

‘Numoli Kuwori’ – A characteristic illumination

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Nakul Chandra Bhuyan is one of the historical drama writers during the pre-independence period. Assamese stories have been made rich with a large number of short stories including drama compositions like ‘BodonBorphukon’(1924), ‘ChandrakantaSingha’(1901) , ‘Bidrohi Moran’(1938) , ‘NumoliKuwori’(1963) etc.

The story of Nakul Chandra Bhuya’s plays has been established in a destructive backdrop during the last days of ‘Ahom Monarchy’. ‘**NumoliKuwori**’ drama’s timeline order is about 1526. It was in that year that ‘Kachari’ fought with ‘Ahom’ ; ‘NumoliKuwori’ is a historical play written against the backdrop of this war. The main inspiration for the composition of the historical play is respect for patriotism and the past. In this play, the playwright can connect the story of the original history without hurting the story with the help of imagination and they have the freedom to brighten up the dull aspects of history.

Nakul Chandra Bhuyadev says in his ‘NumoliKuwori’ drama’s foreword that –“ There are many small things in the history of Ahom, although the women are not as detailed as men”. There is also seen a few mentions of ‘JoymotiKuwori’ . Many heroines in Assam history can be heard talking about people in their mouths but in history they are not written in a broad way. That’s why i felt that there are not detailed mentions for Maglu’s daughter ‘Sumoli’, ‘Numoli’ and ‘Kumoli’; but they are heard a lot in the mouths of the locals.

According to the old history found in the houses of Dr.SurjyakumarBhuyan, SukumarMahanta ; SwargodeuChuhungmung was unsatisfied with the girl in the KachariRajnagar ‘Itagor’ for six months she was called ‘GoromaKuwori’.GoromaKuwori and NumoliKuwori was the same character or different it was not clearly mentioned in the history. In the magazine ‘Jayanti’ ;Nakul Chandra Bhuya wrote about the local story of ‘NumoliKuwori’ and on that magazine historian BenudhorSarma supported that.SatyendraSarma mentioned in his Assamese drama literature that – “ Probably, GoromaKuwori and NumoliKuwori are the same character”. GoromaKuwori’s past history was not unfamiliar but NumoliKuwori drama’s past history was obscure. Although both character feels the same.

The play about controversial character NumoliKuwori in Assam history is written with a fictional touch by Nakul Chandra Bhuyan based on the nominal mentions and field based studies found in history i.e. local details. The play stars Manipur’s KuworiNumoli in the lead role. To protect him from the attack of Mana, his king sends three daughters with the intention of having a martial relationship with the King of Ahom : Sumoli , Kumoli and Numoli. Manipuri three Kuwori’s after staying in Rajnagar for a few days , a war takes place between Ahom and Kachari.Sumoli and Kumoli already become wives of Kachari King.Numoli is offered marriage by Kachari King’s son but Numoli can’t take the whole thing lightly and becomes a rebel in her mind.Suhungmung’sDihingiaRoja defeats Kochari and rescues Numoli and kept NumoliKuwori as the concubine for six months in Dhanshiri and finally established in Kachari state. Officials

were unhappy with the masculine behaviour of the powerful, self-esteem, conscious Numoli and planned to let her down from the throne of governance, so she jumps into water by ridding a horse and died. 'NumoliKuwori' is the tragic result of an abandonment play.

It introduces a modern mind through the play 'NumoliKuwori'; the main focus of this play is Numoli's character. The character Numoli is a complete fantasy of the playwright, which is made by the author as an exception. Numoli, who seeks female rights in male dominated society has appeared as a proponent of women's liberation. The character Numoli is mentioned only in history.

In the history we found about two talented females in dancing and singing, one is 'GoromaKuwori' and another is 'NumoliKuwori'. Some people want to call both of them as the same person; although 'Goroma' is the queen of the 'Kamata' King 'Nilambar', the daughter of the king of Gaur. According to historian Bhunjadev, Garma and NumoliKunwori are not the same. Therefore, through history and field-based studies, NumoliKunwori is uniquely shaped.

The playwright gives his own look to the story; Numoli is sent by the Manipuri King to the King of Ahom as a gift. On the way Kachari King gets it and detains it. Suhungmung's Dihingia King defeated Kachari and kept NumoliKuwori as the concubine for six months in Dhanshiri and finally established in Kachari state. Officials were unhappy with the masculine behaviour of the powerful, self-esteem, conscious Numoli and planned to let her down from the throne of governance, so she jumps into water by ridding a horse and died. Mainly, this is the main story of Bhuyadev's drama "NumoliKuwori".

