

The Influence of Western Fantasy Fiction on Contemporary Bengali OTT and TV Series

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Abstract

The publication of the Lord of the Rings trilogy marks a significant watershed moment in the literary history of the twentieth century. After the publication of this seminal text, it was “translated into numerous languages”(Manlove 156) and it also began to weave its influence into the various literary and cultural traditions of the world. Though the state of West Bengal possessed a powerful and rich literary and cultural background, in terms of supernatural or fantastic literature, the Bengali cultural field also started to take the colour of Tolkien's magnum opus. Subsequently, the Harry Potter phenomenon in the 1990s, and the widely watched Peter Jackson film adaptations of the Lord of the Rings, added to the popularity of Western fantasy in West Bengal. This can be traced in a number of articles in Bengali magazines, journals, and blogs, such as “Angti Niye Abar Lorai,” “Dorja Jure Bisal Sap Er Murti! Khoj Millo,” which reveal the investment of Bengali audiences in the genre. Gradually, as this paper will argue in some detail, some of the newly emergent Bengali OTT and TV series, coming out in the post 2010s - were also coloured by the cultural expansion of Western fantasy. This paper will particularly demonstrate the influence of Western fantasy on Bengali OTT and TV Series with a special emphasis on the features of Western fantasy like the evocation of wonder through specific devices, mythopoeic tendencies, the dynamics of wish fulfilment, and the like. Side by side, the resemblance of scenes, actions, and ideas of the Lord of the Rings trilogy and the Harry Potter series in Bengali OTT and TV Series will also be depicted in this paper. The primary texts that will be studied, include one web series and two serials: Rudrabinar Obhishaap, Kiranmala, and Saat Bhai Champa.

Keywords: Rudrabinar Obhishaap, Kiranmala, Saat Bhai Champa, Western fantasy, Bengali OTT, and TV Series.

Introduction

Bengali Fairy Tale

Bengal possesses a rich history of folk and fairy tales, the collection and textualization of which was inaugurated by the Christian Missionaries of Bengal. William Carrey basically initiated this collection work through his composition of Itihasmala, and along with Carrey, Damant and Rev. Lal Behari Day would continue to contribute towards collecting Bengali fairy tales. Ashutosh Mukherjee is the first person through whom Bengali fairy tale was published in the Bengali language, and his notable works are Rakkhos Khokkos(1897) and Bhut Petni(1902)(Gangopadhyay 13). Subsequently, the tradition of Bengali fairy tale was enriched by Shivnath Shastri's Mukul magazine, Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumder's Thakumar Jhuli, Thandidir Thole, Dadamosayer Thole, Chandi Charan Gupta's Thakumar Rupkotha, Kali Mohan Bhattacharya's Thakurdada's Rupkotha, Shyama Charan De's Bongor Rupkotha,

Satyacharan Mitra's Thakumar Jhola , Shivratan Mitra's Sanjher Kotha . Among the above-mentioned literary works of Bengali fairy tale, Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumder's Thakumar Jhuli, created enormous impact in the Bengali literary tradition. Thakumar Jhuli is comprised of three sections – Dudher Sagor, Rup Tarasi, Chang-Bang(Gangopadhyay 15). In Dudher Sagor phase of Thakumar Jhuli , the stories of Kiranmala and Saat Bhai Champa were published, and scripts of the both TV series Kiranmala and Saat Bhai Champa , despite being adorned with the ornaments, as it were, of Western fantasy, are essentially based on the plot of Mitra Majumder's story Kiranmala and Saat Bhai Champa and are imbued with the influence of the Bengali fairy tale tradition.

OTT Culture

'OTT' or over-the-top is a platform or library of movies, web series, TV series, TV shows, and, on this platform, live sports events and the highlights of it are also shown and stored (Pratap et al.). To see the content of this platform, a cable connection is not needed but one should have a high-speed Internet connection. This platform includes regional sources of entertainment and creates global connectivity by showcasing movies, TV series and TV shows from different countries. In India, there are also various OTT platforms like Voot, Disney+Hotstar, Zee5, Sony Liv, BIGFlix, and Hoichoi. In the Hoichoi platform, Rudrabinar Obhishaap has been streamed, and the influence of Western fantasy on Rudrabinar Obhishaap has been discussed below.

Calculation of Time

In this section, the reader is presented with the chronology of the publication of various key texts. A tabular presentation of the dates of release will help readers to get an immediate, visual sense of the chronological ordering of these texts and possible lines of influence.

Book Name	Book Published
The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring	1954
The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	1955
The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King	1955

Movie Name	Movie Released in India
The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring	2002
The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	2003
The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King	2004

Book Name	Book Published
Book 1: Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone	1997
Book 2: Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets	1998
Book 3: Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban	1999
Book 4: Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	2000
Book 5: Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix	2003
Book 6: Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince	2005
Book 7: Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows	2007

Movie Name	Movie Released in India
Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone	2002
Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets	2003
Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban	2004
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	2005
Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix	2007
Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince	2009
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1	2010
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2	2011

