

Portrayal Of Women Characters In Samaresh Majumder's Famous Novels: 'Uttaradhikar', 'Kalbela' And 'Kalpurush'- A Brief Analysis

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Abstract: Samaresh Majumdar (10th March 1944- 8th May 2023) was an eminent author, best known for his created notable character Animesh series of novels. His famous novels entitled Uttaradhikar, Kalbela and Kalpurush have been considered as modern classic in Bengali literature. Kalbela novel obtained the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award in 1984. This versatile writer, with several awards like Banga Bibhushan Samman of Government of West Bengal, Bankim Puroshkar, Ananda Purashkar etc., created strikingly courageous woman characters like Madhabilata, love interest of Animesh, in his novels. He spent his childhood days in the tea gardens of Dooars, Gairkata in Jalpaiguri district and completed his higher education in Bengali literature through Scottish Church College and University of Calcutta. Early years in North Bengal and later experiences in urban Calcutta's educational institutions had impact on his novels. Woman characters like Madhuri, mother of Animesh, his step-mother (Chhotoma), Hemlata, sister of Mahitosh, father of Animesh; Madhabilata, beloved lady of Animesh and epitome of the spirit of revolution, Nila, Shila Sen, Jhumki, Urmimala, colleagues of Madhabilata, a school-teacher and especially Headmistress Soudamini etc. enriched Majumdar's trilogy novels undoubtedly. Madhabilata was exceptional because in spite of being completely apolitical herself, she provided staunch support in her lover Animesh's radical political activities famous as the Naxalite movement and bravely withstood atrocities in police custody during her pregnancy without official marriage with Animesh. She gave birth to Arka, her only son and later struggled a lot in a slum area for survival with Arka and his biological father Animesh, crippled due to extreme brutality inflicted by police officials. Alcoholism and domestic violence, traumatic widowhood, hardships due to love marriage against family choices, sexual exploitation on married beautiful woman with consent of greedy and immoral husband, struggles of young woman accepting motherhood without social or legal marriage, prostitution for abject poverty, patriarchal dominance in middle-class Bengali household in property matters were skilfully depicted in Majumdar's Animesh series of novels.

Keywords: Bengali society, Communist literature, patriarchy, revolutionary, women.

I. INTRODUCTION

Amar Bhattacharyya in his book entitled 'Revolution Unleashed: A History of Naxalbari Movement in India 1964-1972' rightly opined that- "...Naxalbari is not just the name of a geographical location; it has also become the symbol of a political movement. The name implies the beginning of a new phase in the Communist movement _in the country and has

spilled over well beyond its boundaries.'" This movement's imprint can be observed in Majumdar's Animesh trilogy but besides the political part shaped through footprint of the Ultra-Leftist movement of West Bengal, one can discover story of trauma and triumph of commonplace apolitical women like Madhabilata, whose life- struggles for survival with dignity in this male-dominated society, are also can be termed as nothing less than a social revolution. After the political outburst in

1969-1970, many women came out crossing the boundaries of secluded place of home for emerging as insurgent guerrillas and successful leaders of both male and female rebels. But here in novels of Samaresh Majumdar, we can discover woman characters not as active militant participants in the Naxalite movement, but as providers of strong emotional and financial support behind their near and dear ones (male members) who accepted this bloody path as the only way out of obtaining salvation. Here comment from Mallarika Sinha Roy in her article entitled 'The Romantic Manifesto of Revolution: Some Reflections on Issues of Gender in the Naxalbari Movement (1967-75)' [included in the book entitled 'Discourses On Naxalite Movement 1967-2009' edited by Pradip Basu] can be remembered – "The only emotional recognition of women's agency within the Naxalite existential world referred principally to the model of mother, or the gentle, abiding wife, or loving sister – the ever-nurturing, hard-working, ... apolitical angel."

