CHAPTER-III

The post-war Bengali literature is marked by a sense of fear, gloom, despondency and a negative attitude to life rather than by the easy, smooth and care-free note of the 'Kallol' group of writers. Yet the writing of this particular period is marked by another distinct aspect sense of wit, humour and satire.

When life is burdened with problems and difficulties, when life passes through a serious phase, an undercurrent of humour often lightens the serious tension to a considerable extent. Sympathy and an indifferent and detached objective view of life give rise to comic sentiments and humourous feelings. This was not absent in the minds of the people during the period though there was a serious zolt in the life and the society, even in their economy and culture. The complexities and inconsistencies of life provided food for novel types of jokes and satire, wit and humour. The post-war life and society in Bengal were marked by
serious changes in the spheres of art, religion, attitude of life, patterns of outlook and scientific and intellectual levels also. Whenever there is a change, there may not be consistencies and adjustments at all levels, secondly the changing attitude and patterns may not be acceptable to the elite and the intellectuals. These may reflect perversion and assumed sense of novelty. Therefore, literature based on such aspects of life contains elements of comic sentiments, mockery, satirical remarks, witty stings and humourous designs etc.

The history of humourous writings is an old one. In Bengali literature writers like Indranath Bandyopadhyay, Kedarnath Bandyopadhyay followed by writers like Pramathnath Bishi, Saradindu Bandyopadhyay and more specially writers like Rajshekhar and Bibhutibhusan Mukhopadhyay made appearance with distinct characteristics of their own.

The stories of Bibhutibhusan are in no way comparable to those of Rajshekhar. In matters of creation of plot and situations style, characterization with Rajshekhar and Bibhutibhusan are poles apart. These
two writers however have largely contributed towards the humorous writings in Bengali literature. The middle class society relished the delicious stuff supplied by these two writers in particular.

Asit Bandyopadhyaya mentions Bibhutibhusan as a king of humour, "He is the King of real humour, at least through his stories. The meaning of real humour under current of pain through humour. This particular type of humour is something unheard of in Bengali literature. Only a writer like Bibhutibhusan could excell in his art of creating humour through painful experiences. Behind this humour remained the tear hidden deep and serious readers can grasp it. In this regard he stands at the same level with any gnat humourous writers of the world. Bengali society is basically a problem-ridden one and far this society Bibhuti bhusan has created a fund of pure humour. Humour comes out of the inconsistencies of human behaviour. Whenever this projection of human inconsistency goes beyond a desirable limit the same turns into 'grotesque' or pungent satire. Fortunately Bibhutibhusan is free from both these two extremes." (14)

Bibhutibhusan is not interested in wild imagination of plot. Nor does he have the express intention to create surprise situations. But whatever inconsistency he finds in the ordinary day-to-day Bengali middle-class life he has the capacity to clearly depict it. In this respect Bibhutibhusan and Kedar Nath bear close similarity. Kedarnath (1863–1949) set the atmosphere of his novels and short stories on this ordinary life-style and day-to-day behaviour of the Bengali people. Kedarnath is basically a writer with a realistic approach towards life. His literary world is fed with the richness of experience— are not with sheer imaginations. Sri Sajani Kanta Das has written "Almost all the stories of Dadamasai are reminiscences. His personal involvements may not be that important but all his stories are founded on what he had seen or heard in and around the world of experience."\(^{(15)}\)

Note: (15) Dadama aer Srestha Galpa. (Preface)
Likewise most of the stories of Bibhuti Bhusan are also the projection of his reminiscences. They are founded on his direct and indirect experiences. The family life of the middle-class Bengali society constitutes the very fabric of his stories.

The writings of Kedarnath mark the conglomeration of both laughter and tears in equal proposition and as a consequence a major segment of his writings can be brought under the category of humorous writings. The writers draw his inspiration for the making of 'humour' in the domain of man's inconsistencies and other humour frailties and in his consequential sympathy for the same. Herein we can refer to the definition of humour as has been given by Thacker - "The best humour is that which is flavoured throughout with
tenderness and kindness."(16) Kedarnath is a hummourist in the sense that he focussed the comic situations of life out of his sincere and sympathetic approach but never did he cherish a feeling of contempt, scorn or bitter sentiments towards life, people and society. Take the example of the novel "Ai has" wherein Sibu is shown to hard read upto B.A. but he has been writing only as "I has". There is an element of pain behind this humourous presentation this is explicity displayed in the following statement - "We have nothing 'I' in as - everything is 'it' - third person singular. 'I' is nothing but masquerade."