Name of TV Series	Release Date
Kiranmala	2014
Saat Bhai Champa	2019

Name of OTT Series	Release Date
Rudrabinar Obhishaap	2021

Influence Of Western Fantasy and the Methodology

Despite having a rich literary and cultural history of its own, the influence of the Lord of the Rings trilogy and the Harry Potter series can be recognised in Bengali culture. This is perhaps unsurprising, given the investment of the erstwhile comprador-colonial elites, or *bhadraloks*, in the imperishable empire of Western literature and culture. This class, studied by the likes of Sekhar Bandyopadhyay and Tithi Bhattacharya, was formed under the aegis of colonial rule, and may be considered Macaulay's "minutemen"; inheritors of an imperial desire to create a class deeply invested in Western literature, culture, and education. Following on from decolonisation, colonialism was replaced by what we call imperialism – meaning the neo-colonial hegemony of globalised late- capitalism, driven by the export of Western culture and products. The *bhadralok* class continued to be invested in the veneer of Western literature, culture, and education. And thus, it is hardly surprising that the fantastic imagination in Bengal at the end of the twentieth century should be shaped as much by its own indigenous folk and fairy tale traditions as it is by the influence of Western fantasy. The influence of Western fantasy in Bengal can also be traced in a number of articles in Bengali magazines, journals, and blogs, such as "Angti Niye Abar Lorai", "Dorja Jure Bisal Sap Er Murti! Khoj Millo", and the like. It is also noteworthy that Tolkien's the Lord of the Rings trilogy was also translated into Bengali by Aniruddha.¹ It is also noteworthy that the Harry Potter series was also translated into Bengali. Therefore, this large body of translations, as well as the large volume of responses in the form of blog posts, journals, and magazine articles, make it clear that both Tolkien and Rowling were major influences on the Bengali culture of the late twentieth century. The primary texts that will be studied include two Bengali TV series and one Bengali OTT series: *Kiranmala*, *Saat Bhai Champa* and *Rudrabinar Obhishaap*. To

¹ The first book the Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Ring was translated by Aniruddha and was given a new name which is *Angtir Moitrisongho*. The second book the Lord of the Rings: Two Towers, in Bengali translation, was also named *Dui Minar*. Currently, the Bengali translation of the third book Lord of the Rings: Return of the King is not available in both offline and online mode, but the search is going on.

demonstrate the influence of Western fantasy on the above-mentioned Bengali OTT and TV Series, this paper will focus on the features of Western fantasy like the use of the evocation of wonder, mythopoeic tendencies, wish fulfilment, and the like. Side by side, the similarity of the scenes and actions of the Harry Potter Series, the Lord of the Rings trilogy and Kiranmala, Saat Bhai Champa, Rudrabinar Obhishaap will be demonstrated in this paper.

Application of Characteristic Features of Western Fantasy in Bengali Ott and TV Series

Characteristics features of Western fantasy which have been applied in Kiranmala, Saat Bhai Champa and Rudrabinar Obhishaap are described below.

Kiranmala

Brian Stableford, in his Historical Dictionary of Fantasy Literature, states: "... any story that dramatizes a common day-dream fantasy - such as becoming invisible, having a bottomless purse, or being able to fly – qualifies as a Wish-fulfilment fantasy ..." (435). This particular trait has been heavily used in both the Lord of the Rings and the Harry Potter series. Roddur Roy has applied this characteristic feature to his 2014 TV series Kiranmala. In this TV series, magical objects and magical powers are naturally possessed by the Rakshas clan, and the race of man has no natural magical qualities. Through their extraordinary supernatural abilities, the Rakshas clan has displayed various impossible works. In this TV series, Katkati, the queen of the Rakshas clan, has used "Uron-jhuri" for flying in the sky, and her daughter, Bajramala, has used "Bajra-rath" for the same purposes. This "Uron-jhuri" not only delivers Rakshas the advantages of flying, but it helps them to invigilate upon the territory of both Achinpur and Amritanagari². Through these magical flying objects, they, in "episode 26 of season 8," got the extra advantage in the battle against Amritnagari. In this way, the magical ability of Rakshas to fly in the sky has been portrayed here. The ability to be invisible, which has been exquisitely incorporated into this TV series, is also a "common daydream fantasy." This capability has been used by Rakshas, in order to fulfil their desire quickly. In "episode 6 of season 1," queen Katkati and Pekati displayed this specific ability to be "invisible" by going to Kaltapaswi³, in order to know the ways of getting Bajra-Manik⁴. In "episode 8 of season 12," Bajramala, Pekati and Queen Katkati, for capturing the parts of the dolls of Kumar Prithviraj, quickly become invisible. In this way, by astutely applying the features of "common day-dream fantasy", director Roddur Roy has injected the characteristics of wish fulfilment in his TV series Kiranmala.

"Wonder is of course generated by fantasy purely from the presence of the supernatural or impossible, and from the element of mystery and lack of explanation that goes with it" (Manlove 7). The TV series Kiranmala is loaded with supernatural and mysterious elements, and, what is more, this exposition of mysteries often happens unreasonably. The flying capabilities of "Uron-Jhuri" and "Bajra-Rath", casting spells through mouths, glittering qualities of the scorpion signs, moving objects without touching, and power of Bajra-Manik – all these portrayals of mysterious and supernatural events are absolutely capable of arousing wonder in the mind of any sensitive audience. In this way, this TV series has precisely included this above-mentioned characteristic trait of Western fantasy in its plot- structure.

² In the Kiranmala TV series, Achinpur and Amritanagari are two famous countries.

