



A PSYCHOANALYTIC VIEW OF THE SELF: REVISITING THE BENGALI FOLK TALES

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ABSTRACT

Being contemplated as the adult's macrocosm of narrative symbolization of connotations, folk tales may be examined as convoluted enunciation of the psychic cosmos of the Bengalis, as they are the moiety of folk literature that contain the aggrandizement of dream allegory through oral convention of narrative discourse and thus, may be contingent on the psychoanalytic lens. These tales embodies no unambiguous or conspicuous ratiocination of a tale or occurrences, seemingly fatuity, imagination, chimera, irrationality, unattainability, emblemizing facetiousness, comicality and illusionary coalition of few representations which are generally devoid of undeviatingly instructive and transcendentalist intendments. The personas depicted through the stories adduces to few denotations of hierarchy as they constitute of the king, or the prince, the heir of any kingdom, or Brahmin or merchant or any eugenically admired status in distinctive folklores. These forms of the self either succored or confronted the fragment of the selves as they are reliant on other characters, whereas the characters employed in the folk stories devote their impersonations to untangle any collision or befuddlement or predicament towards contentment of the socially and ethnically appreciated selves. This article is an attempt to assay the denotations as they are elucidated to the representatives as the psychodrama gets

ambiguous and debatable through another ancillary self in the folk stories and it is only through the protruded recognition of the essentially paramount self that the dissention gets deciphered. By adjoining psychoanalytic ascertainments to the socially dispensed implications of the some folk stories that I have taken for the analytical purpose, I intend to take the perspective that from the stance of the adult, who expatiates and communicates it, even though these stories are designated for children, and it is through this stratagem that I would like to take upon the psychoanalytic spectrum and acumen in order to interpret the figurative and allegorical enunciation of the notion of 'rakshas', the 'self', 'id', 'ego', 'sublimation' and 'disjunction' in the selected folk tales of "The Evil Brahmin", "The Brahmadaitya's Tale", "The Rakshas" and "The Devilish Bride".

Keywords- DISJUNCTION, SELF, EGO, SUBLIMATION, RAKSHAS

INTRODUCTION

As the innate conventional practices in multitudinal sections of the sphere were being chronicled by the explorers from Victorian England, the Anglican missionaries and colonial administrators, in order to appropriately comprehend the people they administered, they eventually became synchronous and concomitant to the primitive accumulation of folk rhymes which actualized in the eighteenth century with the publications of "Melody" by Mother Goose in 1765 and "Pretty Song Book" by Tommy Thumb in 1744. As the Bangio Sahitya Parishad (Bengal Literary Council) in Calcutta emerged as the centriole of most Bengali analysis, experimentation, composition and documentation eventually, Rabindranath Tagore began to congregate the folk rhymes which were misinterpreted by the writers for their genres as they were carrying on their research work, and as they discovered their track into the agglomerations, they represented the impact of evident progressions of Bengal upon them. Being the aperture to the inherent anticipations of the authors, the folk stories asserverates an array of feeling and sensitivity consisting of the common dejection and forlornness of the Bengalis, the contented and delighted reveries on the child, the mournfulness and dysphoria apperceived by the women as they collaborate with their own communal circumstances staying within a domiciliary margin,

the aggravating mornings when a mother while arranging for the afternoon repast is struggling to console a yelling infant and even the placatory and amicable evenings and afternoons when a mother is lone with her baby, and thus acquaint us to the acculturation of the Bengali youths through the course of their maturation, and it is all these fundamental aspects that encompassed the first decade of the publication of the Bengali folk literature in the journal of the Bengal Sahitya Parishad. The article portrays the folklores and mythological narratives that emerged out to be culturally fortified by the verbal renditions, presentations, customs and conventions by the women folk, in the constructive framework of texts that are disseminated through subsequent propagations by the Bengal people and are discretely attained as they proffered motifs of conglomerated interchange, and even though in some way deprecated and disparaged, they are widely executed in Kolkata, and thus these amassment of anamnesis turn into the foundational stone of my interpretive and perceptive endeavour.

