

A Comparative Study of Short Story and Radio Drama: an Evaluation of M.K. Binodini's Sagol Sanabi and Shriban Chingolgi Tamnalai

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ABSTRACT: *In this manuscript, analysis about the closed relationship between short story and radio drama, giving the examples of Manipuri writer M.K. Binodini's Sagol Sanabi (short story) and Shriban Chingolgi Tamnalai (radio drama).*

KEYWORDS: *Manipuri Language, Manipuri radio drama, Manipuri short story, Indian radio drama.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Structurally the script of a radio play is much closer to that of a modern short story than to a stage play. That is why, most of the successful Indian radio-plays have been written by the writers of short stories than by the writers of stage plays.

(Chiranjit*, Indian Radio Drama, P: 6)

*Chiranjit, Chief Producer, Drama, Directorate General All India Radio, New Delhi.

The frame-work of the script in a radio-drama is nearer to the script of a modern short story than a stage play. Hence most successful scripts of Indian Radio-drama are generally written by short story writer. We may take up M.K. Binodini's "SHRIBAN CHINGOLGI TAMNALAI" (The Evil Spirit of Shriban Hill) and "SAGOL SANABI" (a type of Indigenous horse found in Manipur, a state of India; its colour was combined of Red and Black) as an example in the context of Manipur.

II. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

M.K. Binodini is a well-known writer decorated with many laurels including Sahitya Akademi Award, New Delhi, India. In fact, one may say that there is no genre of literature which this writer has not tried her hand. After taking the consent from All India Radio, Imphal this writer's SHRIBAN CHINGOLGI TAMNALAI, was published in the souvenir of Manipur theatre in 1968, in the original script of the radio play. This Radio Drama was successfully broadcasted in AIR, Imphal with the first Manipuri producer of radio drama, Nongmaithem Sudhir taking the responsibility of the production.

People know this writer more as a short story, namely SAGOL SANABI has been newly included along with other two short stories in the second edition of the short story book entitled NUNGAIKAKTA CHANDRAMUKHI published in 1967, this has also been broadcasted in the programme of short stories in AIR.

In the type of play known as radio drama, instead of witnessing the elements like a character, stage; acts, scenery, acting etc. are expressed only through auditory method. In this the events are created mentally and perceived through the hearer with the help of the ear. We may examine the essential features or the structure of a radio drama as opined by the well known producer Chiranjit:

Besides the narrative dialogue, a radio-play has many other essential features, which clearly differentiate it from a stage-play. For example, a radio-play is not bound by the unities of place and the time and unnatural frames of acts and scenes. Like a short –story writer, the writer of a radio –play can range through space and time at will. He can probe into the intricate mysteries of the subconscious mind and present the realms of fantasy convincingly. Brevity, clarity and natural flexibility and flow are the essential qualities of a radio-play. Since the listener is at liberty to switch off the radio-set whenever he/she likes, it is imperative that the opening of the story in a radio-play should be effective and gripping. It is also essential to get the action moving without any delay, with marked element of suspense. There is no scope for preambles, prologues, paddings and side-plots. The success of a radio-play lies in gripping the attention of the listener at once. Likewise, the end should also be capable of leaving a lasting effect on the listener's mind. (Chiranjit, Indian Radio Drama, P: 6)

When we closely examine the above point, it can be known that most of the necessary ingredients and the qualifications of a short story are also present in the radio drama.

In a short story also the person who has been reading from the beginning should be made to yearn more, feel anxious and provide pleasure. The story line should flow down without any hesitation. In the view point of the western writer, the father of the short story, Edgar Allan Poe in 1842 criticized Nathaniel Hawthorne's 'Twice Told Tales' in this way

The Prose tale' as a narrative which can be read at one sitting of from half an hour to two hours, and is limited to 'certain unique or single effect' to which every detail is subordinate.

(M.H. Abrams, A Glossary of Literary Terms, P:25)

This opinion of Allan Poe is accepted by critics by applying to short stories. According to Allan Poe the short story should be fully completed read without changing the seat, it should be enjoyed within one or two hours. The purpose on the goal of the short story should be an incomparable effect. This is what Allan Poe often mentions as a certain unique or single effect. The thing or theme shown should be only one or as less as possible, there should be an awakening in a part of reader's life and that should be complete by itself. In the art of the short story the writer should built up the theme in the necessary parts, the ending should be seen in the beginning. The language of the writer should be sparingly or minimum.