³ Kaltapaswi, in the Kiranmala TV series, is the guru of the Rakshas clan.

⁴ In the Kiranmala TV series, "Bajra-Manik" is a magical jewellery of King Vijay.

“Mythopoesis is the process by which myths are made; the core of mythopoeic fantasy consists of the output of writers who see their endeavours as a matter of manufacturing myths...”(Stableford 297). In the TV series Kiranmala, director Roddur Roy, successfully, managed to create a mythical legacy of King Ranajay. In “episode 1 of season 1”, Rajmata narrates: “ tana ekush din dhore juddho kore...rakshas der porajito korlen”(“King Vijay returns from war”, 28:40). In this episode, Rajmata states about the brutal torture of Rakshas during the reign of Raja Ranajay. Side by side, she has also verbalized the defeat of Rakshas in the hands of Ranajay. After manifesting the historical glory of Raja Ranajay, a “prophecy” regarding the return of rakshas after twenty years, has been enunciated by Rajmata. After the inclusion of these historical events and prophecy, Roy has saliently foregrounded some important objects like “Bajra-Manik”, and “Chakra” which also bear historical importance. In “episode 1 of season 1”, the life-saving jewellery “Bajra-Manik” is shown. In “episode 3 of season 4”, Kiranmala’s quest to find Ranajay’s important weapon Chakra has been depicted, and the mightiness of “Chakra” has come to light in “episode 23 of season 8”. In this episode, Kiranmala conquered the war against Rakshas through the support of Chakra. In this way, an amalgamation of historical objects along with glorious historical events unfolds the mythopoeic tendencies of Roy’s TV series Kiranmala.

The intrusion of the supernatural into the natural world is also an important feature of Western fantasy. In the TV series Kiranmala, the name of the Rakshas clan’s original place was “Patal puri”. Katkati, queen of the Rakshas clan comes to the land of humans and tortures them through her dark supernatural magical ability. Through dark magic, Rakshas’ have attacked Amritanagari, a place of humans. An interesting matter is that, at the time of war at Amritanagari, Rakshas’ have shown the use of mysterious magical charms and weapons against human warriors. Thus, through the Rakshas clan, the intrusion of the supernatural occurs into the natural world of Amritanagari. In this way, the director has added the feature of “the intrusion of the supernatural into the natural world” in the TV series Kiranmala.

Saat Bhai Champa

Fantasy, in the human sense of the law, is lawful. At the end of the story, good power often triumphs over evil. In this way, the reader’s desire for moral justice is fulfilled. In “episode 454”, Manimallika, after binding Parul with her seven brothers, his parents, Raghav, and Raghav’s father Veer Pratap, showcases the object “Lal Rokto Chuni”. This is a magical object where Manimallika’s life was preserved by Tantramata. Earlier, Parul broke the object “Lal Rokto Chuni,” but Manimallika returned from her death, due to the assistance of Tantramata. In “episode 454”, an owl, an agent of Parul, brings Manimallika’s death by eradicating the object “Lal Rokto Chuni” again. But Manimallika did not get back from her death this time. In this way, good overpowers evil in the TV series Saat Bhai Champa.

The characteristic trait of “evoking wonder” through supernatural and mysterious elements is one of the significant characteristic features of Western fantasy. This eminent characteristic feature has been included by the directors Rajat Paul and Suman Das in almost every episode of this specific TV series, but among these episodes, some display this trait in a more detailed way. Parul did not see her real mother from the beginning of her childhood, as she was nurtured by Gayatri who is not her real mother. In “episode 21 of season 1”, Parul has painted an exact picture of her real mother, after observing her actual mother’s face in a dream. Senapati⁵ Veer Pratap is surprised to see the resemblance between the painted face and the face of queen Padmavati, the original mother of Parul, and Veer Pratap says: “...e

⁵ Senapati means commander-in-chief of an army. Veer Pratap, in Saat Bhai Champa, was the commander-in-chief of the army of Suryanagar.

tohubohu Rani Padmavati r Chokh” (“Episode 21” 7.17)⁶. Parul’s supernatural capability of drawing a person whom she has never seen before is a matter which can “evoke wonder.” Apart from the example of “episode 21” of Saat Bhai Champa, directors Rajat Paul and Suman Das have, in almost all episodes, essayed to illustrate the supernatural relationship among Parul, Padmavati, nature and its animals like ants, birds, fish, dogs, rats, parrots, peacocks, spiders, deer, butterflies. Parul and Padmavati not only conversed with these animals, but they also got help time-to-time from these animals. Basically, these episodes represent the relationship of Parul and Padmavati with nature in the form of animals in supernatural and mysterious terms. This supernatural relationship and conversation with the natural animals fuel the certainty of the evocation of wonder both in the minds of the other characters and the audience of the TV series Saat Bhai Champa.

Just like the Harry Potter series and the Lord of The Rings trilogy, in this Bengali TV series Saat Bhai Champa, the application of wish-fulfilment, one of the most significant characteristics of Western fantasy, has been comprehensively accomplished by the directors Rajat Paul and Suman Das. In “episode 27 of season 1”, Parul gets the help of Dalim-ronga Projapoti⁷ to fly in the sky and also get honey from the group of Sonali Danar Moumachi⁸. In “episode 23 of season 1”, Parul saw the ghosts of her ancestors - Raja Jitendra, Raja Ganendra, Maharaj Debendra, and Raj Chakrabarti Sarbendra who came to Parul to give advice for going to the royal palace. These supernatural acts of flying in the sky through Dalim-ronga Projapoti, meeting with the ghosts of the ancestors, and conversing with animals - prove the gathering of the trait of wish-fulfilment, a significant characteristic feature of Western fantasy, in the TV series Saat Bhai Champa.