There is a harmonious blending between comic sentiments and characterisation in the humour of Kedarnath. His character portrayals radiate humour. The characters of Kedarnath are mostly from the middle-class and lower-classes. These characters possess inconsistencies and abnormalities in abundance, their behaviours and mannerisms evoke humour. He is not a

humourist for the sake of humour alone. His peculiarity lies in his capability in working out an artistic fusion of both humour and pain.

If one compares Rajshekhar with Kedarnath then one is sure to find some distinct changes in outlook as regards the mood and motive in the writings of the former. Rajshekhar puts special stress on his imagination rather than on his experiences in the making of his humourous situations. His characters reflect a shadow of certain moods and thoughts which they represent, but the characters could not free themselves from those shadow-impressions and become distinct individuals. Even their ways of talking and dialogues do not precisely present the normal and usual ways, they provoke laughter by their unusual way of speaking, and abnormal behaviour. In most cases they do not reflect a genuine and subtle sense of wit, they evoke laughter, they incite lighter and sometimes even joking

Note: (17) Bangla Sahitya Chota Galpa O Galpakar. By - Dr. Bhudeb Chowdhury (Page-361)
feelings, but there is no deeper note of Pathos or pitiful and compassionate reactions. The element of Pathos and an appealing undercurrent of pain is absent in most of his writings.

In this respect, Rajshekhar stands apart from Kedarnath. The most important feature of Kedarnath's stories is a remarkable blending of comic sentiment with pathos along with some incidental flashes of sublime. Not only in his short stories but also in his novels the same fusion persists. In this respect, Kedarnath and Bibhuti bhusan are akin to each other. In the writings of Bibhutibhusan's too this fusion of light mood with a feeling of pity is an important feature. He had a deep sense of pure and genuine humour. The stories of Bibhuti bhusan and their artistic presentation adequately reflect the pathos and complacence of the middle-class Bengali life. In the design of plot and characterisation, Bibhutibhusan and Kedarnath have many points which are mutually comparable. They did not create plots, so to say, they just picked them up from their own surroundings, - the weal and woes, the wishes and aspirations, habits and practices of the people belonging to the middle-class
society were the subject-matters in their stories. There is nothing new, nothing artificially depicted and nothing imported which were not within their experiences. Even then, it will be wrong to suppose that their stories are photographic representation of facts. A story-teller who consciously wants to provoke laughter or one who seeks to delve deep into the comic aspects of life would like to drive the situations and sequences of events accordingly. Bibhitibhusan and Kedar Nath do not make any attempt to find out the comic sentiment, the movements, the way of life, the expressions and the attitude and outlook of the characters reveal the inconsistencies and abnormalities as these do exist. The pleasure on derived by a reader out of a situation or an expression is deeply and inextricably linked with the pathos and paradox of life as it is. The story tellers, - Bibhutibhusan and Kedarnath reveals the sweety sour of life at the cost of bitter experience and expression of the characters projected in their stories. A true humourist is a humanist at the same time and cannot remain detached from the pathetic feelings, woeful situations and pitiable abnormalities of the people.
Bibhuti bhushan's stories are basically not vehicles of comic sentiments, nor are they designed to evoke paradox, laughter or mockery. Humour reveals itself so to say from the characters themselves and not at the cross-roads of events and circumstances. Herein lies the difference between Bibhutibhusan and Rajsekhar. In Bibhutibhusan we never find a note of contempt or critical view, aspersions or inuendoes towards human customs and beliefs, attitude and outlook or towards any serious problems of life. Rajsekhar places his characters in a well schemed situations, he unfolds their expressive or implied views on life and society and these he does by not allowing the characters to speak or reveal for themselves, but by handling them as a conscious writer. We are therefore constrained to observe that Rajsekhar controls the situations, drives the characters, and he places himself in the driver's seat to change directions and accelerate motives and speed as he thinks desirable. Unlike him, Bibhuti bhusan never draws the curtain before a college common room, a city hotel, a marshy land of South Bengal or a snow-clad Himalayan region and even in a crematorium. Rajsekhar likes to indulge in such varieties. There is always an air of assumed novelty
in his stories. The background of the stories not only cross as the limit of common place environments and surroundings it crosses limit of time also, taking the situations sometimes to a 'puranic' past or to an age of the Vedic and Pre-Vedic atmosphere.

The middle-class Bengali life constitutes the very infrastructure of Bibhutibhusan's stories. His stories emanates from his direct experiences with life. Like Rajshekhar he does not create unnatural surroundings, incidents and characters. Rajshekhar presents before the reader a train of man and woman, he-demon and she-demon, hermits and angels or fleet of animals (Dakshinarai, Lambakarna), but never has he kept his doors open for child characters. In all these hints both Bibhutibhusan and Rajshekhar stand poles apart from one another.

