

# KHASI DRAMA : A STUDY OF SOCIAL AWARENESS

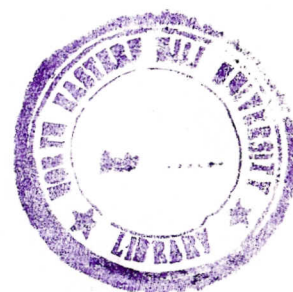
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## CONCLUSION

Khasi dramatists have depicted various forms of awareness which I have classified in my investigation into four categories: social awareness, political awareness, economic awareness and religious awareness.

In the social awareness I have found that Pugh and Myllemngap have depicted a clear concept of the intrinsic culture of the Khasi society relating to marriage. Pugh has vividly displayed that marriage within the forbidden tie of clanship leads into misfortune. Myllemngap is clear in the concept that marriage is the concern of the parents and the maternal uncles of both families and that the consent of both boy and girl is very essential. This shows that the sanctity of matrimony in the Khasi society is maintained.

In spite of the fact that marriage is sanctified yet Sten creates an important awareness that negligence of sexual responsibility leads to a dire consequence of adultery.

In the field of education Pugh stresses for good academic record while Dinno Nath Roy and Khongdup formu-

lates the view that irrelevant education leads to frustration and wastage.

Jala and Pugh create an awareness about evil effect of alcohol as a source of worrying and a cause of poverty. Nongbatlin Rynjah is another dramatist who creates an awareness that indulgence in evil practice culminates to eventual destruction of the victims.

In the area of political awareness there are dramatists like Victor G. Barih, Remy Phankon, Donbok T. Laloo and J.S. Shangpliang who have depicted a high sense of political consciousness. They have made the stage a platform to depict the spirit of patriotism and sacrifice of the natives against foreign intruders. The people who have laid down their lives for the sake of the country are depicted to have possessed a high sense of political awareness. These people are drawn not only from the ruling class like Tirot Singh but also from the commonners like Kiang Nangbah. The womenfolks have also been displayed as the patriots who are politically conscious to join hands with men against the foreigners. Though there is no organised administrative machineries either for civil or military administration yet the people's participation in the affairs of the state is very high. The only form of administrative government is the remote control government of the British from England.

They have also depicted some characters who are not politically conscious which is due either for the lust of money like Long Sutnga or because of simplicity like the mother of Tirot Singh. Whatever may be the reason, the lack of political consciousness poses a threat to the natives, and that simplicity is a political stupidity.

Though the dramatists show that the womenfolks do not participate in the durbar yet Lamare depicts the characters who have violated the Khasi political culture when Iaw Sharing and Luh Shadap occupy the throne. But Duncan sticks to the traditional Khasi political culture where only the male from the selected clans can become myntri.

The dramatists have also displayed their characters relating to the particular syiemship but dramatist like Victor G. Bareh have depicted that the spirit of nationalism extends to the whole of Khasi Hills.

In the economic awareness I have found that Duncan and Lamare depict that barter system exists side by side with monetary system. This is not because the society is a primitive society but because of convenience. J.R. Winton and Philip A.S. Taylor also point out that in the international trade, though there is monetary system yet trade is carried on in barter transaction.

I have also found dramatists like S.J. Duncan, D. S. Khongdup, P.T. Marwein, Alvan Noel Kharkongor, F.M. Pugh, Mondon Bareh, Carlus L. Lare, to name a few, have depicted various economic activities. I have classified these activities into three groups in accordance with the classification of Knowles and Wareing, namely, primary activities, secondary activities and tertiary activities. But with regard to secondary sections, activities are confined to building and construction.

In trade and commerce I have found that there are middlemen but there is no evidence of any exploitation by middlemen. Economic exploitation is depicted by P.T. Marwein where a local woman is exploited by an outsider, by taking advantage of her simplicity.

Though there is no evidence of acute distribution of wealth yet there are people who are rich like Krel of Jala and Nik of Pugh and poor people like Shing of Pugh, Luh Shadap of Lamare and Ksan of Jala. Borrowing has also been depicted by Jala for consumption purposes due to poverty. In this regard Jala represents a world view when Gunnar Myrdal mentions about the poorer strata in the society who have to borrow for buying food and for meeting expenses for illness.

Lamare also displays the use of cowries as a medium of exchange which is also a practice in Africa and South Asia as Ferguson and Krepps pointed out.

Victor G. Bareh, Remy Phankon and Antony Jala have also depicted that the lust for money have created havoc in the society. They represent a world view when Haney writes that it is not only the love for self but the love for self in excess.

In the religious awareness I have found that nearly all dramatists have depicted the consciousness of the existence of God. Phankon, for example, refers to the supernatural power when Kiang Nangbah is selected as the leader. Sten and Lamare make their characters refer to God when they are at wit's end and obtain positive answers for their supplication.

Dewi Singh Khongdup depicts the confrontation between Nabon, the believer in the Christian religion and her family members, the believers in Khasi religion. The problem is eventually resolved by Bor Singh Syiem who proposes to wait for the verdict of the Almighty.

Mondon Bareh depicts the sanctity of the religion. He is critical about the seriousness of the church goers. He depicts the hypocrisy of Mihsngi as a religious man

who is not pious. Syntan is another character that Mondon Bareh has depicted as a hypocrite. These characters are depicted as superficial people in their faith who pretend to be religious but are actually the serpents underneath. He is also critical about the religious sincerity of the church goes at large. He displays that some of them go to church to display their pomposity, some just to stroll about and some to gossip about the active participants in the church.

The above is the brief outline of my main findings in my investigation about the Khasi dramatists. In spite of the fact that they have displayed their plays in different backgrounds yet they have created various awareness of the various happenings that have taken place in the society.

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