Rudrabinar Obhishaap

Director Joydeep Mukherjee, in his web series Rudrabinar Obhishaap, has quite plausibly been able to embody a mythical tradition of Rudrapur gharana⁹. To represent the existing mythical tradition of Rudrapur gharana, Mukherjee has included examples of numerous events, actions and situations. In the first episode of the first season, the main foundation of this particular OTT series has been constructed with the colour of the age-old Mughal tradition and with the fearsome effects of the class division (“Naad” 00.00- 06.54). In this web series, it is shown that Miyan Tansen once visited Rudrapur and created Raga Sanjivani at Rudrapur Shiva temple. This tale of Raga Sanjivani has been constituted by the director to form the quest structure in this series. To showcase the venerable and cursed “Indian Barnashram tradition”, the existence and the talent of the “Damar”¹⁰ community have been proficiently placed in this web series, and not only the endowment of this community has been demonstrated but the exploitation of this specific community by the Rudrabhairab, the representative of the upper class, has been exhibited in comparison with the scenario of the traditional Indian society. A significant matter for concentration here is that the seed of this exploitation and the upper-class strategy of subjugation lies in

⁶ In the TV series Saat Bhai Champa, a specific name is not given for a particular episode title. The episode title has been built by the particular episode number. For this reason, in the reference section and also in the place of in-text citation, episodes of Saat Bhai Champa have been cited by giving the episode number in place of the episode name.

⁷ Dalim-ronga Projapoti, in Saat Bhai Champa, is a magical butterfly. This butterfly aids Parul to fly in the sky.

⁸ Sonali Danar Moumachi, in Saat Bhai Champa, means a particular type of magical bee which has golden wings.

⁹ In the context of Rudrabinar Obhishaap, “Gharana” means musical school.

¹⁰ According to “Indian Barnashram tradition”, Damar is a “shudra” community. It is stated, in the web series Rudrabinar Obhishaap, that this community has an innate ability to sing. In another context, Damar is the name of a river and this river is located at Rudrapur.

the dissemination of the falsified fact regarding the curse of Rudrabina. In this way, the ancient class division and the subtle procedure of its preservation have been applied in this web series efficaciously.

The main matter in this web series is that director Joydeep Mukherjee not only has accomplished the myth-making process but he has also employed conventional Indian myths, publicised by the Indian public, in the amelioration of this myth-making process. Tansen is known for his execution of wonders through his musical capabilities, and his creation of wonder is hardly believable as, in reality, it is impossible neck and crop. This conventional tale of Tansen has been applied in Rudrabinar Obhishaap by introducing Tansen as the creator of Raga Sanjivani, a life-saving medicine for the dead body. Like this, Mukherjee has weaved myth in this web series through the help of the widely spread myth of Tansen in the Indian subcontinent. In this way, mythopoeic tendency, one of the major characteristics of Western fantasy, has been injected by the director in the web series Rudrabinar Obhishaap.

Western fantasy, particularly epic fantasy, is characterised by “a high degree of internal consistency”. Magical objects tend to work in the same way no matter who uses them. In Rudrabinar Obhishaap, magical objects also don’t make any exception, and ergo all the users of the killing flute have to confront and acknowledge death whether it is his /her own or others. That is why, Naad¹¹ uses it to kill Salamath by taking protection in his ear(Rudrabinar Chino 4:27-7:14). Likewise, Naad exercises the playing of Killing-flute for the purpose of his own suicide and the noteworthy matter is that Mumtaz, daughter of Ostad Amanat Khan, kills herself unknowingly through her ignorant usage of killing-flute. Therefore, as exemplified by the magical flute, one can observe a high degree of internal consistency in this web series.

In the case of “a high degree of internal consistency”, “pure in heart” also wins against evil ultimately. Alap and Naad’s rivalry was agglutinated in “episode 7 of season 1”, and in this specific episode, Alap, in the duel of music, was haplessly defeated by Naad, the epitome of evil. With the progression of the scene, Alap along with Shruti, Rohini, Ranjan and two Rudrabhairabs received a “bandish”¹² for acquiring the Raga Sanjivani. The “bandish” was :

(Gupto E Bondish Gao Jodi / Pran Dhele Tandob Boshikoroni/ Dadrar Songote Holahol Muche Giye / Pabe Rag Sanjibani)(“Joghawl” 19:15-23;13)

Through this “bandish” , Ostad Amanat Khan has craftily sought to deliver a hidden message about the Raga Sanjivani. In accordance with this “bandish”, one has to sing this “bandish” in “Dadra” rhythm and “Malkosh” raga in front of the idol of Lord Shiva. Naad, in “episode 7 of season 2” , de facto endeavoured to show his proficiency in the matter of singing this “bandish” , but his ability did not permit him to create any magic. On the contrary, Alap consummately sung the “bandish” , and due to his outlandish performance, Lord Shiva’s idol moved magically from its original place. Ergo, in the case of rivalry between Alap and Naad, Alap, the embodiment of goodness, acquired victory decisively against Naad, the follower of ominous musical tradition. Thus, a “high degree of internal consistency”, a noted feature of Western fantasy, has been included in the web series Rudrabinar Obhishaap.

