Comparative Indian Literature: an approach to a School

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ABSTRACT: Comparative Literature is a holistic study of literature that defies boundaries of nation or language. It tries to look at world literature in terms of similarities, dissimilarities, and historical relations and map the interactions between them. It is fact that, there are some essential differences among the ideologies and cultures of different countries. Different individualities must have to reconstruct comparative methodologies leading with their own canon. It was the turning point of comparative literature, where the different schools like France, American and Chinese etc. had been developed. Indian literature has also been an individuality of thinking. On the other hand, there are a number of languages in India, each of them has carried regional own ship and of course the unsound agreement of unity in diversity. An Indian mind is always flash out from the inside of any regional language. Undoubtedly, any regional literature of India must have to be recognized as a true Indian literature. Indian literatures have a specific twofold appeal, which demand for a new critical analysis to judge their status. In the true sense, Comparative study of India must have to be claim for an own canon of methodology and which must be recognized as comparative Indian school.

KEYWORDS: Comparative Literature, Ethnic Identity, Indian Philosophy, Methodology, Nationality, School

I. INTRODUCTION

Indian Literature is an assortment of various multiplicities from its foundation; it is a mosaic construction of language and culture. This kind of generous and supple experiences directly encountered with the idea of comparative study. However Indians are socialized by an unseen thread of harmony. A new trend has developed among the Indian people to discover their own root and try to realize own selves. Not only they become closer to each other as well as inspired to identify their self-origin also. As a result of this occurrence stretched in the idea of unity in diversity. Though, there are a number of languages in Indian, each and every regional literature has carried the unsound agreement of unity in diversity. An Indian mind is always flash out from the inside of the any regional language. In a true sense, every regional literature of India must have to be recognized as a true Indian literature. In the proposed paper have tried to be discovered that particular stand point of India and search for a new canon of India's own comparative school of literature.

Review of Literature:

There are a number of books found about Comparative Indian Literature. Those books are—Indranath Choudhury's Comparative Indian Literature—Some Perspective, Swapan Majumdar's Comparative Literature: Dimension, K. AyyapaPanikar's Spotlight on Comparative Indian Literature, Umasankar Joshi's Indian

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Literature: Personal Encounters (1988)etc. Buddhadev Basu, Sisir Kumar Das, Sarojini Naidu, Sarbapalli Radhakrisnan, V.K. Gokak, Suniti Kumar Chetterji and many other great Scholars have enlightened the concept of Indian literature. In Assamese also have found books on comparative Indian literature—Prafulla Kataky's Tulanamulak sahity Aru Anubad Vicar, Nirajana Mahanta Bezbora's Tulanamulak Sahity: Siddhanta aru Prayog, Tulanamulak Bharatiya Sahity, Patabhumikat Tulanamulak Sahitya, Karabi Deka hazarika's Tulanamulak sahity aru Anubad-kala, Nagen Saikia's one article "Tulanamulak Sahity". Though, Tulanamulak Sahityattwa by Pallavi Deka Buzarboruah has included an article about the possibility of a Comparative Indian school, still have not found any other discussion gone towards the idea of Comparative Indian School in a large scale.

Aims and Objectives of the study:

Indian literatures have a specific twofold appeal of unity in diversity, which demand for a new methodology to judge their status. Certainly there must be raised a question that may one regional literature will be the representative of the complete Indian literature? Then the answer have pointed to the direction of the sources of common origin—

- Ethnic groups with their same history of migration to different Indian places
- A thousand years old common history of Indian regional languages
- An equal and common level of development of literary isms, trend and tendencies
- A common history of socio-political, economic and cultural movements
- It disclosed that literature of any Indian language is proficient to establish complete Indian literary Characteristic. In this way, an environment of comparative study has been created. It is clear that comparative study can be discovered the unity in diversity of Indian literature in a proper methodology.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To discover an comparative Indian school this paper have gone through two phase of methods—

- [1] Historiography analysis
- [2] Comparative analysis

The study will go through a systematic evaluation of the records and documents of the history of Indian literature and a comparative investigation of the Indian theories and criticisms as well as the outsider trend and tendencies. And it must have to be tried to reach at the proposed hypothesis.

