**A Polyphonic Reading of ‘Titas Ekti Nadir Naam’ representation of Women, River, And Solitude: A Literary, Feminist, Sociological and Philosophical Analysis**

**ABSTRACT:**

Aditto Mallabarman’s ‘Titash Ekti Nadir Naam’ (Titash is the Name of a River) is not just a narrative portrait of a marginalized community—it is a polyphonic literary expression woman, river, and loneliness emerge as symbolic representations of an alienated existence. Themes such as motherhood, love, broken dreams, and the crisis of selfhood are intricately interwoven within a historical and ethnographic context. [1]

Characters like Basanti, Ananta’s mother, and Anantabala are not simply fictional creations—they are the silent embodiments of the self-effacing lives of Bengali women, shaped by centuries of patriarchal erasure. In the figures of Kishore and Ananta, one perceives the ruptures and existential anguish born of a crumbling patriarchal social order.

River and woman—these two stand side by side, as if mirroring each other: one as the carrier of cultural memory, the other as the reflection of existential void. Their co-presence unfolds as a lyrical metaphor—both nourishing and dissolving life in the same breath.

This study explores the aesthetic sophistication, feminist undertones, sociological density, and philosophical inquiries embedded in the novel, where the tension between aspiration and attainment echoes the timeless failure inherent in the human condition. Therefore, ‘Titash’ becomes not just the name of a river—but the tribute to a disappearing world.

**KEYWORDS:** Cultural Degeneration, Feminism, Loneliness, Marginality, Motherhood, River-symbolism, Self-identity.

**INTRODUCTION:**

In the history of Bengali novels, ‘Titas Ekti Nadir Naam’ (Titas Is the Name of a River) occupies a distinctive and timeless space where the multilayered tragedies of feminine existence have been sublimated into art, against the backdrop of rural life. Here, the river is not just a geographical reality—it emerges as a metaphor for life itself. Flowing through the narrative, it becomes the site where women continuously dream, break, and await.

Characters like Ananta’s mother, Basanti, and Anantabala do not just represent individual tales of failure; rather, their fragmented lives collectively become a testament to a society grappling with the erosion of its very existence. Their sorrows are not isolated events, but symptomatic of a deeper structural and cultural breakdown.

In this novel, the feminine experience is intimately interwoven with the symbolic significance of the river—forever flowing, forever eroding, yet endlessly waiting. It's through this riverine rhythm that the novel crafts an ethereal beauty, a tragic mysticism, and a philosophical introspection on identity and loss.

‘Titas’ is thus not just to be approached as a literary artifact but as a mirror that reflects the silent wounds and resilient pulses of the marginalized. The text invites interdisciplinary analysis—through the lenses of feminism, sociology, and anthropology—each revealing a different facet of its submerged consciousness.

The objective of this study, therefore, is to trace and interpret that inner essence: the quiet soul of womanhood, obscured by neglect yet echoing through the river’s relentless murmur—a soul yearning not just for recognition, but for remembrance.

**RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY:**

The present study is conceived as an interdisciplinary inquiry that combines literary analysis, feminist hermeneutics, sociological interpretation, and philosophical reflection to explore the polyphonic dimensions of Titas Ekti Nadir Naam by Advaita Mallabarman. This novel is not just a fictional narrative but a profound archive of collective memory, marginal experience, and aesthetic resistance. As such, the research design is structured to reflect the text’s intrinsic multiplicity and its interwoven cultural, emotional, and symbolic strands.

**Research Objectives:**

* To explore the polyphonic narrative structure and the multiplicity of voices embedded in the novel.
* To analyze the representations of women, river, and solitude as symbolic and existential tropes.
* To interpret the intersection of feminine suffering, cultural erosion, and ecological displacement through interdisciplinary lenses.
* To recover subaltern subjectivities, particularly female, within the socio-cultural collapse portrayed in the novel.
* To examine the philosophical undertones of longing, love, identity, and incompletion as articulated through character and landscape.

Methodological Approaches:

1. **Polyphonic Literary Analysis:**

Drawing from Mikhail Bakhtin’s theory of dialogism and polyphony, the study examines the narrative’s fragmented, non-linear structure. Instead of following a single protagonist or plotline, Titas Ekti Nadir Naam presents a chorus of marginalized voices, forming a rhizomatic narrative. Each character contributes to the novel’s collective consciousness. Textual close reading is employed to identify how these multiple discourses interact, overlap, or contradict, thereby enriching the novel’s complexity. (Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics)

1. **Feminist Hermeneutics and Subaltern Reading:**

The study adopts a feminist critical lens to examine the status and roles of women within the patriarchal and caste-bound Malo society. The concepts of namelessness, motherhood, emotional labor, deprivation, and gendered silencing are central to this approach. The characters of Ananta’s mother, Basanti, Subal’s wife, and Anantabala are analyzed not just as victims but as carriers of silent strength and existential resistance. The reading engages with feminist theorists such as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (“Can the Subaltern Speak?”) and draws parallels with literary figures like Mahasweta Devi’s Stanadayini, Sarat Chandra’s Nirupama, and Tagore’s Charulata. (Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?”)

1. **Sociological and Ethnographic Contextualization:**

The research employs sociological and ethnographic tools to explore the lived realities of the Malo fishing community. Themes such as economic marginalization, cultural extinction, ecological dependence, and rural identity politics are foregrounded. The decline of river-based livelihood is interpreted as both a literal and symbolic collapse of a community’s structure and spirit. The research also evaluates folk traditions (e.g., bhatiyali, kirtan, lokgaan) and their gradual erasure as evidence of cultural displacement.