“Evocation of wonder” is also an important feature of Western fantasy, and this feature has been precisely applied by Joydeep Mukherjee in his OTT series Rudrabinar Obhishaap. In “episode 6 of season 2”, one particular Swaralipi, with the help of Sanai, Sontur, Tanpura, Dhol, and Rudrabina, has

¹¹ “Naad”, in the web series Rudrabinar Obhishaap, is a reputed post in Rudrapur Shiva temple. Naadshankar Das is also regarded as “Naad” in this specific web series.

¹² In the web series Rudrabinar Obhishaap, “bandish” is the musical clue.

been played, according to one hundred twenty bits per minute. Alap discovers that if these all instruments are played in accordance with the time of one hundred twenty bits per minute, he will get one step closer in his quest to collect Raga Sanjivani. When Rohini, Madhubanti, Bahadur, Ramnidhi, Lalit, and Saaj performed efficiently, a supernatural blue ray miraculously emanated from the chakti and magically procreated the riddle of acquiring Raga Sanjivani on the upper portion of the temple. The constitution of this magical predicament can definitely incite wonder in the mind of the audience. In “episode 7 of season 2”, Mahadev’s statue was wagged by Alap’s magical music performance of the bandish, cue of receiving Raga Sanjivani. Also, in the “episode 8 of season 2”, Alap, by vocalizing the Raga Sanjivani, brings back water in the “Damar” river in front of all villagers. In this way, Alap, with his manifold performances, has begotten and snowballed wonder in the minds of both characters and the audience of the OTT series Rudrabinar Obhishaap.

One more significant characteristic feature of Western fantasy is that the setting of the literary works is often placed in the past where the world of fiction corresponds with the past of our world. Joydeep Mukherjee, in the first section of the Rudrabinar Obhishaap, conspicuously delivers a detailed description of Rudrapur. Within its gamut, he adroitly builds a connection with the ‘Mughal’ era by manifesting the name of Mian Tansen and also decorating the name of Pandit Kedar’s wife with the name of Shah Jahan’s wife Mumtaz. Side by side, he has exhibited the age-old issues of class division by proficiently exposing the troublesome position of the ‘Damar’ class. Furthermore, by introducing the women’s prohibition of touching the ‘Rudrabina,’ Mukherjee has attempted to weave the picture of a non-egalitarian society where women were hardly allowed to adopt education. Championing the image of Ostad Amanat Khan who was both a musician and Nawab, the director has infused the series with the essence of Nawabi tradition. More importantly, this OTT series has enriched the audience with the long historical tradition of “three gharanas”- “Anandagarh”, “Rudrapur”, and “Gandhar-garh”. This demonstration of three distinguished ‘gharanas’ and their presence in this series, mirrors the rich historical tradition of ‘Indian Classical Music.’ In this way, the setting of the Rudrabinar Obhishaap is placed in the past where the world of this OTT series has really corresponded with the social, political, and cultural past of the Indian subcontinent.

Resemblance of Scenes, Actions, and Ideas

There are various scenes, actions, and ideas in the web series that are clearly influenced by important scenes in the Harry Potter series and the Lord of the Rings trilogy. These similarities and borrowings have been delineated in the following sections.

Kiranmala

In the TV series Kiranmala, numerous scenes, actions, and symbols are comparable to the Lord of the Rings Trilogy and the Harry Potter series. “Uruk-Hai” was a creature, concocted by Saruman, in order to strengthen the sides of Sauron. The main speciality of this creature is that it has been hatched by amalgamating the species of “orc” and “human”, and similarly, in this TV series Kiranmala, “Bajramala”, a lively girl, is designed by mixing Rakshas and man, in order to annihilate “Kiranmala” and advocate the clan of Rakshas.

In both the Harry Potter series and the Lord of the Rings trilogy, pieces of jewellery like “The Ring”, “The Opal Necklace” and “Slytherin’s Locket”, have transacted a weighty role in the constitution of the

plot. Likewise, the series Kiranmala is loaded with examples, use, and projection of the images of the pieces of jewellery. In this TV series, “Bojromanik” and “Montro-puto mukto mala” are the two important pieces of jewellery. If any descendant of Raja Ranajay wears the “Bojromanik” necklace, he/she will be undefeatable as this necklace can save its wearer from the attack of any dark magic and dangerous weapons. Despite having possession of this necklace, Raja Vijay was defeated by the Rakshas clan. Similarly, in the Lord of the Rings trilogy, Sauron, in spite of having the “Ring” in his possession, was also defeated by Isildur. Therefore, it can be stated that similar plot construction with the assistance of a particular piece of magical jewellery is visible in both the Lord of the Rings trilogy and the Kiranmala TV series. Another necklace is “Montro-puto mukto mala”. This necklace is loaded with dark magic, and, through its use, Raja Vijay was brainwashed and incited against his own queen and his own daughter. The function of “Montro-puto mukto mala” resembles with the function of “Slytherin’s Locket” in Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows. “Slytherin’s Locket”, in Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, was loaded with dark magic and a portion of Voldemort’s soul. Ron Weasley wore this locket for certain days, and this piece of jewellery brought enmity to his mind against Harry. Ron even left the company of Harry and Hermione for a certain period of time. In this way, the feature and function of “Slytherin’s Locket” have been applied in “Montro-puto mukto mala”. Thus, the Kiranmala TV series, in the matter of creating magical pieces of jewellery and applying these pieces of jewellery in making analogous plot structures, has taken inspiration from the Lord of the Rings trilogy and the Harry Potter series.

