CHAPTER – I
INTRODUCTION

Drama is a modern and a dynamically artistic subject of treatise and where the rainbow-like multi coloured forms of life get revealed, such as abortiveness of great efforts, unexpected reverses of fate (hamartia), unfair act of treachery of beloved persons are reflected in drama. These dramatic elements have already been present in the life and nature of human beings themselves, and the dramatist at the time of writing a drama adopts these elements in order to dramatize them; but the mere presence of these elements does not make any composition fit to be regarded as a drama; rather when the elements concerned attain a dramatized artistic form, then there occurs the birth of drama.

So far the other genres of literature are concerned, as the story, poetry and novel etc. are fabricated through specific artistic forms, but that thing is not rightly applicable in respect of drama, as because drama happens to be a composite art. A drama is not only worthy to be read but also to be performed (acted), and which is to be enjoyed sitting collectively in a definite place; but story, poem and novel can be read alone as one wishes and so, the artistic style of drama is rigid and strict. The success of its performance depends upon sincere co-operation of dramatist, actor, producer and spectators respectively; and that’s why drama is called a performing art.

The journey of drama started in the opening age of civilization with a view to entertaining people. Drama came into existence for the
first time in Greece and India. The journey of its victory since then has been going on for a long long time unhinderedly. At present drama is not only a means of recreation, but, in a broader sense, a powerful mirror for reflecting the variegated images of life. Human life is filled with innumerable problems, such as social, religious and political ones and drama brings these factors to limelight through artistically approved way. The perceptible images of life are not visible in any other field except the drama itself, and which carries out social responsibility in a larger quantum. Drama also sings the song for man as how to keep their conscience and consciousness watchful and along with it unites men against unfairness and wrong doing. It also plays a pioneering role in the event of mass rising and awakening of people. The highest worries, hesitation and conflicts, smiles and tears, marks of greatness of human life including the identity of his inner self are available through drama itself.

Bharat Muni’s *Natyashastra* is an ancient book concerning dramaturgy. The Sanskrit rhetoricians have included the dramaturgical art into poetics; and what, according to them, is of two types, namely *Drishyakabya* (a drama/a play) and *Shrabyakabya* (a poem intended to be read, not seen). So, when the actor and actress with the combination of these two types of poetical compositions present before us the resemblances of the moving course of human life by means of stage performance, it is called a drama then only. It is said regarding this in *Natyashastra*:

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ধৃষ্টকোষের বিদ্যুত দুঃখ শুদ্ধি চ যজ্ঞার্থঃ ।
তথ্যাং সূত্রাপর-বৈবর্ণ প্রমঃ সার্ব্ববিষ্কিম্ম ই।
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That is, drama is a *Pancham Veda*, which is neither to be seen nor audible only, rather its one of the chief characteristics is *Kriraneerak* (act of playing), that is, it should be enjoyable to the society through being performed. Consequently, Acharya Bharat created *Lokbrittanukaran* drama, that is, a drama is that one which depicts the life of weal and woe of people pregnant with different emotions and feelings. The definition of a drama given in the book *Sahtyadarpan* is as follows:

"নাটকঃ খাতাত্বত্ত্ব স্যাৎ পঞ্চসির্দি সমন্নিখিলম ।
বিরাসরহিতগুণবদ্ধ যুক্তং নানাবিভূতিভিঃ ॥
সুধুলোকসমুদ্রে--নানারস নিরস্তরম ।
পঞ্চাদিকা দশপ্রান্তত্বাংকর্পরিকীর্তিতে ॥
প্রধাতাংশে রাজস্বাধীনোদানঃ প্রতাপবনঃ ।
নির্বিশেষ নীরবাদিবো বা পুণ্যবামায়কে মন্তঃ ॥
এক এব বহবদ্ধী শূন্যাঃ বীর এব বা ।
অঙ্গ মনো রসঃ সৌরব কাল্পনিক নির্বিশেষেন অকুস্বতঃ ॥
চতুর্থঃ পঞ্চ বা সুখ্যঃ কার্যাব্যাপৃত্ত পুরুষঃ ।
গোপুজা সমাধাযঃ ; তু বন্ধনঃ তথা কীর্তিভূতঃ ॥"²

Aristotle in his *Peotics* points out dramatic event or dramatic action to signify drama in course of his discussion of tragedy.³

It is stated in Encyclopedia Britanica in terms of analysing the character of drama:

"Drama is a form of art in which the artist imagines a story concerning persons and incidents, without himself describing, narrating or explaining what is happening. In practice a story can be presented in this way entirely in dumb show with no speaking, and it must be recognized..."
that this, too is drama. But as it has normally been understood and practised by dramatists, emotions and desires of personages imagined as having these when interacting in a relationship with one another. More than speech is implied by what the characters say; nevertheless, it by using words alone that the dramatist creates his imagined characters, the incidents in which they are involved in a shaped and purposeful plot and the background of place and time in which everything is imagined as occurring."

Generally a drama contains four different elements, such as story (plot), incident, character and dialogue respectively. Aristotle advocates six types of elements in a drama, they are plot (muthos), character (ethos), thought (dianoia), diction (lexis), melody (melos) and spectacle (opsis). The character, too, along with plot plays a prime role in drama and it is character through which any incident or idea becomes alive before our eyes. The literal sense of the term ‘character’ is conduct or behaviour. Character is a totalization of some ideas or beliefs by means of which he maintains consistency with himself and with outer environment. Basing on character, there grows up personality. Man inherits some declivities biologically from the family in which he is born and these inclinations being joined with characteristic traits form personality. Both character and personality play an important role in so far as the discussion of the personages of drama is concerned; but it should be borne in mind that the character and personality of the real world and those created by the dramatist are never same and similar. The hereditary propensity continues through personal idea and belief as well as actions and
reaction of the environment in the real world, but that does not happen in the world of drama. The dramatist under the spell of any specific planning forms character in drama. The very characters are formed out of the heart of the dramatist himself. However, characterization centric thinking of the rhetoricians in regard to character as personality of drama may be here discussed.

Aristotle discussed regarding character in the VI and XV chapters of his *Poetics* and where he opined in this regard:

"By character I mean that in virtue of which we ascribe certain qualities to the agents."  

That is, character is a virtue and for which certain qualities are attributed to man. These qualities are called moral by him. Aristotle pointed out four different attributes of a dramatic character.

"প্রথম এবং সবচেয়ে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ হল যে চরিত্রটি ভালো হওয়া চাই।লেখকের পরিকল্পনা হবে কথায় এবং কাজে; এবং তার মধ্যে থাকবে একটি সিদ্ধান্ত। যদি সিদ্ধান্তটি উঠবে হয়, চরিত্রটিও উঠবে হয়ে। এটি অবশ্য আপনিকে বলবে, একজন লেখকের পক্ষে এক এক রকম। একটি ব্রাহ্মণ বিংশ কীৰ্তিতস্বরূপ চরিত্রটিও উর্দু হতে পারে-যদিও বলা হয় থাকে যে কীৰ্তিতস্বরূপ (পুরুষের চরিত্র) নিকটস্থ এবং কীৰ্তিতস্বরূপের সম্পর্কের নিকট । দ্বিতীয় লক্ষ্য হল, চরিত্রটি হবে বাণ্ডাবিক (যা যথার্থ)। পৌরাণিক চরিত্র (খুবই) সত্য, কিন্তু একটি নারী চরিত্রের পক্ষে পুরুষচরিত্র সত্য বা ব্রাহ্মণচরিত্র যথার্থ নয়। তৃতীয় লক্ষ্য হল চরিত্র হবে ‘অনুগত’। (এবং এই অনুগতা) ‘ভালো’ বা ‘ব্যবহারিকতা’-র (ধারণা থেকে) সত্য। চতুর্থত, চরিত্রে থাকবে সন্ত্রাস। মুলে যদি অসন্ত্রাস থাকে, তাই অসন্ত্রাসের মধ্যে সন্ত্রাস দেখতে হবে।"
The first and foremost thing is that the character ought to be good; and the character is to be exposed in words and actions and there should be a sense of determination in him. That is, if the character related views of Aristotle are analysed, they appear to be as follows:

1. The character should be good. A good character would naturally be good, but some good aspects are also to be displayed in bad character, too; so that some moral intentions are revealed in drama. Where the intention is good, the character itself is good.

