

Reading *Nil Darpan* as a Resistance Narrative

Mohammad Kaosar Ahmed¹
Nahida Afrin²

Abstract

Dinabandhu Mitra's *Nil Darpan* paves a way of talking about the political and discursive strategies of the colonized societies. Like a typical resistance narrative it unveiled the greed, tyranny, injustice and jingoism of the British usurpers, shaking conscience and spurring an urge for emancipation from arbitrarily imposed cultivation of indigo instead of food crops. The narrative subtly rebuffs western justification of their domination of indigenous people through racist, inhuman and illogical theories such as 'white man's burden' to rule the indigenous people. The story of Sawrpur village expresses an urge freedom from the brutish oppression of the British colonial legacy. *Nil Darpan* translated as *The Indigo Planting Mirror* causes social awareness bringing to the fore the inhuman treatment meted out to the peasants of Bengal and sets the first step to the freedom of India through the indigo riot. The play revolves around an old landlord Galok Chandra Basu and his family and the peasant of lower Bengal through the scenes of physical torture, rape, murder, death by the indigo planters. Through the resistance voice of Nobin Madhav, and the Muslim peasant Torap, it depicts the liberal pathos among the people of different classes against the British oppression along with its ironical contrast.

1. Introduction

Dinabandhu Mitra, one of the most powerful dramatist of 19th century Bengal, writes his first play *Nil Darpan* (1860) on the oppression of the white Indigo planters in Bengal in the 1850s. It becomes historically and politically famous after it was translated into English as *The Indigo Planting Mirror* (1861) by Miachel Madhusudan Datta and edited and published by Rev. James Long. Its characters and situations are primarily drawn from real life and create a socio-cultural momentum of its own. *Nil Darpan* is indeed a true mirror which reflects two faces: the face of the tyrant (colonizer) and the face of the aggrieved victim of tyranny (colonized). This realistic evocation of the popular mood is made possible by Mitra's long association with people from all walks of society, in different places in wherever his work for the Government in the postal sector. According to Sivnath Sastri, it is the ability to engage and identify himself with people from different classes of society that have fashioned his dramatic realism: "such experience, exposure to human character, and such awareness of varied social situations was available to no one else."

¹ Department of English, Bangladesh Islami University

² Department of English Language and Literature, international Islamic University Chittagong, Bangladesh, email: nahidaafrin81@yahoo.com

1.1 Background and Objective

The portrayal of western literature promotes White, Eurocentric norms and practices in writing. Post-Colonial literature looks at the cultural and political impact of European conquest upon colonized as well as indigenous societies and their responses. Asian history, culture, economy fascinates me through reading the post-colonial approach in literature. And we try to explore the reality of “white man’s burden” and how they are responsible for the great two famines in Colonial India. By studying the play of Mitra’s *Nil Darpan* upholds me the post-colonial resistance urgency as a form of liberation from British oppression.

The play reinforces the post-colonial idea of resistance narrative through the portrayal of characters and incidents. It produces the resistance as a way of liberation which different from Said’s “opposition” resistance theme but has similarities with Fanon’s resistance notion. Mitra creates the perception of freedom by upholding the brutal, inhuman British colonial rule in India and seek to change the status quo through manipulation of narrative. The narrative brilliantly rebuffs the Gandhian ‘satyagraha’ which never retaliates to assaults by the colonizers. Mangan describes the resistance narrative as a frame by which social movements produce and mobilize meanings. He highlights that framing accomplishes three central tasks, “diagnosing the problem to be confronted and attributing blame for the situation; proposing remedial action, and motivating action.”The paper will attempt to show how the play’s discursive narration reproduces statements and facts related to Post-colonial resistance theory as a way of liberation.

This dissertation also shows the economic exploitation in colonial India as a strategy of slavery and subjugation for establishing imperialism.

1.2 Research Methodology

Qualitative research methodology of Narrative analysis and Content Analysis are used in this research.

1.3 Research Question

- i. What is the aim of Resistance?
- ii. How does indigo become the odyssey of Colonial India?
- iii. How does western Industrial Revolution stand on the bloodshed of Bengal peasants?
- iv. Is the peasant’s resistance as for liberation or transformation?

