CHAPTER - VI

CONCLUSION
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6.1 Achievements

India which is surrounded by seas, ocean & mountains comprises of different provinces. Every province has its own language. The constitution of India under the provision of 8th schedule recognizes twenty two languages, out of which Hindi and Assamese are two leading languages. As Hindi is the official language of India, so it has the wider scope for development and influence over Assamese language. But the source of both the languages is Sanskrit.

The History of Hindi and Assamese literature is very old and rich. As Hindi is read and spoken by most of the people of India, so it is obvious that more literary works are done in Hindi in comparison to Assamese. Hindi literature reflects the civilization, culture, customs and tradition of people of the whole country while the Assamese literature confines only to its Assamese society. But Assamese literature stands at the same footing of Hindi in its qualitative and quantitative aspects. There is a ample scope for enrichment of short stories in both Hindi and Assamese literature.

In the outset of the twentieth century pioneering work in Indian fiction was done by two great writers, Premchand in and Sarat Chandra Goswami in Assamese literature. Though these two writers came from two different regions and their approach to social problems was different yet we finds some points of their similarities. The era of Premchand and Sarat Chandra Goswami was the era of reformation of Indian culture. The influence of the rise and fall of the nation as well as of the age obviously falls upon the life,
society and literature of the people. In this manner, the writers try to depict
the picture of the then environment and the mentality of the individuals and
of the society in their own compositions.

The two writers were contemporary. Style language, theme – in all
sides they have created a new path. Both of them were the worshipers of
humanism. Though Premchand and Sarat Ch. Goswami belongs to different
social setup yet both of them depicted social evils such superstitions, age
old beliefs, custom, tradition, ignorance etc. in their writings.

Short story is one of the most popular literary type among all the
sections of people. The instinct of exchanging thoughts and ideas grew
along with the advent of human language, since time immemorial. It may be
treated as the indispensable human nature. But the modern Hindi and
Assamese short stories emerged in 19th century. Although the modern short
stories are influenced by western literature but the tradition of stories, tales,
fables, myths etc. are very old in India. It was originated in Veda, Upanishada,
Mahabharata, Ramayana, Puran, Jataka, Brihahakatha, Brihatkathamamjari,
Dashkumar Charit, Kathasaritsagar, Hitopdesh, Panchatantra, Shuksaptati
etc.

The tradition of Hindi and Assamese short stories is also very old.
There have been lots of stories in both the languages since ancient time. But
these differ from the modern short stories profoundly in both matter and
technique. But, today the type of literature that we call story is about 100
years old. Modern Hindi and Assamese short stories were fostered by the
considerable growth of magazines and newspapers. Among Hindi magazines
and newspapers the name of ‘Saraswati’ may mentioned which was first
published in 1900. The story name ‘Indumati’ written by ‘Kishorilal
Goswami’, published in this magazine is said to be the first original story in Hindi. Thereafter, Bang Mahila’s Dulaiwali, Brindawan Lal Varma’s, Rakhi Band Bhai, Mathilisharan Gupt’s Nakli Kila and Ninyanve Ka Pher’ were also published in ‘Saraswati’. In 1911 Jayshankar Prasad’s first story ‘Gram’ and G.P. Srivastava’s first story ‘Picnic’ was published in ‘Indu’. In the same year Chandradhar Sharma Guleri’s first story ‘Sukhmay Jeevan’ was published in ‘Bharat Mitra’.

In 1913 Radhikaraman Prasad Singh’s emotional story ‘Kano Mein Kangna’ was published in Indu. In the same year Premchand’s some stories was published in ‘Zamana’ but in Urdu. ‘Sozewatan’ was very famous at that time.

‘Usne Kaha Tha’ written by ‘Chandradhar Sharma Guleri’ was published in ‘Saraswati’ magazine in 1915 which was immortalized him in the story literature forever. Premchand’s first story ‘Panch Parmeswar’ was published in ‘Saraswati’ in 1916, which marked the beginning of realistic story. Apart from Saraswati, Indu and Bharat Mitra there are a number of magazines and newspapers as like Sudarshan, Hindi Galpamala etc. which immensely contributed to the trend of development of Hindi short stories.