2. The character should be like-life. The creation of character is not to be done on the basis of fanciful elements.

3. The character should be appropriate or true to type. A women ought to possess tender and elegant nature but while a king should be courageous and valorous one. The Presence of these factors makes a character accurate and true.

4. A state of consistency is required to be present amongst the characters if they are full of inconsistencies, then a state of consistency is to be upheld even amid inconsistency.

5. He also added more that character reflects qualities of man (agent), but not the incident. The weal and woe of man are revealed through incidents, and thus in consequence death itself is also a kind of incident. Tragedy is not possible without incident, but it may be without a character. Hence tragedy is possible ever without character. The importance of plot is more than character in drama. It may be said in this regard that it is not an acceptable point that each and every character should be endowed with moral qualities, but this quality may be present
in certain characters. The character of protagonist contains such some qualities in the midling of good and bad for which we become sympathetic to him. He was of the opinion that the importance of plot is much more than character itself, but this view cannot be accepted, as because it is character out of which series of incidents emerge, so, there remains a close connection between them. Henry Arthur Jones said that if story (plot), incident and situation are not connected with character, then it would be “Childish and Unintellectual”.

William Henry Hudson in his book *An Introduction to the study of Literature* said about the necessity of characterization in course of indicating importance of dramatic action:

"Characterisation is the really fundamental and lasting element in the greatness of any dramatic work."  

So, it may be said that both character and incident are equally important in drama. As character cannot attains its completeness minus incident, so also vice versa. When the course of incidents advances, then character becomes a co-traveller of the said course and again if character becomes prominent, even then it does not have any mastery over the series of incidents; but some dramas may be dominated by character, while others may have prominence of incidents, yet it cannot be true that since the dramas dominated by characters attain success, so, incident does not have any significance of its own; rather there exists a close affinity between them.

The Indian rhetoricians also discussed at length related to character; and who have also given the introduction of hero, heroine and villain. They are of the view that one who leads the dramatic
incident towards its consequence is a hero, and one who would possess multi faceted qualities, such as nobly born, handsome, efficient, modest, liberal, gentle by nature. They also added that the character of hero may be four types-mild, charming, composed and liberal; but it is most important to have consistency in the character of a hero. The point of a villain is, too, spoken of again the character of a hero. Though this character is self-restrained; yet he is a sinner and obdurate. The name of the relevant hero is pitamarda, who is intelligent and a helping agent of the hero. The Second character in line of hero-helping agent is bit, expert in art of music. The third character in a row is Bidushak, who is intensely a helping-agent of hero, but greediness and gluttony mark his character.

They divided the character of heroine in three different categories, namely swiya (wife of hero). anya (wife of somebody else) and an ordinary wife, and swiya ought to be upright and chaste.\textsuperscript{12}

The Indian rhetoricians have spoken of consistency pertaining to the character of a hero. It is understood from the manner of description that they gave regarding characteristics of hero and heroine that the characteristic of male character is not to be imposed upon female character and from this perspective Aristotle calls the characters ‘appropriate’, which bears a similarity with the view of Indian rhetoricians; but as Aristotle said pointing out the attribute of character that every character has to be good, the Indian rhetoricians did not advocate in the Aristotelian way.

The dramatist writes drama with a specific design in his head and for which he creates dramatic plot, dramatic character and
dramatic situation, so, character, plot and situation fall under that planning. That’s why viewpoint is most important amongst everything. However, character is an inseparable element of a drama.

Now, let us switch over to the discussion of comedy. We may enjoy life roughly in two ways. One bank of life is filled with mental obsession, fickleness, cheerfulness of smiles and joy, while the other part is replete with struggle of life of human beings – an inaccessibly grave image; but the symphony of smiles and joy of life is felt in comedy, where life is colourful and pleasant with the watershed of smiles and happiness. It is said in *Encyclopedia Britanica* regarding comedy:

"Comedy is a term used of both dramatic and nondramatic literature. As used in the 20th century to describe. Contemporary with laughable incidents and characters. This usage, however, is inadequate to cover what has been and still is recognised as comedy in the drama of the past."^{13}

Aristotle put forward his views about comedy in this way:

"As for comedy, it is (as has been observed) an imitation of man worse than the average; worse however, not as regards any and every sort of fault, but only as regards one particular kind, the ridiculous, which is a species of the ugly."^{14}

The excellences of comedy that are available from this Aristotelian definition are as follows:

1) Comedy is an imitation (mimesis) of characters of lower type and also that of bad characters.
2) Here ‘Worse’ does not signify that the man is guilty, rather he has some short coming, defect or flaw (hamartia) which provokes laughter.

3) Aristotle said explaining the term ‘ridiculous’ in the definition that physical deformity or an error may be done and that is never harmful.\textsuperscript{15}

Aristotle did not get chance of reading the comedies of Minandar. He framed the definition of comedy just taking into consideration the comedies of Aristophenis or his predecessors and contemporaries. Showing various flaws and deformities of the characters in the comedies of Aristophenis, a grotesque world was created and so where there was an affair of unreal and exaggerated type characters accompanied with criticism of society and ridiculing. When Aristotle gave the definition of comedy, he then did not keep all the uniqueness of Aristophenis in his head, rather he articulated his views to a greater extent in an independent way. It is understood from his words that the aim of comedy is to provoke comic sentiment. He did not consider comedy very high grade creation. The Character of comedy has to be ludicrous, any flaw or deformity would be the source of sentiment of mirth; but that flaw or defect is not harmful and which has no connection with good and bad of society.\textsuperscript{16}

It is learnt from a stray statement that he made in course of his discussion of tragedy in the book \textit{Poetics}, that end of comedy must not carry any death news, and a fast enemy, too, is to leave the stage like a friend. So, it may be said that if a state of tussle takes an extreme degree between two groups, still then the atmosphere should be maintained in such a way that it is blessed with a happy ending.
After Aristotle, comedies were written with variegated subjects in Greece, Italy, Rome, Germany and France. Aristophenis or Minandar and his contemporaneous dramatists used to write political comedies, but later on the dramatists with a look to the daily livelihood of all the common people familiar to them wrote comedies on the basis of their domestic life and subsequently the journey of romantic comedy or romantic tragi-comedy started from this very point and after a much later period a new world of comedy was created taking Minandar as model for the Terrence intellectuals; where everything is mild and refined; having no clownery nor any act of guffawing. He just for the sake of merriment creating a clear environment presented the life story of the polished youths of Rome.¹⁷

The Latin comedies are primarily realistic in nature and full of sarcasm and where there is no provision for a fancied land but the incidents are pregnant with skilfull complexities. The jesting picture of lustful desire of men and women is found in such type of comedies, but love is absent. So far the Shakespearean comedies are concerned, Shakespeare portrayed the adorable picture of female love. He created paradise of love in this mortal world. Arlando in the drama As You Like It ¹⁸ being mad for Rozalindo went on writing love letter in every tree in the forest of Arden. The deep attachment of Rozalindo for Arlendo lies at the root of act of ridiculing that Rozalio and Siliya did over the affair. Inspite of having been inspired by medieval blind faith, Shakespeare heavily jeered at the character of Jewish-hater Shylock, yet he showed the sense of humanity of Shylock. Since as he has loved life, so he become solemn through
peals of laughter, and thus consequently his laughter got moistened with tears. Baidyanath Shil said in this regard:

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One of the chief characteristics of the dramatic composition of Shakespeare is that his tragedies are basically male-dominated, but while the comedies are dominated by their opposite sex. Women enjoyed much social freedom during the days of Shakespeare and its rhythmical vibration is felt in the gamut of comedies; yet it is not true to say that there was no social distinction between man and woman, as such evidences are prevailing even in the dramas of Shakespeare, and the character of Portia, wife of Brutas, is a pointer to this direction. If a woman who is regarded a frail creature trifles with the destiny of man, then there appears impropriety and which turns to be a comic element.