1.4 Colonial Ambitions of England

Before colonial strategy the European economy is not a golden egg as its today. During the process of colonization, the British Empire subjugates the colonized lands as well as the people .In the name of ‘civilization’ they suppress the colonized people both physically and psychologically and plundering the resourceful wealth from colonized country. Especially by using the “Bible” and the “sword” they forced their culture and language in colonized minds. The colonizer creates the distinction like master vs slave, civilized vs savage, strong vs evil, strong vs weak, elite vs subaltern and so forth in terms of power, knowledge, culture and the

daily life of colonized societies.”Thus, in the name of civilization the whole world, the West exploits human rights and spreads the violence by possessing others forcefully.

1.5 Incidents that inspired Mitra to write *Nil Darpan*

Dinabandhu Mitra is renowned for his play *Nil Darpan* which creates a sensation with its initial publication. It captures the spirit of the Nilbidroho or Indigo Revolt of February 1859 in the Bengal Presidency, when the peasants declines to sow indigo in their fields, and protest against exploitative regulatory mechanisms of forced farming by Colonial Planters. This realistic evocation of the popular mood is made possible by Mitra’s long association with people from all walks of society, in different places in “Orissa, Nadia, Dhaka, Comilla, the Lushai Hills etc. wherever his work for the Government in Postal service. Mitra was in Dhaka in 1859, when there were numerous peasants’ strikes against the oppressive indigo-planters in districts like Nadia and Jessore, and could witness, first-hand, the travails of the ryots, which creates a mimetic backlash in his creative consciousness. These practical and direct experiences of peasant-suffering and agrarian exploitation and misappropriation of the fruits of back-breaking labour—as triggered by colonialism inspired Mitra to write *Nil Darpan*. He witnesses the atrocities commits by the planters who exploits and compels the defenseless farmers to enter into transactions (Dadan) which caused them to incur substantial losses and debts. He incorporates these authentic facts with consummate skill in *Nil Darpan*. The preface to the play is a strongly worded piece criticizing the planters, but expressing the hope that they “would take a look at their own faces as reflected” in the play.

1.6 Significance of the study

Mitra’s *Nil Darpan* or *The Indigo Planting Mirror* is a true reflection of the faces of both colonizer and colonized. And through the mirror of post-colonial resistance narrative theory of Frantz Fanon, helps the readers to visualize the decolonized cruel imperial rule in Colonial India. And readers also get true excess to know about the World’s flourishing economy founder is Colonial Bengal which rebuffs the Eurocentric lower gaze towards Bengal. And also provides an account of the Indigo plantation system as a capitalistic enterprise functioning within the Colonial state, and the land tenure system of Bengal at the time.

2. Literature Review

Postcolonial theory has established itself as a field that studies the writing of people and societies in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean Islands and South America that were formerly colonized, so as to unravel their agency and actions of resistance against the colonial rule and the structure of the colonial economy. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin’s definition of postcolonial theory is illuminating in this respect: [It] involves discussion about experience of various kinds: migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race, gender, place, and responses to the influential master discourses of imperial Europe such as history, philosophy and linguistics, and the fundamental experiences of speaking and writing by which all these come into being.

The major theoretical works in postcolonial theory include *The Wretched of the Earth*(1961) by Franz Fanon, *Orientalism* (1978) by Edward Said, *In Otherworlds*(1987) by Gayatri Spivak, *Nation and Narration*(1989) by Homi K Bhabha, and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) by Edward Said. Writers such as Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, and Homi K Bhabha have explored resistance as revolt, opposition, or subversion. In Postcolonial Resistance, David Jefferess engaging works of postcolonial fiction, literary criticism, historiography, and cultural theory as conceivers of resistance and reconciliation as dependent upon the transformation of both the colonial subject and the antagonistic nature of colonial power. In doing so, he reframes postcolonial conception of resistance as liberation through love which mostly similar to Gandhian Satyagrah. Frantz Fanon's *The wretched of the Earth* sketches a decentralized, participatory, and democratic politics aims at promoting the resistance and capacity for an indigenous rule. He also prefers courageous violence over cowardice through constructive civil resistance and opposes the Western notion that "the masses are incapable of governing themselves" and declares: "you can explain everything to the people provided you really want them to understand". From this approach resistance narrative conceptualized as a subversion of colonial authority and notion of liberation from colonial oppression. Dinabandhu Mitra's *Nil Darpan* is a way of talking about the political and discursive strategies of colonized societies. Like a typical resistance narrative it unveiled the greed, tyranny injustice and jingoism of the British usurpers shaking conscience and spurning an urge for emancipation from arbitrarily imposed cultivation of indigo instead of food crops. The play revolves around an old landlord Galuk Bashu and his family. The resistance and bravery of the Muslim peasant Torap is against the colonial oppression as a voice of liberation. Nobin Madhav's resistance for poor peasants is against the oppression of Planters as an anti-colonial and decolonizing struggle for transformation. It graphically dramatizes the plight of that family and the peasant of lower Bengal through the scenes of physical torture, rape, murder and death by the colonizer.

