

History and historical events described in the Novels of Pt. Godabarisha Mishra

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ABSTRACT: The self sacrificing hero Pt. Godabarisha was a great literary figure in the history of Odia Literature. His novels explore the revolutionary human struggle of contemporary Odisha. He has created many sources of inspiration for future generation and his novels are the major

witness of ancient Odisha. This article shows how the concept and historical events narrated in his novels skill fully)

Keywords: Introduction, concept and historical events in his novels; “Ghatantara”, “Abhagini”, “Athara saha satara”, “Nirbasana”, Conclusion
Dr. Tarakant Nayak transformed into Sadei Jena by taking a miracle drug made by the doctor himself and by taking the drug his condition changes and in the process, he becomes Dr. Tarakant later. After transformation from Tarakant to Sadei he has polluted and corrupted the society. He has been accused of various sins and has been punished for the crime of murder. But after he assumed the form of Dr. Nayak, his feelings and consciousness came to an incomprehensible change. Such a dramatic change of character is an experimental concept in our Odia literature of that time. Although the novelist has taken the main subject matter from foreign literature he has expanded its thought to us by his own creativity. Most probably this novel is aptly named ‘Ghatantara’ due to this process of transformation of a character.

INTRODUCTION

Pt. Godabarish Mishra is the most learned and famous writer of the Satyabadi literary-era of Odia Literature. Although he is a successful poet and dramatist, he is equally adept as a novelist. The contemporary Odisha of Godabarish Mishra was the British ruled Odisha. As a conscious writer he endeavored to inculcate the people of Odisha with Mantra of nationalism and wrote many plays, short stories along with novels. As there is more opportunity to identify life within novel than poetry and drama; he concentrated on composing novels to show the diverse aspects of life. ‘Ghatantara’, ‘Abhagini’, ‘Athara saha Satara’, ‘Nirabasita’ are the novels written by Pt. Godabarisha. Although all of his novels are influenced by western literature, they speak about our own soil, water and wind.

Among the novels of Godabarisha Mishra ‘Ghatantara’ is a Fictional creation but the other three novels contenting various historical aspects of contemporary Odisha. History and Historical novels is not the same thing, therefore while talking about history he has tried to express the high literary direction hidden in it.

The first novel published by Pt. Godabarish Mishra was ‘Ghatantara’. This book was published by Odisha Publishing House in the year of 1957. It is influenced by the novel “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” written by Robert Louis. Although the skeleton of this novel is a foreign novel, very skillfully writer has mixed the color and essence of Odisha in it. The setting of this novel is based on Chandini Chowk, Chowdhury Bazar, Kathojodi River etc. of Cuttack City and the novel revolves around the life experiences of the Protagonist Dr. Tarakant Nayak and Sadei Jena.

His second novel is “Abhagini”. This novel is written in the shadow of Victor Hugo’s novel “Les Miserable”. The picture of pre-independence, (especially Odisha in the 19th century most probably from 1803 -1858) is moving here in a historical order. The story begins with the battle of Banki and the revolt against the British in Cuttack. The intrusion of the rebels into Saranggarh in 1858 AD and the reign at Gajapati Ramachandra Deva II and his son Birakishore Deva II of Puri are the historical facts which are described in this novel.

By the year 1922 Pt. Godabarisha himself was victim of the poverty stricken society that had created a severe food shortage in Odisha. Social life of the people of that time is depicted in this novel. The focal point of the entire novel revolves around the character Panu Nayak or Dhanjay Ray who has get a touch of humanity and turned into a great human being. He put into the sorrows and

pains of mankind. Deep pain, intense futility and deep humiliation pushed him into the formant of hell. Once this demonic human gets a touch of humanity, as a result Panu raised from that hell and get rebirth. He has considered as a human and humanity becomes greatest achievement of his life. This edge of humanity and human values has been reflected very clearly in the character of Panu Nayak alias Dhanjay Ray in this novel.

Godabarish Mishra's novel "Athara Saha Satar" (1817) is based on the Khurda Paika Rebellion of Odisha in 1917. This novel is the direct reflection of the political ideas of Pt. Godabarisha when he was not directly connected with politics. This novel proves how Odisha was conscious, awake and active before the Sepoy rebellion in 1857. Most probably it is the first pre-independence rebellion of India against English.

After they captured Odisha in 1803 they took possession of the non taxable lands under the new land tenure agreement. As a result the common land-lords of Odisha and the people of Khurda were upset. Their misery started from the day beginning of the English rule. They auctioned the land holdings of Odisha to the non Odia Bengalis and Muslims in Calcutta, for a small amount under sunset law. The exorbitant increase in taxes imposed on the common people by the new land-lords from Calcutta caused immense displeasure to the people of Odisha. Monopoly in the salt business pushed the people of Odisha into unspeakable crisis too. In the mean time Buxi Jagabandhu Vidyadhara, the captain of Khurda kingdom had lost his Rodang Fort. As a result the Paika's of Khurda raise violently and the 'Paika Rebellion' of 1817 began under the leadership of Buxi Jagabandhu. This Rebellion was in the background of the novel "Athara Saha Satar" (1817) "This glorious history of Odisha is portrayed in this novel.

Insidents like the rule of British in Odisha from 1803, Paika Rebellion in 1817 are recognized in the history. But the life story of the characters Sadashiva, Kamala, Ganapati, Dinabandhu and Champa etc. are fictional. In this novel, fiction and history are mixed in such a flow that one cannot be separated from the other. Although this novel is written in the shadow of 'A tale of two cities' by Charles Dickens it has managed to hold into the image of the brave Odias of that time.

The fourth novel of Pt. Godabarisha is "Nirbasana" it is also written in the shadow of a foreign novel still it is capable to portrait the character of Odia and their social, economic and cultural conditions of that time. The aim of the novel is to envision the new India by sensitizing the

people of India to the intense public discontent and the rebellion against the foreign ruler. With this, he has also described the fierce and powerful Odian characters of that time.

People of Odisha are sole followers of Lord Jagannath and they worship Gajapati king as the walking idol of lord Jagatnnath When Gajapati Dibyasingh Dev was sentenced to exile for life under the orders of the English, It filled sorrows in the hearts of the people of Odisha. Pt. Godabarisha Mishra is a true representative of common life and a conscious nationalist literary figure. His soul was deeply saddened by this state of our nation. Therefore he has composed the novel "Nirbasana" to narrate such a tarnished chapter of ancient Odisha.

With a sincere effort to make the people of Odisha aware of the past and rebuilt future accordingly the author has taken politics as the main focus point of his novels. Mainly his politics is centered on the national life. Many times while describing politics in the contemporary society he has drawn the reader's attention to the situation of the country by talking about society and economy.

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