The French dramatist Moliar appeared after Shakespeare and who scathingly ridiculed the weaknesses of human character. The glow of intellect is very much in his dramas, yet he mercilessly castigated the weakness of human beings. Pricking those aspects of human character which brutally hurt man as well as make him blind, he has made the social beings conscious.

Bernard shaw kept his sharp watch over every field of society and who mercilessly shot his arrows of sarcasm to all the acts of injustice and oppression of different ages. Bernard Shaw Pointed out clearly as how we in various ways nurtured or pursued falsehood in
the name of truth. So, here follows only a pale laughter and not having even an iota of pity. He scathingly unfolded age old and worn out trend of thoughts.22

The Statement of Allardyce Nicoll, the greatest dramatist of this age, is noticeable. The signs of comedy that he scatteredly pointed out in the ‘Comedy’ chapter of his book *The Theory of Drama* are as follows:

1) A comedy generally does not contain a character in the form of a hero. The juxtaposition of some characters causes sentiment of mirth.

2) Here the laughable characters exist in pairs. Generally, though comedy contains one or more than one humorous characters, yet some more ordinary characters, too, are present here; and due to their contrariety, the first character becomes comical.

3) A comedy is replete with social picture. A universal picture of human society is revealed in a great comedy.

4) A comedy is comprised of some type or class characters of specific classes; and it is the eccentricity of type characters which provokes comic sentiment.

5) A comedy contains a larger quantum of realism, as because a comedy is written centering common men of society.

6) A comedy concludes with a happy ending or ending in union.23

Matters related to various thoughts and considerations concerning comedy have already been discussed. Everybody is unanimous of the fact that comedy happens to ludicrous form of various shortcomings, defects, errors and confusions, inconsistencies and distortions of life. Yet, as comedy aims at reforming society, so
also it may contain sarcasm and mockery. One of the conditions of comedy to have an ending in union in its last leg.

There are a good of differences between comedy and tragedy. Comedy being society-centric provokes laughter related to society itself. The character or the characters of comedy is/are the representative of a certain society or tribe, so, naturally a plethora of characters crowds the world of comedy, but so far tragedy is concerned, the hero himself is be-all and end all. The hero in a tragedy has an all-pervading supremacy. The eye of the dramatist is directed to his sorrows and sufferings. The inspiration of tragedy lies in the exposition of irresistible desire and the hero makes himself closely intimate with this inspiration. The world of tragedy is stirred by the personality of this hero. If the hero of tragedy is defeated, it seems that his whole existence appears to have been finished; and then he longs for death rather than living a life. So, thus he is saved. He suffers the pangs of death till the last day of his life, but no such affair occurs in case of the personages of comedy. Even if they are defeated, there is no reason for them to be broken down. The personages of comedy trifle with life. Nevertheless, it is not at all true that there should be no trace of pain and affliction in comedy, rather these pain and afflictions serve the purpose of accelerating the extreme delight and joy to a higher degree.

There are certain reasons for which man cannot enjoy his life properly and nicely. There are some people, who in regard to their behaviour and manners, cannot pull on together with others, and this is what is called contracted personality of those people. On the other hand, it also does not happen that a huge loss and harm is done to society for this contracted personality and so this incoherent aspect of
these people is tolerable. So, the social beings want to enjoy delightness a bit by pricking this incoherent side. The society wants to make these sociable by reforming them in the process of pricking their incoherence abit. That is, such people should mix with their group and thus be a normal human being. But the interesting matter is that these laughable persons are not at all conscious of that aspect of their character at which the environment and situation jeer. Had they been conscious of, nobody would have laughed at them. It may not be always true that this inconsistency or flow is his habitual shortcoming, rather it may be out of his inadvertence or caprice.

It may be said in terms of an example, when the bell is about to ring in school, then the teacher enters the staffroom in an extremely hurried manner. All the colleagues are looking at the face of the teacher with anxious eyes. The teacher thinks what the matter is. One of the colleagues him whether any hornet has stung on his face. He immediately rubbed his face with his hand. Everybody laughs loudly including the teacher himself. Actually the teacher at the time of coming to school in the winter season used cream on his face. He just applied the cream on different spots of his face, but forgot to smear it on his whole face. The colleagues thought otherwise that wasp might have stung him, so he used limepaste on different spots of his face, but when the actual face came to light, everybody could not but laugh.

Everybody admits it with one voice that we laugh out of impropriety, yet there goes a conflict over the fact as how much our intellectual power works as an inspiration as well as to what extent there exists feeling or commiseration; but Bergson is of the opinion there is no link between laughter and compassion; as we can not
laugh having done a lot of thinkings. We laugh out at the sight of any tolerable impropriety; and this is nothing but a natural reaction. If any person falls with a thud while walking on the road in the rainy season, then other pedestrians laugh out, and he could not walk keeping pace with other walkers, and so consequently everybody laughed out, but seeing it if we are to laugh with much judicious consideration, we can not laugh at all. Then other walkers might have thought that it is natural to have a slip on a slippery road; or, if the injury was serious due to fall, then also others could not have laughed, rather everybody would have shown sympathy.²⁴

Everyone is not ready to accept the view of Bergson that feeling has at all no connection with laughter. Mc. Dougall thinks that laughter, too, grows out of a kind of feeling and what is diagonally opposite something of sympathy. Littlest amount of sorrows or pain of man provokes laughter in our mind. Had man shown only sympathy in the sufferings of human beings, then the human life would have been full of permanent afflictions; but laughter relieves men from this painfulness and which helps us for our being and becoming. Blood circulation goes on smoothly in our body due to laughter. Little sufferings do not provoke our visual sympathy, rather it creates laughter.²⁵ Rabindranath supported this viewpoint of Mc. Dougall in his essay Kautukhashya belonging to his book Panchabhut ²⁶. He said:

“কলেজীর হাসা অর ট্রাজেডীর বেদনার মধ্যে জাতিগত পার্থক্য নাই ;
পার্থক্যাতুকু নিজেক মাত্রাগত । যে স্বল্পবেদনা আমরা সহ্য করতে পারি,
আলাকে ততুকু বেদনা দিয়া আমরা একপুকার আনসন্ন পাইয়া থাকি ।
এই পীড়াজনক আনসন হইতেই বৌদ্ধিক হাস্যের উৎপত্তি । কিছু এই
Again, if this impropriety by hurting any of our favourite stock notions meticulously nurtured in our heart makes our heart mutinous, even then we can not laugh. If any witty singer starts singing:

“‘একদা শ্রীহরি হক্কা হাতে করি
আসিলা রাইয়ের ঘরে ।
বলে, রাধে, একটু আগন্তু দিবি ?’”

Seeing the arrival of flouter Sri Hari with a *hukka* in his hand, we will laugh for inconsistency, but a devoted vaishnava who does not know any other thing except *Radha-Krishna*, will flare up in rage without laughing for his adorable god being ridiculed.

We are going to express our views on the grounds for which we laugh. It should be kept in mind that the elements of laughter are latent in situations, or in words or in characters. An unexpected situation or queer character is generally the source of comic sentiment. We also laugh at the sight of inconsistency or weakness of some other person.

Physical deformity is one of the chief reasons which causes our laughter. As we laugh seeing a very tall man, so also do we laugh even seeing a dwarf. The description of Lilliput and the physical abnormality that Jonathan Swift gave in his *Gulliver’s Travel* also helps us feel fun. Nicoll said in this respect that:
"The Laughter that arise from merely physical attributes of the dramatis persona in a comedy is obviously of the lowest possible kind."

Nicoll said that laughter does not arise out of physical deformity only, as because we will never laugh seeing a blindman or someone who has lost his legs, but we will certainly laugh if anyone mimicks a physically deformed person. Bergson said:

"A deformity that may become comic is a deformity that a normally built person could successfully imitate."

If a physically fit and normal man simulates physical deformity, then it may generate comic sentiment. If a physically fit person feigns physically deformity and so limps, we enjoy it through laughter; as because in imitation of this effort, he does not feel any difficulty, but if a genuinely physical deformed person limps, we become sympathetic to him.