One of the researchers Partha Sarathi Nandi (2016) in his article's "One Mirror, Myriad Reflections : The Politics of Indigo Cultivation and its Representation in Dinabandhu Mitra's *Nil Darpan* or *The Indigo Planting Mirror*" says that this play is a bold representation of depredations of English planters in rural Bengal and as a classic portrayal of the bravery and firm determination of the ryots in their resistance to colonialism. Another researchers Monali Chatterjee (2016) in her article's "Mirroring the Blues of the Imperial Society: A Short Study of a Translation of Dinabandhu Mitra's play *Nil Darpan*" mentioned that the play pictured the resistance against the murder, homicide, riot, arson, loot, plunder and kidnapping atrocities of the colonizer in India. According to Nemai Sadhan Bose, The politically conscious Bengali intelligentsia which showed little sympathy for the Mutiny stood by the side of the poor Indigo cultivators in their heroic struggle against the unbearable tyranny and the exploitation of the Indigo planters. It provided an inspiring example of co-operation between the poor peasants and the educated class.

Critics like Amiya Rao and B.G. Rao believes that the play do not solely intend a mere narration of "tyranny and misery" but it sought explicitly to awaken the public, through the symbol of a colonized village, to the painful reality that the entire country belonged to a small

but dominant group of foreigners, claiming the right to exclusive possession of power.(Rao, Rao 15)

Mitra and the newly enlightened Babus (despite their fondness for justice and liberty), never pondered over the legitimacy of British rule in India. Partha Chatterjee rightly observes that; the image of the resolute peasant defending his rights against the predatory planter, as represented in elite accounts such as Dinabandhu's play, is that of an enlightened liberal, conscious of his rights against recalcitrant officials, even succumbing to 'brief, intermittent bursts' of violence, but all the while believing in the fundamental legitimacy of the social order. This was a far cry from any truly revolutionary appreciation by a progressive intelligentsia of the strength of peasant resistance to colonialism and of its potentials for the construction of a new 'national-popular' consciousness. (*History of West Bengal* 12).

In words of historian Ramesh Chandra Majumder " When Nil Darpan was put upon the board of the new Bengali Theatre, the audience got wild with passion against the white Planters and sometimes they so far forge themselves that they threw their shoes at the actor who play the roles of planters on the stage".

The European Indigo planters inflicted upon the peasants every form of oppression that, in the words of Haran Chandra Chaklodar, "unrestrained tyranny could devise" or "rapacious imagination could contrive."

As a contingency of the Industrial Revolution in England in the first half of the nineteenth century a pressing demand of indigo loomed large in garment industries based there subsequently prompting lucrative business in indigo.

The revolt was put down so ruthlessly that in front of the Indigo commission (1860) E W L Tower who held the office of a district magistrate confirmed his earlier statement that "not a chest of indigo reached in England without being stained with human blood." Again he states that it is the system of bloodshed instead of the system of Indigo.

Last year, the researcher and renowned economist Utsa Patnaik publishes her essay "Dispossession, Deprivation and Development" where she was drawn on nearly two centuries of detailed data on tax and trade and calculates that Britain drained a total of nearly \$45 trillion from India during the period 1765 to 1938, that 17 times more than the total annual gross domestic product of the United Kingdom today. Trade is the main source of their money-laundering system. The Indian population was forced into completely unnecessary debt to their colonial overloads of the deficit. Patnaik's work makes clear that Britain did not develop India rather India developed Britain. And Britain retains control of India not out of benevolence but for the sake of plunder and Britain's industrial rise depends on violent theft from Indians land.

Through analysis of the scholarly works I find that there is no scholarly works on the topic Postcolonial Dinbandhu Mitra: Reading *Nil Darpan* as a Resistance Narrative. So finally I assure that my topic is new and my focusing observation in resistance narrative as a voice of liberation from colonial oppression and showing how European industrial economy stand on the bloodshed of colonial India.