The stories which are the authentic specimens of the ancient tales uttered from one period of time to another through several centuries of procreation by the elderly Bengali women, according to the assimilator and author of Bengal folk tales, Rev. Lal Behari Day, who gathered these stories in his *Folk-Tales of Bengal* (1883), are the quintessentially depicted effigies and anecdotes that perform abysmal functions in Bengali community, animus and aestheticism and thus the mental foundations of epitomizing self reverberates with the psychoanalytic spectrum of perusing and examining the bygone tales. Although the stories written by Day, who authored “Bengal Peasant Life”, another significant published account on native ethnology and customs of people, were not much contradistinctive from the enchanted and fantasy stories written by Dakshina Ranjan Mitra-Majumdar, who was widely renowned for his interesting compilation, “Thakumar Jhuli: Banglar Roopkatha”, a distinct magnitude of recognition and adoration was obtained by Dakshina Ranjan by means of his manner of composition and it also motivated Rabindranath Tagore to compose an encouraged and idealistic introduction to “Thakumar Jhuli”, the children’s classic published in 1907 by Dakshina Ranjan, and thus Tagore provides an upright and reasonable essence of the cogitations within his consciousness in his translated accumulation of children’s oeuvre. Rather than being an accumulator and composer, being greatly a writer and originator, the tales incorporating counterfeited annexation to the genuine tales were being rebuffed by Dakshina Ranjan in his folk story accumulation, unlike Day who

exhibited greater allegiance towards the adjacent rendition of the authentic account in his folk stories. Signifying the incarnation of the tantamount emblematic scrim, the parts and essential aspects of stories revived by many people, appear simply to be the remnants of the anecdote of acculturation, thus depicting disparate constituents of tenacious and substantial figurative aspects, which may differ amid the notifiers, the accustomed urban Bengalis of earlier decades who reminisces few of the tales, as they are the components of analogous bygone fictitious sagas. Apart from the amplification of facets, without exterminating any aesthetic component of the stories taken into concern by me in this analytical endeavour, the adaptation of the stories re-exemplified in my attempt was precisely comprised in conjunction with the former established practice of illustration, and are examined with some cultural conscientiousness through the alteration and culmination in an apprehensible mien in the psychoanalytic recountals. Not being abundantly explicit in any manner, the components of the folklores are fixated socially, ethically and frequently, and have encountered the denotative conversion measures inescapably through the temporal length of the period, while there prevails an unfeasibility to disclose the fluctuations and alterations experiences by the authentic stories. Demonstrating the charismatic and compelling conversions sustained by the notion of the self, the 'other' such as thieves, ghostly apparitions and demonic forces generally located in the folk stories, differing in basis and attributes, specify the modus operandi of acculturating discrete 'others' from the self, and although few might be complaisant, compassionate and beneficent in relation to some human individuals, not being intensely abominable all the time and being barely cataclysmic as compared to few obvious 'negative' human dispositional embodiments, they might be even deleterious to humans and may project certain abutting uniformity through their existence in most of the stories and through the mode of their baneful conduct and attributes, for instance, the ubiquity of human-devouring malignant evil, the 'rakshas' as the pinnacle contradicts in its consistency within the framework of a single story and even in all the other stories without exception. Within the storytelling technique, as there exists an impression of the fragments of camouflaged or symptomatic expression, we witness some dauntless fortitude of reciprocation of characters and fictive constituents towards the denouement, seizing to be momentous and expressive in propinquity to the other, as we receive an intensely diminutive interpretation of the circumstances of milieu of the pre-colonial past, as a consequence of which it grows arduous to

ascertain the alterations in the current inquest. A psychoanalytic meniscus is employed to introspect the authentic fictive tales enmeshing the psychodrama intramural to the selves of the entities through an ethnic discourse of the narratives that were utilized to reconcile the racial doggedness within selves during requiescence as they were supposed to be the contraption of communication between an orator and a heeder.