An element of strangeness marks the humour of Rajshekhar. They abound in scorn and oblique views. He does not have any sympathy for a false veneer or the so-called modernism of cheap politics or naked commercialism. He has sharply reached against superstitions, manners and customs and other unnatural ways
of life. He, however does not express zeal for reforming through a process of creative criticism. Regarding the villainous characters like Birinchibaba, Ganderram, Shyamananda Bramhachari or Kallidong swami the author virtually suspends his impartial judgement in his writings. His sole business has been to portray them in his typical ways. As regards 'Gaddalika' Rabindranath has stated - "He (Rajshekhar) has been creating portraits after portraits as if they are known to me from times immemorial." (18)

The literary world of Rajshekhar abounds in innumerable lively personages. In the language of Rabindranath, Rajshekhar's literary world is nothing but a "Character Gallery". Each and every character of his throbs with life, flesh and blood, and we know them, see them and come across them in our surroundings. They do not seem to have come from fiction, they appear in the setting of drama of life as it is. The author has so skilfully instilled life to them that they appear to be real men and women.

Note: (18) 'Prabashi', Agrahayan year 1332.
Right from the characters like Bramhachari, Ganderiram Batparia, Tarini Kabiraj, Nadu Mallik, Birinchi Baba, Latabar Nandy, Jigisa Debi, Afingkhor Kerani Baroda Khuro each and every character portrayal of his has been vitalized by the authors majic touch. We feel, we invariably happen to meet them in our day-to-day life in the streets, as well as in the ordinary get-together, in the academic, commercial, social environments. But Rajsekhar is essentially a humourist per excellence. His characters are quite unlike the characters of the other so-called 'realists'. His approach to realism is typically his own, quite unlike those of others. The attention of every humorist is concentrated on the inconsistencies, mannerisms, and unusual life-styles of the people, and humour is the product of these inconsistencies of human behaviours. The author's almost ironical attitude towards these behavioural inconsistencies is projected through his characters. His laughter as some critics feel is a typically cynical one and the same has considerably exaggerated his characters. And strangely enough, the readers draw their fun out of these exaggerations. Take the example of the story "Sri Sri Siddheswari Limited." The character of Ganderiram Batparia is projected as a
dishonest businessman in more or less a realistic prospective. The portrayal of Ganderiram evokes humour only out of his exaggerated self, while without this tune of exaggeration he would have appeared before us not as a humorous character but as an out-and-out dishonest person, we would have hated him with a feeling of nostalgia. This fusion of 'realism' and exaggeration characterises the character portrayals of Rajshekhar. The fusion is more marked especially as regards his (Ganderiram's) speeches - "Sin? Can I comit a sin? Kasem Ali does the business. I live in Calcutta................. I neither see with my eyes nor do I smell with my nose.............. I am the 'Mahajan' only.............. I pay the money and that's all. If I don't pay Kasem Ali will borrow from some other rich man. If the deal is sinful, it is Kasem Ali who is liable, what am I to do about it? Even if these happens to be sin at all them I have some pieties too to my credit. I observe, 'Akadosi', Sivratri, fasting in Ramnavami and I spend some coins as some charity. I have created a quite a few Dharamasalas- one in Lilluah, one in Bali, one in Sewrafuli."
This satirical exaggeration constitutes the cardinal source of Rajsekhar's humour. The world or spirit depicted in the story 'Elusandir Math' does not create any atmosphere of suspense and fear. Though he takes the readers to an unnatural environment and opens before their eyes a world of ghosts and spirits, he in fact exposes the hollowness of the doctrine of rebirth and the traditional views on wife's fidelity to her husband. Through this humour the rationalistic and inquisitive mind of the author has struck a note of doubt and disbelief about the age-old Hindu prejudices at their very roots. He strikes the note of contrast and inconsistencies in modern life and the inherent weakness and shallowness in modernism, he also points out subtly the drawbacks and abnormality in the traditional customs and beliefs of the old days. Nowhere did he attack anybody or any school of thought directly. The deep sense of humour did not allow him to turn into a philosophic satirist. He had the temperament of laughing at a man or an attitude when a serious thinker would have come forward with scathing attack. Didactism is something quite alien to his nature. He did not cherish any reformative mission while writing about man, human society, education, religion and about
their ethical values. His satires do not hurt any specific person or group. Even if there happens to be a feeling of being hurt that too is being overshadowed by humour. In fact, Parsuram's sense of humour can be called intellectual laughter,"as Berges used the term. However, one of the most important features of his humour is that no particular individual or group feels hurt. Even the person or the persons to whom his pinpoint remarks and jests have been directed, would not feel hurt, they would rather enjoy the objective presentation of their own image. This is like pelting of stones supposed to have been done by hobgoblins, which actually does not hurt but creates a sensational feeling of caution. That is why he is a popular writer to people of all walks of life even though they are directly or indirectly drawn into the texture of his writings.

