CHAPTER - V

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Aboriginal communism was in vogue in the society during the Stone Age at the very beginning of the creation of human race. At that time, both man and woman searched for food in a group.

The society was not critical during the new Stone Age. But the human society is mutable – slavery society, feudal society and at last capitalist society. Thus the position of man-woman changed.

Once woman played the role of an active worker. The ancient society was almost woman oriented. But woman could not do anything during the age of war. For the sake of safety and security, introduction of father to son started and starting of fatherly love gradually withdrew of woman from the top position. A family was formed and the woman became housewife bounded by the ring of family. Hostility and warfare, ploughing and metallurgy etc. are the difficult works, only done by the man. Woman is very much minor in that regard. They were bounded in a family, main works were cooking and upbringing the children.

Though the social system of Vedic period was father-oriented, the works like knitting wool, sewing, weaving etc. were done by woman. The
woman also did the job of flower plucking in those days, found evidence other than the Veda. For that,

Beside this woman participate in war after taking military training. They also did the work of teacher. Apishali and Oudomedhi are noticeable.

After this the position of woman goes down. Along with the country it is also seen in Assam too.

After all the woman was shifted from the work of productive and ruling society to the boundary of family life. In the later period, though the development of capitalism was weak, many women started taking part in productive work of the society, for example, in tea garden, mine, factory, field etc. As a result, they became self-dependent, self-reliant. Among the literate woman many of them started earning and participating in group in freedom fighting, Labour- Farmer Revolution also.

On the other hand,
But in literature it is rare that a woman got any good position in case of financial matter. Though the picture of suffering from financial matter is noticeable, we get the picture of their prosperous state also. In Charyapada,

ঠাটল সোর ঘর নাহি পড়বেষী

হাড়িত ভাত নাহি নিতি আবেষী।

i.e.

ঠালায আমার ঘর, পড়াই নাৰী। হাড়িতে ভাত নাৰী, নিতাই রাতের অতিথি।

Here we noticed that,

নারীরা নানা ভাবে জীবন উপার্জন করতেন। চর্চা গীতিতে (সমস্ত থেকে দ্বাদশ শতাব্দী) দেবীদের কথা আছে, নিম্নশ্রেণীর এই মেয়েদের কেউ কেউ তার বিক্রি করত, বিক্রির জন্য চাঙারি তৈরি করত... গৃহিণীরা মদ চোলাই করত। নৃত্যগীতবাদ ও অভিনয়কলার সঙ্গে নারীরা সম্পূর্ণ থাকতেন...

They go hand in hand with the man in profession. Along with male class they also bend towards earning. Women are called as Sundini, Dambi, Chandali, Sharbari etc. It however changed later. This new woman is no more to be underlined with those derogatory adjectives such as Sundini, Dambi and so on.

The woman has not any role in economical production in socio-economic system of middle age. Husband's abandoned wife has no other way to beg. And again childless early widow has to spend her days in the house of father-in-law by preparing food. It is noticeable in Chandi Mangal Kabya of Bengal,

মদলকাণ্ডে নিয়দ বহু ফুলরা মাংস বিক্রি করে। মালিনী ও গোলামিনারা

বেচাকুরা করে।
Radha is a chaste woman, yet she has the right to go out from house. She roams from path to path of Mathura with the help of Barai, with her mate by decorating the pot of curds and covering it with silk cloth. It is applicable only for her financial need. It was the direction of Aihana’s mother, the mother-in-law of Radha, that with Barai, Radha could go out to earn money for the sake of family. Again the family of Hara-Gauri in Chandimangal was poverty stricken. Gauri said,

कालिकार भिक्षा नाथ उठार शुमिनु।
অবশেষে যেবা ছিল রসন করিনু॥
রসন করিতে ভালো বলিলে গৌসাই।
প্রথমে যে দিব পাত্রে তাই ঘরে নাই॥ ९

There is no any earning woman character in the novel of Bankimchandra. Praphulla in দেবীচৌধুরী says,

জিজ্ঞাসা করিও—আমি কি করিয়া খাইব? আমি বাগদীই হই—মুচিই হই—
—তাহার পুত্রবধূ।তাহার পুত্রবধূ কি করিয়া দিনপাত করিবে? १०

Here it can be imagined that how the women are helpless in the economic field. The robbery of Praphulla and the job of waitress of Indira is not a respectful earning source in the society. Of course in the beginning of the novel দেবীচৌধুরী, the novelist portrays the picture of a terrible privation of a poverty stricken house. The mother of that house begs for living. The daughter is unfortunate, deserted from her father-in-law’s house. She has nothing although has many things.