It is necessary for both short story and radio drama to make the chain of events to be short and characters to be less. In fact it can be seen that in both these arts one can know the similar glory in the features. The theme of this writer's Radio drama and short story is the same. It is based on the Romantic and Ideal man-woman relationship by keeping a horse in the centre. As it is said that the tiger can be found at un-expected places, the writer tries to show that in the heart of a man hated and scorned by the people, there may be a soft spring of Love. People cannot identify the good parts of those people who indulge in slaughter and who accept stolen goods. They never think that in the heart of such people also there is the emotion of love.

As there are pearls inside the fearful depth of the ocean, with the passage of time the rowdy stolen goods, the well known Mangi continues to love Sakhi who has been loved from his childhood even after she was divorced and returned home after being a wife at Imphal. Although Mangi can express his courage and power in stealing and other crimes, he can never express his love to Sakhi other than showing some sign and gesture. As Sakhi has never pondered even for a single that there would room for love in the insensitive heart of Mangi, she comes along without knowing Mangi's love for her, at all this Mangi's curious, he wants to convey his love only once to Sakhi. This desire for communicating his love is this gift of the writer, The Radio Drama and the short Stories, the two different genres.

Radio Plays provide hearing, the speakers cannot be seen, only the voice is heard. The difference of radio drama from the stage drama is only the style of writing. To compose a radio drama is similar to portray a beautiful picture using words and sounds. In radio drama, the stage is represented by the Micro-phone. Here, scenes are not much important, the actions are communicated through voice, music, and sound effect. An entertaining play can be built up in the mind of attentive listeners and by attracting the mind of listeners, a good taste can be given successfully.

The laws of drama as regard concentration, plot, characterization and so on all apply with equal force to radio drama. (Marjorie Boulton, The Anatomy of Drama, P: 25)

It is agreed that what is seen differently in the stage and the presentation of the stage drama and radio drama's ingredients are still there. In the western view point a drama has been classified into six elements. They are plot, character, dialogue, atmosphere, style and outlook. In the above elements of the drama, many elements of the short stories are also there. A Short Story is one of the very progressing and developing freely branch of literature. Hence Short Story are also growth out and criticize. It is because the radio drama and short stories of the writer made completed to the goal reaching discussion.

According to E.M. Foster, the plot is a garlanding of the events. This should be reasonable, The first event should be a reason which leads to another event which could not stop emerging, making it the second reason, the event should be the cause revealing events, this can be seen in the two creations of the writer completely.

The Writer's radio drama 'Shribanchingolgitamnalai' is shown in five acts. In the first act, it is shown that the female character Sakhi has been married at Imphal and is a divorced woman who has returned home. It is also shown how the protagonist Mangi adores Sakhi and how Sakhi cannot perceive a single sign; this reveals the difference in the two hearts. Sakhi and Mangi met after a long time the short way near the edge of the hill. Sakhi yearns to reach home soon. If Mangi did not carry her heavy baggage, she would not be able to reach home. It is her good luck that she met Mangi. But she feels afraid when going with Mangi as she regards Mangi as a rowdy and as time was late. As a part of the story Banyan tree is brought in, darkness is the cause of all secrets and mysteries. This lonely situation may be easier for Mangi to carry out wrong behavior. His love sick heart is shown not only in carrying the baggage also in his love for Sakhi from his early childhood, whom he loves even after she returns home as a divorcee.

The Second Act of this drama is brought out as the consequence of the first act. His loud cry that he would come to see the banyan tree indicates that he wants to become closer with Sakhi and offer communicate his romantic heart. To meet and come closer with Sakhi, he comes to borrow Sakhi's father horse for riding in a

Kangjei Game or polo. Sakhi's father doesn't want to give the horse as he knows Mangi to be a rowdy character. Because of this, Mangi goes away challenging Sakhi's father's that it would be good if he is recognized. The conflict between Mangi and Sakhi's father shown in the second Act is used as the consequence of the earlier scene the nagging of Mangi's heart increases, the father and daughter regard him as a burglar, stolen good buyer, a man who can lead seven untamed buffaloes. Hence, it is his inexpressible love for Sakhi, refusal of borrowing the horse in his attempt to come closer with the daughter. The horse not kept in the stable as it is thought to be surely stolen from the front part of the bedroom and revealed the theft by a sneering laughter. Thus, SagolSanabi was stolen.