Parasuram does not moralise, but he aims at some idea or ideology, he cuts joke with a profession, an attitude or an outlook, but it is not directed to an individual. Shakespeare remarked that a drama is a projection of Nature, a mirror. The artistic mirror of Parasuram is held a bit obliquely, so one cannot
identify oneself with the distorted image on the mirror. The onlooker takes it to be an image of one other than himself.

One will perhaps hear in Parasuram an echo, though not precisely in all respects of Trailokyanath Mukhopadhyay. In respect of the volume of composition, variety and categories, Trailokyanath, is perhaps marginally above Parasuram, but the latter may claim superiority over the former in subtlety and intellectual approach.

But both of them are master artists despite their inherent differences. The humour of Trailokyanath is softened with tears, while that of Parasuram is tinged with mild scolding and irony with of course some exceptions here and there. The stories of Trailokyanath are rooted to rural atmosphere while those of Parasuram reflect an urban background centering round Calcutta. In status, culture and outlook Parasuram was basically an urban, so in expression and thought and design his stories carry an air of urban environment. In this respect he is quite distinct from Trailokhyanath. But the humourists like Trailokyanath, Pramathnath Bisni
and Parasuram fundamentally differ from Bibhutibhusan, more especially as regards their mental make-ups and attitudes. Bibhutibhusan maintains a discernible distance physically as well as mentally.

The humourists and the satirists are, in general prone unconsciously to take to a high-handed attitude to social and individual gestures with which they can not see eye to eye. Therefore they carry an invisible rod or cudgel to slide and point out the oddities and hollowness. In this regard too Bibhutibhusan makes a distinct departure. He is not an ideologue, nor is he a committed reformer. He has evoked unstinted humour in the stories like 'Gobindamasi', 'Dulalkouta', 'Charusilpa', wherein one can notice humourous inconsistent incidents and idiosyncrasies of the characters. He has not only enjoyed those inconsistencies himself with an open mind but also allowed his readers to share the element of fun with equal gusto. His stories like 'Barjatri', 'Planéhet', 'Durghatana', 'Drabyagoon' etc. unfold a world of humour but in driving the situations, in characterisation and in variegated designs of characters, nowhere he is serious. He does not care to see things with spectacles of philosophy, ideology
and sociology. There may be an element of pleasant surprise to see a rather unusual movement of somebody, or unexpected and uncommon behaviour, he dispassionately observes and smiles. He is not a pensive thinker, he does not want to brood over the psychological or any other inducing causes behind the inconsistencies nor does he feel like taking some one to task for the abnormal or apparently absurd movements one makes. Sentiments of friendship or love or filial piety - whatever may be the central theme of his story, there is always an undercurrent of humour which manifests itself.

Bibhutibhusan does not treat his characters to be his puppets. Man, he believes is the architect of his own destiny. In the character of a man there remains the seed of his tragedy as much as in him there remains the element of humour. Other external forces may determine the shape of man's destiny but it goes without saying that the cardinal determinant of a man's destiny remains latent within his ownself.

Humour is the basic element of Bibhutibhusan's stories. In his stories he gives his insight a free
play and thereby ably projects the inconsistencies of human behavior with an artistic finesse. He peeps more into the inconsistencies of human behavior rather than into the inconsistencies of events. In the process he does not distort the realities of life nor does he go beyond. In him, humour is evoked in the unpractical imaginations, inconsistencies in characters, inconsistencies in the sequence of events intelligent dialogues, and almost funny exposures etc. A case in point is the story "Bargatri", Bibhuti Bhusan is essentially a man with a temperament of comic sentiment. His creative attention is rivetted always towards the inconsistencies of persons revealed through certain situations. And those characters may be either a baby, or an old man, or a trader, or ascetic. His creative merit lies in moulding type characters and by virtue of this typification of characters he could easily arrest the minds of curious readers.

In the writings of Hutom or Bankim, Parasuram or Bishi the author does not merely laugh at or strike a note of inconsistency fallacy, foolishness and degenerated or deformed outlook, he appears to take a critical view of objects or moods or situations which he exposes
with either a deliberate or inadvertent desire to chastise the people or the society. An objective inclination to arouse a public and social consciousness against all that is artificial or affected and all that reflect a pretended feeling of advanced culture and sophisticated gentility. However, in Parasuram there is no express intention of reforming the adulterated views or sophisticated modernism. Bibhutibhusan on the other hand is neither a critic nor a reformer. He does not see things from a higher place with a feeling of scorn or detest. We can find parallelism between Bibhutibhusan and Prabhat Kumar in this respect. The soil of Bengal is soaked with tears of sorrow. They wanted to saturate the minds of people with a liquid dose of fun and laughter. This propensity finds expression in the preface to "Ranur Dwitiya Bhag-
"My mission is to lighten the density of atmosphere surcharged with problems and sluggishness."