1. **Philosophical-Thematic Analysis:**

A philosophical reading underlies the research design, focusing on existential motifs such as solitude, loss, memory, and the incompleteness of being. The text is engaged through concepts like Giorgio Agamben’s ‘bare life’, existential alienation, and the metaphysics of waiting. The characters’ emotional trajectories are not treated as psychological phenomena alone but are elevated to philosophical meditations on fate, temporality, and identity.

1. **Table 1: Comparative and Intertextual Study:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Work | Region | Marginality Focus | Narrative Mode | Symbol |
| Titas Ekti Nadir Naam (Mallabarman) | Bengal (Tripura) | Malo riverine community | Polyphonic, elegiac | River as lost culture |
| The Grapes of Wrath (Steinbeck) | Dust Bowl, U.S.A | Displaced rural farmers | Linear epic | Land as exploited mother |
| One Hundred Years of Solitude (García Márquez) | Macondo, Latin America | Forgotten town | Magical realism | Time as circular decay |
| Godaan (Premchand) | North India | Peasant oppression | Realist, moralistic | Caste as class metaphor |
| Things Fall Apart (Chinua Achebe) | Igbo, Nigeria | Colonial subjugation | Tragic, cyclical | Man vs masculinity/culture |
| Nectar in a Sieve (Kamala Markandaya) | Rural South India | Rural poverty and gendered suffering | Realist, elegiac | Land as lost sustenance |
| The God of Small Things (Arundhati Roy) | Kerala, India | Caste, trauma, postcolonial identity | Postmodern, fragmented | Small things as resistance |
| Season of Migration to the North (Tayeb Salih) | Sudan | Cultural dislocation, postcolonial crisis | Symbolic, psychological | The Nile as duality |
| The River Between (Ngugi wa Thiong’o) | Kenya | Tribal identity and colonial influence | Allegorical, lyrical | River as traitor/divide |
| The House of the Spirits (Isabel Allende) | Chile | Family trauma and political history | Magical realism | Spirits as memory/history |

The following chart visually compares global literary works relevant to the themes discussed in Titas Ekti Nadir Naam:

The study incorporates comparative literary analysis to deepen interpretation and situate Titas within broader literary traditions. It draws intertextual connections with:

* Mark Twain’s Mississippi River as a geographical conscience of marginality,
* John Steinbeck’s Salinas Valley as a symbol of socio-economic turmoil,
* García Márquez’s magical realism, where land and loss coexist poetically.

In Bengali literature, the narrative is placed alongside Manik Bandopadhyay’s Padma Nadir Majhi, Bibhutibhushan’s Aranyak, and Jibanananda Das’s poetic evocations of melancholy and liminality.

**Scope and Delimitation:**

The research focuses on the textual, symbolic, and cultural universe of Titas Ekti Nadir Naam, without venturing into detailed linguistic stylistics or manuscript variants. While the novel lends itself to postcolonial and ecological readings, the emphasis remains on its literary polyphony, feminine representation, and philosophical interiority. Secondary materials such as critical essays, theoretical texts, and comparable literary works are used selectively to enhance but not overshadow the primary text.

**Significance of Methodology:**

By combining diverse theoretical approaches within a single analytical framework, this methodology honors the inherent plurality of Titas as both form and content. The research resists reductive interpretations and instead embraces ambivalence, silence, and incompletion as productive critical spaces. It affirms that marginal voices are not just subjects of pity but bearers of meaning, memory, and metaphysical depth.

**1. NARRATOLOGICAL STRUCTURE AND COLLECTIVE VOICE:**

Unlike classical Western narrative arcs where the story revolves around a central protagonist with a linear progression of conflict and resolution, ‘Titas Ekti Nadir Naam’ dissolves the idea of a singular “hero” or “heroine.” It adopts a polyphonic structure—a multitude of voices and sub-stories flowing like distributaries of a single deltaic river. The story is rhizomatic rather than hierarchical; it grows laterally, entangling time, memory, and loss.

This technique echoes Mikhail Bakhtin’s idea of the polyphonic novel where truth is not monopolized by one voice but emerges through the interaction of many. The novel’s refusal to offer a centralizing consciousness is also a political gesture—affirming that marginal lives do not need a singular savior, but speak most authentically in choral resonance. (Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics)

**2. PHILOSOPHICAL GROUNDING: THE QUESTION OF “WHOSE LIFE?” :**

The question—“Ei jīban kāder?”—is not just rhetorical. It deconstructs the very foundation of social representation in literature. It interrogates ownership over life itself. Who writes history? Who tells the tale of the boatman, the fishwife, the widow, the outcaste?

The question aligns with Giorgio Agamben’s concept of ‘bare life’ (la nuda vita)—lives that exist in the shadow of the law, unrecognized by institutionalized power, yet alive, feeling, resisting. In Mallabarman's hands, such bare lives attain aesthetic dignity and metaphysical weight.

**3. TITAS AND THE RIVER AS DESTINY: SYMBOLIC GEOGRAPHY:**

In ‘Titas’, the river is not a background; it is an active, breathing character. It's memory. It's change. It's disintegration. In that way, it resembles the role of the Mississippi River in Mark Twain’s ‘The Adventures of Huckleberry’ Finn or the Salinas Valley in John Steinbeck’s ‘The Grapes of Wrath’. However, in ‘Titas’, the river is more cosmological than economic. It embodies a mourning landscape, not just livelihood.