III. COMPARATIVE CONTEXT OF INDIAN LITERATURE

Indian literature has a virtuous and well-made beginning from the root of its own origin. Afterwards the number of cultural exchanges have made by several modes of communication from the other part of the world; not only from the west but from the middle-east and south-east also. These components, which customized an encompassing foundation for every regional language of Indian literature—

• Folk Tradition

- Standard Tradition—Sanskrit and Dravidian
- Western Tradition—European, Islamic, Christian and others
- Post-Colonial Tradition—Thinking of Third World Identity²

The above mentioned elements have formed a unique Cultural heritage for Indian literature. It is true that, the style and function of the Indian mentality have made with many other constituent components. For example, linguistic growth and development of the regional literatures of India have also conveyed a common tradition from the very beginning. Though, there is no any concrete definition to define Comparative Indian Literature separately. Still the unique quality of every regional literature is reflected in unity along with diversity. This is the strong-minded perspective of India, which has made a strong background for comparative study of literature.

IV. TRADITIONAL CRITICISM OF INDIAN LITERATURE AND COMPARATIVE METHODOLOGY

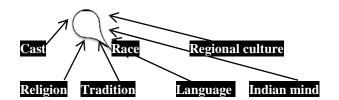
Probably, the tradition of Indian criticism was starting from 200 B.C.in Bharat's "Natyasastra" Bharat was the first critic, who had placed the construction of "Rasa" with performance of drama. Exponent Abhinaba Gupta had explained about "Rasa" that, it is an absorptive state of mind of a reader, who has whole-hearted devotion to the text of literature. Indian philosophy had believed that the Supreme power of the whole creation is the ultimate goal of men and that supreme creator had been recognized as God. Behind the whole creation of the universe have found the infinite divine power. Despite the fact that the creatures are known as soul and the creator of the whole creation is known as the supreme soul. In "Taittiria Upanisada" God, the supreme soul, which is defined as "Brhma" also. On the other hand, "Brhma" is the source of unlimited "Rasa"⁴, and in the same time "Rasa" is the supreme source of love, beauty, joy and truth. When a reader had felt his soul inside the literature, at that same moment he had also been reached at the state of self-desired pleasure. Some essential human needs related to hunger- sensation and some fundamental human feelings of heart, like happiness-sadness, achievementdisappointment, aspiration-depression, love-hatred, pleasure-pain and many other feelings are almost the same in everywhere of the world. When a reader discovers himself in literature with his own desired composition of sensitivities, then it is mingled together only one fact, i.e. pleasure of mind. According to Manmath Bhatta, it is an unexplainable touch of fluidity, which can disappeared every kind of painful experiences and knowledge.⁵ Its magic flow leaded

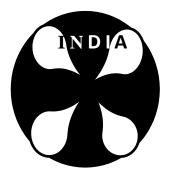
forward the reader to the unlimited joy. As a critical term, "Rasa" is complicated, but it has presented problems of Indian tradition. However, in its most basic sense, it means "aesthetic pleasure" and comprehended to relate the other ideas. Nevertheless, the joy producing creative supremacy is the source of unlimited beauty also. It was discussed before also that, the Indian philosophy had been believed at the supremacy of extreme power "Paramatma" as the source unlimited love, joy, beauty and ultimate truth. Particularly in this magnificent point of Indian philosophy is different from the west. Consequently the Aesthetic theory of the west must also be

poled apart from the east. In the context of beauty a number of differences have had in the Aesthetic theories of the east with the west. In spite of all the critics of both east and west have reached in a common opinion, i.e. unannounced share of beauty is more important than the announced one. After a long discussion it is come to light that, the concept of "beauty" of west is similar to the concept of "Rasa" of east. It is noteworthy, while the western critics are used the word "beauty" for a visualize Glory, in the same time the eastern theory of "Rasa" had been produced a mood of pleasure, which is inexpressible and it is recognized as "Chamathakar" or "Saundryya". American methods of comparative school have wanted to justify the "beauty" as the literary quality point, whichever made the literature as true literature. Thus, the Indian comparative method can be provided the "Rasa" as the qualifying scale for justification of literature.