Manideepa Bakshi, wife of Azizul Haque, Murari Mukhopadhyay's love interest Bhadra Chakravarty, Amiyo Chattopadhyay's wife Meena, Ajay Bhattacharyya's wife Jayashree Bhattacharyya and Dronacharyya Ghosh's beloved Krishna Bandopadhyay were some exemplary companions of their husbands/ lovers committed to the cause of the Naxalite Movement. Some of such companions actively participated in the radical politics and some were involved in the Leftist cultural movement only. May be those real-life characters had their footprints in shaping Samaresh Majumdar's psychological world while creating Animesh trilogy. Jaya Mitra, herself a political activist dedicated to the cause of Naxalite ideology, had to withstand police brutality during her imprisonment for almost five years in several jails of West Bengal such as Midnapore Central Jail, Berhampore Central Jail, Presidency Jail etc. Her terrible experience of physical torture on herself and witnessing the same on other woman prisoners had been documented with meticulous perfection in her book (autobiographical prison literature) entitled 'Hanyaman'. Such reminiscences can be remembered by readers while studying 'Kalbela's heroine Madhabilata's horrific experience in lalbazar police custody before helpless eyes of her beloved Animesh, a Naxalite leader, paralysed due to custodial violence.

Other woman characters such as Madhuri, first wife of Mahitosh and mother of Animesh, were depicted by the author with realistic touch expressing profound knowledge about each and every details of educated middle-class Bengali household/ domesticity. Madhuri, though died a pathetic premature death due to miscarriage, left an unparallel imprint on psyche of young Animesh who discarded conventional domestic life and societal norms due to his involvement in the armed Naxalite movement. Another important woman in 'Uttaradhikar' novel was Chhotoma, the childless step-mother of Animesh, always trying her level best to become like Madhuri and befriended young Animesh but was victim of domestic violence and loveless conjugal life due to alcoholic and abusive husband Mahitosh, unable to come out from terrible sorrow of his beloved first wife Madhuri's sudden death. As a mother-in-law, she was jealous towards educated and independent woman Madhabilata and accused her with weapon of the allegation that she confined Animesh in a nasty

slum area and did not make any socially approved marriage with Animesh. But later she repented and requested Animesh to be more sympathetic towards Madhabilata ('Kalpurush' novel). Hemlata, daughter of Saritsekhar and sister of Mahitosh, played a pivotal role in the childhood and adolescence of Animesh as a loving and caring aunt. She, a widow in her tender age, refused to remarry in spite of her father's desire due to impact of social conservatism, and served her father, brother, sister-in-laws, brother's son Animesh as and when required but always nurtured deep regret and frustration for her deprived life from a very young age due to bondage under patriarchal control. She was affectionate towards Madhabilata, wife of Animesh and accepted her without any reservation in spite of knowing the fact that no social custom of marriage and legality had been followed here. ('Kalpurush' novel). Nila, daughter of Debabrata Mukherjee, close friend of father of Animesh, was a significant character in the novel 'Kalbela' as a symbol of modern, western-educated free-spirited woman of strata of Bengali middle class intelligentsia and she used to get pleasure in multiple relationships. But finally she married a youth of her choice against wish of her parental house and as a result had to withstand extreme poverty and hardship for maintaining a dedicated conjugal life discarding her near and dear ones of blood relation. Shila Sen was such a character who was triggered as a woman of easy virtue and questionable character due to her excessive proximity with some African men but in reality she was utilized by her greedy and immoral husband for collecting money. When Shila experienced true love in her life, her abusive husband made a deadly acid attack on her and fatally injured her. She in spite of withstanding so much harassment from men in her life, was deeply affectionate towards Animesh who once had been saved from police due to her courageous efforts and was full of admiration for Naxalite rebel Animesh's love interest Madhabilata.

Madhabilata was the outstanding female character of 'Kalbela'. She loved Animesh during student life in Calcutta University in spite of being quite conscious about his active involvement in extremist Leftist politics and consummated this relationship in Shantiniketan though they were not legally or socially married and her parents were completely against this love affair. During days of imprisonment of Animesh as a Naxal leader, she was physically tortured in Lalbazar as 'wife' of Animesh but did not surrender before pressure tactics of police and courageously gave birth to her son Arka, without any financial and emotional support from her near and dear ones. She, a school-teacher and financially independent woman, took paralysed Animesh with her after release from jail and settled in a poor slum area. In 'Kalpurush' novel, one can observe that she had such a strong personality that she discarded her lifelong love interest Animesh in North Bengal's in-laws house because he wanted to stay there with Chhotoma and Hemlata without her consent. Later in Calcutta, during her severe illness created by extreme sacrifice and self-torture, she became reunited with Animesh and always tried her level best to provide education for her son Arka. She was an inspiring role model before her son and inspired Arka in arrangement of well-being for all people in the slum area. Finally in 'Kalpurush' novel, she had to bear the pain of

separation from son Arka, imprisoned for political conspiracy, but did not bow down before police.