The river carries not just fish and ferries but rituals, languages, and unrecorded philosophies of a community on the edge of historical extinction. The lyrical treatment of the river parallels the magical-real realism of García Márquez, where land and spirit are indistinguishably interwoven. (One Hundred Years of Solitude (García Márquez))

**4. THE AESTHETIC OF LOSS AND POETIC HISTORY:**

The aesthetic scaffolding of Titas is constructed not upon climactic events but upon slow erosion—of community, of language, of cultural memory. In that, it bears resemblance to the poetry of Jibanananda Das, whose line—“Antarāl chuñe jāi / palāsher raktākto swapner bhitor diye”—becomes the emotional DNA of the novel. The antarāl (the liminal, the invisible) is where the Malo community exists—not fully dead, yet not entirely alive in the mainstream’s imagination. (Jibanananda Das)

Here, the novel becomes an elegy, not an epic. It'sn't about glory but remembrance. Not about conquest but survival. And that too, not heroic survival—but the survival of memory through the quiet medium of art.

**5. FEMININE PRESENCE AND THE SILENCE OF THE SUBALTERN WOMAN:**

Though many characters move through Titas, the fate of women—especially widows, deserted lovers, and aging matriarchs—mirrors the fate of the river itself: gradually abandoned, yet persistently flowing. Their voices may not dominate dialogue, but they structure the moral undercurrent of the text.

 Titas resonates with Mahasweta Devi’s women—notably the mothers and tribal women who are structurally silenced yet spiritually sovereign.

* **THE POETICS OF THE VANISHING:**

‘Titas Ekti Nadir Naam’ is not simply a novel—it is an archive of loss, a folk-epic of erasure, and a testament to the voiceless. It not just redefines the regional novel in Bengali literature, and expands the aesthetic and philosophical horizon of the form itself.

* **TO ECHO RABINDRANATH ONCE MORE:**

“Man is not meant to live within narrow enclosures—he seeks to expand.”

Titas is that expansion—not outward toward conquest, but inward toward memory. It's a meditation on what it means to A Polyphonic Reading of Titas Ekti Nadir Naam: Women, River, and Solitude — A Literary, Feminist, Sociological, and Philosophical Analysis, to disappear not in silence, but in a song only a river can remember.

* **THE STREAM OF EXPECTATION AND FULFILMENT — THE INNER NARRATIVE OF THE MALO LIFE BY THE BANKS OF THE TITAS:**

‘Titash Ekti Nadir Naam’ by Advaita Mallabarman is not just the story of a marginalised community—it is a profound reflection of a vast human existence. The joys and sorrows, love and separation, and existential dilemmas of the Malo community illuminate an eternal human conflict: that between expectation and fulfilment. By delving deep into the inner layers of their lives, the author portrays a philosophy of life where “what man desires is one thing, but what actually happens seems entirely another.” (Mallabarman, 2014)

This contrast unfolds as a subterranean grief, the silent undertone of the novel. “A plaintive, tragic tune flows endlessly beneath the apparent vibrancy of our flowing lives, like a hidden underground stream.” (Chattopadhyay, 2007, pp. 190–191). This latent strain continues the tradition of Bengali fiction, much like in Rabindranath Tagore’s ‘Chokher Bali’ and ‘Nastanirh’, where the clash between inner longing and life’s harsh reality is rendered in a deeply poetic form. (Tagore)

Likewise, in the backdrop of the Titas River, Mallabarman constructs a human epic, where the river is not just a geographic entity but a metaphor for existence. Just as in Manik Bandopadhyay’s ‘Padma Nadir Majhi’, the river becomes for Kuber both a symbol of sustenance and destruction, so too does the Titas reflect a dual imagery—of livelihood and of social disintegration. A close reading of the novel reveals that as the river dries up, the very essence of Malo life begins to fade: (Manik Bandopadhyay)

“The crisis emerges primarily around the drying up of the Titas River, which signifies the existential dilemma of the river-dependent Malo community and the degradation of their distinct cultural identity.” (Mallabarman, 2014, p. 225)

This crisis is not just environmental, but a profound cultural collapse. When a society—built upon folk songs, customs, livelihoods, and social cohesion—loses its river, it also loses its sense of self. Mallabarman portrays the conflict between expectation and fulfilment not just as a psychological struggle but as a collective existential threat—and therein lies the literary distinction of his work.

* **IN THE TRAGIC RHYTHM OF EXPECTATION AND ATTAINMENT: THE CRUEL IRONY OF FATE IN THE MATERNAL WORLDS OF KISHORE AND ANANTA'S MOTHER:**

Advaita Malla Barman’s ‘Titash Ekti Nadir Naam’ (A River Called Titash) is not just a narrative of a marginalized community—it is a profound mirror of tragic human existence, where the conflict between expectation and attainment resonates deeply within every character. This existential clash finds its most poignant artistic expression in the maternal figures of Kishore and Ananta’s mother, in whose lives the yearning for life and the ache of incompletion are woven into a metaphor steeped in silence.

Kishore—a romantic soul, a dreamer—responds to “the magical call of the unknown.” For him, the river is not simply a means of livelihood but a wellspring of profound aesthetics. He loves a woman he does not know, for in his vision of love, “One can marry a woman whom the heart has never known or recognized.” This reflects a poetic, unparalleled melody of attraction toward the unfamiliar. Yet, when he marries this unnamed woman, he remains unaware that this joy is but a prelude to a cruel twist of fate. The abduction of his just-wedded wife by bandits robs him of both love and self—transforming him into a madman, a hapless plaything of destiny.