‘Arunodoi’ the first Assamese magazine published in 1846 gave glimpses of Assamese short stories, yet these were not treated as short stories. ‘Jonaki the second Assamese magazine published in 1889 in which modern Assamese short stories was originated. ‘Lakshminath Bezbaruah is regarded as the first short story writer in Assamese literature who brought entirely a new conception and modern approach to the short story. The
story ‘Seuti’ written by ‘Lakshminath Bezbaruah’ published in the 4th year of ‘Jonaki’ in 1892 is regarded as the Assamese short stories. During this period the short story writers like Sarat Chandra Goswami, Surya Kumar Bhuyan, Lakhminath Phukan, Nakul Chandra Bhuyan, Mahi Chandra Bora, Holiram Deka, Troilokyanath Goswami are also remarkable.

Apart from ‘Jonaki’ the contribution of magazines named Bijuli, Bahi, Alochoni, Chetana, Milan, Sadhana etc. in the development of Assamese short stories is remarkable. A new era of Assamese short stories began with the publication of ‘Abahan’ in 1929. Thereafter the trend of development of Assamese short stories had been continued through ‘Jayanti’ and ‘Ramdhenu’.

Premchand, whose real name was Dhanpatrai Srivastava, was born on 31 July 1880 in Lamhi, a village near Banaras (now Varanasi). His father Munshi Ajaib Lal was a clerk in the postal department. Premchand’s early education was in a Madarsa under the maulvi where he learnt Urdu. Premchand was just eight years old when his mother Anandi Devi died. His father married again and Premchand was left without the love of his father too.

Then his father passed away when Premchand was fifteen or sixteen, and still a student. After losing his parents, Premchand became responsible for his step mother and his siblings born from her. Premchand was married to a girl in an arranged child marriage proved to be painful for him and he left her in 1899. After that Premchand married a child widow Shivrani Devi in 1906. After passing the intermediate he had to stop his study. He got a
job as a teacher in the Primary school. In 1919, he passed his B.A. with English, Persian and History.

After a series of promotion he became Deputy Inspector of School. In response to Mahatma Gandhi call of non-cooperation with the British he quit his hob. After that he devoted his full attention to writing. His first story appeared in the magazine ‘Zamana’ published from Kanpur. In his early short stories he depicted the patriotic upsurge that was sweeping the land in the first decade of the past century. Soz-e-Watan, a collection of patriotic stories published by Premchand in 1907, attracted the attention of the British Government. In 1914, when Premchand switched over to Hindi, he had already established his reputation as a fiction writer in Urdu. While writing Urdu novels & short stories he emphasized in presenting the realities of life and he made the Indian villages his theme of writing.

Premchand wrote about 300 storeis and several novels as many essays and letters. He also wrote plays and did some translations. Many of Premchand storeis have been translated in English and Russian.

‘Godan’, his last novel, is considered as one of the finest Hindi novel. In Kafan (story), a poor man collects money for the funeral rites of his dead wife, but spends it on food & drink.

Besides being a great writer Premchand was also a social reformer and thinker. His greatness lies in the fact that his writings embody soial purpose and social criticism rather than mere entertainment. Literature accroding to him is a powerful means of educating public opinion. He
believed in social evolution and his ideal was equal opportunity for all. Premchand died on 8 October 1936.

Sarat Chandra Goswami was born on 12 May 1887 in Narayanpur Satra (presently known as Nalbari Satra). His father Lalit Chandra was a teacher in Nalbari Sanskrit Tol. His mother’s name was Mukundpriya Devi.

Sarat Chandra Goswami was the second son of the family. He was loved by all the family members specially his elder brother Pratap Chandra Goswami. Financially they were not so strong and in that environment, Goswami has to start his student life. He started his student life in Nalbari. He was a brilliant student. After completion of his middle school education he came to Guwahati and took admission in Collegiate School. Then after one year his father died.

In 1904 he took admission in Cotton College for studying F.A. During that period he was married to Bhubaneswari Devi.

