

Preface

The present thesis aims at the study of the treatment of love and its growth and development in the field of Assamese short story. Already existing literary history or other critical studies on different literary aspects in Assamese could spare only a limited space for modern Assamese short story. In such studies one could hardly expect to find much concerns with the treatment of love in the short story.

The budding of Assamese short story took place at the time when the genre first made its way through Indian literature soon after its contact with western thought. Right from its beginnings, love has become a major theme in Assamese short story. In the romantic period of Assamese literature when the writers were imbued with the idea of emancipation they went on giving free expression to love even if they were often thwarted by the prevailing social traditions. But, with the coming of independence and consequent liberation of people, the nationalistic spirit found a free expression. The old traditions began to be influenced and modified by modern ideology and western thought. A major transition thus occurs in Assamese literature of post independence period and this change takes place in the short stories with the introduction of different modern views as regards psychology, politics and economics. Thus the short story undergoes some major changes since its emergence in

Assamese literature and it deserves an in-depth study.

The present author however, attempts to treat only a particular theme as mentioned before. The development of the genre along with its treatment of the subject of love has been surveyed through three major literary ages which were fostered by three leading literary magazines viz. the Jonāki, the Āwāhon and the Rāndheny. In addition to this the stories of the recent writers are also dealt with in another chapter. The introductory chapter comprises a study of the concept of love. He has tried to give here its meaning definition and its philosophical, spiritual and psychological background keeping in view ^{to} the subject-matter of the present work. It also records the mode of treatment of love in some major early literature including Assamese.

An attempt has also been made here to study the different trends of love set by the Assamese short story writer of different ages. Critical observation on remarkable stories are made in relevant places in order to show the achievements of the writers.

All effort are made here to include all the significant Assamese love stories, whatever may be other value or importance otherwise. Even then, it is possible that some love stories are left out from the notice of the author. This may happen because of the typical prevailing situation in Assam, where there is no institution whatsoever for the meticulous

preservation of all Assamese writings. It is for the same reason that many stories had to be studied in their secondary sources since their primary source was not available for him. The author can only express regret for this.

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