The principal objective behind his writing is to exploit the humorous potentialities which lay latent behind the problem-ridden constraints of human life. Both Prabhat Kumar and Bibhutibhusan stand side by side in this context.
Bibhutibhusan and Prabhat Kumar approach nearer to each other also in respect of presentation of plot. They do not dwell in an unreal world, but realists as they are by nature, they do not base the plots entirely on facts. They do not set their characters against an unreal, unnatural, queer and artificially designed backgrounds as Parasuram frequently does. Both of them are nevertheless realists in the sense that they draw up an environment or a situation which may not be factual but which has a semblance to reality. Tagore remarked "Literature deals in matters which are not facts but probable" (Bangla Bhasa Parichay). The characters depicted by them are distinctly human placed in the body of plots which have probability of being real.

Bibhutibhusan, and Prabhat Kumar as well do not favour the idea of painting the devil black, villains or utterly dissolute characters are absent in their writings. They believed in the sublimity and serenity of life and had probably a feeling like Tagore. Sufferings are there, death too is certain, there are pangs of separation, yet there is harmony and perfect
bless leading to an infinitude*  

The attitude to life comes out of a positive faith. There are certainly reasons to feel despondent, poignant and critical over the affairs of life as it is, but Bibhutibhusan had probably an introvert feeling towards human lapses with a positive faith inherent goodness. "A king of humour" (Asit Bandyopadhyay - Bangla Sahityer Sampurna Itibritta, Page 708) as he is considered to be, he had elevated the tune of his writings to a high level. A pulsating feeling of pain is intermingled with his sense of humour. In the story "Katay holo" (কাতয় হলো) the pleasure of a man who has purchased a hilsha fish (a new import in the market from the Ganges) is tinged with a shadow of pain of people in the streets whose mouth waters while the pocket is too dry to satisfy the desire. When a few letters in the first Reader are washed away by tears of eye, the frivolous and precocious girl (Ranu) claims that no one in the family bothers about the 'First'  

Note : *
Reader when there are so many books. A gloom is cast over her mind when she is told that her ignorance in 3 R's will entail loss of contact with her dear uncle when she is married.

Curious pleasure, condescending mood, sense of filial piety with an admixture of puerile excessiveness characterise the writings of the author. The readers will ever remember his 'Ranu' and 'Gansa' and his associates. He is unrivalled in stories of the kind mentioned above. Comparable in temperament though Prabhat Kumar is, the latter probably lacked the poetic attitude of Bibhutibhusan by which he could dive deep into the nascent beauty and simplicity of human mind.

The humour of Rajsekhari is marked by a satirical overtone. It is equally marked by a poignant criticism against the artificialities of human behaviour, the so-called modernity, politics or commercialism. He has vehemently criticised the artificialities of religion, culture, behaviours and other commercial approaches of life. But the humour of Bibhutibhusan is marked by a note of simplicity and not by the poignancy of irony. He simply enjoys the consistencies of human behaviour.
and thereby unfold the world of humour.

The language of Bibhutibhusan is also equally marked by simplicity as much as his situations are. In him one does not find the poignancy of satire or the subtle irony. Nor any attempt at intellectual analysis. No any wit either, Rajsekhar's scientific attitude, his rich resourcefulness, and his scholarly touch on language and diction are adequately reflected. Through his funs and frolics of his stories and also through his characters and situations. An attempt at analysing the existence of God though the unmoracy of the integral calculus, or an attempt at analysing the inner relationship between a cycle of love and the magneticity of love, or the so-called 'Scientific' mind of Lambakarna etc. coupled with the style of his presentation evoke humour even for the native readership. Rajsekhar's stories are marked by a kind of novelties both as regards situations and the style of presentations and the same evoke pure humour. In the same strain the resourcefulness of his language and diction coupled with the novel ways of employing the same evoke humour.
Language, situations, and story elements are of different taste in Bibhutibhusan. There is a class of writers who are endowed with the capacity of delving deeper into human moods and thoughts, Bibhutibhusan belongs to that class. He has the rare artistic capacity to invite persons from every stratum of life. In his character gallery we happen to meet person from every walk of life and belonging to all age-groups. They stand before us with full human vitalities.