This tragedy, however, transcends the personal—it becomes a multidimensional rupture, an inner death. Similar to Tagore’s ‘Charulata’ or Sarat Chandra’s ‘Nirupama’, it reveals the impact of social constraints and the pangs of loneliness. Yet, Kishore’s suffering erupts with sudden, devastating immediacy—like a volcanic burst of sorrow that leaves no time for comprehension. (Tagore)

On the other hand, Ananta’s mother becomes a symbol of solitude. Though she experiences the fullness of motherhood, both society and fate snatch it away. In the lives of Kishore, Ananta’s mother, and Basanti, this incompleteness flows like a silent weeping— “like a long river, where happiness arrives like fleeting waves, while sorrow flows as an endless current.”

Therefore, in this novel, the collision between longing and fulfillment is not just a personal catastrophe—it becomes a reflection of an existential philosophy, where dreams, memories, and reality converge to compose an unparalleled tragic epic imbued with poetic pathos and metaphysical depth.

* **FATE-CURSED LOVE AND SELF-SACRIFICING DETERMINATION:**

In ‘Titash Ekti Nadir Naam’ (A River Called Titash), Ananta’s mother emerges as the living embodiment of an unspoken tragedy—a silent poem of lifelong waiting and loneliness. Though bound in marriage and having entered domestic life, the fullness of adolescent love and conjugal bliss never graced her destiny. Her abduction by bandits and subsequent refuge in the fishing community shaped her days into an unending chapter of deprivation, incompleteness, and yearning for love. In her case, “returning from the jaws of death” did not signify a new beginning but rather marked the onset of a quiet renunciation.

This love was not confined to physical intimacy—it was deeply spiritual. Years later, when she returns to her in-laws' home with the hope of being reunited with her husband, she discovers a shocking truth: the madman roaming the village is none other than Kishore, her husband. Yet, even in the face of this devastating revelation, she does not collapse. Instead, she devotes herself to his revival, both in body and spirit.

This unwavering self-dedication finds its most poignant expression in her soul-piercing dialogue:

“You cannot restore the man of his mind to him. True, I cannot. But I can try—try to become that person of his soul myself.” (Mallabarman, 2014)

This line stands as a powerful symbol of a woman’s self-recognition, her faith in love, and her immense inner strength. It'sn't an act of self-abandonment, but of self-radiance. Her love transcends conventional norms; it springs from a profound resonance of the soul—where being the “person of the mind” is not about physical union or social identity but a deep spiritual attunement.

In her character, we witness the silent devotion of Aparna from Bibhutibhushan’s ‘Aparajito’, the self-aware, defiant love consciousness of Taslima Nasrin’s K, and the mystical realization echoed in Rumi’s words:

“The wound is the place where the light enters you.” (Rumi, quoted in Bruce, 2018)

Ananta’s mother carries a love imbued with philosophical depth—where separation, loss, and even the beloved’s mental disintegration cannot dim love’s radiance. Her love is not a plea, but a prayer; not a craving, but an awakening through self-offering.

Therefore, the love story of Ananta’s mother transcends the personal to become a refined human document—where fate, deprivation, and unrelenting longing converge to craft a luminous emblem of a woman’s self-identity and spiritual resilience.

* **SHATTERED DREAMS AND THE ETERNAL ECHO OF PARENTAL GRIEF:**

In ‘Titash Ekti Nadir Naam’ (Titash is a River’s Name), the psychological breakdown of the young Kishore is not just a personal tragedy—it embodies the silent collapse of his parents’ dreams and the ultimate disintegration of their envisioned domestic happiness. Adwaita Mallabarman artistically captures this emptiness with such poignant intensity that it transcends the immediate narrative and foregrounds the deeper crisis of the eternal family structure.

The age-old philosophical belief— “A child’s happiness is the parents' happiness”—resonates through the medieval Bengali literary line uttered by Ishwari Patni:

“Amar shontan jeno thake dudh-e-bhaate.” (“May my child be blessed with a life of rice and milk.”)

This longing is not just a customary ideal but forms the very foundation of parental selfhood and identity. However, this hopeful vision extinguishes the moment Kishore returns, mentally devastated, derailing all their plans for a peaceful household. The future that once shimmered with joy now dissolves into a motionless, tragic void.

On the night when Basanti is married to Subla instead of Kishore, that broken dream takes its most painful shape. The narrator reflects:

“...bura burir chokhe se raate aar ghum asil na.” (“That night, the old couple could not sleep.”) (Mallabarman, 2014)

This single sentence reverberates with infinite sorrow. The symbolic attempt to drown out wedding music with the hiss of the hookah, the flickering light—all create a tableau of haunting loneliness. Though the son is physically alive, he is psychologically dead—a kind of living death, the most tragic form of life’s incompleteness.