V. MOSAIC ASSORTMENT OF INDIAN FEATURE

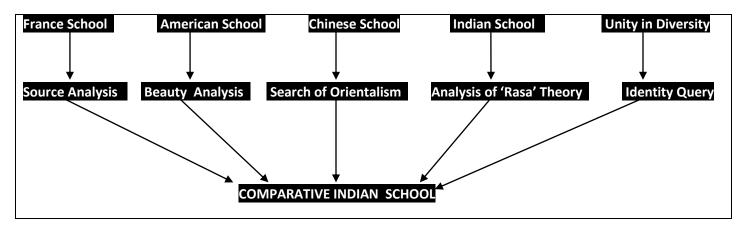
India is a colorful combination of language, religion, races and the ethnic groups. The Indian people have transmitted from generation to generation a stunning heritage with many customs and ethics from the pre historic period. Though, there are countless diversities have its places from the very beginning of the Indian identity. In spite of such multiple atmospheres people of India are equal in their inner-tune. The multiple culture of India is the potential source of anarchism, but it is not a self-creator of any inconsistency. Though, some confusions are created and raised by some evil power (may be some political or some religion oriented) now and then, all of the Indian are dwelling together with love and peace. In the same place people lives in India with innumerable identities of Language, religion, race, ethnicity along with every one's individual abilities of educational, occupational, economic, political and also many other self- distinctiveness. Gradually reflection of all these contradictory issues and their effectiveness are going to be increased in Indian literature. In this context, the area and perspectives of the comparative study of Indian literature raised to be more important. India's mosaic status is almost like a colorful flower given below. Every part of this flower contains same elements with own nature along with the national identity. Each of the region or small parts of India has individualities with the similarities.





France school of Comparative literature always had stressed on the methodology of historiographical study. 8 Indian comparative methodology had also been preferred to accept that methodology of historiographical study. In the same time Indian comparative methodology had also been inspired by the "*Orientalism*" favored by Chinese comparative study. 9 Comparative Indian Literature itself is a holistic study of all regional literatures, which defines anonymous boundaries of religion, casts and races with regional traditions, cultures and languages.

Grounds for a Comparative Indian School: India is a resourceful area for comparative study. An extensive history of the Indian civilization with variety of ethnic elements has claimed for the source originated methodology of France school of comparative literature. It has been discussed before that, Indian perspective privileged to discover the ultimate beauty of literature, which is similar to American methodology of comparative study. From the time immemorial Indian cultural heritage has respected beauty as the important element of the "Rasa", the unlimited source of fulfilled aspiration. The Indian philosophy of pleasure may also be oriented with the concept of "Beauty". It is clearly defined that the ethnic mosaic variation of India itself is a thrust source for comparative study. How, when and why the ethnic groups were originated, its growth and development and its migration to one place to another—are the important queries for research, The Chinese thinking of "Orientalism" have also been merged with it, from which raised a number of new areas for analyze and have claimed for a own comparative methodology of Indian Comparative Study. The proposed Indian school of comparative literature might be emphasized on—



To explore following aims given below—

- o Pluralistic nature of Indian culture in literature
- o Ethnic-conflict, identity crisis as well as the mutual understanding among the inhabitants.
- Cultural innovation and reconstruction of Indian literature
- o Relation of Indian literature with history, geography, economics and politics.
- O Search of the unseen bond of national integration

VI. INDIAN LITERATURE IN THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Indian literature has a long glorious past of four thousand years old oral literary tradition and one thousand years written literature. Indian history is the evidence of the growth and development of the Indian literature. Almost all the Indian regional languages have produced from the Sanskrit in the same time with a same beginning. It was thirteen century, when the regional literatures were going to be developed from the Sanskrit tradition and it had been continued for a long time before the British entrance to India. For instance, during a same period the great epics the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* were recreated from Sanskrit to each and every regional languages of India.