Soudamini Sengupta, headmistress of school, where Madhabilata continued her teaching profession, was a symbol of human empathy because she tried her best for saving terribly ill Madhabilata in hospital when Animesh was far away in North Bengal.

Urmimala was a small character in 'Kalpurush', who had been saved from hooligans through young Arka and loved by him. But she wanted only friendship of Arka and nothing else with him, who was not in the same socio-economic strata.

Jhumki, a significant but small character of 'Kalpurush', could be dragged into flesh trade due to poverty, but was saved by Arka's timely intervention. She became incharge of Ishwarpukur slum's community kitchen formed by Arka and his dedicated friends.

In this article, I will try to unfold Majumdar's superb efficiency in depiction of woman characters in his three novels and comparative analysis will also be made by me.

II. PORTRAYAL OF WOMENFOLK IN STORIES OF 'UTTARADHIKAR', 'KALBELA' AND 'KALPURUSH'

The backdrop of story of 'Uttaradhikar' novel was a tea-garden of Jalpaiguri, North Bengal where hero Animesh spent his childhood and adolescence. Saritsekhar, who worked for a long time in Swargachhera tea-garden, was grandfather of Animesh and ruled his family as a great patriarch with iron hand. He married twice but his two wives died much before his demise and only the younger one was able to keep deep imprint on his psyche. –'Baro bou kakhon elo kakhon gelo, kono anubhuti tairi holo na'. He adored his chosen daughter-in-law Madhuri, wife of Mahitosh and mother of Animesh and so Madhuri enjoyed complete freedom and solace in his household. He by own choice enshouldered responsibility of grandson Animesh's education before his entry into college and instructed his widow daughter Hemlata to look after Animesh. Saritsekhar was undoubtedly a dominating person but was liberal enough to think about remarriage of his daughter Hemlata, who lost her husband in a very young age. Hemlata herself denied because she thought that widow remarriage would be nothing less than a crime and decided to stay in her father's house for her whole life. When she was only eight years old, she had to bear the heavy responsibility of looking after Mahitosh and Paritosh, her brothers and cooking for everyone. During childbirth of Saritsekhar's second wife and also during Madhuri's pregnancy, she played a pivotal role. She tried her best and utilized entire might to save Madhuri's life during her excessive bleeding for miscarriage and due to her superstitious belief, held herself responsible for death of her beloved sister-in-law- '...Hau hau kore kende uthlen Hemlata, 'Ami chaini go, kal sakale jor kore amake diye sindur poralo o, ami je bidhaba, sei pape meyeta chole gelo go—'.

We can observe a different Hemlata when police of the Congress government searched Saritsekhar's house to catch Priyotosh, her brother who joined the Communist Party. She vehemently opposed the police officials who were searching

for the forbidden Communist periodicals and said that nobody should tarnish the sanctity of her worshipped idols by touching them. She often criticised Saritsekhar, her sole support, also for bondage of womenfolk due to domestic servitude- '...bina paysar chakarani. Ar keu ek belar beshi apnar seba korte gheshto na.'

Gender discrimination has been highlighted by author through young Animesh's thought-process observing his father's second marriage after tragic and untimely death of Madhuri- 'Bou more gele jadi abar biye kora jay to Pishima keno biye koreni? Pishima to abar sari pore machh khethe parto.'