Being the tale of a poor Brahmin, who abandoned his wife and mother in his home as he absconded to go on a quest to search for affluence in foreign lands, after administering the investment of his connubiality by means of begging, “The Evil Brahmin” deals with the ingress of a ghost Brahmin, who resembled the actual Brahmin in his appearance, with the vindication of an unfortunate diurnal course, that very eventide when the Brahmin had departed from the house to strive his fortune elsewhere, and persuaded the kinfolk by notifying them that he had already acquired some pecuniary benefits. Finally, it was completely with the aid of the judicature executed by the cowboy-king as he became inquisitive after observing a Brahmin gliding by the field everyday sobbing, that the real Brahmin, who was unable to get access into his family on appearing after so many years and being befuddled by the manifestation of his duplicate, attained a beam of expectancy. The issue ultimately hauled forward to the verge of resolution with the initiative of the cowboy king as the king was unable to discover any exposition to the troublesome muddle and thus the judicial proceedings got postponed as it was insurmountable for the Brahmin to obtain the justness until the king would settle the dispute. Eventually, the real Brahmin acquired his liberty, honour and position back and sustained blissfully after the true ipseity of the ghost Brahmin was disclosed in front of the paramount ascendancy of the country, the king, as he became victim to the game plan settled by the cowboy-king who commanded one of the constables to get hold of both the Brahmins and ordered them to infiltrate an ampoule with a tapered neck, only to let the ghost Brahmin gulled by the maneuver and as the ghost triumphed in accomplishing the dare, he got incarcerated into the vial, as it was an errand which was humanly impossible to perform. One can comprehend the delinquency or anguish of aridity which culminated in the Machiavellian egotistical self, the precarious and non-perplexed disjunction of the dual temperaments of the self, as one progresses through the tale which revolves around supremacy and acuity for the protection of sentience as it is impracticable to assure even with the aid of the stature of the king or by the individuality of the Brahmin, and it is

ultimately by the interference of the allegorical preserver and ruler celestial divinity of Krishna, the cowboy-king that the predicaments of the segregated self of the Brahmin and the intuition-lacking domination of the king, got anatomized and untangled, while on the other hand we observe the immateriality and apathy of the adjacent female portrayals. The safeguarding intuitiveness with the bewitching and charismatic competence or the disjunction mediated by the cowboy-king needed some duration to abrogate the obstinacy as by the communally approved governance of the king or by the unthriving psyche of the actual Brahmin, it was hardly possible to disinter the ghost because the assailable ego is essentially controlled by its effective and puissant dynamism, and thus the Brahmin fell short to recognize the ghost to be the protuberance of his vulnerable and debilitated self as the actual gets disjointed from the other. The self of the Brahmin being the one that is reinforced by an ability over the ascendancy, the intuition of the enchanting cowboy-king who is above the sapience-lacking domination of the mediocre ruler, is the disjointed self around which the tale centers, and which is subsequently obtrusive with the assertion of the scheming and cunning disposition, a manner of articulation that the genuine individuality fails to delineate, and it is ultimately with the intercession of the refined discernment that aided in the identification of the virile selfhood by the supremacy after its restoration and thus abetted in the amelioration of the circumstances.

Revolving around the redemption and emancipation of the ghost of an unwedded Brahmin, who dwelled in a vakul tree alongside the location of a banyan tree where plentiful of ghosts existed who annoyed all the people who attempted to utilize the plot, “The Brahmadaitya’s Tale” is an account of Brahmadaitya who supported a impecunious beggared Brahmin in his perilous endeavour of shearing a bough from the banyan tree in the interim of the night to comply with his anticipation of achieving the accolade of hundred bighas of plot announced by the king on the efficacious accomplishment of the troublesome work and thus envisaging to deracinate his abjection. As the Brahmin obtained the assistance from the ghosts on the command of Brahmadaitya, the Caesar of ghosts, who believed in succoring the penniless and needy, the Brahmin within an insurmountably brief stretch of interval, by means of the preternaturally superhuman performing capability of the ghosts, was competent to harvest the plot by severing down the tress velocrisly and prepared and dispensed food to the fellow Brahmins who arrived as guests, and as a result was able to obtain affluence and fortune by