In the fourth act, the effort of the father to find the horse and the unhappiness felt by the father and daughter at the loss of the horse is shown. During the Second World War, Mangi became friendly with a soldier, Mangi has drawn in the forearm two lotus leaves pierced with an arrow indicating that it craves at the banyan tree of near Sakhi's house. As the soldier has said he also says that the carving was the hearts of he and his beloved. Mangi has not carved it in a mad moment not finding the right place, he had tried to show by sign his love and desire for Sakhi. To console her fear, Mangi tells her that the evil spirit of Shriban hill was not a black god but a white god. Wanting to show that he was not the man known by others as a terrible evil spirit, he asks her to sit without being far from him by expressing that he was a man with a heart and was ready to point out the banyan tree. Sakhi's thought was only to watch his house. She thinks whatever Mangi said to be a meaningless babbling and as he thought nothing about what Mangi has carved she answered that she was not the keeper of the Banyan tree and she knew nothing. Sakhi urges again and again that they should go as she was more afraid of Mangi than the thick woods. The reason for Sakhi's fear for Mangi is that when she came from the pond with a wet dress Mangi stares with a laughter; this is more important reason for fearing Mangi who has been fear and hatred from the before. At this stage Mangi was said to be wise intelligent and handsome but a point was brought in that his becoming worse is related with Sakhi and Sakhi's father's defect. Mangi dropped Sakhi upto the gate and shouted that one day he would come to watch the Banyan Tree.

In the first part it is shown that Mangi, the person known as a decoit and a thief has also a heart. Mangi who buys stolen goods and survived by stealing others properties, whom he has yearned for a long time, drops Sakhi, upto her gate without touching her body or a single hair. Sakhi's father cannot directly accuse Mangi though he has not seen Mangi, though the voice of the thief sounded like Mangi. If he complaint to the police he might not have found his horse in his life. He doesn't want to make a request to Mangi. So he sends someone to compromise. A new character called 'Sajou' the maternal uncle of Sakhi is brought in. Urging Mangi to search the horse Mangi dilly-dillies saying he would give or will not give, demanding 200 rupees or saying that he could not find or saying that he was not a man who liked money showing that he is not trying and he is not ready or thinking to give. In this act Sakhi's father agrees that he has not given the horse to Mangi because of his rowdy character. They had come to settle at the village during the war. After the war Mangi went to the school at Chingmeirong. Mangi's father also entrusted Mangi to Sakhi's father to teach his son. The land they were staying was also very cheaply sold by Mangi's father. After the death of his parent Mangi's took to stealing. Thinking this Sakhi's father's heart melted and he started loving Mangi. The horse cannot be found, everyone knows Mangi is the thief. It is natural that the horse will be found if he searches it. The writer, in the fifth act makes Sakhi's come at Mangi's house after thinking about her father's sorrow. When the person he desires comes Mangi pretends not to see or take interest in his work. This is known to Sakhi also. Mangi tells Sakhi with an argument that he was not a horse thief. He uses a comparison by saying that if she can believe what others say about stealing the horse, will others believe if it is said that Mangi loves Sakhi. Sakhi is mixed with pity and shame and promises to go away as they have settled, as the place was suitable for horse rearing.

As they are expelled for stealing the horse we find a part of the climax in this act. The listeners think whether Sakhi will go away without knowing the riddle of Mangi. Mangi in this situation asks Sakhi to wait and come back in the backyard. Sakhi is afraid and doesn't like to go. Between this two different minds, what Mangi could not express for a long time, is expressed by clever magic words by refreshing the heart of every listener.

Mangi- Don't be afraid, I will do nothing to you. How evil am I? What have I done to you! Look Sakhi, I won't touch you though you are other's property... come follow me... isn't my vegetable bed beautiful, I can't even look after it. I plan to rear fish by digging a pond in a corner, by rearing chicken in another corner. But it is never possible. I cannot even repair this house ... Why should I repair this home? This is better.

