

The Value Of Hope In Easterine Kire's Son Of The Thundercloud Through Christian Theology

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses to show the prophecy of recuperation through the allegorical image of Jesus Christ. The prolific writer Esterine Kire belongs to the Angami tribe, so she clearly picturized the dialect, culture, way of dressing and their conviction in Christianity. The novel spins around the character Pelevotso, all through of his journey he comes across plethora of hardships. In the midst of his voyage he stumbled up on three women, they are living in this world for long years, another character Rhalie, his face resembles like Jesus Christ. At the end of the novel he sacrificed his life for all. Mainly this novel focusing on the environmental condition, which makes people to suffer a lot. I propose to study Son of the Thundercloud, which discovers the reason for the drought and it offers us to rethink our responsibility to live in this environment.

Keywords: Death, hope, love, prophecy, famine, Christine thoughts

Easterine Kire is a poet, novelist, academician and singer currently lives in Norway. Majority of Kire's writing are based on the real facts of Nagaland. *The novel Son of the Thundercloud* gives a limpid picture around the esteem of hope and belief of angami people in Almighty. *Son of the thundercloud* is very similar to the story which is mentioned in St. Mathew, the birth and crucifixion of Jesus Christ. St. Mathew is one of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ and regarded as the first author of gospel of New Testament. Through the power of Holy Spirit Virgin Mary gave to Jesus Christ, this miraculous birth is parallel to the incident mentioned in the novel *Son of the Thundercloud* through the character Mesanuo. As per the prophecy "Heaven would open and pour out rain when the son of the thundercloud was born. A drop of rain had fallen on the tiger – widow and made her pregnant" (kire 56 - 57). Concurring to the prescience, the virgin Mesanuo supernaturally gave birth to Rhalietuo from a rain drop.

Mother Mary hopefully waited for savior of the world just like how the characters Kethonuo and Siedze hopefully awaited for the rain. American author Howard Washington Thurman says, "A dream is the bearer of a new possibility, the enlarged horizon, and the great hope" the two old women Kethonuo and Siedze have the dream of getting rain in their dark life according to them dream can bring out new possibility in life and their Sanguine thoughts lit up the new door of hope. Everyone have umpteen of problems in their life if I have the optimistic mind, surely I can come upon all those difficult situations. It is evident in the life of two sisters. Kethonuo says

I'm so glad I lived long enough to see this! She shouted joyfully. Pele could not understand how anyone could live as long as the sisters claimed to have lived and not see rain. But there was no time to think about that as the storm of the century slammed into them and battering at the roof pele has just made. (Kire 30)

Two sisters are ideally anticipated for this moment for long years. Their desire is to induce rain at last it is fulfilled by the grace of God.

In the novel *Son of the Thundercloud* Kire tells about the angami people they all are suffered a lot because of drought, in the present scenario people are also facing the extreme power of heat so let us imagine, how terrible if a community is facing the droughtful situation from seven hundred years. As an individual person I cannot even envisage this pitiful condition. Presently, people are facing extreme heat of a scorching sun. In Kerala today 21 April 2023 estimated temperature is soaring above forty degree Celsius in seventeen different locations. In Tamil Nadu searing heat has reached forty one degree Celsius. A person cannot live in this

sizzling hot so let us think about how the Angami people faced the drought for these long years. Globally it is estimated around fifty - six million people are affected by drought every year; it leads to the great loss in agricultural and economic field and also affects our health condition. Often in the North Eastern region faces severe water scarcity during the months of summer and winter, it is actually due to the change of climate and Jhum cultivation. The American – Australian singer John Butler describes about the western part of Nagaland as, they are blessed with the fertile soil, and they are best known for the cultivation of rice. But Easterine Kire in his novel *Son of the Thundercloud* delineates the famine of Angami village.

There is a contradictory statement said by John Butler and Easterine Kire. In reality Nagaland is the fertile region but in this fictional work he points out the dry land. Most of the novels of Kire presents the relationship between human and nature. The survival of mankind on earth is related to human's reverence towards nature, It is very evident in this novel, the perpetual traveler Pele's village got demolished due to the blasphemous thoughts and negative impact of human towards nature. Humans have lived in the lap of nature for millions of years without destroying it, from the eighteenth century that the mode of production has been altered with the rise of industrialization. Such changes have eventually led humans to cause irreparable damage to the mother earth. Once river was the main source for the villagers, they got plenty of foods from the river so with deep love and affection people call it as our mother. Easterine Kire's novel comes as a past any question help, a remedy that may help the condition of mankind and at scarcest catechize individuals to respect nature in case not to reestablish nature to its earlier shape. Kire is of course not the essential writer from Northeast India to do it; there have been other popular researchers like the writer and former deputy commissioner Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi and the journalist Arup Kumar Dutta who have attempted to orchestrate between nature and culture.

In this novel clearly points out the structure of the village, migration and hunting. Often Naga tribes shares the common characteristics of the construction of village majority of them prefers to settle in the hilltop region against the attack of enemies. The word Angami is derived from Tuonyumia which means swift walker,, the name was given by two ethnic groups Lotha and Sema. The former existence of Angami is from China and they are notable for their costly ornaments, which all are made out of seashells and conch shells. Their territory is mainly prominent for the abundance of large stones.

Gobs of questions aroused about the spread of Christianity in Nagaland. Naga conversion to Christianity took place in the late nineteenth century. Whilst look upon to the history of Nagaland readers can understand the emergence of Christianity began with the American Baptist mission. Umpteen of contradictory Christian statements can see in the novel *Son of the Thundercloud*. As per the Christian belief people are hopefully awaited for the advent of Jesus Christ. They have the hope that, he will forgive our mistakes and cleanse us from our sin and give a new life of jubilation. Their longings, anticipation, dreams and trust comes true by the arrival of God.