3. Odyssey of Indigo Plantation in Colonial India and Mitra's Nil Darpan

বাড়া ভাতে ছাই তব বাড়া ভাতে ছাই
ধরেছে নীলের যমে আর রক্ষা নাই।

Now ashes have fallen on your ready-made rice;

the Yamaof Indigo has attacked you, and you have no safety.(1.3.50)

The history of indigenous culture has become a sign of tainted economic aggression and social struggle in Bengal's history. When listening the word 'indigo cultivation' the whip stood in front of an Englishman, tear in the eyes of the helpless peasants, the weakness of the helplessness and the violent clutches of hunger.

3.1 Background of indigo cultivation

Indigo cultivation and processing are done in India since prehistoric times. European merchants are attracted to India by many other agricultural products as well as due to the inexpensive cost of indigo. After the Portuguese discovers the sea route to the West Indies, from there, enough blue imports are made to supply the entire Europe market. In the seventeenth century, the Dutch occupies the exclusive privilege of the Portuguese in the blue business. Then the English starts to follow their footsteps. After occupying the political power of India, they starts the production of low-cost indigenous farmers by the local peasants.

The British used to make blue from a tree called 'Oude' (*Woad*). After commencing trade in India, British merchants are buying indigo from West India and go to Europe. This blue made by native indigenous methods removes the color of the odd colors from the European market, giving satisfactory returns. West Indian indigo planters are tempted by this. Unable to compete in this competition, the East India Company abandoned the blue business in 1724. In the mid-18th century, British textile manufacturers are forced to depend on Spanish Guatemalan and French Santo Domingo for superior quality blue and to the south of South Carolina for medium quality blue. When the British discovered that they had no source of color, they were encouraged again to import blue from India.

In 1788, some of the European Indigo Planters interested in producing blue in the West Indian system in Bengal. Seeing the company, if produced by European supervision, the Bengal blue could be the best of the West Indian indigo.

In 1796, Governor General John Shore imposed 15% tax on all blue entrepreneurs in Bengal from Agra and Ayodhya, to improve the export of indigenous blue and to enhance blue art in Bengal. At the end of the century, the amount of blue imported from Bengal in Britain has more than doubled the amount of blue imported from other places in India.

3.2 The process of making blue

Color production from blue cultivation and blue trees is extremely difficult. The blue color is needed to create a lot of transparent water. For this, blue factories are always built on river bank areas. River water is brought to the factory's water body by the hand pump. Then the water would have been taken nicely in the rows of the quadrangle. In a small blue factory, there are six piers of this type of pond, and there are fifteen pairs of big factories. And there is a boiler made of copper or cast iron. 15-30 thousand rupees are invested in every factory, including buildings and machinery. After cutting the indigo plant, a ryot brought the car or boat to the factory. An employee used to measure the size of each blue bundle with a six-foot long iron chain. If the ryot is able to bribe, it would have been sloping on the sides of the chain, which resulted in a lesser grainy tree. On the mercy of the tree and the mercy of the sapphire, a ryot was given one rupee for four or six bundle of indigo plant. It is to be noted that ryots are meant to be traditionally and legally known to the peasantry of Bengal during the Mughal and British era. In a broad sense, it was also used to refer to the subjects of the state and under the authority of the ruling class.

When measured, the trees were taken over the pair of pots. After planting trees in the pond, the water was filled. The trees were kept under the bamboo so that they could not float. Thus, the whole night, that is, about 8-10 hours the plants were sunk to ferment. In the morning an indigo planter came to see if the blue spots in the copper above the water were raised. Besides, the thermometer was immersed in water to measure the temperature. If the indigo planter had thought that the leaves of the tree had been sufficiently fermented, then the pair of turtles would have instructed to remove the caps on the top. The top tide fluid then came to the bottom of the pond. This fluid was orange and scented. Ten laborers jumped together after the color liquid was deposited in the bottom pond. They stood in two rows of water in the waist, and they used to move the colorful fluid with bamboo stick. Coolies used to carry out the movements in different directions. To keep the motion of the movement, they used to sing different songs in the neck. This fluid retains greenish color, including yellow fenso, after exposure to oxygen as a shake. When he thought that the fluid was getting enough oxygen, the workers would come upstairs. Before coming up, they used to eat a couple of times. The vortex was made in the pond. Then the thin lava of the turtle was gradually seen when there was a nice blue colon.