Soil of Bengal is essentially wet, and the mind of people too is soft. That is why sentiment of love and devotion dominated virtually the whole span of early literature. The mundane life was not given predominance in the aristocratic literature. In the earlier dramatic works also sentiment of love, devotion and Puranic traditions were very much favoured. Subsequently however there is a change. The people of Bengal had to pass through a series of political turmoil, economy of people was seriously affected, people had to stand face to face with stern realities of life. In the past Bharat Chandra era, in the British regime with influence of Western culture and spread of new system of education, there was a birth of
middle class society, and that was at the same time an "age of reason" when the outlook of the intelligentsia had been fast changing. In Rammohan, Vidyasagar, Bamkim, Vivekananda and Tagore we hear a note of humanistic ideals attend with the new trends of thought about life, society, economy and culture. The fertile minds of people were showered with the new monsoon so to say which carried the winds of new fervour, fervour of patriotism, scientific thoughts, economic and social emancipation. Naturally therefore, the soil of Bengal became wet again not with the overflow of devotional sentiments but with an out cry of new needs and necessities.

The lives of the Bengali people has lost its simplicity and purity due to many economic, social and political pressures. Life has become a drab reality without its inherent music and rhythm. And given this background Bibhutibhusan has made a sincere endeavour to bring in a little bit of fun and jollity to the Bengali life. Beyond this he does not have any other intention. His sole purpose was to lighten the painful strain of human life. In the Ranur Ditwiya Bhag' he has clearly pointed out that his real intention is to
lighten heavy strain that the country has been very painfully passing through. Bibhutibhusan very dexterously evokes humour out of the simple and virtually neglected events and characters of human life like a baby in a homely surrounding, boys and girls, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, grandmother, bridal room, marriage party, the photograph of pair of young boy and girl in a studio, womenliness of young girl, the bottle of a phenyl, the hearth of a monk (Bairagir Bhite) and also through many such common place matters. Bibhuti bhusan is more specially drawn towards the juvenile mind. He has tender feelings for them. In the child character-portrayals like Kiku, Khirer naru chor, Parir Khoka, Sudha, Fitu, Dasu etc. he has been able to establish his own distinct identity. He has drawn the attentions of his readers towards the sources of undefiled humour in the simple and day-to-day realities around us. Most of his child characters have gained immense vitality in his dexterous hand.

Bibhuti bhusan has established his primary identity as a humour writer, and only in that area he excelled almost all. His humour is marked by simplicity and naturalness. It is perfectly chiselled and
polished. His humour is free from his personal predilections. It is equally free from the poignancy of satire and irony. Nor does it depend on the certain special lights moments or ironical situation. His kind of humour is the direct result of his insight into life and the world. He creates lighter moments in the whirlpool of seriousness. Hence his creative identity finds expression through his deeper realizations.

The personality of Bibhutibhusan has three major facts - the man, the philosopher, and the artist. The man in Bibhutibhusan is endowed with a sense of humour. His kind of humour makes its presence felt through a veil of tragic awareness and deeper realizations of the realities of life. In the eye of a philosopher the happiness and agonies of human life are no different from the puppet shows. The philosopher in Bibhutibhusan has looked at human happiness and agonies in his own way and this approach has converted

Note: (19) 'Bibhutibhusan Mukhopadhyay Srestha Galpa' - Statement of Prof. Jagadish Bhattacharjee, Preface - Page No. 7.
his agonising experiences into unalloyed humour. While his kind of humour is free from bitterness of any kind, it is equally free from the venomous ironies sense of humour is perfectly tinged with a kind of sympathy of the author. The essence of his writing, be it Batasalya be it 'Sakhyas', be it 'Mathura', Bibhutibhushan identifies himself solely as a humourist. Like an alchemist he can convert a painful moment or experience into pure humour. In fact, Bibhutibhushan has tried his best, certainly with tremendous success, to lighten the serious moments of painstricken mind of the Bengali people.

Nevertheless, Bibhutibhushan cannot always be associated with frivolities. He does not lack seriousness. In his writings he has presented almost each and every aspect of human experience. Stories like 'Durghatana', 'Planchet', 'Tirthatatta', 'Chaitali', 'Haimonti' are the exhibits of his flair for variegated experiences. When the train has met with an accident one Marowari businessman is found to be busy in making money by way of selling medicines to the victims. He has presented in his stories how people make money out of man's religious sentiments and prejudices. He has
also tried to evoke humour through the supraphysical experiences by way of planchet. He has not forgotten to vitalise money of his painful moments in their true colour and intuisity. He often tries to project that humour and agonies are complementary to one another. In many of his stories both humour and agonies perfectly co-exist. Despite all this Bibhutibhusan is essentially a writer of humour. He is always interested mainly towards the inherent inconsistencies of human behaviour. The child, the old, the trader, the pious and almost every character gets a new dimension in his magic touch.

The humour of Rajsekhar is marked by a sort of self propleeleing richness and purity.