(M.K. Binodini, ShribanChingolgiTamnalai, P: 14)

This brings to the stage of making Sakhi ponder. Instead of feeling disgust on Mangi, her heart is being slowly conquered by Mangi's pretending very cleverly that he is keeping the hays in a row. He expresses indirectly that the hidden horse was not taken deliberately but to show his capability. The external argumental conflict between them is brought in an internal condition. Mangi expresses the mistake of his being wrongly taken and expresses that he is also a man who wants to marry and by spending life as a simple and truthful man. Mangi doesn't take the amount of Rs.200 which Sakhi gave him after going with the horse and returning again. But he says that if he determines to steal he can steal not only the horse but also Sakhi, so she should take away both the horse and money. At this moment which looks like lack of communication, the two hearts suddenly

start communicating and Sakhi starts thinking for Mangi. Sakhi pretends to be angry and says that she will not take the horse as the money is not taken by Mangi. Hearing that, Mangi tells her to keep the horse carefully, he expresses his desire for Sakhi to come and stay near him. By saying his heart's message that if she comes to search the horse frequently, the horse will be lost regularly. He tells her to keep him at her house as the stable keeper not to get the horse lost, than the horse as well as himself will not be lost. This is an expression of his lonely and the isolated sorrow. At that time Sakhi laughs and expresses her beginning of knowing Mangi's love by saying 'Shall we do that?' At that moment, Mangi tells her to leave the horse as he will bring the horse and entrust it to her father. Then throws to Sakhi the amount of Rupees 200 by saying that the price of love which his heart desires is different from the price of the horse. This shows that Mangi wants to keep a good relationship with his teacher-like father of Sakhi. As Sakhi has started knowing the image of love which has been stored in his heart, he wants to make her father also know the true picture in his heart. Thus, the writer completely builds up the plot of the radio drama by her skilled style of writing. It will not be too much to say that the events of the short story and the Radio Drama are equal though there may be some difference in the beginning or the end. In the short story, the lost of SagolSanabi is the beginning. The sorrow in the lost of the horse and the possible reason of the horse being lost are expressed through the dialogue of the father and the daughter. Through the use of flashback technique, the writer skillfully builds up Sakhi's fear and disgust for Mangi, Mangi's seducing her from the Shri Ban Chinggol, and during her cooking of rice. By intercepting the remembrance, the writer starts narrating how Sakhi has said that she has not lived at Mataikhul from the beginning of civilization, settling at the village to rear horse, carving of love sign at the Banyan tree, Sakhi's marriage etc. And again she returns to Sakhi's memory and points out that Mangi's outlook is her most disgusting one and starts showing the way Mangi has looked at her when she returns from bathing and how he looks at her as one of the palanquin bearers and returns again to the thought of grief on the loss of SagolSanabi.

The writer also shows how one evening Sakhi, without knowing why, suddenly got up without telling her father and came near Mangi. Mangi became ready to give the horse with a plan when Sakhi started requesting to search for the horse, and Mangi started saying the thought in his heart. In the conclusion of the plot, of this short story, Mangi tore the money bills piece by piece and threw it angrily on the face of Sakhi, Sakhi ran fast with the horse without looking back. Only after reaching her house, she slowly started feeling agony. She didn't feel angry on that. The writer's carefully created words start showing that Sakhi has been loved from a long time by Mangi and Sakhi realizes it ultimately. The writer shows how the two hearts carved on the Banyan tree and the carved scripture became wider and broader, the meaninglessness of the words in the past is compared with the present knowledge and how Mangi's love started enveloping Sakhi's heart. At this stage the little difference in the plot of a radio drama from the short story is shown by the tearing of the Money bills and the running away without the horse. In the plot of this radio drama, it can be seen how in the pace of the story, Mangi's loneliness not being brought up under rules with the death of the father and mother and the people of the village not caring and looking at his condition.