The stream of other great Indian classics, mainly the Veda, the Upanishad, the Bhagavata, the Jatakamala as weas the great creations of Kalidasa etc. were moved over from Sanskrit into regional languages. In this way, several elements were transported from one source language to another through different approaches and these were received in any Indian language as motif, theme, forms, style, character, dialogue, plots etc. The images of Rama, Sita, Karana, Krisna, Arjun, Draoupadi, Radha, Ravan, Bibhishan, Sakuni, Manthara etc. are used in different mood and style in the todays Indian literature also. For example, recurrent use of the themes in modern Indian literatures like, Destiny of Karana, harassment of Draoupadi, Love of Krisna and Radha etc. On the other hand, love, respect, abandon, integration, mercy, sympathy and many other the values of Indian ethics are reflected with an equal attention in all literatures from any regional corner of India. Because the Indian mind have been built up by a stunning rich heritage of noble moral and ethical beliefs. Instead of India's own traditional stream of literary elements Indian literature have also been enriched by some external trend and tendencies.

- Middle-eastern
- o Western
- South-eastern

Middle-eastern:

The Persian trend of *Sufiism* underwent another considerable change towards the end of the seventeenth century. The total Persian influence flooded the subcontinent with Islam, Sufi thought, syncretic values, literature, education and a number of other elements have also been received from the Persian literature to Indian literature spontaneously. ¹⁰ In the meantime, encouraged writers of the both countries to exchange not only the common literary elements, like stories, plots, characters, dialogues etc.; but to receive the component of varieties also, like—the motifs, themes, style, forms, words as well as the philosophy and culture. For example,

Plot or Story: "SahaporiUpakhyan", "Madhumalatti", "Hatim-tai" "Alibaba aour challis chor" etc **Philosophy:** Lyrics of "Jikir" and "Jari" created by Ajaan-peer, he had adopted the idea of "Suphism" with the Vaisnav philosophy of Assam. Kabir, Suradas (The great saints of North India) and many others also had been inspired by that "Suphism". The "Gajals" were also practiced with the inspiration of "Suphism".

Recreation: Fitzeral was translating of Omar khayam's "*Rubai-yat*" from Arabic to English. And then many Indian poets from different regional languages had translated "*Rubai-yat*" from the Fitzeral's Englishversion. Jatindranath Duwara, the renown poet of Assam had been translated it into Assamese as "*Omar Tirtha*".

Words used in different Indian languages: Kalam, Dowat, dawat, kayamat, Owkalatnama, Tahsildar, Phoujadar, Raham, Dariya, Owkil, kurbani Dard, Phakir, Mehphil, Majlis, Masjid, Dargah, Manjil etc.Type Themes like "The love of Laila-Majnu", "Faith on today, not tomorrow", "Concept of Madhusala" etc.

Western:

In the latter 18th and 19th century British were entering to India almost for commercial purpose. But they had not taken time to convert themselves to possessor, they had been occupied the provinces politically and colonized with a calculating strategy. Just because of that sudden storm Indian woke up to discover own selves. During this ill-fated rude period British had begun to exploit Indian. On the other hand, they began to identify own ill traditions, like "sati", child- marriage, illiteracy, untouchability and exploitation of widow etc. In the light of new education educated Indian leaded a movement to lift up mass people from the darkness. In the same time, some of the Indian had tried to invent their own origin. They had been attempting to re-invent their old Indian classic traditions, like—the Vedic, the Upanisadic, the Buddhist, the Vaisnavite etc. Subsequently, there had been grown-up a great change each and every corner of the Indian society—in nationality, religion, culture, education, philosophy, sociology and so forth. These changes had reflected in the Indian society along with the literature and cultures. In Assamese literature have also various examples of the renaissance.