* **RABINDRANATH TAGORE, PERHAPS PROPHETICALLY, CAPTURED THIS DESPAIR:**

“Mrityu jekhane ekdin ashirbad hoye ashe, shei mrityu-prasannatar purbe dirgho nissongho jontrona aro oshohoniyo.” (“When death one day arrives as a blessing, the prolonged loneliness and agony preceding it becomes even more unbearable.”)— (Tagore, page unknown) (Tagore)

Echoing this sorrow, Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay described the grief of a childless father as akin to:

“Andhokare hariye jawa nakshatrer moto.” (“A star lost in darkness.”)— (Mallabarman, 2014)

These metaphors elevate the grief of Kishore’s parents from a literary sentiment to an existential experience. We witness a similar melancholic preoccupation with a child’s uncertain future in the character of the Raybahadur in Bibhutibhushan’s Aranyak. Likewise, in Manik Bandopadhyay’s Putul Nacher Itikatha, the cruelty of fate leaves an indelible mark upon individual lives. (Bibhutibhushan)

Therefore, Adwaita’s portrayal is not just about a son’s misfortune—it narrates the collapse of parental dreams, their identity, and their entire domestic existence. Here, ‘hope’ appears as a “deceptive disguise”, which gradually transforms into a deep-seated sorrow embedded within human relationships.

 the author reminds us that broken dreams, isolation, and profound suffering are not limited to an individual—they resonate through an entire family, a cultural fabric, and the ongoing stream of human life. And within this resonance lies a sublime aesthetic and philosophical consciousness—elevating the Bengali novel to the pinnacle of literary artistry.

* **SPRING-RAVAGED LOVE AND THE HUMAN DRAMA OF EXISTENTIAL DISPLACEMENT:**

In Advaita Mallabarman’s novel ‘Titas Ekti Nadir Naam’, a profound tragedy unfolds against the backdrop of the spring festival, not as a celebration of renewal, but as the site of brutal emotional annihilation. On this day, a young woman’s love for Kishore collapses into cruelty when she becomes the instrument of his deepest humiliation. In a storm of emotional turmoil and mental instability, Kishore violently assaults Ananta’s mother, only to face social retribution and ultimately take his own life.

The shock of this suicide becomes unbearable for Ananta’s mother—a woman who had once fought desperately to restore her mentally unstable husband. Crushed by guilt and grief, she dies within two days. This layered tragedy is rooted in the unspoken, unrecognized, and unnamed dimensions of love—its failure and aching void of existence.

Ananta’s mother is nameless—not just in a linguistic sense, but symbolically representing “the erasure of being, an exile of the soul.” As Dr. Rumela Bandopadhyay articulates:

“What need is there for a name for someone who holds no social worth, whose love is never acknowledged, who cannot claim her child, who fails to bring her husband back from madness into normalcy due to social opposition?” (Bandopadhyay, 2007, pp. 174–175) (Radharani Devi)

‘A name’ is not a mere grammatical label… what really belongs to Ananta’s mother?” (Mallabarman, 2014)

This observation not just exposes the intimate anguish of Ananta’s mother and critiques the ruthless structural apathy of society. She is unable to rebel, unable to dream of self-assertion; instead, she fades silently into oblivion. In stark contrast, characters like Rajlakshmi from Sarat Chandra’s works or Mrinal from Manik Bandopadhyay’s fiction carve out a language of existence through acts of defiance or self-destruction. But Ananta’s mother remains a nameless, unfulfilled soul, suspended in voiceless yearning. (Sarat Chandra)

This tale of death and incompletion transcends individual tragedy—it permeates the landscape, the rhythms of nature, and the seasonal motifs of the Titas. Spring here is not a celebration of blossoms and color—it is a melancholic irony of the seasonal cycle, where grief masquerades as festivity. Spring and love do not harmonize here; rather, they become metaphors for corpse and void.

 the episode penetrates the core of the novel—emerging as a deeply existential meditation on love, mourning, anonymity, and self-effacement. It transforms a personal loss into a sweeping social and philosophical tragedy, where the silenced cry of an unacknowledged soul reflects the broader devastation of a loveless, unhearing world.

* **BASANTI’S DOOMED LOVE, VOWS, AND A LIFE ENTRAPPED BY FATE:**

In Titas Ekti Nadir Naam’ (Titas: A River’s Tale), Basanti’s life emerges as a poignant tragedy—an embodiment of how a woman’s love, aspirations, and repetitive misfortunes become a cruel plaything in the hands of society and destiny. Her emotional bonds with Kishore and Subal during adolescence are painted in hues of innocent radiance and ethereal beauty. Yet her heart, unwaveringly, inclines toward Kishore. Though their marriage is arranged, Kishore, lured by another woman in Titas, loses himself and returns mentally unwell. Basanti’s first love collapses, leaving her alienated and discarded—a woman shattered and stripped of social identity.

Later, Kishore tells Subal:

“Having heard everything, Subal jumps with joy and says, ‘Brother! So, you’ve already found Basanti here. Now tell me—will you hand over the Basanti back home to someone else?’

‘I hand her over to you.’

A faint glimmer of hope buzzed softly in Subal’s heart.” (Mallar Barman, 2014)

Though this dialogue carries the tenderness of a heartfelt promise, reality takes a harsher turn. The marital bond between Basanti and Subal ends in swift catastrophe when Subal dies in a tragic boat accident. Once again, the shankha (conch bangles) and sindoor (vermillion)—symbols of marital sanctity—are wiped from Basanti’s fate. She is once more enclosed within the mournful identity of widowhood.