We laugh at the defect, deformity and sufferings of other persons. We consider ourselves superior to them who are an object of ridicule for these reasons; but it is important to bear in mind one thing that when the quantum of defect, deformity or suffering of some other person is very small, we laugh only then. When these are in larger scale, then sympathy instead of laughter is created.

The littlest fault of character is one of the reason which provokes laughter. The great creators of comic sentiment have created sentiment of mirth with this fault. If the character related fault is serious, then certainly a sense of hatred would crop up instead of laughter, such as no comic sentiment emerges out of acts of theft and dacoity etc; but instead in case of miserliness and hypocrisy, comic
sentiment comes up. A miser is a harmful element to society and hence we become delighted hearing a tale as how a miser is controlled. The drama *Kripaner Dhan*\(^{32}\) of Amritlal Basu contains the story of a miser being outwitted. Humorous farces have been written like Dinabandhu Mitra’s *Nabin Tapasvini*\(^{33}\) regarding amorous attachment to another woman and Michael Madhusudan Dutt’s *Budo Saliker Ghade Rown*\(^{34}\). Charlatanism is a prime element of provoking laughter. Jyotirindranath Tagore’s drama *Aleekbabu*\(^{35}\) contains funny elements of a liar and hypocrite Aleek. The character Kamalakanta in Bankimchandra’s Book called *Kamalakanter Daptar*\(^{36}\) provides comic sentiment; where kamalakanta is addicted to intoxicants. Though different discrepancies and injustices of society do not miss his eyesight; yet the intoxicated character Kamalakanta is a priceless asset in the Bengali literature.

The incoherent and unexpected incident is the prime factor which provokes laughter. If we fail to keep pace with place and time as well as with environmental condition, we have to be a laughing stock. Even if a character is good, but lacking common sense and consistency, then the character concerned becomes a laughable one. Unexpected incident is the prime reason of laughter. If a child falls in course of walking, we do not laugh, but, on the other hand, if a powerful police officer falls, we burst out laughing, as because there is nothing unnatural for the police officer to fall, yet not natural, too. If any old man in the present society wants to marry again, then the character itself becomes a laughable one. Bhakta Prasad’s lustful greediness for the wife of some other person in the drama *Budo Saliker Ghade Rown* is a source of comic sentiment. Though sexual attachment between man and woman of equal age is a natural
phenomenon, but so far man and woman of unequal age is concerned, it is surely an unexpected matter.

We feel fun at ignorance and stupidity. The town dwellers cannot put a brake to their laughter seeing the manners of villagers. We taunt him (villager) for being ignorant of any modern fashion or style. Similarly, any young guy seeing the manner of any old or conservative person feels fun. Again, if any stupid shows demeanour like a clever man or an ass exhibits physical feat like a horse, it becomes a loud laughter of fun.

A witty person pays not a least attention to a person who makes a parade of his moral sense. If any person is adhered to moral rules and of grave nature, the society does not like them. Though nobody says anything in presence of them, but mimicking their gestures and postures behind them, enjoys laughter. Amritlal Basu wrote some farces about excessive religious edicts of Brahma Samaj of the nineteenth century.

A bizarre or a wonderful incident or character rouses our laughter. If a man painting his face with colour and wearing strange dress comes out in the street, we cannot but laugh. When a little child sees a new toy, it would laugh Thinking it a something queer. What is funny and wonderful to one may not be to another. Coming to urban area, a villager feels curious at the sight of high-rise building and communication system; but this is not a matter of curiosity for a city dweller.

Observing the erroneous behavior of a self-forgetful and indifferent person, we enjoy fun. It is generally seen that people like artist, poet and a scientist are of absent-minded nature. They inspite
of being men of parts appear to be many times as helpless as a child; and which provides a scope of jesting for us.

Many times the application of language, too, becomes a source of laughter for us. The style of using language by the villagers is quite different from that of the city dwellers. Hearing the Bangal language as well as voice of that one, we, the Bengalees of Kolkata, make fun of it. Even corrupt language also creates a sentiment of mirth. We call it ‘লুটি’, but most of the people living in the interior areas of Bangladesh call it ‘নুটি’. We burst out laughing at the utterance of ‘ন’ in place of ‘ল’.

Laughter is a special asset of mankind being a natural instinct of human beings and which springs up in human mind but body of man is the medium through which laughter is displayed. Pramatha Choudhury said in this regard :

“এ রস মধুর নয়। কারণ এ রসের জন্মস্থান হস্তক্ষী, মণ্ডল, জীবন নয়, মন।”

Now we may focus a spotlight on the views of Sanskrit rhetoricians in this respect. Acharya Bharat pointed out the factors that cause laughter :

“অশোভন বেশ বা অলংকার, বেহায়াপনা, লোভ, কলহ, অস্বাভাবিক কথা, নানারূপ লুটি-কূলিতি--প্রভৃতি থেকে হাসির উদ্রেক হতে পারে বলে ভরত মনে করেছেন।”

On the other hand, Dhananjoy without pointing out these reasons, has signified the corrupt style of speaking as the source of comic sentiment :
The Sanskrit rhetoricians said about different types of laughter and follows below the nature of those laughters:

""বিকৃতাকৃত্বাকাশ্বেীনানোথ পরস্যা বা।
হাস, স্তাৎ পরিপোহাস্তু হাস্যাধিপূক্তিঃ স্মৃত্রা।"" 39

Bharat stated the same views in a more elaborate manner. According to him, laughter is of two kinds- ‘atmastha’ (for ourself) and ‘parastha’ (for some other else). When a person himself laughs is called ‘atmastha’, but while he induces some other else to laugh is called ‘parastha’. He is of the opinion that lower class people as well as women seem to be tending to laughter much more. 41

The Indian rhetoricians said about force that sentiment of mirth is created centering blameworthy or lower class characters and in this regard Aristotle deserves to be remembered. He also said when a man is depicted in a worse manner that what he is actually, he becomes an object of laughter. Most of the western rhetoricians think that when two opposite matters are set in a parallel way in words and actions, laughter bursts out from this discrepancy.

Laughter is not limited to mankind itself only; rather even the expression of laughter is also visible amongst the creatures of lower
order. The delightful feelings of mind get revealed through laughter and the feelings of that delightfulness, too, are seen to be unveiled in the creatures of lower order. They express their joy making the posture of their face and body according to the rhythm of laughter. A domestic animal at the sight of its master wags its tail repeatedly out of joy and which seems to be his laughter born out of his joy. In this regard Darwin said:

"The anthropoid apes, as we have seen likewise utter a reiterated sound, corresponding with our laughter, when they are tickled, especially under the armpits." \(^{42}\)

That is, apes, too, are seen to laugh like man if they are tickled.

It is not true that only civilized human beings laugh, but even savage people expose their delight by laughing, and the expression of their laughter is done in various ways. James Sully said in this respect:

"Loud laughter accompanied by jumping about and clapping of the hands, and frequently carried to the point of a flooding of the eyes -- these are conspicuous characteristics to be met with among the Australians and other savage tribes." \(^{43}\)

That is, they express their delight by jumping, clapping and in a loud voice and this is the specialty of their laughter. Such laughter is much more real, not feigned and natural. Sully added more regarding delightful laughter of the Australian natives as well:

"........the natives of Central Australia are a merry people, and sit up laughing and talking all the night long
The more recent observations of Lumholtz support the view that the natives are 'very humorous'.

They laugh sometimes seeing the wonderful matters and even out of curiosity they laugh, too. Fun in mimicry is a special characteristic of the savage people. It is often seen after the defeat of the enemy the savages at the time of utsav mimick the timidity and impropriety of the enemy and the savage tribe who has gathered then rolls about in loud laughter.

A savage person is inferior to a civilized one in terms of education and culture, and thus consequently the civilized lot bursts out laughing seeing the manners of the savage community, and again observing the discrepancy of the civilized people, the savages feel a sense of fun. Sully said in this regard:

"Yet it is possible that the savage may, once and again in making merry at our expense show himself really our superior. His good sense may be equal to the detection of some of the huge follies in the matter of dress and other customs to which enlightened European so comically clings. And he has been known to strike the satirical note and to look down upon and laugh at the stupid self-satisfied Europeans who preached so finely but practised so little what they preached."