While recounting “The Mirror of Erised”, Dumbledore, in The Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone, states:

It shows us nothing more or less than the deepest, most desperate desire of our hearts. You, who have never known your family, see them standing around you. Ronald Weasley, who has always been overshadowed by his brothers, sees himself standing alone, the best of all of them. However, this mirror will give us neither knowledge nor truth. Men have wasted away before it, entranced by what they have seen, or been driven mad, not knowing if what it shows is real or even possible (Rowling 157).

Through the above-mentioned quotation, Albus Dumbledore intends to state the ominous aspects of the mirror, and, side by side, he has also foregrounded the matter of the mirror’s ability to demolish man’s future by enunciating the “deepest, most desperate desire” of “hearts.” Correspondingly, in The Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, Rowling has proffered the mirror imageries through a “two-way mirror.” In the entire Harry Potter series, this “two-way-mirror” has been utilized for communication purposes among James Potter, Sirius Black, Harry Potter, and Abeforth Dumbledore, and uniformly, “the mirror’s use” has contributed extensively in the plot advancement of Kiranmala TV series. Here, the mirror performs like a character: “Muskil Ashan Arshi Sakhi” is a character and , to enlighten “Rakhshas” with all the relevant news, this character wields a magical mirror named “Maya-arshi”. In ‘episode 15 of season 1,’ ‘Maya-arshi’ assists ‘Kaltapaswi’, the sage of Rakhshas, in discovering the killer of ‘Batapi’¹³ Rakhshas, but what is more important here is that this mirror, unlike the ‘two-way-mirror,’ not only aids the Rakhshas but it also supplies information to the protagonist Kiranmala. In “episode 31 of season 2”, “Maya-arshi” has helped Kiranmala to know about her mother’s condition. Apart from constituting connection and providing information to the characters, the main difference

¹³ Batapi is the name of a Rakshas.

between ‘two-way mirror’ and ‘Maya-arshi’ is that ‘Maya-arshi’ has been headed by the middleman “Muskil Ashan Arshi Sakhi”. By highlighting this aspect, it can be clearly stated that this TV series, about the matter of using “mirror imagery”, has grasped the fragrance of the Harry Potter series and also has fostered slightly in comparison with Rowling’s magnum opus.

In Mike Newell’s Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, in David Yates’ Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince, Voldemort’s face often pops up in clouds. The portrait of Voldemort’s face in the cloud indicates sinister effects and the insinuation of some impending danger in the world of magic. Indistinguishably, in “episode 1 of season 2 ” of the Kiranmala TV series, the face of a Rakshas became evident in the dark cloud like the shadow of “Voldemort” near the burima’s hut. This face of Rakshas not only arrives in clouds but attempts to attack Burima. In this way, this scene of “episode 1 ”, demonstrates close similarities of scenes from the Harry Potter series.

In the entire Harry Potter series, photographs of all dead wizards on the wall have been demonstrated in a way as if the person in the photograph is still operative. Their actions, their behaviours, and their reaction in the lap of certain circumstances – have been orchestrated in a realistic way; even, the deceased characters of the photograph partake in conversation with the mortal wizards. For example, in Chris Columbus’ Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, Hermione Granger, in the magical stair of Hogwarts, criticizes Harry’s ability to hearken the inaudible sounds and says, “Even in the wizarding world, hearing voices isn’t a good sign”(Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets 48.06); pari passu a dead character from the frame of the wall did not also endorse Harry’s ability and states, “She’s right, you know”(Harry Potter and The Chamber of Secrets 48.10) Even, the portrait of “the fat lady of Gryffindor Common Room” sings and also interacts with students of Gryffindor house. In this regard, the Kiranmala TV series has also adopted inspiration from the Harry Potter series and side by side, this series has also manifested this above-mentioned imagery in a slightly different way. In the TV Series Kiranmala, multifarious magical eyes, in “episode 14 of season 6” have been fabricated and framed by the queen of Rakshas clan, in order to invigilate Kiranmala and his family members. Not only these magical eyes in the wall incarcerated the family, but they also time-to-time used to cast spells on the royal family. Therefore, in terms of creating lives on the life-less wall, the TV series Kiranmala has taken influence from the Harry Potter series.

In Peter Jackson’s the Lord of the Rings trilogy, Nazgul has an immeasurable contribution to the operation of the dark lord Sauron. The deepness of the influence of Peter Jackson’s the Lord of the Rings trilogy will be extensively comprehended, if anyone zeroes in on the entrance of “Amrita Bhannd”¹⁴, the place where Amrita is concealed, in “episode 6 of season 8”. The statue of “Nazgul”, for the purpose of adornment, has been employed in the entrance of the “Amrita Bhannd”. It ostensibly appears that the figure of “Nazgul” has been presented as a statue, but when the plot fosters, it becomes palpable that these “Nazgul” statues are the magical protectors of “ Amrita Bhannd”. These custodians sleep most of the time. If anyone elevates their voice in front of the doorway of “Amrita Bhannd”, these “Nazgul” statues get up from their sleep to shield “Amrita”, the magical drink. In this way, the Lord of the Rings trilogy has left its mark in the TV series Kiranmala.