In the plot of this drama, one can systematically see that Mangi was not an evil person, he knew that one should not touch others property, but in his battle for survival, he indulges in stealing, telling lies and buying stolen goods. In the plot of the short story, one cannot find the regret felt by Sakhi's father for Mangi, how they both settled the land from Mangi's father very cheaply, how he had taught Mangi for some time, bringing up a relationship of a student and a teacher. There has been a defect in Sakhi's father and Sakhi as inhabitants of the village when Mangi became a bad man, is clearly shown in the radio drama while this is not clearly mentioned in the short story.

But the short story shows how Sakhi knew what Mangi has carved on the Banyan tree and had seen it after Mangi told her. But in the Radio Drama, the writer shows how Mangi carved, what, why etc. only after Sakhi returns as a married woman to support Mangi's long love for Sakhi as a part of conversation technique. The writer makes the short story through a well planned plot where one can see the beginning, the middle, and the end to make the events complete.

To portray character is the drama's most important and unavoidable ingredient. In the radio drama as well as short story, the character and the plot are not only close but also blended as characters can drive the plot to any place of destination. In both, there is no room for many characters because it is to give a strong emphasis, without making the spectators forget. This writer is extremely skilled in characterization. In this radio drama, the writer enlivens the soul of the play by using four characters only:

Mangi is portrayed as a buyer of stolen goods and indulging in stealing and telling lies in the mind of the people. He is the protagonist of this play showing that despite his mistakes, he wants to convey his love, is generous in the matter of the heart, does not overcome love with desire and thinks that in love, one should sacrifice and not conquer by force. **Sakhi** is portrayed as a home-returned married woman from Imphal and living at a village, who grew up in a wild and free manner. She has the thought of challenging or competing with a man. **Sakhi's Father** is portrayed as a man who regards his property as being valuable, who wants rearing horses with the motto 'I will never do wrong to others and others should not wrong to me' and to live peacefully. Lastly the writer portrays **Sajou** as Sakhi's maternal uncle, who thinks deeply and is very calm.

In the short story, the character of Sajou is not there. But the above three important characters are there and they all take the responsibilities of their roles. In both short story and radio drama, it is shown how Sakhi thinks about challenging Mangi if she was a man, and her returning home after divorce, the difference between man and woman, disrespect of woman by man, the desire for challenging the convention of the society etc. These are done in a very little way most of them cannot bring out their strength as in Arambam Samarendra's Sanatombi.

In the radio drama where the voice is the soul, dialogue is very important. What is said by a character, and whether he is able to express what he wants to reveal is very important. This is to be reported, to the listener that what a character thinks, feels, where they are, what they are doing and how the characters are facing the events happening around. In every stage of this writer's radio drama, there is a big space for dialogue. In the short story also there are characters view, goal, moral etc. conveyed through dialogue. In the short story, the dialogue cannot take all the responsibility of occupying a large area as in the case of a radio drama. Through these dialogues the flow of the story is realistically concentrated in the writer's radio drama and short story.

In both radio drama and short story, the place and time is very important. The writer uses only some short words to express how in a radio drama where the voice is the soul, the parking of a driving bus, the sound of a crowd, the driving away of the bus, the condition of becoming evening and the hour a woman feels unhappy of going alone etc. can be easily shown. Through the skilled expression of the writer, the atmosphere is not diverted and the road is a very unfit road beside a hill can be felt in the mind of the listener. The writer can convey the sequence of how the people talking and walking on the road reach the shore of the pond, the place where the banyan trees grows, and the gate of Sakhi's parental home etc. The writer maintains the time and place in a very balanced way. The writer in both short story and radio drama can describe and carry the listeners or the readers to the particular place and time through her narrative of the lack of civilization in the villages, people changing villages due to war, the desire for rearing horses in the Manipuri society etc.

The writer's garlanding of words and expression of feelings and emotions is a unique and magnificent style. After listening to this radio drama and reading the short story, though one says that both are equal as the story is same, the different taste can be seen from the writer's style of expression and writing. The title is given by projecting on the horse in the short story and by projecting on Mangi in the radio drama. It is natural that radio drama has got more advantage in getting a chance to become closer with Mangi as a man. In short story the reader has to search the lost horse with Sakhi among the different memory and recollections of her past life. The strange thing is that the same story can give different taste through the two different style or genre of writing.