For example:

- a) New printing and editing version of the old manuscripts in the regional languages, like—the Gita, the Bhagavat, the Mahabharat, the Ramayana etc.
- b) Production of Dictionaries, Grammars and Text books etc.

This new trend and tendencies had aimed to reach in the human and humankind, and then the philosophy of European humanity was merged with the Indian ideology of "religion of man". ¹¹ A great uprising incident was carrying a number of changes to literature and there had been developed some new literary genres, like—lyrics, odds, sonnets, short stories, novels, biography, auto-biography etc.

For example:

- a) In Lyrics: Like Chandrakumar Agarwala, Lakshminath Bezbaroa, Hemchandra Goswami in assamese language and Biharilal chakravarti, Bankimchandra, Rabindranath Tagore in Bangloi language etc., many other poets of every Indian language had been run-through this genre.
- b) Short Stories: In hindi Premchand, in Bangla Bankimchandra, Sartchandra, Rabindranath, in

- Assamese Lakshminath Bebaroa, Sarat Goswami etc. were the eminent writers of this age.
- c) Autobiography: In Bangla Rabindranatha Tegore's "Jiban-smriti", in assaese Lakshminatha Bezbaroa's "Mor Jivan Snowaran" etc.

In fact, during this period total Indian society and culture had been completely turned towards a new viewpoint. Entire literary occurrence of this era had also created a rich comprehensive area for comparative study of literature among the Indian languages.

South-eastern:

In the ancient period Buddhist culture is the only cause of conversations between China and India. After that it was seen that, the Indian Buddhist pioneers had visited China to promote Buddhism and then the Chinese explorers also had been come to India. In this way the inter- exchanged approaches were started between two countries. The instance, of Faxian (Fa-Hsien, Fa Hien)'s pilgrimage to India during the period of the king Chandragupta II (between 399 and 414 CE) with a number of Chinese monks. The incident itself is a great evidence of inter-conversation between India and China. Faxian entered India from the north-west side and then had reached at Pataliputra and he was staying in India for 6 years. He took back with him Buddhist texts and images sacred to Buddhism. ¹² Xuan Zang the 2nd Chinese monk went to India to seek out Buddhism. He is world-famous for his sixteen-year pilgrimage to India and the noble career as a translator of Buddhist scriptures, is one of the most illustrious figures in the history of educational Chinese Buddhism. Xuanzang had studied Sanskrit and Brahmana philosophy at Nalanda . He had also been studied hetu-vidya (logic), and the other texts such as the Mahayana-sutralamkara (Treatise on the Scripture of Decorating the Great Vehicle), and Madhyamika ("Middle-east") policies in India. ¹³ Thus, the streams of reciprocal responses to each other hade made not only a shared bridge between China and India, but the tendency of mutual exchanges had also been extended to all over the South-eastern countries. With this the proposed comparative Indian school may have got a new dimension for study of literature.

Assamese Literature in Indian length: All the Indian literature written in regional languages represent equal quantity of common specific points. Each and every Indian regional literature has had some own ship with an open Indian mind. They had been living in their own place with their own local culture. From the time immemorial, Assamese literature has carried their local tune along with the great Indian heritage. There is an extra hypothesis also occurred in Assam, i.e. the percentage of mongoloid element is very high in Assam. Thus, the ethnic combination of assimilation is different in Assam from the other Indian states. Undoubtedly, the situations have created a new dimension to study of Assamology. It must have to be spread over to Assamese literature to judge its own ship within the Indian phenomenon.