The allegorical figures of *Son of the Thundercloud* are, the protagonist Pelevotso, central character Rhalietuo, his mother Mesanuo, her two siblings and the spirit-tiger. Everyone calls Pelevotso as Pele which means faithful to the end. As his name implies he is very faithful to everyone till the end of the story, severe drought swallowed his parents, wife and children. As a result of this Pele start of his journey to the weavers land. Pele hears the rumour that, weavers land is a fertile land and everyone should get enough food and water. By hearing this he takes a firm decision to move on to the well cultivated land. On his voyage he faced plethora of obstacles, at the middle of the journey Pele saw the abandoned village, their he noticed the haunted house, inside of that two women, who looks like a phantom, after a bit of conversation with them, he understood that, they are not the ghost but a full spirited human. One woman is four hundred years and the other one is three eighty years old, they are living for these long years with the intension of getting rain and they are eagerly waiting to welcome the son of thundercloud. The allegorical statement in the New Testament, people hopefully waited to welcome the son of almighty. Jesus Christ came to earth to purify us from our sin. On the other hand the sole aim of rain is to replenish the earth and all the creatures.

Both the women accompany with Pele to direct him to the land of weavers, where their sister Mesanuo is living with the intension of fulfilling the prophecy. While she saw her siblings she burst out to inform the happy news, she is pregnant in her old age whilst look up on to the bible, Elizabeth gets pregnant in her old age, she burst out in joy to announce this news to mother Mary when she comes to meet her. Mesanuo narrate the incident to her sisters about how she gets pregnant, while she was collecting the herbs which she puts out to dry, all of the sudden Mesanuo heard the sound of thunder. Before reaching the home, a drop of rain fell on her. Mesanuo says,

A single drop of rain! One moment the sky was overcast with angry clouds thundering and threatening, and the next moment all was clear again. The clouds passed over our village and nothing happened. Nothing except for that one drop of rain. I felt the baby grow inside as soon as that drop landed on me (36 – 37).

For many years Mesanuo leads a solitude life because she knows the reality of prophecy, as per the prophecy she will bear a child, here it shows an allegorical picture of Jesus Christ. Mesanuo and mother Mary are the pure soul of nature, they bore a child out of some supernatural powers and their foremost concern is to fulfill the prophecy. According to the prophecy Rhalietuo kill the tiger and save the villagers from the evil spirit. On the other hand mother Mary conceived the baby through the Holy Spirit and the aim of Jesus Christ is to redeem us from our sins. Until the birth of Rhalietuo, the village people renamed Mesanuo as tiger-widow;

this shows the lack of respect to a woman. The same insult, people are showing to nature with their inhuman activities. The Indian historian Dipesh Chakrabarty noted in his one of the article “human are the main reason for the physical processing of earth.” (Climate of history 3)

Kire has conflated mother earth with the human mother, both have been neglected by the patriarchal society they not only tries to control both but also tries to decline both through wicked acts. The village headman is a typical representation of the patriarchal society he disbelieves Mesanuo’s virginity, the typical male supremacy one could find through the character headman. “People prefer to believe what is more plausible rather than what is miraculous.” (116) While knowing about the miraculous birth of Rhalie, the village people were in dilemma, whether to believe or not. Everyone knows about the prophecy but they never thought that it will be fulfilled. Anyhow they cannot doubt her chastity as per the parturition by forty - five fertility has declined, here in this novel Mesanuo is two hundred years old so its not possible to bear a child through physical relationship.

By the birth of Rhalie, everything has changed, the dark nature lit up with love, affection and jubilation. Plethora of miracles happens to mother earth too, she gave birth to new creatures. He walked around the village and saw that rocks and stones were standing in places where there had been none before (40). According to the Hindu mythology it is believed that Sky (Dyaus) is the father, Earth (Prthivi) mother, while it comes to Rig-Veda, they are the archetypal parents, they have the capability to create new life (celestial bodies and nature). According to Eco feminism everyone should give respect to both women and nature. Another allegorical image of this bizarre story is Kethonuo and Siedze have the ability to predict the movement of stars. By the Diurnal motion of stars, they help Pele to reach weavers village. As per the Christian mythology, Star leads the three shepherds to meet Jesus Christ at Bethlehem. Every single incident relates to biblical allusions.

At the end of the novel Rhalietuo killed the tiger spirit with his spear, thus the prophecy was gratified but by jealousy headman’s son Viphru intentionally murdered Rhalietuo. According to the Christian theology Jesus Christ was crucified for the sin of people, thus his arrival to earth was fulfilled. Every creature in this world has the intention to live on earth for the prophecy which lay upon them. How Jesus Christ teaches people to love each other in the same way, Rhalieto through his birth shows everyone how to love others. “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (St. Mathew 22:39)

The novel is enveloped with hope, love, migration, longings and so forth. Hope have the caliber to keep someone alive for centuries, it is evident through the three women characters, who anxiously awaited for their dream. Love brings rain of excitement, joy and prosperity, love opens the new chapter of life and hatredness creates flood of sorrows. For seven hundred years Angami people lived through the melancholical situations. They cannot escape from the tragedies of life but one has to walk out from all the pathetic situations and fulfill the responsibilities assigned for us to live in this world. A timeless tale reminds us that we can always choose love over fear, hope over despair, and believe in what’s miraculous rather than what is merely plausible (Tribune)

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