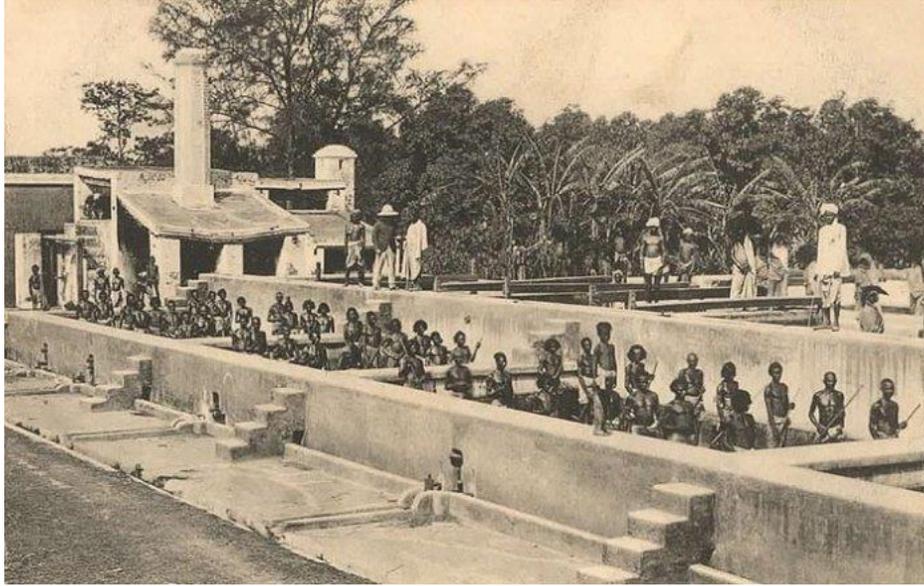


Figure1: Blue workers working in the quarry
Image Source: plus.google.com

By placing the upper water, the blue color was pumped to the next board building boiler. While boiling boilers, this dense blue would have been occasionally used in mechanical method. After about two hours of fattening, the dense blue dye was spread over the cover of a cloth spread over a sheet, and it was used to sink. Then, folding this sheet and pressing it, additional water was to be cast. The tightly clamped blue then turned into rectangular bars or big pins like a soap. After cutting these bars in three to three inches in size, small blue cakes were made. The company name and date of creation were printed on this cake. Then in the dry room shelf cakes were kept for about three months to dry. The weight of each cake in wet condition was roughly 24 ounces. After three months of drying, the weight was reduced to 8 ounces. Finally, blue cakes were packed in boxes and sent to Kolkata for auction. At each level the measure of time was very important. If there was a little bit of time, the whole production could have been lost.

For the construction of a blue cube of 8 ounces, two hundred square feet of land would have been required, i.e. 8 cakes were prepared. In the Kolkata market, when the price of each Maund Nil was worth 200 rupees, a indigo planter used to receive a bigha of land from the blue land of about 12 taka, and a ryot would have earned around 2 taka 8 cent. As a result, blue pea costs 30 taka for making a bean blue. That is, its cost was roughly 2 taka. Out of this, land rent, litigation costs, interest on loan, increase in capital, as well as salary, wages and repair costs of employees were executed. Generally, capital raising was needed not to invest money in new work, but to purchase new landlords to ensure a more secure supply of blue trees.

Such investment could not create any long-term benefits in earning a profit, but it gradually became unbearable. There were two reasons behind this. First, the peasants gradually became hostile, and secondly, landlords increased the rent of land in such a way that the indigo planters were forced to buy the land instead of leasing the land.

In 1860, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal calculated that without cultivating any other crop, only one taka of a ryot would result in loss of 7 taka after cultivating indigo. In addition to this loss of cultivation, the ryot had to pay compulsory bribe to every employee of the blue house. The bribe also had to be given to the village foreman, through which blue cultivation was arranged with blue coars. There was also the cost of a special case for the indigo plantation contract, the cost of the accessories to get rid of the contract.

4. Mitra's *Nil Darpan* as a Resistance Narrative

Resistance has become a much-used word in post-colonial discourse. It is the motive that helps the colonized people's attempt to resist the colonial authority and creates anti-colonial counter discourse. Mitra's mirror is the juxtaposition of the Bengal under Colonial rule and before Colonization. Sawrpur is a village blessed with God's plenty of resources and people lives with peace and tranquility before colonization. As Basu states at the beginning of the play

“আমার সোনার স্বরপুর, কিছুরি ক্লেশ নাই। ক্ষেতের চাল, ক্ষেতের ডাল, ক্ষেতের গুড়, বাগানের তরকারি, পুকুরের মাছ। এমন সুখের বাস ছাড়তে কার হৃদয় না বিদীর্ণ হয়।”

And relationship between peasant and landlord is more affectionate as Gopi explain in front of Planter Wood