It is not true that it is only people of matured age who laugh, rather even a suckling child is seen to laugh. Freud is of the opinion that the smile which flashes on the lips of a child satisfied suckling milk of mother’s breast is the first smile of the child concerned. Freud said:
"According to the best of my knowledge the grimaces and contortions of the corners of the mouth that characterize laughter appear first in the satisfied and satiated nursling when he drowsily quits the breasts. There it is a correct motion of expression since it be speaks the determination to take no more nourishment, an 'enough', so to speak, or rather a 'more than enough.' This primal sense of pleasurable satiation may have furnished the smile, which ever remains the basic phenomenon of laughter, the later connection with the pleasurable processes of discharge."47

This laughter of the child emerges out of pure delight, as there is no lingering resonance of worry and any wish; but with the advancement of age there appear multi-colouredness and complexity in this sort of laughter. An atmosphere of mockery, persiflage and contempt is developed amongst little boys and girls. A ray of glowingness marks the laughter during calf time; but laughter pertaining to old age is very pale and complex, as thrill of liveliness seems to be very weak in that laughter.

Laughter is very important for our life. Laughing a lot, we get not only mental peace, but also enjoy physical gain. Veins and muscles of the whole body being set in motion at the time of laughing keep the body vivacious and fit and the blood circulation of our head becomes normal. So, laughter is a heavenly asset of human beings. It is only laughter which can make a man happy who has been in vortex of unfold sorrows and sufferings. Even a squalid man is possible to be converted into a bosom friend by means of laughter only; as it makes
others our own, and one’s own man becomes very intimate. Sully said:

"Nothing, indeed, seems to promote sympathy more than the practice of laughing together. Family affection grows in a new way when a reasonable freedom is allowed to laugh at one another's mishaps and blunders."

A jocose is favourite to all of us and we all like him, too. A nest of love and sympathy grows in us for that man who is able to laugh. During the royal time in the ancient age there had been the practice of keeping a jester or clown and who used to keep everybody in laughing mood in the royal court. Right form jester of the ancient time down to humorist of the present society are equally an object of honour to all and sundry of society. We love those actors and actresses who play humorous role in films and dramas. As soon as we see actors like Charlie Chaplin, Bhanu Bandopadhyay, Rabi Ghosh, Chinmoy Chattapadhyay etc, our mind is filled with joy. Ajit Kumar Ghosh said:

"আমাদের শিক্ষা-দীক্ষা, সংস্কৃতি-সভ্যতা আমাদিগকে অনেক মিধার ভূষণে ভূষিত করিয়াছে। হাসি সেই মিধা ভূষণ ছিল করিয়া, কপট আচরণ ভিন্ন করিয়া আমাদের আদিম, সহজ প্রকৃতিকে অনারুতি করিয়া দেয়। সেই প্রকৃতি কোন নিয়ম শাসন মানে না, কোন নীতির ঢাক-রাঙনি প্রাহা করে না। আমাদের প্রতিদিনকার সমাজ-শাসিত, সভ্যতা-চালিত পথে অতি সতর্ক পদক্ষেপে চলিতে হয়, কিন্তু হাসির কাদামাটির প্রাঙ্গণে আমরা প্রাণ বসায় ছুটাছুটি, লুটাপুটি করিতে পারি।"

Now let us discuss the classification of comic sentiment. It is said about bhav, anubhav, bibhav and byabhichari bhav in the Sahityadarpan:
According to them, it is reasonable to name laughter only as chittabritti (faculty of the mind). Bharat said when someone himself laughs, then comic sentiment is atmagata (self-centric), but when makes one other else laugh, then it is paragata (intended for others).

Ample analysis has been conducted in the western literature on the sentiment of mirth. The writers like Shakespeare, Moliere and Lamb have induced the readers of all the countries all tin to laugh in a massive degree.

Humour:

Humour is great out of all the classifications of comic sentiment which is a wonderful and mysterious element, but compassion and sympathy happen to be the fast enemy of humour, as because these silence the comic sentiment; yet these feelings are actively present in humour. The durability of laughter is very transitory, but humour has a far-reaching effect. Ajit Kumar Ghosh said:

"হাস্য জলের উপরিতুল্য ভাস্ম বুদ্ধ, বুদ্ধের নায়কে ফুলিক ও চঞ্চল কিন্তু হিউমার জলের তলাশায় পর্বত দূরিপাক -- স্নায়ু এবং দূরপ্রসারী। জীবনের প্রতি সমবেদনশীল দৃষ্টি, সকলের প্রতি এক উদার
Passionate outburst is not visible in the peals of laughter born out of humour. Laughter caused by humour is soft and low. An adverse current of pain has been flowing in the bosom of this stream of laughter. One who laughs constantly is not a humorist at all; but a real humorist hardly laughs, rather induces other people to laugh boundlessly. An unending peals of laughter remain hidden under the veil of his apparently grave face. Moliere is a glaring example of it. It is heard whenever he remained companionlessly, he felt pain very much, but it is he who goes on making people of the world laugh age after age. In this regard Ajit Kumar Ghosh said:

“ঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁঁ
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The mind of a humorist is full of with a broad range of sympathy, who is in search of morals and principles through life, but not in reverse order; and that’s why a great humorist is above all views and party. He accepts everybody, yet never mingles his own self with anybody. Meredith said about humour:

"If you laugh all round him; tumble him, about, deal him a smack and drop a tear on him, own his likeness to you and yours to your neighbour, spare him as little as you
shun, pity him as much as you expose, it is a spirit of
Humour that is moving you.”

Satire:

The laughter which makes our face gloomy instead of
brightness and what hurting us makes us afflicted is a satiric one. A
satirist is very harsh and merciless. Mercy and exemption are foreign
to his dictionary. Even the slightest fault does not evade his eyes. The
purpose of a satirist is to reform and to educate. He goes on flogging
where there exist defect and impropriety in the society.

The word ‘Satire’ is derived from ‘Satura’ which denotes
medley; and the medley of merriments and rejoicings of the mobile
actors was previously regarded a ‘Satura’; who used to ridicule the
distinguished figures and the prevailing practices and rituals by
means of distorted bodily postures, frolicking and jesting. All the
satirists for a long long time have been following their tradition. They
all the time have been ready like a grave and serious teacher, to teach
the society. Ajit Kumar Ghosh said:

“The purpose of satire is not to hurt but to reform, but that purpose
remains in a concealed state. A satirist does not in a straight-forward
manner condemn and abuse nor doles out moral lessons in a straight
way. Bhabanicharan Bandapadhyay’s Naba Babubilas is a fine
pointer to satiric composition. The flow of Writer’s satire has been stealthily running even in this book. Since a Satirist has achieved a glorious berth on the strength of his learning, wit and experience, so he does not show his respect to common people. The defects and shortcomings of society easily come to his notice and so he pierces everyone with the arrows of satire and taunts. Kaliprasanna Singha in his *Alaler Gharer Dulal* and in *Hutum Pnyachar Naksad* scathingly insinuated the artificiality, immoral practices and degradation of the contemporary society. Amritlal Basu, too, is a great satirist in the Bengali literature. The most skilful writer of Satire is Swift, who in order to express his sense of despicability and hatred has mentioned strange creatures and quaint incidents. He satirized the contemporary political system through lilliput and brabdingnyag.

Wit:

It is seen in the discussion of humour that its existence lies in a sympathetic heart, but there is another kind of comic sentiment which appeal goes to intellectual brain and that what is called wit in English. It is stated about wit in *Encyclopedia Britanica*:

"Wit was a form of intellectual quickness, raillery and repartee, likely to be an upper-class. Manners of discourse, likely to be dangerous, as are all sharp weapons, that can cut good and bad alike, wit was associated with the aggressive sexual restoration rakes, who, in the eyes of good citizens had used ridicule against religion and marriage and all moral and social decency. Wit was infarior, further more, as a literary form because it was primarily cleverness and thus
without passion or heart; in comedy, therefore, it offered no cause for the action of characters; on the contrary, it was regarded as too after abliterating the distinctions between character because some authors in their over flowing desire to display their wit tended to put their witticisms in to the mouth of inappropriate characters.”