The writer makes the readers and listeners etc. see clearly in the beginning how as different from stage drama the style of a radio drama can make events known through certain words in economic expressions. In fact, Binodini is a very skilled and creative artist. Her style and quality is like an artist who can paint a beautiful picture with limited colours, she reveals the characters hidden in the heart, behaviour and manner etc. very clearly. In her words and expressions which are like the musical sound of the veena, there is a miracle-like magic. If we examine a moment,

Mangi- I ask 'what this sir is?' He says, 'this are my beloved's heart and my heart, they call their beloved 'sweet Heart'. What was carved at your Banyan is the hearts of my sweet heart and mine. Sweet heart means the heart which is sweet.

Sakhi- My goodness! Are you saying that a heart is sweet?

(M.K. Binodini, Shriban Chingolgi Tamnalai, P:16)

Here the writer uses simple language to show how Mangi uses the knowledge he has gathered from a white man to convey his love for Sakhi. The writer's expression can make the listener's feel realistically that Mangi's sincere love has been clearly imitated. Having a rustic point of view, Sakhi expresses whether a heart is sweet in a surprised way.

In this story arousing the interest for reading begins directly from the backbone, the crisis is kept without diversion, by the end, the real test is clearly preserved. It's the kind of short story where there is a cut in the arrival of boundary suggestively and conclude the story. Some are entrusted to the reader by expressing openly. Let's examine by taking up this situation-

Sakhi quickly runs upto their gate and without looking back by carrying the horse. She doesn't know how long for a while, taking deep breath. The pain on the face is felt only now, she checks it by tracing, but doesn't feel angry. Suddenly she sees the banyan tree standing silently with the two curved hearts even now. The carvings have become much broad. But in the past it was not very clear. (M.K. Binodini, Nungairakta Chandramukhi, P:155)

In love, love to shyness, from loves, becoming unconscious without reason, being nervous etc, always take place. That is why Sakhi ran upto the gate without knowing the extent of time, she is unable to be angry though she feels pain when the horrible and disgusting Mangi hits her with the torn piece of money. She has started loving more at the manner and behavior of Mangi after seeing the banyan where the two hearts are carved. It is in such situation she started loving more at the manner and behavior of Mangi after seeing the

banyan where the two hearts are carved. It is in such situation that the writer who is well known as a short story writer can express the things of the mind more successfully than the language of the Radio Drama, not being annoyed at the pain felt at her face; in radio drama cannot express deeply or show how the unclear carving become more broad and clearer in the view of Sakhi's heart. The artistic quality of the writer can be clearly imparted by the language of the meaningful message of the heart which can be seen easily from the outside but tasty and meaningful. The flow of the plot is made more beautiful by using flash back technique in her radio drama and short story. The writer's language is carried softly like the expression of the heart, the words also become soft or mild, and the listeners and readers also feel anxious and curious about what happens next.

The writer discusses mainly the romantic aspect of the human heart through her radio drama and short story both. The intention of the writer is to show that even in the heart of a man who is unbelievable, there is a tolerable heart which is quite soft. As the Chandramukhi blooms among the pebbles in another short story, there is also a big space of love in the heart of Mangi. What is very successful is that in such a man, there is a stable and immovable love which he had adored from childhood, not to change his love even after returning back after being married without knowing his love, never changing his love, attempting to express whatever he can, his soul becoming satisfied merely by expression, never thinking about using force to the one who is unwilling, the capability of this writer to make everything realistic like in a real event by using a strong pressure is a great success of the writer.

III. CONCLUSION

In Manipur it is rare for short story writers to take more interest in writing Radio Drama. The famous chief producer of Radio Drama, Chiranjit has said that most successful scripts of the radio drama are mostly written by short story writers and there are some greatly successful Manipuri radio drama which have been fully successful in All India Radio Drama Competitions. To provide the evidence, LamabamBiramani's short story 'Atithi' has been adapted into a radio drama by M.K. Binodini, the radio drama called "NongPhadokLakpada" which was translated by I.S. Kangjam as 'KabhiKabhar' in hindi and LongjamJoychandra as 'The Rare Guest' in English and produced by DilipMayengbam, this radio drama won the Best Production Akashvani Award in the AIR Drama Competition 1990. Thus this well known writer of national level short stories of India is also a greatly successful writer of Radio Drama Script.

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