Basanti’s life becomes a haunting elegy of womanhood—a symphony of sorrow dictated by fate and social architecture. The cruelty of patriarchal norms, the authority of social conventions, and the stark irony of destiny repeatedly crush her love and selfhood. This tragedy evokes memories of Rabindranath Tagore’s Charulata or Sarat Chandra’s ‘Kiranmoyee’, yet Basanti’s silent anguish feels even more profound, more intimate. Each rupture of relationship mirrors a death of the soul—a descent into deeper isolation. (Tagore)

However, this is not just Basanti’s personal downfall—it symbolises a larger cultural crisis. In the flowing current of Malo society, a woman’s position is never stable. Her life is governed by love, custom, and abandonment. Like the river Titas itself, her existence flows with undercurrents of impermanence, dispossession, and pain.

Ultimately, her story raises a quiet, aching question:

Can a woman’s dream ever truly come alive in such a society?

* **THE POETIC CRUELTY OF DESTINY AND BASANTI’S UNFULFILLED DOMESTIC DREAM:**

In ‘Titas Ekti Nadir Naam’ (A River Called Titas) by Advaita Mallabarman, the fate of Basanti unfolds like an unwritten poetic tragedy. Her dreams of love and a stable family life are relentlessly shattered by the cruelty of destiny. What begins as a hopeful marital journey with Subal is soon engulfed by the fatal clasp of the life-destroying river. That tragic moment becomes symbolic of life’s inescapable fate, leaving in Basanti's world an irreparable void.

Subal’s death turns into a tragic denouement in her life—an ending as inevitable and devastating as Apu’s solitude in ‘Pather Panchali’ after Durga’s death. Deep within Basanti’s character lies a quiet yet conscious longing for love. First, it is the adolescent Kishore who rejects her; later, it is Subal who offers companionship, but not happiness. This emotional defeat is echoed in the social label she carries—“Subal’s wife.” Professor Achintya Biswas aptly observes: (Biswas)

“In the downpour of love where Basanti had longed to bathe, Kishore’s marriage elsewhere and his descent into madness left her deprived of that cleansing rain...”
(Mallabarman, 2014)

* **BASANTI’S INNERMOST FEELINGS FIND VOICE IN HER STARK REFLECTION:**

“What use are men? They are like raindrops—vanish as soon as they fall. They are like the tide—give a moment of joy and then lie down in the river’s heart.” (Mallabarman, 2014)

These metaphorical words poignantly express the betrayal of fleeting masculine affection and the eternal disillusionment of womanhood. Basanti’s voice resonates not just her own sorrow and that of countless women like Kusum and Rajlakshmi. In this context, Rabindranath Tagore’s lines from the poem Stri (Woman) remain profoundly relevant: (Tagore)

“He always wants only the outside—He knows not the cry that rises from within.” (Mallabarman, 2014)

Basanti’s life thus becomes an embodiment of that silenced inner cry, where spiritual longing is smothered under the veil of a mere social identity. Unfulfilled love, the collapse of domestic dreams, and the treachery of fate combine to transform her into an artistic embodiment of collective feminine anguish. Her existence is not just that of a fictional character; she becomes a unique literary icon—a universal symbol of woman’s silent suffering and strength.

* **THE RETURN OF LONGING AND THE SILENT ECHOES OF MOTHERHOOD:**

In ‘Titash Ekti Nadir Naam’ (A River Called Titash) by Advaita Malla Barman, the character of Basanti is not just a marginalized woman—she is a timeless symbol of yearning, entangled in the crisis of a fractured identity. Her affection for Kishore was rooted in a deep existential longing. In becoming “Kishore’s wife,” she had glimpsed a reflection of her true self. But fate’s cruel irony reshaped her destiny—she became “Subal’s wife,” entrapped in a barren and contradictory role devoid of emotional reality. Motherhood, in her life, turned into an unfulfilled anticipation.

In this childless existence, Basanti’s maternal instinct remained unspoken yet persistent. And yet, Kishore’s son, Ananta, emerged as a silent surrogate to the child she never had. The relationship they shared under the guise of “Maashi” (aunt) was more than mere kinship—it was a veiled manifestation of her repressed motherhood, a quiet substitution for the love she could never express. Her affection surfaced in paradoxical ways—at times selflessly nurturing, at others cloaked in harshness. When she scolds or pushes Ananta away, it is not rejection, but rather the manifestation of a silent maternal grief.

In this context, Rabindranath Tagore’s poem ‘Matri-Bhakti’ (Devotion to Mother) becomes profoundly evocative:

“The child called her ‘Ma’, looked into her face—

But she hid her tears;

The child could not understand her sorrow.”(Malla Barman, 2014)

Ananta, too, likely never grasped the silent bleeding beneath Basanti’s masked exterior—but the reader does. That long silence of unfulfilled longing briefly surges into an emotional crescendo during the boat race on the Titash, when Basanti catches a glimpse of Ananta and cries out in desperation:

“At the call of ‘Maashi’, the bride of the boat turned her head swiftly.

Then she cried out, overcome with emotion—

‘Ananta? My Ananta!’

“ …Tears streamed down both her eyes.” (Malla Barman, 2014)

This moment of reunion is more than a burst of emotion; it is a moment of tearful transcendence. Basanti, in that instant, becomes an unwritten archetype of motherhood—breaking past the confines of socially sanctioned ties, she reveals the ultimate form of maternal love. In this portrayal, one glimpses the resonance of characters like Sarat Chandra’s Rajlakshmi or Bibhutibhushan’s Ratan—women who crossed the bounds of societal roles to forge deeper human bonds. (Sarat Chandra)

Therefore, Basanti is not just a forsaken woman; she embodies the synthesis of motherhood, sacrifice, memory, and love—a grieving mother who “does not utter the language of love aloud, but weaves an eternal song through her tears.”(Malla Barman, 2014)

* **INNER FIRE AND SELF-RENUNCIATION: A WOMAN’S SILENT WEEPING AMIDST THE PARADOX OF MOTHERHOOD:**

The long, searing pain of childlessness and the unspoken agony of inner torment continue to gnaw at Subal’s wife. When Ananta returns after years of absence, she is stirred by the proud emotions of a mother reclaiming her child. Yet behind the veil of this reunion lies her silent and sacrificial renunciation. Life’s cruel circumstance had once compelled her to forsake her own child—an act that devoured her spirit slowly, like an eternal wound within.