Mahitosh's second wife, later called as Chhotoma by her step-son Animesh, was habituated to lead a loveless conjugal life because Mahitosh could not make himself free from the memories of Madhuri and guilt felt for his first wife's premature death. Hemlata initially wanted to call the second wife as Madhuri and indirectly instructed her to create a space for herself as mother in mind of young Animesh. She succeeded in becoming friend of Animesh and initially showered affection on him like a caring elder sister. She even tried to defend her alcoholic and abusive husband Mahitosh before Animesh. Actually she was not educated enough to earn her livelihood and was never willing to be a burden in her brothers' families so the only way-out was withstanding torture in that suffocating so-called conjugal relationship. Mahitosh always criticised her as a childless woman and compared her with first wife Madhuri. Actually due to evil influence of Adhar tantrik, Mahitosh felt that his second marriage and deep desire for another son through the second one humiliated spirit of Madhuri and so he started to beat the second wife for satisfying dead Madhuri. She could be fatally injured due to alcoholic abuse/ domestic violence but was saved for timely intervention of Animesh.

Animesh was loved and cherished by Jayadi, a very small character in 'Uttaradhikar' novel. This educated woman was also victim of verbal abuse of her mean-minded husband who labelled her as characterless and made a mockery of her affection towards Animesh- '...kochi kochi bhaigulor matha chibote parbe na bole monkharap lagchhe na? Tomar je purush-dhora rog chhilo ta jadi jantam kon shala biye korto!'

In 'Kalbela', Animesh reached Calcutta for continuing his higher studies and gradually became engaged in Leftist politics in his days at Calcutta University. Later due to the impact of Subas Sen, he was emotionally disengaged from parliamentary democracy oriented political life and joined the Naxalite movement for translating the dream of armed agrarian revolution into reality. In his turbulent life, he fortunately obtained love of Madhabilata, who left her parental house and took shelter in a women's hostel to save this relationship. She always provided financial help to Animesh and hid weapon like pistol but was never actively involved in the bloody path of Naxals. She started her independent life as a school-teacher against wishes of her father because without that financial empowerment, it was not possible for her to be companion of Animesh. She even went through the experience of physical intimacy with him in Bolpur and without any type of legal or social marriage, nurtured her son single-handedly in a slum area. She had to withstand barbaric torture of officials in Lalbazar police custody but she asked

Animesh not to disclose anything about other Naxalite leaders like Mahadevda. She took Animesh with her after his release from jail and he got shelter with Madhabilata and son Arka in a slum in his totally crippled condition due to police atrocities. Animesh with deep admiration for Madhabilata realized that- *“Ei Kolkatay eka ekti alpobayasi meye ... nanan protikulatar sange lorai korechhe ainer kono adhikar chharai, kono protyasha mone na rekhei. Eta ... ekti meyer khetre biplab bola jabe na keno?”*

Nilā, daughter of Debabrata Mukherjee, friend of Animesh’s father, revolted against her guardians for maintaining her love relationship with a person, who was not at all wealthy and established. She accepted a life full of hardships with this man rejecting luxury of her parental home.

Shila Sen was a woman trapped in flesh trade due to excessive greed of her immoral husband and later became injured in acid attack inflicted by that abusive spouse. Her beauty was tarnished but she survived for love of Sishir, who selflessly loved her soul only.

‘Kalpurush’ novel was a story of trauma and triumph of women like Madhabilata, wife of Animesh. She fought a never-ending battle in slum area of Ishwarpukur with her meagre resource as a school-teacher for well-being of her handicapped husband Animesh and son Arka. She tried her level best for mixing in the surrounding but due to class barrier, local people mainly used to label her as arrogant *masterni*, totally misfit in their area. She was the sole breadwinner in her family and so to some extent, Arka used to obey her directive of continuing study avoiding local hoodlums. Whenever Arka disobeyed her, she used to beat the son mercilessly because she was not ready to compromise with her sense of morality and ethics besides theory of formation of ideal human being.

Samaresh has skilfully depicted life of influential and anglicized, rich high society ladies like Mrs. Suruchi Som also. Suruchi was immersed in luxury without any employment of her own but her wealthy husband Mr. Bilas Som did not allow her to enter his bedroom alone so she cried every night. Her spouse was in love with a prostitute namely Trishna Pal and gave her costly gift. So Suruchi’s life was devoid of happiness and conjugal bliss.

Jhumki was a significant character who tried to earn her livelihood learning cabaret dancing because there was no other way-out before her for survival- *“Kalo sharirer khub bazaar achhe baire.”* She was attracted towards Arka but was conscious about the harsh truth that companionship of an ill-reputed girl like her would create turmoil in Arka’s life. She could be completely engaged in flesh trade but Arka saved her and she found a prestigious life for herself cooking for the entire community in common kitchen of Ishwarpukur Lane’s slum area.

