CHAPTER-2

THE DEPICTION OF FISHERMAN'S SOCIETY IN THE NOVEL 'GANGA'
At the end of the twentieth century, two novels were published - 'Titast Ekti Nadir Naam' (1956) by Adaitya Mallabaram and 'Ganga' (1957) by Samaresh Basu. Both the novels are about the other castes of fisherman. Both this novels demand a careful study where in, both the content and the forms deserves exclusive mention. But this two has some similarities. Both of this novels were the outcome of practical experience. Not a trace of unreal lives of those others can be found in this two novels. Both of these novels are said to have the socio-economic perspective of a feudal milieu, that is giving way to colonial texture. The long-respected concept of convention of historical relationship is on the way to its destructions.

The 'Ganga', a fiction by Samaresh Basu, was published in the Puja issue of 'Janmabhumi'. Samaresh had to write it in haste. The material of the fiction 'Ganga' is the direct outcome of Samaresh Basu's personal experience. Those characters are known to him. The author has strong affinity with their lives.

A critic of Thomas Hardy on his regional novel has said "He digs them up by the roots with earth on them". Samaresh in the truest sense has depicted their lives from below. He in a note, commented that "the names of those characters whom I have mentioned in the early editions of the novel has to be cited once more in the new edition. These are, Kartik Das and Paresh Das of Atpur Malapara, Nimai Adhikari his father, his elder brother of Halisahar. Many days many
nights he had spent with them without their help the fiction 'Ganga' could not be conceived'.

At the centre of this fiction was his philosophy, that is associated with the river. The river, becomes the picture of indefinite nature its also a flaw. In this process the inns and outs of those fisherman is written with all their nuances.

The social beliefs, rituals, folk festivals and folk song have got the excess to the fiction, Nibaran Malo has voiced this pretention. he told his brother "Be aware, don't look at the edge of the river. There are omen, evil omen".

The length and breadth of the fiction "Ganga" is much broader and deep perspectives. The author has depicted their lives to project the other in them, the other being an important segment of the fisherman's lives. That is why the chapters are not divided according to the orders. Samaresh has said, "If the actions are divided chapterwise, then the people, their activities, their rivers all will be broken and divisive".

At the centre of 'Ganga', the lives of the fisherman has been depicted in this way, in pain and struggle in din and bustle, their lives were spent. Sometimes, traces of happiness could be found in their festivals. Those fishermen, who catch fishes spread Nets, their lives they take part in rituals. In the worship of 'Ganga' - the 'Sajbhata'. The fare takes place into the bank of 'Ganga'. The languages only of the - Net, Fishes, Boats, many peculiar element on their lives could be found in this novel. If the net is spread in the fathomless pit of the river.

Now it brings disaster to the fishermen. when fishes could not be found into the Net, how at that time the fishermen begs help to the mother 'Ganga' At occasion of Ambubachi Prayer, the fisherman stop
fishing because according to the beliefs of the fishermen in the water at the Ambuchai, the unpreseanted picture could be foreseen, the mother gets fertile. This beliefs were not limited to the fishermen in that part of India but also the fisherman in the other part of India.

At the heart of the activities of the fisherman of 'Ganga' the main inspiration is drawn from their Folk songs,

"Alas! I am undone
My heart throbs."

Whose face shall Bilash see? Why his heart rests at topsy turvy? For Himi? Those who listens to his Music queries appear in their mind. But these are not sociology driven. It is about artistic theories the main theory to success.

In this ocassion, Samaresh has said."Gango has a lasting influence upon me. From my childhood onwards I have been observing 'Gango' from a different angle. Gango is my another identity." 

This is the offshoot of the philosophical contour that is the driven force of a writer who belongs to the middle class. That is why it is romantic. Cruising with fishermen is an adventure. For instance Himi of Bilash? Bilash could go to the ocean only after the loss of his addition to adventure.

The root experience of education is his greater experience/ wisdom. It is true that he has no such experience of Sea-voyage, like panachaeas. Not that learning of resistance in battle with the sea. But he has learnt being at a close quarters, learnt the ins and outs of this system.

His careless characters has given him his voice. "Everything we have seen, you could not understand the signs only indulged yourselves in gossiping."
This is also spread in the manuscripts too. Bilash does not accept that Fish should only be in water. He says "leave the manuscripts these are only hot matter," then where lies the nonsense of the logic of Paanchu. Bilash replied "Why Magna? Thus the fish sell less. If anything comes to my net it will fall even if it is not written in the horoscope. Not even in a single day, I found that the Zodiac has given the accurate information."9

Panchu's query, to what lies your demand. His posterity gives him back such a voice - voxpopuli, from Paanchu Bilash gets alienated from each as if Bonayary and Karali, into the time and exchange.

Many conceptual clarification on Bilash took place through the pens of many critics. According to a critic this fiction is not simply a tale to fisherman but also an ultimate journey to the quest. Truely it is a romantic quest.10 The author has said that, he too is also a crew in such a journey. A critic has truely said this is the reflection of the close entity the altar ego of Samaresh Basu. After 17 years of its publication, we consider this reaction belongs none other then to the middle class nature is taking - reality into signs is his habit. From Bilash's side to set out for sea voyage is nothing new. He is the son of Nibaran Saidar, sea is an his bond like his father's. He too is raughty. Nibaran too, on seeing tortoise could say that a tortise could not prevent him from his journey.

Bilash is like his father. He knows, if he, for once could go to the sea. Then he need not stand his feet upon the trap of Mahajan's debts. At the end of the novel, we see he went to the sea, but not alone, he went as a leader.

Here Bilash reminds us of Karali of Tarasankar.
1. Katasahitye Samaresh Basu: Samagrik Mullayan - Dr. Jhuma Roy Choudhury Page-192
4. Erakam kahinke parichhede bhag karle er manushguli o tader kaj ebong nadi sab tukro haye yay. Lekher Mukhamukhi - Arun Kumar Mukhapadhyay Page - 214
5. Amar prane sukh nai he/Bara uthali pethali amar buk Samaresh Basu Rachanabali (vol - II) Saroj Bandhapayay (Ed.) Page - 220

10. Samaresh Basu: Samayer Chihna - Parthapratim Bandyopadyay Page - 57

11. Ganga - Samaresh Basu - Introduction