At the moment she finally holds Ananta again, the unspoken language of her repressed motherhood finds voice. But at that very juncture, motherhood is thrust into a crucible of unbearable trial. Under the cunning instigation of Udayata, a cloud of suspicion descends upon Ananta, making him look at the woman—his own mother—with cold, doubtful eyes. The warmth of childhood affection is abruptly erased, and in its place, a steely, unfeeling heart emerges. His rejection slices through Subal’s wife like a blade, carving out a profound and devastating void.

It Is at this breaking point that her unvoiced yearning for motherhood erupts in a heart-wrenching question:

“Tuiyo ki amar por hoye geli, Ananta?” (“Have you too become a stranger to me, Ananta?”) — (Mallabarman, 2014)

This single question encapsulates an entire history of dispossession and heartache. Yet Ananta’s reply only deepens the frost:

“Apon to kon kale noi masi… Ma moriya gelo, shey adaro ekdin haat-bajarer motoi bhangiya porilo.” (“I was never truly yours, aunt… The mother died, and even her affection crumbled one day like the marketplace stalls.”)— (Mallabarman, 2014)

In these lines, love is reduced to merchandise, and relationships become as fragile as contracts. The phrase “bhangiya porilo” (“crumbled down”) rings with an uncanny resonance—conjuring the image of spiritual disintegration as a melancholic metaphor of lost bonds.

Her anguished response:

“Bhangiya porilo! Ki koriya tui bujili je bhangiya porilo?”

(“Crumbling down? How did you know it crumbled?”) — (Mallabarman, 2014)

This is no mere question; it is a cry of silence—a lament where love never sensed any rupture, for her affection had no conditions to fracture.

In this passage, Mallabarman portrays motherhood as the purest form of selfless dedication—total in sacrifice, yet unacknowledged; abundant in love, yet denied any reciprocation. It'sn't just a tragedy of a fractured relationship, but a symbolic chronicle of a woman’s complete effacement of self.

* **SIMPLICITY VERSUS SELF-INTEREST:**

This emotional devastation can be compared to ‘Bimala’, the central character in Rabindranath Tagore’s play ‘Denapaona (The Debt and the Dues)’. Bimala, too, suffers the agony of a life without a husband. Yet, her inner capacity for love and sacrifice eventually restores her to a position of dignity. (Tagore)

In contrast, Subal’s wife is denied even that redemption. She remains an emblem of voiceless suffering, a monument to unsung sacrifice. Similarly, in ‘Pather Panchali’, Indir Thakrun, though full of maternal grace, ultimately becomes an “unnecessary burden.” Subal’s wife mirrors this transformation—an abandoned relic of rejected affection.

* **MOTHERHOOD AND INSTITUTIONAL JUSTICE:**

Society glorifies the image of the ‘mother’ with near-mythical reverence, yet frequently fails to acknowledge her existence institutionally. In the case of Subal’s wife, her motherhood was more than care—it was devotion. But neither society nor Ananta could recognize it. This failure calls into question the very sensibility that claims to uphold the ethics and sanctity of maternal love, only to betray it.

* **THE DESOLATE FRONTIER OF DISINHERITED MOTHERHOOD:**

This moment of heartbreak becomes the final sigh of a fatigued soul. In Ananta’s rejection, she not just loses her son—she loses the only document of her existential truth. Her memory of motherhood becomes a blood-stained inscription in the pages of history. Through this episode, we witness how broken relationships transcend individual grief and transform into the collective anguish of a whole class of women.

Mallabarman’s narrative thus goes beyond storytelling—it interrogates the invisible suffering etched within the feminine soul, the unreciprocated sanctity of motherhood, and the societal mechanisms that erase women’s sacrifices even as they sanctify them. This portrayal of Subal’s wife becomes not just a personal lament but a universal elegy for all forsaken mothers.

* **THE TRAGEDY OF MOTHERHOOD: CRISIS OF IDENTITY AND THE CRUELTY OF REALITY:**

In ‘Titas Ekti Nadir Naam’ (‘A River Called Titas’), the character of Subal’s wife emerges as a quietly piercing embodiment of the tragedy of motherhood. Her blind affection and complete self-surrender to Ananta transcend the conventional mother-child dynamic—they symbolize a deeper, emotional recognition, a soul’s unwavering devotion. Yet, this boundless affection meets the cruel blow of rejection when Ananta turns away from her. In that moment, she is not just stripped of her sense of motherhood but is also plunged into a harrowing crisis of selfhood.