Urmimala, another prominent woman in young Arka’s life, was saved from attacks of eve-teasers through bravery of Arka, but could not cross her class barrier to build a relation with her protector surpassing friendship. Arka himself realized the situation- *“Urmimalara chirokal anyo chheler sange matha uchu kore hete jabe. Urmimalake se chaite pare na. Ki achhe tar! Bidye nei, artho nei ebang janmotai to prohelikay jorano. Arka, tomar babar nam ki ?Keu tomake*

kichhu deyni.Urmimalara tai tomader kachh theke kromosho dure sore sore jabe.”

Madhabilata everyday fought for gathering money so that her family could shift into a better area but her self-respect was so strong that she refused a large amount offered by Priyatosh, uncle of Animesh and showed the same steadfastness in her in-law’s house in North Bengal. Her mother-in-law (Chhotoma/ second wife of Mahitosh) accused her telling that she was self-centred and confined Animesh in a small, untidy room in slum area so that Animesh could not communicate with his near and dear ones. But in spite of those allegations, Madhabilata remained calm and earned respect as a dutiful daughter-in-law in eyes of father-in-law Mahitosh and aunt-in-law Hemlata who showered her with gifts like ornament and sari of Madhuri, dead mother of Animesh. Chhotoma even questioned validity of their conjugal life because Animesh and Madhabilata were not legally married. But in spite of that, Madhabilata tried to make a bridge with her present mother-in-law and was sympathetic knowing her loveless conjugal life with Mahitosh (termed by Chhotoma as serfdom). Chhotoma after her widowhood was immersed in despondency but did not force Animesh to stay with her and Hemlata in Jalpaiguri. Madhabilata also felt the pain and helpless condition of them but left Animesh behind in anger because Animesh wanted to stay there without her consent forgetting her lifelong terrible sacrifice.

During Madhabilata’s fatal illness, her colleagues including Head Mistress Soudamini Sengupta showed sister-like concern and tried their best during her tough days of hospitalisation. Madhabilata became reunited with Animesh and comprehended that their mutual love and affection was everlasting. She was a strong pillar behind Arka when he tried to solve the problem of basic needs of fifty families of slum area of Ishwarpukur Lane and consoled him when he was imprisoned due to political conspiracy and his companion Bilu was murdered. She confronted police officials when her son was kept behind bars for false charges and inspired Arka with her courage and never-bending determination. ‘Kalpurush’ was a story of empowered womanhood and its perfect symbol Madhabilata has rightly told her son that- *“ Ektai to jivan, baje kharoch korao ja na kharoch korao ta. Toke dekhe etuku bujhechhi ami.”*

III. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THREE NOVELS GIVING THRUST ON REFLECTION OF WOMEN’S LIVES THROUGH TRILOGY

While making a comparative analysis of depiction of women’s lives in Animesh novels of Samaresh Majumdar, one can observe that ‘Kalbela’ is the best in this sphere. In ‘Uttaradhikar’ novel, Madhuri was a short-lived but undoubtedly prominent character as a beloved wife of Mahitosh, highly cherished daughter-in-law of Saritsekhar’s family, a true companion of her widow sister-in-law Hemlata and an ideal mother for Animesh. She performed all her domestic duties as a dedicated and responsible housewife successfully and enjoyed marital bliss. Father-in-law Saritsekhar voluntarily enshouldered the responsibility of making Animesh a good human being with educational

enlightenment. But her happy life ended for heavy bleeding due to miscarriage during her second-time pregnancy after deep psychological trauma hearing the prediction of *Shanibaba* about her son Animesh's possibility of imprisonment in youth due to political reason. Even after death, she influenced thought-process of Animesh continuously.

Hemlata, caring aunt of Animesh, never experienced marital bliss in her life because she became widow in her tender age and could not give her consent for remarriage due to fear of becoming socially ostracised. She provided staunch support to her father Saritsekhar in his old age and used to withstand his patriarchal dominance but sometimes expressed frustration mixed with anger due to life-long bondage and slavery as a deprived woman. She was loving enough to nurture child Animesh following instruction of Saritsekhar, caring towards her sister-in-laws (Madhuri and Mahitosh's second wife called as Chhotoma by Animesh).