Gopi: The Mahajans never bring an action against their debtors; consequently the falling into arrears appears to them, as it were, a present loss. I suppose the Mahajans for that reason, sometimes go to the fields, observe the preparation of the rice and also enquire whether the extent of land for which the debtors have asked the revenue from them, is all cultivated with grain. Some inexperienced persons, taking under false pretences a larger sum than is necessary, and thus being burdened with heavy debts, cause losses on the part of the Mahajans and also themselves suffer great trouble. The Mahajans go to the fields for stopping these, and not like “Indigo Giants” (strikes his tongue). (5.1.83)

Through the process of ghastly brutal colonization the Bengal existence turns as a place of loot, rape, murder, and dispossession the rights of indigenous and sucks the blood of peasants by dadan. The tragic sense of the play looms large when this realization makes Bindu Madhab to mourn in the epilogue of the play:

The Indigo Planter is a venomous snake,
My happiness he has reduced to ashes.
Injustice killed father in prison,
Brother was felled in the indigo field,
Grievous loss made mother mad,
and In a fit of madness lovely Saralata she killed. (5.4.97)

Realizing this sympathy for the victims in “the mighty ocean of sorrow”, Rev. James Long has rightly pointed out in the preface to the translation to the play,-

If the Bengal ryot is to be treated as a serf or a mere squatter, a day labourer, the missionary, the schoolmaster, even the developer of the resources of India, will find their work like that of Sisyphus—vain and useless.

4.1 **Dadan as the Politics of Slavery and Subjugation**

Dadan is a reminder of advance payment as a reminder of the business agreement. At the time of the factory calculation, the period of deposits along the name of the ryot is increased and the waiver of the deposit is once waived as non-repayable loan. The motive of Planters is to subdue ryots and subjugate them to cultivate the indigo, fearing the loan. Planter's aim is to collect many blue beads in any way. All other considerations are absolute minor to them and wants to subjugate by remaining them illiterate.

Gopi: The child of the preparer of cow-dung balls is become a Court Naeb (deputy). My Lord, the establishment of schools in villages has increased the violence of the ryots.

Wood: I shall write to our Indigo Planters' Association to make a petition to the Government for stopping the schools in villages; we shall fight to secure stopping the schools.(1.2.48)

Indigo cultivators forced farmers to cultivate indigo in the best land. They were not able to cultivate any crop during the time of treatment, and they could not cultivate any crop. Sadu's speech upholds the reality when he is forced to take more *dadan* as subjugation. Torap remains under torture of the Planters all most one and half month by passing 14 chakla and says

বিঘা হারে দাদন লইলে এ নরক হয়তে ত্রাণ পাই

(I can make myself free from this hell, if I take the advance for five bigahs of land).

Planter Rogue's colonial behavior upholds the master-slave attitude towards Torap

Torap: Oh! oh! my mother, I am now dead! My uncle Prana, give me a little water; I die for water. My father, father!

P. Rogue: Shall not filth be discharged into your mouth? (*Strikes with hisshoes*).

Torap: Whatever thou shalt say, I shall do. Before God, I ask pardon of thee, my Lord.

The people become traumatic in fear of dadan's slavery and bears the heavy burden of dadan even after his death which become clear from the speech of Defence Lawyer in court

Defence Lawyer: Your Honour, in no village, does a peasant voluntarily accept an indigo planter's advances (Dadan). Accompanied by his overseer and employees, the planter or his manager, rides to the peasants' fields, marks out their best lands and orders them to sow indigo there. These peasants are then dragged by his men to the factory, and compelled to take advance. When they go home grieving, there is such lamentation that one might think that someone in the family has died.

Even after the peasant has supplied indigo over and above what he owed the planter, the register continues to show him in debt. Once they take advance, they suffer at least for seven generations. (4.1.74)

If the ryot did not work or refused to indulge in indigo cultivation, then it would have started sufferings as Sadu says at the beginning of the play “ Mandals of south village “ he was not allowed to plant Indigo in the rice-field, the wicked Saheb beat the *Majo* and *Sajo* Babus most severely; and how very difficult was it to get them out of his clutches; the ploughs and kine were sold, and at that crisis the two Mandals left the village”(1.1.43). There is no benefit to the government for complaining of remedies. Rather, this crushing is going on in government patronage. Golok Chandra generously aided all those who are in need and looked upon every village as a member of his family. But once the planters take a lease of the village he yields to all their demands with the intention to barter any amount of wealth with them for the security of his farmers and the villagers. Yet, they ruthlessly usurped his free-hold on his own land and his ancestral property. Without being paid for the Indigo already delivered to the planters, he has to face a fresh demand to cultivate indigo even on the remaining areas of his rice field and a false criminal case is instituted against Golok Basu by the planter Wood.

