



# Climatic - Cultural Aspects Of Tripura's Writings: An Eco-Critical Study Of The Selected Bengali Poems From Tripura.

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## Abstract

Climate is an indispensable part of nature as well as human behavior. The thoughts, the discourses, the culture, the social life of mankind - are all dictated by the climatic factors. Much of those cultural aspects are reflected in the writings of a particular region. Literature being a glance of the human life also encapsulates the nature around man in its writings. The writings of Tripura echoes the climatic factors that influences its culture. The Bengali poets of Tripura found the same inclination towards nature. Being a land of tribal inhabitants, the nature assumes to them as a mystical and mythical epitome. Nature is not just an ecological component or a backdrop but are living retrospection of their everyday life. Those poets not only just praise nature, but makes it a part of their own. This paper will look into those texts from an eco-critical perspective using Eco-criticism as a methodology. It will look into the eco-consciousness among the writers and their concerns for the climate. The paper will examine how climate in those writings gets personified, how the Moon becomes more than a celestial body, how the seasons become human emotions and how the climate gets incorporated in the writing culture of Bengali poets from Tripura. A descriptive method will be applied to study the selected poems and trace out how the ecology and climate has incorporated in the lifestyle of the people.

**Key words :** Climate, Culture, Tripura, Eco criticism, Bengali Poems.

## 1. Introduction

Human and nature has always been entangled with each other. The culture of a region is influenced by the climatic conditions. The climate also dictates the aesthetic appeal of a region. Nature has incorporated into the lives of people in such a way that it no longer remains as an environment but as an expression of people. Literature and Nature always share a cordial relation with each other. Writers have often being fascinated by the climatic world around them and this is no exception for the Bengali poets of Tripura. Tripura experiences moderate warm temperatures during summer and a fair amount of coldness in winter. With the presence of Bay of Bengal in its South, there is a high humidity during the summer. These geographical factors let the inhabitants of the region relish all the seasons and create a ecological cohabitation of different flora and fauna. This paranoia of nature gets reflected in the artistic expressions. Poets were always infatuated with the nature around them since time immemorial. It is in the nature that they found solace among the chaos. In the nature, they found expression of turbulent mind. In their poems, the poets of Tripura shared their perceptions of nature that they found in this region. Many even drew inspiration from the nature of the neighboring country of Bangladesh. This paper aims to study those poems and find the ecological appeal that lies in those humanitarian discourses.

## II. Objective of the Study

Nature has been an indispensable part of people's life. It has been a muse among the writers since time immemorial. For the Bengali poets of Tripura, it has been a way to express themselves. The ecological phenomenon was equated with the humanistic fervors. This paper aims to study how the various natural climatic components were ingrained in the Bengali verses composed in Tripura.

## III. Methodology

The present study uses both Primary and Secondary sources. The Primary sources include the texts of the poems both translated and un-translated. The Secondary sources include study of the articles, research papers, books relevant to the field of study. It would employ Eco-criticism as a methodology to trace the ecological elements ingrained in those poems. It would use descriptive research technique to study the poems.

## IV. Tripura and it's Climate

Tripura is a North –Eastern state of India. It shares a unique physiographic features of having rivers, lakes, forests, hills and planes. Although being diverse in its demography, yet It shares a peaceful cohabitation of tribal and non-tribal communities . It is located between 22'56" and 24'32" north latitudes and 91'09" and 92'20" east longitudes. About 60% of its land is hilly while the rest 40% of the land is plain. With the presence of Bay of Bengal in it's South, there is a high humidity during the summer. Tripura experiences moderate warm temperatures during summer and a fair amount of coldness in winter. These wide range of geographic variables let the peoples enjoy a diverse range of climate and seasons which results in different celebrations and festivals among the inhabitants.

## V. Notion of Eco criticism

Eco-criticism is an inter-disciplinary study of Literature and Ecology where scholars and critics analyze how literature incorporates nature. The term 'eco-criticism' was coined by William Rueckert in 1978 in his essay "Literature and Ecology : An Experiment in Eco-criticism" . Eco-criticism evaluates the environmental concerns that the writers include in their fictional writings. There exists a great balance between the imaginative world and the scientific world. Literature is work of pure fiction, but the writer creates that world using tropes from real life situations, experiences and environments. A writer's experience of his regional climate will affect his or her portrayal of the same in the writings. The poets of Tripura were no different to this phenomenon. Most of them used nature as a repeated element in their poems. Politically some of those poets were refugees from the neighboring country of Bangladesh, who fled to Tripura due to various political turmoil. Geographically it was a different situation for those writers as they migrated from the land of plains and oceans in Bangladesh to the hilly, bamboo forests of Tripura. This changing natural, climatic conditions created amusement as well as frustration among those poets which they vented out in their poems.

## . VI. Tradition of Bengali Poetry in Tripura

Tripura traces its legacy of Bengali writings from the Royal era of Tripura. The Kings of Tripura had great affections for the Bengali community, their culture and their writing traditions. Members of the Royal family such as King Birchandra Kishore Manikya, Anangamohini Devi themselves composed literary pieces in Bengali. In the midst of nature and climatic conditions poets found a solace and drew their inspirations. In recent time, many of them are now translated in English by various translators. The Bengali poems of Tripura not only worshipped nature but made it a medium of expression.