Second wife of Mahitosh was a significant character of 'Uttaradhikar' novel. After Madhuri's sudden tragic death, Mahitosh married her but never loved her. She, as Chhotoma, tried her best to create a space for her as a trustworthy friend in world of young Animesh, her step-son and became successful with her affection. But she could not escape verbal and physical abuse in hands of alcoholic husband Mahitosh who triggered her as a childless woman. Mahitosh felt that his dead first wife Madhuri's spirit was terribly unhappy for this second marriage and his desire for child through the second wife. He, due to this guilty-consciouness, always mistreated the second wife and the deprived woman could not leave the household because she was not educated enough to earn for maintaining herself and was not eager to live as a permanent burden in her brothers' families. So when young Animesh pushed his alcoholic and abusive father to save her from torture, she tried to prevent Animesh for fear of losing shelter in house of her husband. Trauma of women without financial independence had been portrayed in 'Uttaradhikar' novel.

In 'Kalbela', Madhabilata was an exceptional character as an embodiment of the spirit of social revolution. She befriended Animesh during studying in Calcutta University and their friendship turned into deep love. Madhabilata was quite aware of the fact that her beloved was engaged in armed unrest of the Naxalites and he could not enter into a conventionally happy household with her. But she did not back out and always acted as a steadfast pillar behind unemployed Animesh providing emotional and financial support, fought with her parents for saving this love and ultimately took shelter in a girls' hostel leaving behind safety, security and comfort of her parental house. After getting job as a school-teacher, she took decision of visiting Shantiniketa for meeting with Naxalite leader Animesh and did not avoid physical relation with him without any type of social or legal marriage. This is a revolutionary step indeed in society of 1970s in Bengal as a middle-class *bhadromahila*. She had to face brutal physical harassment (during her pregnancy) in Lalbazar police custody before eyes of Animesh, then imprisoned and handicapped for endless police violence. But she maintained her courage and asked Animesh not to tell anything about his fellow-rebels before police officials to save her from torture. Later she gave birth to her son Arka, whose

biological father was Animesh and experienced various hardships due to accepting motherhood without marriage. She, a independent working lady, took crippled Animesh with her after his release from jail and fought for survival with her small family in a slum area within poverty maintaining her dignity.

Shila Sen, as a working woman engaged in a travel agency, enjoyed illusive freedom and sexual advancement of many males. But actually she had been trapped in a pathetic situation for her husband's fathomless greed. He wanted the money earned by Shila through immoral way but made horrific acid attack to tarnish her beauty when she found true love in Sishir. She could send the abusive husband in prison but decided not to do so for fear of loss of shelter and social reputation. She was affectionate towards young Naxal Animesh and saved him from hands of police with determination.

Nilu, daughter of friend of Mahitosh, father of Animesh, left her wealthy parental house for saving her love affair with a poor man and struggled with poverty for survival but did not bow down her head. She was a friend of Animesh but their relationship never crossed the boundary.

In 'Kalpurush', one can observe Madhabilata as a dominant figure in her family as a bread-winner but her love, sacrifice and concern for husband Animesh and son Arka had been always noteworthy. She refused financial help from Priyatosh, brother of Animesh's father Mahitosh maintaining her self-respect and tried her level best to keep Arka free from the dark world of anti-social hooligans in slum area of Ishwarpukur. She earned respect as a devoted daughter-in-law in her husband's house in North Bengal overcoming initial attacks of Chhotoma, who alleged that Madhabilata was responsible for confining Animesh in a small room of the dirty slum area and did not make any type of institutional marriage with him. Later Madhabilata was able to create a space for herself in hearts of mother-in-law Chhotoma and Animesh's aunt Hemlata but due to her misunderstanding with Animesh, came to Calcutta alone with son leaving Animesh behind. This decision proved her mental strength and towering personality but finally during her terrible illness, she surrendered before her life-long beloved Animesh. In end of 'Kalpurush', she provided psychological support for Arka, who translated the dream of successful community life in reality in the slum area but due to political conspiracy, became imprisoned. She, as a brave mother, confronted police and asked Arka to maintain courage during his life behind the bars.