Humour is mild and solemn, while wit is sharp and lasting for a very short time. Humour contains revelation of experiences and on the other hand, wit registers the display of learning. Wit happens to be a weapon of the intellectuals in the civic life. The maker of wit with help of alliteration, paradox and antithesis shows excellent dexterity of words and sentences. As a magician at the time of displaying his feats keeps us informed to some extent and in dark to some degree, but after some time when the unknown mystery is unfolded, it amazes us, so also a learned humorist similarly speaking out something arises its opposite sense in our mind. Ajit Kumar Ghosh said:

“‘উইক্র ভাসনায় মন্ত্র একমূল্য প্রবল নহে, ইহার বিপরীতমূল্য মন্ত্রের সমন্বয়ে। এই সংস্কারের ফলে শুনীর বিশ্লেষণ শাসিত লিপ্তি চতুর্দিক উদ্ভাবিত করিয়া তোল। বুদ্ধিগ্রাহী ও শিক্ষাপ্যক্ষ বলিয়া ইহার আবেদন সত্যবৃহৎ নহ। দুইবার চিন্তার পর ইহার মর্ম বোধগম্য হয়।’”

There is no difference of light and serious in the world of humour, moreover, there is no way to understand who is right and who is not; rather here both humorist and object of ridicule become unified. It is the nature of wit to generate new breed of thoughts abandoning traditional trend of thoughts.
The presence of antithesis and paradox are found in the writings of celebrated writer Pramatha Choudhury. The trace of humour is seen in the literature of the first chapter of life of Rabindranath and that of wit in the literature of his last life. Bhnadu Dutta, Nimchand, Aleekbabu are the notable character in the Bengali literature. The importance of intellect is much higher than emotions of heart in the present day world; and that’s why the dominance of wit is more powerful than humour.

Fun:

It is no doubt that humour, wit and satire, too, contain laughter, but that laughter is brought forth by thinking. The laughter out of fun is pure, Where there is no question to attack, and having no purpose behind it. Man under the spell of mental delight burst out laughing. We are besides ourselves with laughter at the sight of any odd situation or an exaggerated character. This laughter is loud and high. The more the human civilization gets evolved, the more his laughter has become low and thoughtful.

A jester used to make everybody laugh in the royal court in ancient time, and that was a pure laughter. We, too, in our practical life enjoying fun are lost in outburst of laughing through light frolicking in every place of our activities; and as a result of which our mind remains in a merriment mood, keeps us physically okay. Ajit Kumar Ghosh said:

"কৌতুকময় হাস্যরসের মধ্যে উষ্ট্ট ও অষ্ঠাভিক ঘটনা ও চরিত্রের সমাবেশ থাকে। যাহা সহজেই মনকে ধাক্কা দিয়া সচিত্তিত ও আমোদিত করিয়া তোলে তাহাই এই হাস্যরসের প্রাণ।"
Jocular sentiment is spread everywhere in the domain of Begali literature and it is this very comic sentiment which got prominence in the ancient Bengali literature. This sentiment of mirth has immensely been prominent in *Hanumaner Lankadaha*, *Kumbhakarner Nidrabhanga*, *Lahana O Khullana Yuddha* and *Kalketur Bhojan Parba*. Thus, subsequently laughter of mirth has been revealed in Dinabandhu Mitra’s *Jamai Barik* ⁶³, *Biye Pagla Budo* ⁶⁴ and in Amritlal’s *Tajjab Byapar* ⁶⁵.

The Sanskrit literature also contains comic sentiment in a massive scale. A *Bidhushak* (jester) happens to be the living image and chief source of comic sentiment in Sanskrit drama; and this character is main source of social satire. He is a Brahmin by caste, that is, Brahma-related thought is his only concern having a birth right in studies and teachings. So, sense of greediness should not occupy his mind but it is ascertained from the Sanskrit dramas as how much derailment he suffered from the track of Brahminical principles. **Firstly**, he never gets engrossed in studies. Every word proves him a dullard, but again this Brahmin sometimes orally throws out such philosophical maxims, which seem to be an example of extreme incoherence causing maximum laughter. **Secondly**, the distortion of his shape or hump-backedness provokes laughter. **Thirdly**, he is an admirer of king and so it is his duty to create laughter in the mental world of the king. What this simple minded brahmin does loving the king provides elements of laughter pertaining to impropriety. This is not a sarcastic laughter, rather a
laughter mixed with a pure and finer sense of sympathy. The gluttony of the Brahmin, devoted to Brahma, contains a love mixed satire towards the society. The sarcastic arrows that are shot to the society through the character of Bidhushak are of very high level. In the subsequent period, this Bidushak character was created in the principles of Ramkrishnadeva by Girish Chandra. Bidushak of Girish Chandra may be a stupid and even his activities may provoke laughter, yet he lacks character related baseness. He is above everything despite living in this mortal world; and who has offered light and peace to the world giving up worldly ties. It was Bhagawan Srikrishna himself who embraced him as his friend.

The Sanskrit dramatists also wrote satires concerning discrepancies and weaknesses associated with character of the lower level people of the society, and we get its evidence in the sixth Act of the drama Shakuntala. The brother-in-law of the king is the head of the royal guards, but his education and culture, learning and wit are almost zero. It is only as being brother of the queen he has held such a high post. He is not at all a man of character. He taunted that fisherman in various ways whom he tied, but when that fisherman got hefty amount of money from the king, the brother-in-law of king randomly received bribes from him. Kalidas in a unique way ridiculed the character of police and it is in this Act the sarcastic sentiment became more captivating. The man who is himself characterless is speaking ill of the profession of a fisher man:

“তা তোর জীবিকা বেশ পরিত্যাগ করতে হয় দেখা ছিল।”

66
When a characterless man vilifies the acts of a good man, but never looks at his own activities, then there comes up great humour pertaining to character.

We meet with the presence of comic sentiment in some more Sanskrit dramas, and those characters have made us laugh, such as king of Bidisha appearing in the drama *Malabikagnimitra*, and *Bidushak* of protagonist Agrimitra and Arya Gautam of the drama and *Bidushak* of king Pururaba and type character Manabak belonging to *Bikramurvasi*. Each of them as a well known clown and gourmand has been established in Sanskrit dramas; and who create comic sentiment everywhere in drama by means of their actions, words and style of speaking but Maitreya of sudrak’s drama *Mrichchakatik* did not play the complete role of well known clowns and gourmands of other Sanskrit dramas. None of the aspects of Maitreya are completely developed in the drama, yet two different characteristics are present in his character. He is equally glutton and jestful. His main identity in the drama being as a friend of Charu Dutta, a constant companion of the latter in his weal and woe, and he stands by Charu Dutta in his rainy days, State revolution and in the crematorium. He cannot think of his own act of living after the demise of friend; so, he has been always effortful of upholding the dignity of Charu Dutta; and his everything seems to be insignificant before the interest of Charu Dutta. Hence, the character Maitreya is different from other *Bidushak* Characters of Sanskrit dramas. In addition to that, the mention of bits of style of different principle or minor comic characters is found in different Sanskrit dramas, such as *bit, doot, pratihari, kanchaki, sakhi* etc. Brief mention of these characters are found almost in all the Sanskrit dramas, for example,
Sangstanak character in Sudrak’s drama *Mricechakatik*. He is present in the drama not only as a type of stupid, but also cunning, cruel, sensual, selfish and oppressive.

Comic sentiment has been scatteredly lying here and there even in the ancient Bengali literature, and subsequently comic sentiment has enriched the Bengali literature. Shiva has been living a life of a worldly householder in *Shibayan*, and Parvati, too, is a housewife possessing common faults and qualities and for which bountiful comic sentiment has appeared through their everyday bandy words and attachment. Though the *Mangalkabya* contains sentiment of mirth, but we notice identical type of comic sentiment. The humourous characters in *Chandimangal* are Murari Shil and Bhandu Dutta.