In 1908 he passed B.A. exam from Metropolitan College (presently known as Bidyasagar College). Then he took admission in M.A. but he had to stop his studies due to monetary problem. He got a job as a Deputy Inspector of Schools. After a series of promotion he became the first Assamese School Inspector.

Goswami wrote many stories, one novel named ‘Panipath’, plays, books based on education, text book etc.

Besides being a great writer, Sarat Chandra Goswami was associated with many social organizations. He played an important role in the foundation
of Asom Sahitya Sabha and Gauhati University. He was also associated with Jorhat Sahitya Sabha, Jorhat Theatre, Assam Scouting, Nalbari Sanskrit College, Nalbari College etc. Sarat Chandra Goswami died on 19 December 1944.

Both Premchand and Sarat Chandra Goswami were contemporary. Financially they were not so strong and in that environment Premchand and Sarat Chandra Goswami had to start their student life. Premchand lost his parents in a very early age and he had to live without the love of his parents. But, Sarat Chandra Goswami was loved by all the family members. So he was lucky in that matter. Both of them were Graduate and became Deputy Inspector of School. In response to Mahatma Gandhi call of non-cooperation with the British he quit his job. But Sarat Chandra Goswami continued his service and after a series of promotion he became the first Assamese School Inspector. He was retired in 1942.

Both of them were great writers. They wrote many short stories, novels, plays, essays, letters, text book etc. Besides being a great writers both Premchand and Sarat Chandra Goswami were also a social reformer and thinker. Their greatness lies in the fact that their writings embody social purpose and social criticism rather than mere entertainment.

My topic is “A Comparative Study of Pre-Independence Hindi and Assamese Short Stories with special reference to Premchand and Sarat Chandra Goswami.” So, through the stories of Premchand and Goswami, I have tried to compare Pre-Independence Hindi and Assamese Short Stories. Premchand represents Pre-Independence Hindi Short Stories and Goswami represents Pre-Independence Assamese Short Stories. The then North Indian
society was depicted in the stories of Premchand and the then Assamese society was depicted in the stories of Goswami. Through this comparative study we are able to familiaries with both the societies. We came to know how the Hindi and Assamese social lives influenced short stories of both the languages.

Goswami’s collection of short stories are - Galpanjali, Mayna, Bazikar and Paridarshan. He wrote in a style with a difference. Whereas humour and satire formed the forte of Bezbaruah, Sarat Ch. Goswami had a flair for writing feelingly about the common people and the lowly. The aim of Bezbaruah was mostly promoted by a passion for rectification of social views. Sarat Chandra Goswami was stir up by the tug of war between the definite and the indefinite forces. There is nothing in his storeis about the vanity and Angels, rather his storeis are the snapshots of humanism, existence, rendered moving by his sympathetic stand point and simple expression. He mostly deals with the drab life of the Assamese vilagers, their sorrows and joys, hopes and fears, their simple love & their thrifty activities.

Writing in an different style, free from twist & turns of speech, Goswami has delineated his characters on the sake of life. At the supreme moment of realization of life’s desires, his characters are often struck down by unseen forces. They have neither strength nor resolution to break the shackles of a social convention. We do not have in his stories the noise of man’s heroic fight with forces too.

During Goswami’s time, the position of widows in the society was very pathetic. The male dominated society took every decision. Socio-
economic protection provided to the miserable lives of the widows was awfully lacking. In some of the stories of Sarat Chandra Goswami, the widows has been portrayed in full light. Such stories as ‘Ghunusa’, ‘Nair Datit’, and ‘Mayana’ are striking example of his compassion and kindness for the sufferers. Because of this humanitarian outlook, he was dealt with the tragic lives of widows in the society and has pleaded for fair deal and justice to them through and exposure of the inhuman cruelty.

Premchand is credited with introducing realism into the Hindi literature when it only consisted of the fantasy stories, fairy tales and religious works. His creation are compiled and published as Maansarovar. His stories mirror the society that he lived in. With a break from the past his characters are not all good or bad but somewhere in between. His characters are based on real life people and as in life sometime we see a good side or the bad side of the person.