Though, the above discussion has revealed a strong idea to recognize a methodology of the comparative Indian literature. It has also been cleared that the comparative methodology of Indian literature for each and every regional language is almost the same. But, there had been found certain extent a different scenario in the case

of Assam, i.e. a different Ethno-linguistic approaches of the Tibetan-Barman language and cultures. The complete representation of this absorption has mark in Assam along with the north-eastern region an extraordinary individuality than other parts of India. Therefore, Assam itself is a more potential, more thrust area for comparative study of its literature, language, culture and so forth.

Assamese Literature in regional perspective: Assam is not only a colorful mosaic of ethnic races; it has also been incorporated by the different castes, sub-castes, religions with their own individuality. From this very angle, Assam may be called a little India. Today, innumerable distrust has developed among the people of Assam from different reason and from different sources, like politics; from which have grown some unknown doubt in relationship among the people of Assam. Currently a destructive hunger to self- existence have been developed an identity crisis among the inhabitants. Nowadays identity crisis is a developing hazardous problem of society in all over the world. In the same time people have also been inspired to reach at the national integration. They wanted to discover own individuality in front of the mirror of re-designed ethnic identification once again. Lastly, they have observed a unique and special depending demand to each other within their own mind; they have also been realized that the unity is the ultimate foundation of all these diversities. Unquestionably literature is the accurate mirror of the society i.e. the events of the society have been revealed in Assamese literature. Thus, all literatures of Assam have written either in Assamese or in the dialects must have to be reflected the Indian mind. The comparative methodology is the proper choice of demand of the present platform to define "unity in diversity".

VII. FINDINGS

Ultimately, it has come to light that, India is a resourceful zone for comparative study of literature. On the basis of the following outputs unquestionably Comparative Indian Literature must have got the recognition as Indian school of comparative literature.

The long history of Indian literature with a great heritage of multicultural tradition have to be demanded for the source-invented historiographical study of literature, which was the initial leading point of the France School of comparative literature. Indian philosophy believes that the supreme power "Brahma" is the creator of the whole universe. "Brahma" is unique and ultimate source of endless "Rasa" with truth, beauty and love. So, the ethics of love, brotherhood, unity, equality, non-violence, trust are the directions to reach the ultimate goal of "Rasa". This particular ideology of Indian philosophy has to be merged with the key-idea of American school of comparative literature, i.e. identification of "beauty" is must be the base of the judgment of literature. In china, Spirit of the orientalism have been supported to identify own ethnic origin and it was the conscious influence of the Chinese school of comparative literature. In India have also found the same feature on the colonial perspective, which must to be created an equal circumstance for developing orientalism. Thus the Indian comparative study of literature had adopted the idea of orientalism to justify their literature.

The own colorful mosaic surface of India is another point of view with a different importance, which is

the main distinctiveness of Indian culture "unit y in di versit y'. It has been created an individual area for comparative study for its own. It has been clearly defined that the above mentioned four points must be inserted goal for the study of literature in India. From this a distinct comparative methodology with a concrete canon have found in India. Undoubtedly, this methodology must have to be known as comparative Indian school.

Suggestions:

From the above discussion a number of outcomes have rose to define. Comparative school of Indian literature, itself has stand on the foundation of a pluralistic nature of Indian culture, i.e. the reflection of ethnic-conflict, identity crisis as well as the mutual understanding among the people etc. Actually the assignment of comparative Indian school might to be governed by the followings reconstructed cultural aspects.

- ❖ Pluralistic nature of Indian culture in literature
- * Reason and the solution of ethnic-conflict
- ❖ Fact of the identity among the inhabitants of India
- ❖ Points of assimilation.
- ❖ Cultural innovation and reconstruction of the Indian literature
- ❖ Inter-disciplinary relationship of literature, history, geography, economics and politics
- ❖ Quest for an unseen bond of national integration

VIII. CONCLUSION

Indeed there is a creative thrust area for comparative study of literature and culture of India, from which itself to be raised a response for an own methodology to study of literature and has demand for a different measuring canon of literary analysis. Undeniably, that exclusive platform of comparative study of Indian literature should be declared as Indian school of Comparative literature.

End Notes:

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