The Poet hit the character of Murari Shil with the sarcastic shafts. He was a miser and a riches-greedy trader. As kalketu was to get the price of meat from Murari Shil, so the latter feeling the arrival of the former went into hiding in his own house, but after wards when he came to know that Kalketu had come to sell his finger ring, then the greedy trader through the window passage showed a deep sense of relationship with Kalketu:

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"ধনের পাইয়া আশ  আসিতে বীরের পাশ
ধায় বাণ্য বিড়কীর পাথে ।
মনে বড় কৃতৃহলি  কাকেতে তন্তার ধালি
হড়পী তরাজু করি হাতে ॥
করে বীর বাণ্যাকে জোহার ।
বাণ্যা বলে তাহিপা  ইবে নাহি দেখি তো
এ তোর কেমন বাবহার ॥"67
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Observing this opportunity seeking behavior and greed of Murarishil we feel thrills of fun.

Bhandu Dutta has been a living character in the Bengali literature. The poet has scathingly satirized his hypocrisy and sycophancy. He in order to take revenge upon Kalketu instigated the king of Kalinga to fight a battle against Kalketu, but after the release of Kalketu he again feigned to be an intimate friend of Kalketu:

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"বেই আপনার হয় সেই কথু ভিন্ন নয়
আপনা জানীবে ভাঙ্গা জটাতে।
রাজার সভাতে বাণী আমি সে করিতে জানি
ভাঙ্গা বিদিত জগতে দু।
যখন দুপুর নিশি সভায়ি পাশে বসি
অনেক বুঝালু নরপতি।
ধরিয়া রাজার পায় খণ্ডালু সকল দায়
খুঁনী সে জানয়ে মোর মতি।।
তুমি খুঁনী হৈলে বন্ধী অনুক্ষণ আমি কাপ্ডি
বহু তোমার নাহি দায় ভাত।।
দেখিয়া তোমার মুখ পাসরিঙ্গু সব দুঃখ
দশ দিক হইল অবদত।।
হইয়া লোকের চূড়া সিংহাসনে থাক খুঁড়া
আমারে রাজার লাগে ভার।।"
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The manner in which the poet has given an artistic depiction of the hypocrisy of Bhandu Dutta has appeared to be very enjoyable.
Lots of elements related to comic sentiment have been present in the stories of Gopal Bhand and who had been a jester in the royal court of Krishna Chandra Roy. Jester-like characters were in all the royal courts in ancient time for entertainment. It should be borne in mind that laughter gains vitality of life in the leisure away from tight schedule of works. A bit flexible type of life is required for laughter. Since as there had been leisure even in the days of yore, some special persons were engaged for presenting comical thrills. The western courts, too, were glittered with buffom, fool and court jester. Creating incredibility of events now and then in the stories of Gopal Bhand, the comic sentiment was just presented, but it was the wheedling language of Gopal which helped the stories attain a comic feature. Ajit Kumar Ghosh said about the character of Gopal Bhand:

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গোপাল ভাঙ্গের জীবনে যে চরিত্রে তার সমস্ত সভ্যতাকে কৌতূহল সৃষ্টি করেছিল সে প্রয়াস নেই। তার চরিত্রে হাস্যকর ছিল বটে, কিন্তু তার বুদ্ধি অপর সকলকে হাস্যকর করিয়া তুলিত।````

Pyarichand Mitra has satirized different characters of society in his *Alaler Gharer Dulal*. Many characters, such as miser, illiberal, mentally deranged, greedy for money etc. have been portrayed there; but out of them the most vivacious character is Thakchacha as his queer way of speaking mixing Urdu and Bengali pricks our feeling of jesting. Even the description of Agarvom Sen in the book titled *Mod Khawa Bodo Day Jat Thakar Ki Upay* is quite ludicrous:

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অগাড়োম সেনের রোমান্টিক প্রভাব রক্ষা - তার শিক্ষার প্রকাশ - পেটেটি একটি ছাড়াই জালা - নাকটি চেপটা - ঢাকা মুজ্জেরা তালা - হী হী বোড়াপের মত - দন্ত ওলিয়া মিসি ও পানের ছিয়ের টুকুলুচঃ````
We can not but laugh seeing the appearance and nature of Agarvom.

The various characters of Trailokyanath Mukhapadhyay are also ridiculous. Domru is a comic character in the story *Damrucharit*. Parashuram is well skilled in creating comic sentiment; and his strong comic sense is available in the stories fabricated on unnatural backgrounds. The presence of humorous characters is seen in the stories like *Bhushandir Math, Hanumaner Svapna, Ga Manush Jatir Katha* etc. The characters, such as Shibu, Kariya Piret have provided immense comic sentiment in the story *Bhusandir Math*. We cannot but laugh at the sight of human nature and behaviour of these characters in the astral world. The character Hanuman in the story *Hanumaner Svapna* has purveyed comic sentiment by virtue of his nature, behavior and activities.

The greatest example of humour of Bankim Chandra lies in *Kamalakanter Daptar*. He is an opium eater. All the time he remains under the spell of imtoxicant and speaks in a queer manner. When we are able to discover his philosophical image lying under the veil of state under the influence of intoxicant, we are taken aback. Ajit Ghosh said in this regard:

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"কমলাকান্ত বোকা ও পাগল সাজিয়া আমাদের বোকা ও পাগল বানায় মাতা। আমাদের সুফল ও নির্বোধ দৃষ্টি তাহার রূপ দেখিয়া অর্বচীন আমাদে উৎফুল্ল হইয়া ওঠে, কিকু আমাদের সুদৃশ্য ও বুদ্ধিমান দৃষ্টি তাহার বরুণ বুদ্ধিয়া শ্রদ্ধা ও সচেষ্ট নত হইয়া পড়ে।"
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Primarily two types of characters are seen in drama.

**Firstly**, individual character or blooming character; which may be called a nimble one. The characters which are created with internal conflicts, activeness and emotionality are blooming or nimble characters and it is such character endowed with bloomingness and full of personality happens to be the glory of drama. This type of character following the confrontation of incidents of drama gradually gets developed. Moreover, these character in the contact of various other characters as well as by their actions and reaction being developed achieve a consequence. The dramatists of the Bengali literature like their foreign counter parts paraded extraordinary skill in creating characters pregnant with personality, such as Raghupati in Tagore’s drama *Bisarjan*,\(^{73}\) Karna in Khirode Prasad Bidyabinode’s *Naranarayan*,\(^{74}\) Aurangajeb in Dwijendralal Roy’s *Sajahan*\(^ {75}\) deserve to be mentioned as developing characters.

**Secondly**, type or comic or class character; which are generally called static characters. The purpose or goal of such class of characters is very explicit. These character basically reflect a specific aspect of life in drama and their unchanged nature is caught in the specific incidents. They remain unchanged from beginning to end in the drama, and if even changes occur, that, too, in a very minor degree and this happens for the sake of drama itself. There is no hesitation, conflict or misgiving in such characters and who are being motivated by a single mindset or purpose from beginning to end in the drama but not led by and blows and counter blows, conflict and confrontation, action and reaction or psychological conflicts. So, their unavoidable impact is not notice over the dramatic story (plot). They even do not seem to be a character made of flesh and blood. This kind
of character is called type or comic characters. Every single specific and distorted aspect of human life gets revealed through them. They appear by nature somewhere as mad, drunkard, hypocrite, an old miser, jealous husband, conspiracy making servant, clever beguiler, mentally deranged, physically deformed, and again somewhere as an indifferent character, or probably as timid or possessing style of a specific language or a bearer of some specific doctrines. Since they are displayed in drama with a bit exaggeration, so they turn to be enjoyable. Many times type or comic characters playing a big role in drama draw our special attention, yet in most cases these type or comic characters appear in drama with the excellences of minor or class characters. However considering from such angles, type or comic characters may primarily be divided into two categories-

(a) Physical speciality as well as speciality in terms of dress and toilet including style of speaking

(b) Mental speciality and speciality pertaining to abstract idea.