Humour of Rajsekhara is characterised by exuberant and unalloyed purity. The outflow of his comic sentiment never became turbid by excess of intellectual exercise. It is like a spring dazzling bright with sunshine descending below, rippling and dancing emitting out splinters of wild glee. The most important feature of Rajsekhara's humour lies rather in his art of creating situations, than in verbalised wit. He sketched
that segments of life which strike a discordant note. He believes that the comic sentiments of man do not find expression only in sharpened thoughts, quibblings of words and syntactical disharmony. Humour he believes, is not the outcome of verbalized wit. Most of the people, he believes, are unconscious humorists. Humour is created behind their awareness. Thus, almost each and every character of Rajsekhar is an unconscious humorist. They donot appear in the stage with any predetermined purpose. It is the situation that generates humour in them. His kind of humour projects his characters in their true colours. Because of this external impositions and subjective approach his humour has not attained the highest pitch. Nevertheless, Rajsekhar occupies a distinct place in the humour writings of Bengali Literature. As a matter of fact, he must be said to have spent up a completely new chapter in humour writings.

Rajsekhar occupies a distinct place in the art of creating humour through a process of satire and irony. And this is nothing unusual for him. His personal life, culture, upbringing, have their indelible impact on his writings. As a student of science,
Rajsekhar had a scientific approach towards everything. Besides, being brought up under the care of a disciplinarian father, he had the mental discipline and the same is profusely reflected in his writings. Even as regards his approach to human problems his scientific mind coloured and conditioned his treatment. He looked at human issues with scientific mind. While, as a necessary consequence, all the human frailties stood before him in their nakedness. But he has not tried to create humour through a process of bitter irony. In fact, his disciplined and the so-called 'Classical' personality is fully projected in his writings. His humour has met destroyed the artistic excellence of his stories. An element of serenity coupled with a kind of ironical style gives his stories some distinctness.

One of the most distinguishing sources of Parasuram's humour in his subtle, colourful as well as sarcastic comments. In many places the sharpness and precision of his comments have evoked immeasurable humour. A rich command over language coupled with his variegated experiences have largely fertilized and enriched his humour. In the story like 'Swayamber' the
comment of Chatterjee Mahasal have evoked a good deal of humour. While describing the "Memsahib" he writes-
"Her face resembles a soury Chiness fruit-her lips are like two ripe chillies. She is clad with a piece of
napkin". "He describes the smiling face - "She giggled and seeds of maize, as it were seen. She needed and
said - ghut morning (good morning) Mr. Chatterjee felt when she stared at him, he reacted - I Keder Chaturjee,
no zoo garden."* Through such designs and artifice of inducting different dialects, patois and jargons in
their colloquial forms Parasuram has tried to enrich his humour.

Parasuram and Bibhutibhusan at times concur and at the same time differ in different areas. One can
very easily discern the similarities and the dissimilarities that exist between the two authors. None of

* Quoted from Story 'Swambara'.

"মৃদুসাধী সাচা জরুর, প্রথম পাচা প্রমাণে ... যে বারে তাকে দেখারকান।
' তোমাকে বললাম, শুতাই শুতাই হও বাঁটে ধারায় সাজে ফুটে ধার বাঁটায়,
নিজের সাদা চাঁদপায় - কুতুরিং', কানে বন্ধ নিকে ভাঙ্গা আরো নিকে ভাঙ্গা
সমস্তই চুতাচুতায় যা তোমার, তবু তোমার মেজাজ, তবু তোমার মেজাজ
কি কুর্তাকান্ত।
them has any professed desire of preaching morality and pulling any ulterior motive up those who erred. They seem to remain complacent only with the act of projecting the inherent inconsistencies of his contemporaries. They do not overact and exceed the limit of artistic decency.

Rajsekhar is sharp and rather a bit terse (not however with an intended notion of evoking cheap sentiments of fun). He creates novel situations and environments, but lays emphasis on characters. Sometimes placement of situations and the timing of events appear to be ludicrous, but he has in his mind a train of thought or mood which gets the upperhand. Eibhuti bhusan depicts the situations as they are and should be. Rajsekhar's characters cannot be associated from the environments, they are interlinked, while in Bibhutibhusan the environment does not pervade the atmosphere. In time, in Rajsekhar characters cannot be delinked from environment, while in Bibhuti bhusan it is normally not so.

Rajsekhar, as we have already noted has a satirical overtone, which can be felt, though not always
evident, Rajsekhar appears to reach over the situations and sequences of events indirectly while Bibhutibhusan has an impulse to feel. The brand of humour of Rajsekhar is intellectual laughter, in the entire process he maintain an objectivity without allowing the subjective image intrude into his writings. Another noticeable point of contrast between the two is that the characters in the stories of Bibhutibhusan are individuals, - a man or a woman, a girl or an adolescent, on the score of his or her personal ways or attitudes is singled out by the author, the abnormalities or inconsistencies which arouse comic sentiment are but his or her own characteristics. Rajsekhar on the other hand imports a character or a group of characters which normally represent a class. The 'guru' who is so devoutly respected by Ray Bahadur's wife ('Guru Biday'), Bantul and his friends, Jigisha Devi ('Ratarati'), the infatuated lovers ('Prem Chakra') political aspirant Bakulal ('Dakshina Ray'), Kebalram ('Birinchi Baba') and so on typify the salient traits of mood or motive of a class of people.