ওপরি—ও পিপি—ও প্রফুল্ল - ও পোড়ারমূখী। ... কেন মা? মা বলিল, যা না দোষের বাড়ী থেকে একটা বেগুল চেনা নিরে আয় না। ... তবে খাবি কি? আজ ঘরে যে কিছু নেই। ... প্রফুল্লকে দেখাইল, আঠ মুঠা চাউল আছে মাটি—
—তাহা একজনেরও আধ্যাত্ম হইবে না। ११
There are many heroines of Bankimchandra who left house to uncertainty, willingly or unwillingly. For example, Kapalkundala, Mrinalini, Giribala, Suryamukhi, Shaibalini, Indira, Praphulla, Shanti, Kalyani, Sri etc. They could not get any facility on their own, even did not get any proper education. And the social system was not favourable for them.\(^\text{12}\)

On the other hand, in Assam a different picture is noticeable in the novels of Rajanikanta Bardaloi. In the novel rahadoi, Rahadoi,

\[\text{शक स्त्री तिक दुर्गा कटा, कापौर रौरा काम करे। एकदेखे घबरन सुखेथे चलिय धरिले।}\]

After that many unwanted situation arise in her life, she could not bond with marriage and engaged herself in social work to become Krishnadashi. And Rangili in the novel कथिती,

\[\text{माछ मचात, डूंडा रोरत, विध मीठे गोरत आक नाचेनत ताइ आंध्युपरा आर्य।}\]

In Bengal, Rabindranath wrote in his poem মুক্তি,

\[\text{জানি নাই তো আমি যে কী, জানি নাই এ বৃহৎ বসুদরা}
\[\text{কী অর্থে যে ভরা।}

\[\text{আমি কেবল জানি}

রাজ্যার পরে খাওয়া আবার খাওয়ার পরে রাজ্য।}\]

Here, he highlights the ill economic condition of Bengali family. But he does not highlight the question of right of woman, her freedom and her economic self-reliance. When there is a strong financially conflict, the poet takes her to the world of impersonal.\(^\text{16}\) He mixed the real problem of earthly life to the theory of philosophy and Upanishad. So there is not any economically self-reliant woman in the first period of novels of Rabindranath,
In the novel বোগাবোগ,

কুমুদিনী যারা পড়াশুনা করেছে।

Only Labanya of নাবীরচিত্র is economically self-reliant. There is an importance of her working life in the novel. Besides this, Aela of চার অধ্যায় was also a school teacher. Besides this,

তখনও বিবাহের জন্য কুমারীদের গান বাজনা শিখিবার রেওয়াজ হয় নাই, কিন্তু সেলাই বোনা ও কার্পেটের কাজ করা অবশাই কর্তব্য ছিল। শহরে তো ছিলই, গ্রামেও ছিল।

This evidence is also noticeable in the novel সৌরা of Rabindranath Tagore, the wife of Pareshbabu, Baradasundary said to her elder daughter, Labanya,

যে সেলাইকার জন্যে তুমি প্রাইজ পেয়েছিলে সেইটে নিয়ে এসো তোমার।

It thus becomes clear that the girls needed to have the knowledge of stiching. Stiching was helpful for the economic stability of the family. After a long time, Saratchandra came to Bengali literature, yet there is not any heroine whose professions can be approved in the society. He also does not attach the problem of development and freedom of woman to the economic self-reliance.
He brought forward the oppressed women of middle and the lower class to the stage of literature and highlighted their pain and suffering of their life.

On the other hand, there is a different picture of women in the society of Assam,

As the novel makes it clear, the women are expert in weaving. In the novel of Dandinath Kalita, Purnima also tried to earn. On the other hand, it is also said in the novel of Dandinath Kalita,
Here, the education of woman has been mentioned. Prabhavati was also a teacher in this novel,

শিক্ষার অন্তঃ এবছরমান বিদেশে শিক্ষায়ীক কাম করিছিলো।

There were some unsocial activists who tried to capture the managing committee. For sexual torturing of the beautiful Prabha, they tried to drive out Dinabandhu from the managing committee. After that, some rumours spread out about the relationship between Prabha and Dinabandhu. But Prabha overcame this situation and took her own way. After this she resigned the post of teacher and made herself engaged in social work with Dinabandhu.