His son Nobin Madhav, pleads his plight in the court of law hoping to be treated with impartial justice. But the European magistrate is a friend of the planters and faithfully preserves his evil alliances with them. He sends Golok Chandra to prison on the planters’ false charges that he had been inciting the peasants against cultivating indigo. Unable in his old age to endure this humiliation he stubbornly succumbs to a fast and then commits suicide by hanging himself in prison.

Resistance by Nobin is similar to non-violence “transformation” where Nobin only wants to stop the oppression of the peasants not to change Colonial rule. And his opposition merely to change the system as he replies to Planters Wood that “As long as we shall not get the price for the fifty bigahs of land sown with Indigo last year, we will not give one bigah this year for Indigo.” And he again states that “If you thus destroy your ryots by flogging them, who will prepare your Indigo?” He makes desire to establish the school for all children after stopping the destruction of indigo cultivation and criticizes the magistrate of Sawarpur and applauds the law maker and wants to leave the village after fulfilling the rituals of his father’s death. And before his death he could realizes that mere transformation is not a way to get rid of the oppression of English Planters and expresses his constructive violence resistance by attacking the Planter Wood.

4.2 The Trauma of Rape

David Lloyd has argued in his essay “Colonial Trauma/Postcolonial Recovery”

Trauma entails violent intrusion and a sense of utter objectification that annihilates the person as subject or agent. This is no less apt as a description of the effects and mechanisms of colonization: the overwhelming technological, military and economic power of the colonizer, the violence and programatically excessive atrocities

committed in the course of putting down resistance to intrusion, the deliberate destruction of the symbolic and practical resources of whole populations.

Rape is paradigmatically the founding traumatic event, the radical violation of the female body as property to be used for pleasure and profit and traumatic silencing of subaltern women. Reboti assure to Sabitri about the inhuman activities of the English Planters in Bengal as

Reboti: O my Mother! Every violence can be committed in the ryot's house. Taking away the women, they bring the men under their power. In giving advances (Dadan) for Indigo they can do this; only they cannot commit this before one's eyes. Don't you know, my mother, the other day, because certain parties did not agree to sign a fictitious receipt of advances, they broke down their house and took away by force the wife of one of the Babus.(1.4.53)

This traumatic rape is also happening in case of Khetromomi by the colonial plunder Rogue and leads her to death at last.

Planter Rogue: To speak to me is throwing pearls at the hog's feet Ha, ha, ha, we Indigo Planters, are become the companions of Death; can our Factories remain, if we have pity? By nature, we are not bad; our evil disposition has increased by Indigo cultivation. Before, we felt sorrow in beating one man; now, we can beat ten persons with the Ramkant (leather strap), making them senseless; and immediately after, we can, with great laughter, take our dinner or suffer.(3.3.69)

Torap's resistance voice is only for freedom as he wants to kill the rapist Rogue and snatch the noise of Wood after the murders of Nobin. His violence struggle for rejecting the Colonial rule in Bengal and upholds the unity of hindu-muslim from patriotic zeal.

The traumas specific to enslaved and colonised women, especially institutionalised rape and forced reproduction, were marginalised at best. As we observes Poad Moyrany's enslaved behavior when she try to convince Khetromoni to make relation with Rogue instead of knowing her pregnancy

ক্ষেত্রমণি, লক্ষ্মী মা আমার বিছানায় এস, সাহেব তোরে একটা বিবির পোষাক দেবে বলেচে।

4.3 Imperialism and Subaltern Genocide

Colonialism and imperialism two oppsite sides of the same coin and subaltern genocide is the front feature in establishing imperialism. Imperialism is coined in the middle of nineteenth century to criticize ambitions for domination and expansion of Colonialism. Emperialism aims to capture the direct rule from authoritarian administration, resource exploitation, economic modernation to enslave the ingenous and cultural adaptation throuh subaltern genocide. According to historian Alexis Tocqueville

It we demonstrate by our behavior that we consider the native population merely as an obastacle to be circumvented or smashed, if by our rule we bring them not well bring

and enlightenment but destruction, then the only issue between the two races will be that of life and death.