One of the most important features of Parasuram's humour is his sense of proportion. A critic like
Srikumar Bandapadhyay has noticed one glaring lacuna in the style of Parasuram, who is stated to be lacking the sense of pathos which is an integral part of humour experiences. And this sense of human pathos make often then not vitalized 'the' humour. In the famous humourous works, there is always an under current of pathos. A master piece like Don Quixote is an example of this class of writings. This trait is noticeable in the fiction of Sarat Chandra Chatterjee. But nevertheless even without a tinge of pathos one can produce excellent brand of humour. Authors like Aristophanies, Rabels, Moliere and G. B. Shaw belong to this group of writers - Parasuram too belongs to this class.

In Bibhutibhusan's writings, there is a harmonious blending of comic, pathos and insight. Unlike other humourous writers he does not exaggerate a situation, nor does he twist the speech pattern. The story "Ranur Pratham Bhag" is a glaring example in point. Ranu a little sweet girl always feels cross over her being a minor child. She aspires to be rated as an adult. Unlike other children she is never found in doll's house, she has rather a pretended feeling that she is to look after all domestic details. This
mimic activities which were adopted from the elders, are actuated by her dormant impulse of womanhood. She sneers at the idea of reading the First Reader because none in the family reads that book. This projected sense of maturity, this overpert attitude and the over-zealous seriousness of a little girl must not be misconstrued as artificial handling of situations and manipulated exaggeration of a girl's attitude. One who is acquainted with the child mind and the middle-class domestic atmosphere to which she belongs, knows fully well that it is all but natural. The last scene unfolds the climax. Just before starting for her father-in-laws' house this girl appeared before her dear uncle with a bundle of First Reader, (once supposed to have been concealed and declared lost) in a repentant mood. The fickleness and childish precociousness which once evoked fun and laughter now change its colour. Laughter fades into a shadow of gloom and pathos. Shades of colourful lives of a rainbow become fade and unclear by the water vapour accumulated around.

As Bibhutibhusan deals in plain and simple human materials, these are appealing to all sections of people because the trains of mood and thought therein
bear human traits, without constrains of higher philosophy, politics, economy and culture. The intellectual approach in many of Rajsekhar's stories requires sometimes a suitably enlightened and equipped mind to appreciate it, but Bibhutibhusan can easily arrest the minds of readers in general. Moreover, Rajsekhar presents characters in an undertone of caricature, (Viz. Sibnath, the college teacher, Susen Babu, husband of Jigisa Devi, the hotel keeper (Ratarati) Batparia, Khalvidam Swami (Guru Biday) etc. Bibhutibhusan never lets loose a tone of mockery and pinching.

The earlier stories of Parasuram present a happy fusion of satire, irony and humour. But every bit of his writing is dominated by Sharp wit. This does not always mean at Parasuram bent only on the wit, although the same constitute the most enjoyable part of his writings. Bibhutibhusan is quite different in this regard. He too employs cut in the process of creating humour but the same does not constitute the vital ingredient of his humour. In this regard we can recall the comment - (Story 'Swambar', Page 263 "Is there a grand mother who is just a young woman?" ("Didima arr kar labajubati haye thake balunto?") But in reality
Bibhutibhusan does not belong to the group of wit-mongers. He does not intend to arrest the attention of his readers with the tentacle of wit and intellectual exercise. He has a different way, while the stories of Parasuram are essentially aggressive in character, but that of Bibhutibhusan are saturated with a sense of sympathy. This has given him a special place in the world of humour.

Before drawing a close to this Chapter, we may be permitted to make a few conclusive observations. As there is a deep stamp of intellectual approach to the problems of life and society and scurrilous remarks on the attitude and aptitude of men and women in the stories of Rajsekhar (sometimes with implied suggestiveness and at times with direct and unrelenting firmness) it appears that the stories are concluded with a moral values which preys upon the minds of the readers. If it will be wrong to say that the author has consciously and purposefully led the readers to that end, He does not pose any moral question. He simply presents the inherent inconsistencies of human life as it is.

In case of Rajsekhar, his attachment for artistic
excellence is quite prominent. On the other hand, the very approach of Bibhutibhusan is different. He wants to see life as it is. And that is why his stories do not display any special flair for wit and artfulness.