Dharani got the job of a weaving trainer in the novel, জীবনব বাটিত। She was charmed having seen the born-talent cloth weaving of Assamese woman. After the death of Dharani, Tagar joined with Shipini (a women skilled in weaving and spinning) Sangha in the region of Roha.

বোরা কটাত তথ পোই পরিত শিপিণ। কোনোরে কপাহ বিচারিবর আলে। কোনোরে রাইজপরা বরণপি বিচার। কোনোরে হাট-বাজার শিপিনিসজ্জ কালি কাপোব রেচ। মৃত্ত হামী অসমান পরিকল্পনাত মোঃ দরীলে পাই তথবে কিচু সামকু পাইছে।

But many rumour spread out about her and Golap Doctor. Her daughter Kamali says,

সুলিত সকলোরে মোক ভক্সব জীত্বক, ভক্সব জীত্বক বুলি জোকাই থাকে। মই কিবা ভক্সব জীত্বক সেকি?
After this, she met with Kamalakanta when she went to Hakim's house about the work of Shipini Sangha,

After a while Police searched her house by clamming her a thief. By this way, problems create in Tagar's life.

On the other hand, শ্রীকাত্তঃ of Saratchandra in Bengal, Annadadidi is luminous in the economic problem. In the eyes of society she is wicked and ostracized but in sacrifice, service, chastity, in pain and poverty, she is an incomparable character in Sarat literature. When Srikanta met her for the first time,

She always struggles in the family of pain and poverty. She paid all the debt after the death of Shahji and at last left for somewhere.

Even in the problem of economy, Annadadidi is luminous character, on the other hand, Kiranmayee being economically tortured, is a fallen lady in the novel চরিত্রীন. The condition of the house of Kiranmayee's husband,
And Kiranmayee as a result, depriving of love and affection and being injured by pain and poverty, she sacrifices the chastity. The mother-in-law also accepts that,

किन्तु पूजा ताहार नृत्तक, दुसह हुंखर दिन समागत प्राय। \( \ldots \) वे तात्त्व करार हारानेर चिकित्सा करितेहि,
से ये कि आयाह बिना ब्याने औषधपथ्य योगाइतेच, 
केल संसाराे अर्थे क्यायेर्वारो सान करितेहि,
इहा ताहार आलोचर छिल ना।

Although she went to Arakan with Dibakar.

In the novel, बिराज बौ the root cause of Biraj is only her poverty. Though the husband is a habitual hemp-smoker, but generous. He lost everything while going to get married of his younger sister,

उपरुपरि दुई लन अजन्या, गोलाय धन नाई, पुकुरे जल नाई, माछ नाई –
– कलाबागान गुकाइया उठितेहि, लेबुबागाने काळा लेबु बाईया पडितेहि।

Again, the younger son of Jamindar, keeps an eye on her because of her poverty. Out of anger he takes shelter in his Bajra (one types of boat).

After this,

से दासीवृति करिते गियाहि, किन्तु ताहार भगवाह समाज से नहीं—पूहस्थ बिदाय दिलेन। तथा हिते भिककई ताहार उपजीविका।

Yet in the end we find that she left her breath reclining her head on her husband's body.

On the other hand in Assam, अपूर्ण of Daibachandra Talukdar, Purnima says,

...
The wife of grocer said many things to the mother of Purnima for the sake of paise. The ill condition of economy is very clear here.

In जीरनর राजত of Birinchi Kumar Baruah, along with economic self-reliance, economic ill condition had also been portrayed. After the death of Dharani, the family condition of Tagar becomes very bad.

Here, the woman tries little to free herself from the economic ill condition and also from various social obstacles and this scenario is visible in the novel of Bengal as well as in Assam. And this aggressive thought took them forward in the path of economic self-reliance. It can be said,

And,

All these simply reveal is clearly that the family economy has to be managed by the woman alone, whether it is a patriarchal family or a
matriarchal one. It doesn't matter to what extent women become the subject of negligence; in reality, in the world of family-economic affairs, men must bow down before the women. Women have continuously faced the problems related to the family economy and very often, have challenged them. In the novels of Bengal and Assam, the novelist have profoundly depicted in their works the active woman in the family affairs, and this is really significant in order to access the vision of the new woman in both these regions.

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