

LOVE
AS A THEME IN KHASI NOVELS

by

John Santar Shangpliang

DEPARTMENT OF KHASI

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED

IN

FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT OF THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN KHASI

To



NORTH-EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY

SHILLONG-793 001

MAY, 1989



CONCLUSION

Having [?]investigation the way Khasi novelists treated Love as a theme for their creation, certain conclusion emerges. I would now summerize my major findings according to the chapters that I have assigned to each of the important natures of Love.

Marital love. I find in the novels I have examined that this kind of love is preceded by romantic or erotic love. Only after the lovers are united in matrimony either according to religions or culture does marital love really begin. I also find that most Khasi novelists take marriage as a divine institution; hence marital love too is divine. That means that marriage is not merely a union of man and woman for sexual gratification. Thus, it involves a high sense of responsibility on the part of married couple to make marriage a success. By implication, it means that marital love needs fostering: the spirit of give and take, and the spirit of forgive and forget. The lack of such spirit has driven a few novelistic characters to

moral degradation of all sorts.

I find, too, that arranged or forced marriage does not succeed in the world of the Khasi novels. This is true to the real Khasi society which is more or less free compared with other societies in the Indian sub-continent. True marital love knows no barrier like religion or nationality. S. Quotient Sumer shows exactly this nature of such love when his hero, an American Christian marries the heroine, an Indian Hindu in London; but in a few novels marital love is circumscribed by religious beliefs. Yet in a few more children serve as a binding force for the success of the marriage; while in one where a married couple is not blessed with a single child, only mutual understanding binds the husband and wife together.

It is both interesting and gratifying to note that no Khasi novelist believes in dowry, polygamy, polyandry and homosexuality. The novelists in general might have been guided by the ethos of the Khasi society. And in this respect, they reflect life as it still is.

Parental Love. Most parents in the world of the Khasi novels demonstrate that their love for their children knows no milestone. However, in Tiewsoh's Kam Kalbut, an isolated instance, a father could write off his daughter because she was in love with a school teacher who did not support her father politically. This is unfortunate because in a real Khasi society every body is free to support any candidate he likes. I must confess that the difference during election time does not last long because the welfare of the children is uppermost. Even in the case of Tiewsoh's character, we find that a mother cannot forget her own child. The reason for the misery of the daughter is because the mother submits to her husband: a departure indeed from the Khasi norm where a mother cannot care less for her own children because they belong to her. I have stated above there is a couple who could stay together happily without children; but in B.C. Jyrwa's U Kyrdoh Mawlynnai, the childless couple adopted a son. Though not of their own flesh and blood the fostered parents give their adopted child the best of education they could afford. The child grows to be a man, and he is a doctor. We must not lose sight of the fact

that doctor's job is well- paid not in terms of salary alone but in terms of love and respect of the patients and their relatives.

It is again interesting to note that in a few novels I have examined, the writers devised their societies in such a way that the children should not question their parents' wisdom. In a real society, some parents admit that they are outdated; but some do not. This may be the reason why some novelists take recourse to psychology to project diversity in the life of the Khasi society.

This parental love enters into conflict with erotic love. At least in Jyrwa's U Khain bad ka Ngen we find just this. The supposed hero promised the heroine that he would not fail to marry her. But his parents, very un-Khasi in nature, make him suffer psychologically because the girl he loves is poor.

Filial love. Most Khasi novelists show that the children characters they created have both love for and duty to their parents. It is children's duty to take care of their parents when they are old. Jyrwa's young

Doctor who intended to marry submits to the wish of his fostered parents in order to make them happy. When he finally discovered his real mother, he takes care to see that the fostered parents are looked into in their old age by giving them his own sister, found along with his own mother. What Jyrwa's character does is more welcome to a childless couple; because a girl will stay at home whereas a boy is bound to leave even his mother after marriage. In U Khain bad ka Ngen too, Khain submits to the wishes of his parents though it pains his heart eternally as he has to leave his girl friend forever. The real conflict between filial love and romantic love is there; but finally, it is not love which defeats another love, but duty to parents. Jyrwa nearly depicts the same kind of duty in his Kynjri Ksiar also when Sharai submits twice to the wisdom of her parents and her uncle: first when she denied her second husband; and second, when at the initiative of the uncle, she accepts him gladly as her husband. On the whole, children of the novelistic world are made to submit to their parents.

Brotherly love. The world of the Khasi novelists

is like the real one when they depict the true Khasi tradition of human relationship. Neighbours are there to guide and help their fellow human beings; there, too, to participate in their joys, and to condole the death of a member of the society. This tradition is found in almost all Khasi novels I have examined. In W. Tiewsoh's Kam Kalbut, however, there is a character which sacrifices his own comforts for the welfare of other characters. In a real Khasi society alone would others find that friends, relatives and fellow residents of the same locality participate fully in the matter of life and death. Characters which lack this nature of love are there. Pde's world testifies to this.

Divine love. Divine love has been depicted by John Roberts, the leader of Khasi novel-writing. His God is a Christian God: a god who loves the people so much no matter where man lives. We notice this in other works as well. But almost all novelists show that the love of God for man is conditional: man must obey God's laws. Incidentally, all novelists project that there is life beyond the grave. It is this consideration, I find, that

the novelists I have examined project their God the way they do.

Finally, I feel called upon to state that I have examined various issues in the body of the work itself and that I have done justice to Love as a theme in Khasi novels.