The characters which are generally developed resorting to physical speciality as well as speciality in terms of dress and toilet including style of speaking are primarily regarded as humorously type characters, of course, it has its exception, too. The humorously type characters are basically created through perversion of conversation, dress, attempt to talk. In this respect introducing blind, lame, stammerer, dwarf, jester, hypocrite, drunkard, timid clever, beguiler, old miser, servant etc. humorously type characters are created, such as if a very tall or a diminutive person enters on the stage or if a short man along with a tall man and a rickety man along with a fatty man come on the stage, it automatically provokes the laughter of the spectators; and if a jester or hypocrite or a character having
impropriety in respect of dress and manner of speaking, they become humorously type characters, such as, laughter bursts out at the sight of bulky Jaladhar in Dinabandhu Mitra’s *Nabin Tapasvini*. When this man waits for Malati taking a pose crooked in three parts of body or crawl on all fours, we have to laugh for the deformed type. We come across comic characters in different dramas for the speciality for their style of speaking such as, Bholachand’s incorrect English in Dinabandhu Mitra’s *Sadhabar Ekadashee*, Kedar’s ludicrous mannerism in Tagore’s *Baikunther Khata*, Ghanashyam’s Stammering in *Byapika Biday*, Kedar’s ludicrous mannerism in Tagore’s *Baikunther Khata*, Ghanashyam’s Stammering in *Byapika Biday*, Kedar’s ludicrous mannerism in Tagore’s *Baikunther Khata*, Ghanashyam’s Stammering in *Byapika Biday*, Kedar’s ludicrous mannerism in Tagore’s *Baikunther Khata*, Ghanashyam’s Stammering in *Byapika Biday*, King Indraneel’s *Bidushak* in Madhusudhan Dutt’s *Padmabati* resorted to shameless buffoonery to save himself from extreme shamelessness and thus where these type of type characters have been created following corrupt practice of speaking as well as speciality related to style of speaking. Again Bhakta Prasad’s act of dressing like a lady’s man in Madhusudan Dutt’s *Budo Saliker Ghade Rown*, Old Rajib’s dress like a bridegroom in Dinabandhu Mitra’s *Biye Pagla Budo*, have appeared as an evidence of the distortion of the dress of such type or comic characters.

The type or comic characters which are created concerning mental speciality and speciality pertaining to abstract idea may be included into two categories. First, type character caused by mental derangement and which are primarily humorous characters and are converted into villain like type character; such as effort of old Rajib of projecting himself as a young man even at old age, and an effort of marrying a young woman in the guise of a young man, outburst of love for not indentifying widow mother of pencho, disguised herself on a married woman in Dinabandhu Mitra’s *Biye Pagla Budo*, and
again the going of old Bhakta Prasad to Shiva temple with the intention of sexually enjoying a Muslim woman in Madhusudhan’s farce *Budo Saliker Ghade Rown*, all these belong to mentally deranged type or comic characters. Secondly, the speciality of some type or comic characters is thus – who appear in the drama mentally as a symbol or mould of any specific idea. They become just a bearer of propagating any specific ideology, such as Lalit Mahan Bhadra in Dinabandhu Mitra’s *Leelabati*[^80], Kalikinkar in Girish Chandra Ghosh’s *Mayabasan*[^81], widow Santa in Amiratalal Basu’s *Tarubala*[^82] and characters like Thakurda, Dhanajay Bairagee etc. in different allegorically symbolic dramas of Rabindranath being the bearer of specific ideology have become type or comic characters from mental or ideological perspective.

The word ‘Comic’ means ludicrous or fun. So, it can easily be inferred that a dramatist presents a comic character in drama mainly to make people laugh, but apart from this there are more objectives of the dramatist behind the presentation of comic characters.

**Firstly**, some dramatists create a jester or a buffoon or humorous character of high stature with a view to generating comic sentiment. This Kind of character is primarily created to provide some sort of ‘relief’ removing sense of monotony of the spectators. In many cases, they appearing in complicated situation relieve the spectators temporarily from breathless condition. Many times as a helper of a hero they save the hero through wit and fun, but they have no personality of their own; rather they are presented in drama just for the sake of buffoonery and wit and fun. They are basically man of ordinary character and who are generally led by others. This type of character is Brahmin by caste and glutton and very shamelessly
admire the major character of the drama. This kind of type or comic
caracter is seen in large number particularly in comedy or farce.
First of all two Bidushaks of Madhusudan’s Sharmista and
Padmabati come to our mind; and whose namely are Madhasha and
Manabak. Both of them are royal companion, Brahmin and varacious
eaters, engaged in light pleasantry and buffonery in drama. They are
created after the shadow of Bidushak of Sanskrit drama, and they like
Bidushak of Sanskrit drama have superficial looks and an
accomplished hand in coarse behaviour. The humours character
named Udarpoday of Ramnarayan Tarkaratna’s
Kulinkulasarbasva comes to our mind, a gourmand, and for which
he has no discrimination. Moreover, the character Kanchuki in Grish
Chandra Ghosh’s Ramer Banabas and Ghesera–Gheserani of
Pandav Gourav are humorous characters.

Secondly, one or more than one characters are introduced in
drama with a view to promote the brightness and speciality of any
special dramatic character. Presenting type or comic character side by
side of a character possessing unique qualities, the dramatist creates a
contrareity and as a result of it the special character gets revealed
clearly. In this regard Rabindranath’s farce Baikunther Khata may be
cited. Bakuntha happens to be the central character in the said drama,
who is disinterested in worldly affairs and inexperienced about house
hold matter. He always maintains himself by his own whims. As he
loves to write, so he likes, too, to make others hear his own affairs;
and here lies his weakness. The dramatist presented comic characters
like Kedar and Tinkori in the drama to bring to limelight the
simplicity and indifference of the character. Baikunath has a bit
weakness to his own writing. The cunning Kedar secretly reported
that weakness to his companion Tinkori. Taking the advantage of Baikuntha’s weakness kedar tried to marry his unmarried sister-in-law with his brother Abinash and he was also successful in this respect. Kedar and all his distantly related near and dear one living in the hour of Baikuntha, Started harassing and oppressing Baikuntha and his widow daughter. The dramatist has successfully depicted the character of foxy Kedar and Tinkori in order to reveal the simplicity of Baikuntha, and here lies the success of comic character.

**Thirdly**, inciting incidents in many occasions are taken place by comic characters for dramatic requirement; such as conspiracy, murder and realization of an end are executed by them and so in this regard comic characters play an important role. The reference of Madanika and Dhanadas from Madhusudhan’s drama *Krishnakumari*⁸⁷ may be cited; where king Jagat Singh engaged Dhanadas for the purpose of marrying king Bhim Singh’s daughter Krishnakumari. On the other hand, Jagat sing’s Kept Bilashbati engaged Madanika to overturn in at marriage. Though Jagat Singh engaged Dhanadas to the work, but Dhanadas knows nothing except his own interest; as his main motive was to earn money by any means and to win over Bilashbati. It matters nothing to him even if Jagat Sing faces losses. Though the character took part in the act of conspiracy, yet in terms of conduct and behavior he is a comic character. On the other hand, Madanika in spite of taking part in conspiracy the manner in which she defeated Dhanadas is quite ludicrous. At last it was due to tricks of Madanika the marriage of King Jagat Singh and Krishnakumari was cancelled.

**Fourthly**, a dramatist creates comic characters to satirize and to reform the society. The purpose of a satirist is to cleanse the
society as well as to educate it. He with an inquisitive eye unfolds all the shortcomings, discrepancies and maladies piled up in the society, and then the dramatist takes the help of comic characters, as he through such character wants to free society from its maladies. Right from the initial time of the Bengali drama lots of dramas and farces have been written satirizing the unfair practices of society. Sufficient number of dramas and farces were written related to polygamy, drinking of wine, visiting prostitutes, greediness for fair sex. The dramatist through the comic characters satirized the social maladies in a humorous way; and wanted to make people’s mind conscious.

**Fifthly**, a state of colourfulness is created in drama through the presentation of comic character. The spectators constantly witnessing the serious, sad and wearisome scenes get tired of. So, various comic characters are created to relieve the spectators from a monotonous condition. Hence, in consequence of it, this types of characters add a different dimension to drama.
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