The remarkable characteristic of his writing was the reality with which he depicted his characters in the stories. Unlike other contemporary writers, he did not write fantasy fiction, or stories based upon a hero. It was flying in the sky of fantasy until Premchand brought it to the ground of reality. Premchand wrote on the realistic issues of the day-communalism, corruption, dowry, Poverty, debt etc. His stories were influenced by his own experience with poverty and misery. His stories mostly represented the ordinary Indian people as they were, without any embellishment.

Premchand most famous story, Kafan deal with village life. In Kafan (shroud), a poor man collects money for the funeral rites of his dead wife,
but spends it on food and drink. Premchand’s late work shows a new mastery. The characters appear to have taken over their own world.

During Premchand’s time, the position of widows in the society was pathetic. They have to suffer a lot in the male dominated society. “Beton wali Bidhwa’ and examples of such stories where the tragic lives of widows in the family and society has been portrayed. In ‘Beton Wali Bidhwa’, after the death of Phulmati’s husband, her son’s started neglecting her. And, at the end of the story she commited suicide.

‘Burhi Kakee’ portrayed the picture of old widows in our Indian Society. Stories like ‘Thakur Ka Kuwa’, ‘Satgati’, ‘Dudh Ka Dam’, ‘Mandir’ are deal with the life of dalit’s. ‘Sadgati’ (Salvation) is a short story revolving around poor Duki, who dies of exhaustion while hewing wood for a pltry favor. ‘Thakur Ka Kuwa’ is a very popular story where Thakur Sahab didn’t allow them (Dalit) to touch the well. And as a result they have to drink dirty water.

Though the Pre-Independence Hindi and Assamse Short Stories depicted two different societies yet some similarities are there. For example during that time the position of widows in the society was very pathetic. They have to suffer a lot in the male dominated society. Both the writers gave clear picture of the widows in our societies at that time. Both of them pleaded for fair deal and justice to them through their stories. Both Premchand and Goswami depicted the picture of their contemporary society very faithfully.
It can be easily assumed that both Premchand and Sarat Chandra Goswami were successful writers. Both of them depicted the contemporary society in living ways. They were against the superstitions, evil traditional customs etc. that prevailed in their society and wanted to reform them. Therefore, although they were born with different historical backgrounds yet they are with similar voices in their stories.

Both Premchand and Sarat Chandra Goswami were the great writers. There were many differences between them as regards to the style and technique in the short stories. There is of course similarities between them as regard to depiction of contemporary life. The have chosen their plot of the stories from the contemporary Indian life; and both of them had the intention of exposing the problems.

Both Premchand and Goswami used narrative style enormously. The art of progressing through narrative is found in both of them.

The stories of Sarat Chandra Goswami are simple and with clear cut aims. In case of Premchand there is a superfluity of description and generally his stories are lengthy ones.

Both the writers had the intention to discuss the problems of the contemporary society and to find out some solution for them. This idea is more prominent in the writing of Premchand. Both of them are successful in exposing social evils through humour.

Both Premchand & Goswami gave more weight to regional languages in their stories. They were well versed in depicting the internal emotions and to use language appropriate for the state of mind.
Goswami also used words from different languages like Bengali, Uriya & English. Both Premchand & Goswami were well versed in using simple, complex and compound sentences.

It can be easily concluded that both Premchand & Goswami did not use different styles and techniques to make their stories wonderful and unusual; but they used them to make the stories meaningful and exceptional. Both of them are quite successful in this aspect. They did not use different styles and techniques to make the stories beautiful reading, but these came naturally when writers tried to make the stories meaningful.

In short through this comparative study we are able to familiarise with both the societies. We also come to know how the Hindi and Assamese social lives influenced short story literature of both the languages.

6.2. Future Prospects of the study

In this thesis an attempt has been made to make an exhaustive comparative study of the Hindi and Assamese short stories of the pre-Independence period. There is scope for more similar studies on this subject, because besides Premchand and Sarat Chandra Goswami, other literateurs too can be included in such studies. I sincerely hope that anyone who tries to make similar studies in future, will find my thesis immensely helpful.