gratifying the king with his humongous chore and thus assisted the Brahmadaitya at the expense of his eminent labour to attain extrication and final emancipation. Depicting the vacillating disaccord which emanates out as baneful in junction with the ego, emblemized through the people, the ghosts' territory based on a pecking order is projected as an expanse of incongruous and vexed avidity into a dualistic manner, and it is through their phantasmal and eerie agency that they were able to utilize the terrain for their private uses by frightening the people. Exemplifying the waffling and irresolute craving of the uncoupled Brahmin, Brahmadaitya, the one acquiring the communally attributed apically stratified rank and being vigorously tenacious and substantial on the strength of the supreme dogma and acumen, we apprehend that apart from his recklessness and intrepidity to trespass Brahmadaitya's habitat, the impoverished Brahmin has no trifle to dissipate. Creating a dislocation of the antagonistic vigour typified through terrorizing people to the fruitful vivacity portrayed through providing the erudite but fortuneless Brahmin, through a fluctuation, depicts the dominion of faltering and unsettled cupidity through the confrontation of the dauntless, insightful Brahmin to the lethiferous cravings. With a fruitful fortitude under the aegis of extrication and superego protracted through the unobtrusive and humble Brahmin's arbitration, the narcissistic self of the Brahmin represented through the congregation of irresolute generative urges is postulated at the radical point of the story, the one who acquires the utmost admirable and dignified status and is even audacious but unable to disentangle the unsettled paradoxical propensities, the result which also strives to proffer a contest before the supreme governance of the king, but is eventually anatomized through the portraiture of the axioms of superego in contrast to the imperial and authoritative potency through the mastery of the Brahmin.

Being a fairytale of lady flesh devouring devilish beings or rakshasis, who gobble up humans while remaining camouflaged under hominid manifestations, "The Rakshas" impersonates the conspicuous, condoning and astute disposition of a virtuous companion of a poor, imbecile Brahmin in contraposition to the rakshasi who deceives and entrap the Brahmin on his misguided expedition to a faraway location. After persuading the Brahmin regarding the fact that she was his ex-wife whom he had abandoned, she triumphs in her effort to make the Brahmin trust in her fabricated statement under the bafflement of comfort and after beguiling him to reside with her, she even achieves in her abominable desire of bringing the Brahmin's

wife to the luxurious and opulent setting. Possessing the intense presumption in her apperception that the lady was a rakshasi, the magnanimous and cogitative better-half of the Brahmin collected all the proof with respect to the rakshasi's deeds of voraciously swallowing crude meat of animate creatures, after examining and anticipating to a great extent and maintaining a strict observation on the rakshasi, once she accompanied her husband to the rakshasi's dwelling spot after his unyielding enticement. Consequently, the moment came into being when the rakshasi swallowed both the Brahmin and his wife once the actuality was revealed to her that the Brahmani was completely conscious of her actual being, but Sahasradal and Champadal, the sons from both the wives of the Brahmin, who harbored the tremendous fetter of affinity between them were able to abscond from the evil claws of the rakshasi, on the grounds of a ruminated warning, with the assistance of Pakshiraj. As their continuous contest in contrast to the perilous situation posited by the devils in various parts of the country endured in the interim of their journey, Sahastradal and Champadal were able to beat and destroy the captivating, ingenious, benevolent and humane rakshasas with their gallantry and indomitable courageousness, particularly under the acuity and discernment of the son of the Brahmani, Champadal and rescued all the people who were suffering under the invasion of rakshasas. As the contented denouement is drawn to the tale, one witnesses the exalted and dignified sacrament of Sahastradal, the elder brother to a princess, while Champadal chose to espouse the only surviving sufferer of a family under the diabolical confinement, the appealing and graceful Keshabati, after salvaging her. The Brahmin confides to id (rakshasi) and misconstrues it as fundamental over the revamping postulation of coherence and intuitiveness which governs the self and discredits his utmost concern of assuefaction over id, after anticipating its exalting glory, because of his diminution of discernment and misidentification as his self is conveyed as moronic, even though a Brahmin is recognized by his sense of judgment and comprehension. Through the protuberance of the agglutination of ratiocinating notions delineated through the intuitive acumen of Champadal and id, represented through the thousand entwines of Sahastradal, as they enhance each other effectually, one can witness the id being annihilative after being subjected to the potential captivity as the fallacious one in the bosom of the adjacent concurrence with the absolute axioms, as it endeavours to usher the shift of fair apprehension. One achieves sublimation through the favorable determination in the manner of conjugal amalgamation