Urmimala was a small character of 'Kalpurush' novel. She was saved from hooligans by Arka and loved by him. But she could not offer more than gratitude and friendship due to overwhelming status barrier.

Jhumki, was a small but significant character in 'Kalpurush' novel. Due to hardships created by poverty, she could be completely engaged in flesh trade, but for Arka's intervention and sympathy, she became incharge of community kitchen in slum area of Ishwarpukur and used to lead a healthy life with prestige.

In Animesh trilogy, the eminent litterateur depicted sorrowful life of women of different classes through 'Uttaradhikar', but described their successful struggle for existence with dignity and triumph also through 'Kalbela' and

‘Kalpurush’, and here lies true significance of his identity as a Womanist author for creating character like Madhabilata. I think, in comparative analysis, ‘Kalbela’ is the best in sphere of depiction of empowered women, because it has shown that educated and financially independent women can do anything to save their love and maintain self-made choices even withstanding police atrocities during turbulent days of an armed rebellion.

IV. CONCLUSION

While summing up, it can be observed that famous litterateur Samaresh Majumdar’s novel ‘Uttaradhikar’ is life-story of young Animesh who was a completely apolitical character during his adolescent years in North Bengal, but deeply felt the footprints of the 1953 Calcutta anti-tramfare hike resistance movement, a month-long, Left-led unrest against a proposed one-paise increase in second-class tram fares by the British-owned Calcutta Tramways Company, supported by the Congress-led government in West Bengal. He was injured in police firing actually targeting the Communist rebels and later in description of his life in ‘Kalbela’, one can notice that this first incident of the urban Calcutta left fathomless impact on his psyche and he finally as an outcome of his anti-establishment mindset, dedicated himself to the cause of the bloody Naxalite/ultra-Leftist movement. Crippled Animesh, after facing barbaric wrath of the police force, was merged in despair but survived due to selfless love of his sweetheart Madhabilata, who was not legally married with Animesh. The only son of this courageous couple was Arka, the hero of ‘Kalpurush’, who inspired the underprivileged families of a slum area entitled Ishwarpukur *basti* to live a healthy life created through the *mantra* of togetherness and well-being of the entire community. But this noble endeavour could not last long due to political conspiracy and Arka became imprisoned but his mother Madhabilata gave him courage and solace. Mahashweta Devi’s immortal creation ‘Hazar Churashir maa’ (novel) had been enriched by two characters- one is Sujata, whose beloved son Brati had to die a brutal death in hands of police officials determined to obliterate the Naxalite youth force and another was Nandini, Brati’s love interest, who was mercilessly tortured in police custody due to her involvement in Naxalism. Those two characters can be compared with Madhabilata, who herself was brave mother of the captivated Arka, symbol of dream of social revolution from the grassroot level and who had to withstand police atrocities during her pregnant condition before the helpless eyes of her imprisoned beloved Animesh in the turbulent years of 1970s. Mahashweta’s outstanding story namely ‘Draupadi’ can also be remembered where the heroine Dopdi Mejhen, a fierce tribal militant leader of the armed Naxal insurgency, was gangraped by army men but she did not lose her undaunted courage and pride in spite of that horrific experience. Madhabilata also during torture in police custody asked Animesh to hold his head high and information about other Naxalite leaders could not be obtained from Animesh, witnessing torture on his lady love for steadfast nature and determination of Madhabilata, epitome of the spirit of

revolution. Jaya Mitra’s book ‘Hanyaman’ and Malaya Ghosh’s book ‘Lalbazare 64 din’ (both autobiographical prison literature) are quite significant while analysing the character of Madhabilata, because the hellish treatment towards the imprisoned women directly or indirectly connected with Naxalism and targeted by the atrocious state power, were well-documented in those literary works skilfully.

Researchers, interested in historical documentation of the turbulent and restless time of 1970s and ideology of the Naxalite/ extremist Leftist Movement, can find ample resources from Samaresh Majumdar’s Animesh trilogy and here lies significance of those three novels besides their literary value.

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