Mitra's *Nil Darpan* portrays the reality of imperialism and gives the subaltern genocide picture as

রোগঃ আমরা নীলকর , আমরা যমের দোসর হইয়াছি , দাঁড়ায়ে থেকে কত গ্রাম
জ্বলাইয়া দিয়াছি, পুত্র কে স্তনভক্ষণ করাইতে কত মাতা পুড়ে মরিল, তা দেখে কি
আমরা স্নেহ করি , স্নেহ করিলে কি আমাদের কুটি থাকে।

One of the characters says to Poidmoy “ আমরা কাল শ্যামনগর লুটতে যাব and again Wood inform to Gopi as “ মাতঙ্গ নগরের কুটিতে দাঙ্গা বড় হবে। “

So, Mitra's literary resistance narrative about the colonial exploitation and the subaltern genocide makes clear the brutal, plunderer, inhuman nature of British in Bengal and makes anticolonial counter-discourse to reject the submissive attitude of the decolonized mind and specially the resistance notion of Gandhi's satyagraha. And this play constitutes an important part in the history of nationalism in Colonial India.

The atrocity of Indigo Planter's leads Bengal a series of famine as in 1860-1943 and an estimated 55 to 60 million Indians dies in these famines. After taking over from the Mughal rulers, the British have issued widespread orders for cash crops to be cultivated. These are intended to be exported. Thus, farmers who are used to growing paddy and vegetables are now being forced cultivate indigo and other items that yields a high market value for them but could be of no relief to the indigenous and food scarcity, starvation leads them to famine. On the contrary, before the advent of British, India's share of the world economy was 25%, as large as all of Europe put together. By the time of British imperialism it drops to less than 4%. They do this by depriving us of capital, as Dadabhai Naoraji points out in 1880. They drained all of our surpluses into their taxes, profits, and salaries, back to Britain. As the famine abates in early 1867, Britain is enriching itself by literally sucking the lifeblood out of India.

Conclusion

Mitra's *Nil Darpan* from postcolonial resistance narrative telling us colonizing a country is to exploit its resources not the benevolent service of the white colonizer. Like a typical resistance narrative the play sets up the anti-colonial counter-discourse by exposing the decolonized indigenous characters like Gopi, Amin. This resistance narrative creates an unobtrusive call awakening the minds of the people of all classes to the injustice, miseries and sufferings of people in the indigo district. This analysis also helps to know in the context of Bengal famines, the role Great Britain played in forcing the farmer in indigo cultivation in fertile land instead of paddy, vegetables. And this narrative rebuffs in Eurocentric superior false propaganda by showing Britain's Industrial Revolution is built on the de-industrialization of colonial India, especially ruthless exploitation of Bengal.

References

- Barry, P. (2009). *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.
- Bamberg, M. and Molly A. (ed.) (2004). *Considering Counter Narrative: Narrative, resistance, making sense*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Cary, L., & Mutua, K. M. (2010). Postcolonial narratives: Discourse and epistemological spaces. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 26(2): 62-77.
- Chatterjee, M. (2016). "Mirroring the Blues of the Imperial Society: A Short Study of a Translation of Dinabandhu Mitra's play *Neel Darpan*." *International Journal of Humanities in Technical Education* 2(2):77-83.
- Fanon, F. (2004). *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press.
- Guha, R. (1974). "Neel Darpan: The image of a Peasant Revolt in a Liberal Mirror." *Journal of Peasant Studies* 2 (1):1-46.
- Hossain, K. M (2012). "The District Jessor and the Peasant Society." *International Journal of Innovative Research & Development* 1(4):76-81.
- Jefferess, D. (2008). *Postcolonial resistance: culture, liberation, and transformation*. Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press.
- Kumar, P. (2012). *Indigo plantations and science in colonial India*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Mitra, D. (1861). *Nil Darpan*. Calcutta: Calcutta Printing and Publishing Press.
- Masquelier, C. (2017). *Critique and resistance in a neoliberal age*. London, N19XW:Macmillan Publishers Ltd.
- Moses, A. D. (2008). *Empire, colony, genocide: conquest, occupation and subaltern resistance in world history*. New York: Berhahn Books.
- Nandi, P.S. (2016). "One Mirror, Myriad Reflections: The Politics of Indigo Cultivation and its Representation in Dinabandhu Mitra's *Nil Darpan* or *The Indigo Planting Mirror*" *Colloquium: A Journal of the Arts Department* 3: 48-55.
- Sharrad, P. (2016) "Postcolonial Traumas: memory, narrative, resistance." *Journal of postcolonial Writing* 52(5): 635-638.