In 'NumoliKuwori' we found that not only Numoli was not sent as a gift by the king of **Maglu** (Manipur) but also there were also two sisters '**Sumoli**' and '**Kumoli**' with her. Sumoli and Kumoli, the three women sent to the Ahom king to defend their country from the onslaught of Manar, obeyed the king's order i.e. the father's order, for the welfare of the country. But the proof that Numoli was the exception to this unjust order was found in Numoli's words before the 'Kachari Kingdom' was established. Just for political reasons, despite being his own daughter, for men's bitter hearts they are often used against their wills for this mentality we could get to see a revolutionary mind in Numoli's character.

After the Kachari King Derchengfai's order, '**DekaRoja**' could not make her own even after threatening '**Numoli**' who did not even accept his shadow. As she saw **Tuladoi's** attraction to **Koncheng**, she felt that her hope might be fail so Numoli tell 'KachariKuwori' Tuladoi to protect women's dignity. Again, Tuladoi said Numoli that she had mistakenly become woman for not accepting 'DekaRoja'; Numoli replied: "Don't make mistakes. I am a woman in every molecule, atom. But I am a rebellious girl. Whether it is the Father or the King, he sends woman to the unknown men of a foreign country through Kotoki without understanding the mind of the women. The woman is like a product sold on a merchant." NumoliKuwori, who hates the male hater i.e. DekaRoja; who does not think that the woman is under men, has again become a symbol of women's instincts as soon as she sees '**SwargodeuChuhungmung**'. For a period of six months, **AhomSwargodeu**, a powerful figure in his charaghar, has been guarding his kingdom and throne with his dance-songs and charming style.

At last, according to the advice of the Ahom nobles, Kancheng tricked Numli and set fire to Numoli's house and reminded Swargodeu about his own state. Without informing Numoli, the rule of '**Kachari Kingdom**' was handed over to her and 'Swargodeu Chuhungmung' went his Kingdom, Kuwori Numoli's male hated mind again became oppressive. "I am Numoli Kunwari. the man has to bow before Numoli. Women also have power. Women can also rule." For the welfare of the people, '**Barchautiya Chief Officers**' had removed Numoli from the reigns and brought the captive '**Kuwor**' as King. When she heard that she sacrificed herself in the '**Bihora Lake**' to avoid being deceived by men again.

Behind Numoli Kuwori's male hatred mind there is the patriarchal attitude of her father to send her to the kingdom for marriage. Men's are so cruel that, for the sake of his own selfishness; kindness, affection, love can all be sacrificed.

"What will a men do if the women sits in the male seat?" – this thought created in Numoli's mind is the main philosophy of the play and even as Swargodeu was dearest without informing anything to 'Kuwori'; he betrayed. Numoli finally realised that Swargodeu was also a man. Numoli Kuwori is depressed by the repeated betrayal of women by the men. That's why she said -

" Swargodeu, Swargodeu, tomarpremotdhik , sotodhik...

Prempritisokolokiprithibitsesh hoi goise?

Opomaanobohelakiekmatraprotidaan?Bihora,

Bihora, tomarbohobukut..."

The playwright portrays another contrasting fictional character of Numoli i.e. Tuladoi, daughter of Kochari King 'Derchongfar'. Tuladoi has more innate attraction towards men than Numoli who has given three leaps in the name of men. Tuladoi is very attracted to Ahom general 'Konseng Borpatra' after hearing about his war skills and bravery. Generally, the female mind is more fond of quality; the bravery and valour attracts. Patriotism is worth the most than one's own love. The warmth and determination, firmness of the female mind as Tuladoi has taken away the glow. Whatever it is, the female centric play has been worthwhile in the simple implementation through Numoli, Kumoli, Tuladoi etc.

'Numoli' is the first free character to seek women's emancipation in the drama world of Assam. Highlighting Jyotiprasad's women's love marriage, Bhuyadev introduced the thought in Assamese drama and instilled that thought in the spirit of women's liberation and called for a new thought. For this ideal that 'Numoli' is the sun of feminist philosophy in the history of Assamese literature.

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