¹⁴ Amrita is a magical liquid which can give immortality to anyone. Amrita Bhannd, at Amritanagari, is a secret place where Amrita is kept.

Saat Bhai Champa

In both the Harry Potter Series and Saat Bhai Champa, the main antagonist carries a close relationship with snakes. As Voldemort is the descendant of Salazar Slytherin, he has an intense connection with the “snakes” and has the capability to speak with this specific creature. He, in order to execute his mission, has employed Nagini as his weapon, and, due to the endeavour of Nagini, professor Snape was slayed. Likewise, Manimallika, the main antagonist in Saat Bhai Champa, demonstrates a genuine connection with snakes. She, like Voldemort, has also the ability to verbally communicate with snakes and, for her mission of revenge in “episode 21 of season 1”, has also trained snakes as her weapon. Another viewpoint is that both the Harry Potter series and Saat Bhai Champa have similarities in terms of the imagery of tattoos. In the body of Lucius Malfoy, Barty Crouch Jr., Voldemort’s tattoo has been engraved, and this tattoo is constructed with the images of snakes and a skull. Identically, Manimallika also bears a tattoo which is drawn with the images of “snakes.” This relationship with snakes, speaking with snakes, using snakes’ tattoos, preparing snakes as a weapon for personal missions – all these matters, through the depiction of the relationship between snakes and the main antagonist, manifest the influence of the Harry Potter Series on Bengali TV Series Saat Bhai Champa.

Hearing the scream of Lord Voldemort and knowing the fact that he himself is also a horcrux, Harry, in part two of Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, proceeded to the forest to embrace death. When he was advancing to the forest, he, with the help of the resurrection stone, noticed his dead parents, Sirius Black and Remus. A conversation took place between the living Harry and four lifeless persons, and these persons assured him that they would be with him until the end. Parul, like Harry, in “episode 23 of season 1”, also got a view of four dead persons: Raja Debandra, Raja Dharmendra, Raja Ganendra and Raj-chakraborti Sarbendra. These people basically blessed Parul and indoctrinated her to emancipate her country from evil forces. Like the movie, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, a conversation between the protagonist and four lifeless persons has also occurred in the TV series Saat Bhai Champa. In this way, Rajat Paul and Suman Das, directors of Saat Bhai Champa have taken inspiration from the Harry Potter series, and the idea of this particular scene from the movie Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows has been implemented in the TV series Saat Bhai Champa.

In both the Harry Potter series and also in the TV series Saat Bhai Champa, from the side of the main antagonist, a strong preparation for becoming the devil and also obtaining dark-magical power with the help of the mentors is seen. Horace Slughorn appears in David Yates’ Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince, and Harry, through Slughorn’s memory, comes to know that young Tom Riddle is assaying to clear his doubt about “Horcrux” from Slughorn and states, “I was in the library the other night in the Restricted Section, and I read something rather odd about a bit of rare magic. It’s called, as I understand it, a Horcrux”(Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince 1:52:44-1:52:59). Slughorn remarks: “A Horcrux is an object in which a person has concealed part of their soul”(Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince 1:53:23-1:53:27). Likewise, in the TV series Saat Bhai Champa, Tantramata helped Manimallika to become an evil witch, in “episode 111 of season 1”. Thus, in terms of the preparation of becoming the devil and of acquiring sinister magical power through the assistance of a mentor, this TV series Saat Bhai Champa has got priceless spice from one of the significant works of Western fantasy, the Harry Potter Series.

Rudrabinar Obhishaap

The “Slytherin house” in the Harry Potter series and the “Rudrapur gharana” in the TV series Rudrabinar Obhishaap both represent the darker aspect of their respective field. Unlike “Anandagarh gharana”, Rudrapur has amalgamated violence with the field of music. “Naad”, in the Shiva temple of Rudrapur, is a reputed post, and the selection process of “Naad” demands two antithetical qualities from the people of the “Damar caste”. In order to be singled out as “Naad”, one has to be the maestro in the musical field and also has to be competent in committing vicious activities. In this series, Naadshankar Das, “Naad” of Rudrapur Shiva temple, assassinated Salamat, Nur, and Anadi, but astonishing matter is that he also did not parade any sign of compunction because he was accustomed to perpetrating these types of ferocious deeds. Likewise, in the Harry Potter Series, the killing curse is also casted by the majority of the people who are from Slytherin’s house. Salazar Slytherin preferred pure-blood students over muggle-born students, and also the students of Slytherin house buttressed Slytherin’s “pure-blood principle”. Likewise, in this web series, Rudrabhairab, kingpin of Rudrapur gharana, also preserves class-division and does not permit women to master music. In the Harry Potter series, the darker use of magic can be observed extensively within the students of Slytherin house and “the Cruciatus curse”, the “killing Curse” are also widely exercised by them in comparison with the students of Gryffindor, Ravenclaw, Hufflepuff. Like the students of Slytherin house, Naad, envoy of Rudrapur gharana, plies the killing-flute to exterminate the descendants of Madanti. On the other hand, musicians of Anandagarh gharana, despite having expertise in the musical field, are not acquainted with the existence and use of the killing-flute. This use of dangerous flute is normalized in the musical society of Rudrapur. Thus, Rudrapur gharana, in the matter of carrying upper-class mentality, of normalizing the violence and the darker aspect of the musical field, manifests parallelism with Slytherin’s house of the Harry Potter series.