## VII. Climatic cultures espessed through the writings

The Climatic landscape of this state has often been weaved into the literary domain of the writers. The changing climate has often being a great precursor of the poetic creations. The Bengali poets were infatuated with the climate around them and would relate it to their daily life. They expressed themselves through shades of seasons. They showed their concern for the climate.

The seasons that the poets experienced were reflected in their poems with underlying philosophical insights. Tripura experiences a fair amount of rain which becomes an important phenomenon in the poems. Tripura experiences monsoon or the season of rain in various phases. Monsoon enters Tripura approximately in the first week of June as the wind direction changes from northwesterly to southerly and it brings humid air from Bay of Bengal. The average temperature ranges from 31 to 32 degree Celsius. The 1300 mm of rainfall act as a respite against this heat which poet Swapan Sengupta in his poem 'Rain in the City', expresses, as he feels the rain could

“ ... smudge off heat from this city ...” (Gupta 2017, p.42)

The poet wish if he could paint rains so that it can take away the scorching heat. But this same coming of rain is viewed pessimistically in Sankhasubhro Debbarmann's poem, 'The rains that Came'. To the poet, rain is an epitome of misery that is unwelcomed. The sky covered with clouds create a dull atmosphere to which the poet associate his melancholy.

“ ... the rains that came

they brought with them cold solitude

Like leaves untimely shed ...” (Gupta 2017. p. 99)

Rain is equated with a terror that evokes fear and cause misery among the peoples. Such a tone continues in the poem 'Sraban Debata (The Monsoon God)', where tears are compared as Shraban Debata who sits in the eyes. This is a Hindu Bengali mythical reference where Shraban Debata or Lord Indra is worshipped as the rain God. It is said that the wrath of Indra could cause downpour and heavy rains that could add misery to the people's lives thus equating rain with tears.

Like the season of rain, the Autumn too holds significance in Bengali poems from Tripura. It is not the Spring of hope but the desolation of Autumn season that poets correlated with themselves. Autumn is the in-between phase of retreating summer and the upcoming winter. The trees start shedding their leaf. Animals start gathering food for winter. Pre winter winds start eroding the green landscape. Poet Kalyanbrata Chakraborty in his poem 'Autumn's Neighbor' echoes the same sense as he feels that he developed a dry emotion like the dry season. He has no affection for the rusty nameplate of the peoples and he feels

“...no neighbor's memory is retained ...” (Gupta p.25)

Swati Indu in the poem 'Well Wish' creates a panorama of seasons with the human emotions. The season of rain, summer and winter are juxtaposed with each other resonating the changing human emotions over time.

## VIII. Changing Climate and Nature

The modernist poets of Tripura showed their concern for the changing ecological conditions. They felt that the landscape around them is degrading. They were in despair to see the lush green scenario of the state is getting destroyed. Akbar Ahmed in his poem 'The fringes of the jungle', describes how birds have become weak like winter in the lines,

“ ... innumerable birds

above my head, weakened by winter are flinging themselves in fire .

Numerous insects and reptiles, along with this destruction

Some of them have gone far way, some of them killed forever.

... by gun wounds or by starvation ...” . (Gupta. p.122)

The poet feels that the violence of men have destroyed the habitat and the beauty of the state. Ecological concern is also traced in Mridul Debroy's poem 'Just Before Evening'. Poet compares the desolate pictures with Tripura's nature. Poet equates the helpless pathos of Hamas and Israel to Tripura's Longtarai. With

pain he claims that the beautiful scenes such as mesh of bamboo leaves have now been replaced with municipal lights. The nature has changed to such an extent that,

“... the ducks, oblivious of swimming,

Come up on the banks –

Frozen still as if they have forgotten to shake themselves dry ... ” (Gupta. p.133).

An intermingling of the nature and the pollution can be seen in Madhav Banik's poem, 'Have brought clouds, would you mind getting drenched'. The poet expresses how the rustic cloud has fallen in love with city smoke. Cloud becomes a symbol of nature and smoke becomes a symbol of pollution. Bimelandra Chakraborty in his poem 'Agartala', describes the changing aspects of the nature. He describes how once upon a time the Elephants would roam in the evening, the jackals used to howl, deers would run, Dhanush birds would fly around. But now he feels that vibrant and lively aspect of the Agartala is fading out.

### Conclusion :-

Climate of Tripura has been a major concern in the verses of Bengali poems from Tripura. It has influenced the culture of the people much of which is reflected in the poems of Tripura. The climate, the nature has assumed the form of an expression for these writers. Nature here is not just an embodiment of beauty but an indispensable part of themselves. Poets were infatuated with changing seasons. They were concerned with climatic changes. They were sympathetic to the degrading environment. In those Bengali poems, nature and climate have been weaved in a perfect blend.

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