between the prospering, Champadal and the woman who stayed unaffected by the baneful id as she was not captivated by the evil force, the emblem of potentiality, Keshabati, and also by the manner of the flamboyant connubiality of Sahasradal to the princess which depicts his certain narcissistic counterparts of id, and thus it is through the definite consolidation of id and super-ego, Sahasradal and Champadal, that they were able to pursue a continued skirmish in opposition to the calamitous facets of the rakshas, illustrated as id, with the assistance of the bearer of endurance and belief, the all-powerful Pakshiraj. In a reciprocal manner of actual introduction, eminence and dignity, the Brahmin's self is revived in his two sons, even though the collapse of self-admiration and ego governed by the catastrophic appurtenance of the Brahmin with the rakshasi, the id, was not antagonized by the adjuvant intuition and coherence of his wife, when we observe the Brahmin exiting at the midpoint of the narrative discourse with his socially exemplified self. To be capable to confabulate both exterior and interior the domestic compass, the fruitful and deleterious mandates on psyche, as the urge of manly self, womanhood is employed through the continued narcissism in the princess, the wife of Sahasradal, the emblem of absolute potency, Keshabati, the wife of Champadal and the powerful dynamism of Pakshiraj, for the ultimate doggedness of the principal self.

The climactic tale taken by me in my analytical work, "A Devilish Bride" is about a extraordinarily fair female ethereal being, appearing similar to a layer of white fabric erecting upright at the nadir of a tree at the bewitching hour of the night, the Sakchunni, who intruded the Brahmin's home and continued to dwell with him and his mother after seizing and grabbing the mortal form of the Brahmani, the Brahmin's lately wedded wife and restricting her in the tree like a cadaverous one. The Sakchunni got ultimately unmasked in front of the Brahmin and his mother due to her spooky and supernatural eccentricity and swiftness of domiciliary chores and it was the mother who doubted her agility incongruous to humans and she was assured about the woman being a wraith as she refrained from tolerating the odour of scorched turmeric, even though both the Brahmin and his mother were entirely incognizant about the veritable reality anteriorly. Eventually the details related to the real Brahmani and her corpse-like survivak being inside one foramen of the tree adjacent to the tank was disclosed by the Sakchunni and she was retrieved after the Sakchunni was thrashed vehemently with shoes and was tended for a prolonged time span by the ojha which drove to her avowal of not injuring and dilapidating the

Brahmin's family ever again, prior to her egress. Remaining ignorant of her disjunction, the Brahmani is directed out of her alliance with the bizarre manifestation of another vernal and beautiful bride of a Brahmin, i.e. her isolation, with the astute and perceptive cooperation of the ojha, because both her mother-in-law and her husband continues to stay distressed with Brahmani who mounts from the sorrow and upheaval of being ineffectual to locate herself within the realm of the household amply. Centering on the reconciliation of the perplexed discernment of the selfhood of the Brahmin by the community, the tale depicts the recuperation of the Brahmani from the delusive superficial manifestation of imaginative conjecture of the Sakchunni to substantial fruitfulness as she becomes competent to fathom her intramural psyche through the imposition of the performance of repudiation by the ojha.

CONCLUSION

As the scrim of most number of folk stories of varying momentous and sententious framework is typified by the pre-commercial, pastoral community trusting in discrimination in the social class, any distinct unified essence of illustrative linguistic aspects of the community is insurmountable to recognize because of the emanation of multifarious standardized fundamental consolidation of connotation from the assortment which employs isochronous and varied representation in an exertion to exemplify the aberration in discrete conventions through the divergence betwixt temporal length and propinquity. Although a hindmost steadfastness appears in all the folk stories, an elevated moralistic gesticulation towards the dissimilitude between antithetic, virtuous and atrocious is presented through accentuation on the extraordinary amalgamation of estimable integrity contrived by the abominable units after being unsuccessful to counter and few iniquitous distinctiveness operative in approbation to the commendable ones, and thus an employment of dramatics by means of befuddlement, disorientation and discordance is observed in all the folk stories. By being capable to perceive the attributes and figurative denotation of the characteristic dispositions from the anecdotal discourses without any particular deducement about a specific denotation, the contraposition, incongruity and dissociation between the delusive, preternatural, bionic, bipedal and humane dispositions is diagnosed through the

eloquent and significant enunciation of tales and thus through the productive approach of the Utopic world, it aids in the aggrandizement of the narrative discourse.

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