In the Lord of The Rings trilogy, Gollum, just like a spy, constantly keeps an eye on Frodo and Sam on their quest to “Mordor”. In this OTT series, Alap’s mission was auspicated when Rudrabhairab kidnapped Alap’s mother Rohini and blackmailed Alap for getting Raga Sanjivani. Along with the capturing of Rohini, Rudrabhairab set two spies on Alap – “Naad” and a “flute-player”. These both two spies carry partly the characteristic features of Gollum. The flute-player constantly plays the same tune of flute, and he, like Gollum’s attitude towards Frodo and Sam, follows Alap’s progression in the matter of getting Raga Sanjivani. Gollum, though he was spying, also aids Frodo and Sam by showing them the quickest road for going to Mordor. Likewise, Alap was also aided by the flute-player. Alap received a medical report from the flute-player and through the medical report, Alap later was able to figure out the real descendant of Madanti and the actual identity of Rohini. Another spy, “Naad”, like the behaviour of Gollum, not only follows Alap, but he enters into the real plot and establishes himself as a major character. Like Gollum’s mind, Naad’s mind is also placed in a shifting mode. The proof of Naad’s shifting mind has become transparent in his ways of execution of his deeds. He, as he was given the responsibility of killing the descendants of Madanti, killed Salamat, Nur. He also tried to kill Shruti and Madhubanti. In spite of becoming successful in accomplishing the majority of his responsibilities, Naad could not kill Saaz for his deep feelings towards her. His mind was continuously shifting between his thought of responsibility and his thought of love and that’s why he failed to slay her in his several attempts. Thus, Naad, like Gollum, has manifested the shifting motive of his mind in this web series.

Like the Harry Potter Series, “tattoo” has played an integral role in Rudrabinar Obhishaap. “Rudrapur gharana” is like the Slytherin house of Harry Potter because it, unlike “Anandagarh gharana”, represents the darker side of the music. “Rudrapur Gharana”, like Voldemort’s use of tattoo, applies a tattoo to the body of the music students. This tattoo is constructed with the image of the “Rudrabina”, and it serves two purposes in this OTT series: “purpose of identification”, and “purpose of the demonstration of violence”. Just like Barty Crouch junior was identified as a supporter of Voldemort through the tattoo on his hand, Anadi and Hemanta, in Rudrabinar Obhishaap, were also identified as students of Rudrapur gharana through their tattoos. In this way, this tattoo has been made “a symbol of identification”. Naad, after murdering Salamat and Nur, has made this tattoo on their body when everyone does not totally know about the symbol except Bahadur. Thus, this Tattoo has served as a symbol of violence in the entire OTT series. In this way, Rudrabinar Obhishaap has been coloured by the Harry Potter series.

Earlier, the similarity between Rudrapur gharana and the Slytherin house has been depicted in this paper. In both the Harry Potter series and Rudrabinar Obhishaap, magic and magical objects have been used to kill people. In the Harry Potter series, the spell “Avada Kedavra” has been used as a deathly weapon on numerous occasions. Similarly, in Rudrabinar Obhishaap, the magical killing flute has also been utilized by Naad to kill people. Thus, in terms of specifying magical deathly weapons, the TV series Rudrabinar Obhishaap has taken inspiration from the Harry Potter series.

Conclusion

From the above-mentioned description, it can be considered that the Lord of the Rings trilogy and the Harry Potter Series have played an integral role in flowering these two TV series and one OTT series: Kiranmala, Saat Bhai Champa and Rudrabinar Obhishaap. Directors of this series- Rajat Paul, Suman Das, Joydeep Mukherjee and Roddur Roy- have played an immeasurable role in building the plot which carries within its body the characteristics of Western fantasy fiction. In this way, the magic of Western fantasy will hopefully reach the people through their own culture and will create a permanent place in their minds. In the end, it can be said that important examples and events from all episodes of a TV series or OTT series can not be covered in a single paper. For this reason, specific areas, where further research is needed, have been mentioned in this particular section. The Kiranmala TV series has been arranged into twenty-one seasons and these twenty-one seasons are loaded with numerous episodes. Similarly, the TV series Saat Bhai Champa is constituted with four hundred fifty-four episodes. Apart from focusing on the whole story of the Kiranmala TV series, major emphasis has been provided from the episodes of seasons 1 to 12, and further research can be accomplished from the episodes of seasons 13 to 21. In the case of Saat Bhai Champa, episodes no. 21, 23, 111, 454, and 27 have kept major contributions in this paper and further research can be done by concentrating on the other unworked episodes of Saat Bhai Champa. In this paper, from the OTT series Rudrabinar Obhishaap, episodes like “Joghawl”, “Naad”, “Raga Sanjivani”, and “Rudrabinar Chinho” have been used to provide examples and citations. Episodes like “Madantir Bongshodhor”, “Rudrapurer Nari”, “Arek Naad”, and “Udara” are also important episodes and these episodes can be taken into consideration for further research.

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