Her Internal anguish transforms into suppressed resentment. But society offers no recognition, let alone the scope for protest. When her silent protest is mistaken as aggression by the community, she is rendered invisible—stripped of dignity, left alone, helpless, and abandoned. This collapse is not just psychological; it reverberates on a bodily level too. Once a respected woman in the village, she now becomes a target of humiliation:

“In childhood, her parents dearly loved her… she had a place of honour in the neighborhood.” (Mallabarman, 2014)

The contrast between this cherished memory and her current desolation creates a terrifying inner conflict—a conflict where identity crumbles beneath society’s ruthless constructions. In this light, Subal’s wife’s motherhood becomes an inherited essence passed from woman to woman—maternal pain as lineage:

“Sometimes she wakes up from the pain in her body… in the household, only the mother is real—everything else is meaningless.” (Mallabarman, 2014)

This line transforms personal solitude into a collective female lament. Her motherhood is not just a biological function—it is an existential calling. Her anguish finds resonance in characters like Binodini of Shailajananda’s “Bedinir Atmakahini”, the “Breast-Giver” from Mahasweta Devi’s powerful tale, or Sharadindu Bandyopadhyay’s ‘Tanmayi’—women tormented by the tension between maternal identity and social recognition. (Mahasweta Devi)

The spiritual profundity of this maternal yearning Is echoed in the words of Radharani Devi:

“When a woman desires to become a mother, she does not pray to God; she becomes God herself.” (Devi, 2014, p. unknown)

This utterance elevates Subal’s wife’s childless motherhood into a state of divine suffering—where maternity is not just human but nearly miraculous. Her longing becomes a symbol of sacred pain, a motherhood unacknowledged by society yet sanctified by inner truth.

* **A TRAGIC POEM OF MOTHERHOOD: A WOMAN’S CRY AT THE EDGE OF SELFHOOD:**

In ‘Titas Ekti Nadir Naam’ (‘Titas: A River’s Name’), Advaita Mallabarman presents Subal’s wife as an embodiment of selfless, yet unacknowledged motherhood—a woman who, though not a biological mother, nurtures Ananta with the warmth of a mother’s heart, conduct, and sacrifice. She becomes a silent icon of spiritual motherhood, denied social legitimacy. Her devoted love receives no societal recognition, and thus her sense of maternity resonates with a silent sorrow, echoing a lament of unfulfilled womanhood. As the author poignantly observes:

“In these words, we find not just his utter dependence on his mother during this crisis and a clear expression of the wounded pride of her maternal self.” (Mallabarman, 2014)

This perception transcends the biological confines of motherhood. It redefines the word “mother” as an expansive entity, rooted in empathy, sacrifice, and soulful affection. Yet the social framework refuses to validate her maternal claim. Despite a lifetime of love, care, and self-denial, she remains merely “Masi”—the aunt—never acknowledged as ‘Ma’, the mother.

“She remained only his Masi—could never become his Ma.”(Biswas, unpublished manuscript)

This unspoken anguish merges with the eternal tragic undertones of Bengali literature. It evokes the memory of ‘Abhaya’ from Sarat Chandra’s ‘Srikanta’, where motherhood transcends childbirth and finds its truest form in emotional nurturing, self-offering, and service. (Sarat Chandra)

Perhaps the most heartbreaking moment in the novel arrives on the eve of Subal’s wife’s death, when she imagines Ananta’s wedding and wonders with an aching heart:

“Who will occupy the mother’s seat on that day?” (Mallabarman, 2014, p. 257)

This is not just a whispered expression of pain—it is a mute yet profound testament to how deeply the spirit of motherhood had taken root in her soul. Her inner conflict—remembering faces like Udaytara or Ramu’s mother, hesitating to claim her right—suggests an intense, silent psychological struggle over her maternal identity.

Through this character, Mallabarman crafts a portrait of the modern woman’s psyche—where motherhood is not solely biological but a deeply spiritual calling. Even without social acknowledgment, her truth radiates in the reader’s consciousness, eternally luminous.

* **SYMBOL OF FATE AND WAITING: THE TALE OF ANANTABALA’S DEPRIVATION:**

In ‘Titash Ekti Nadir Naam’ (A River Called Titash) by Advaita Mallabarman, the tragic trajectory of Anantabala’s life—marked by love, longing, and endless waiting—emerges as an enduring symbol of feminine deprivation in Bengali literature. The innocent spiritual bond forged between Ananta and Anantabala in childhood carries a divine resonance, subtly echoed in the very similarity of their names— ‘Ananta’ (infinite) and ‘Anantabala’ (the eternal girl), as though hinting at a cosmic design.

Though readers might hope for a redemptive union, that hope is shattered by Ananta’s urban ambitions, which lead him away from his roots and from her life. Before departing, Ananta leaves behind a solemn promise:

“One day he will return to her, and on that day, whatever Anantabala says, Ananta will listen.” (Mallabarman, 2014)

This simple vow becomes the sole beacon in Anantabala’s life. Yet time flows relentlessly, and Ananta never returns. Her silent, unwavering wait becomes a matter of ridicule within the Malo community. Social mockery and disdain encircle her like a shadow:

“Each day, she seemed to grow older little by little. Eventually, even her mother and aunts found her presence displeasing.”

Younger girls would sometimes taunt her in rhyme:

‘Anantabala, left at home,

Brings us all a weary groan.” (Mallabarman, 2014)

This satirical rhyme encapsulates Anantabala’s utter isolation, her social humiliation, and the devastating self-erasure that often defines the female experience. Ananta becomes the archetype of the man who breaks promises and abandons his past, while Anantabala transforms into the quintessential figure of the eternally forsaken woman of Bengal—whose desires are never fulfilled, whose love is never reciprocated.

The trajectory of their broken love echoes earlier tragic romances In Bengali literature, notably in Bankimchandra’s ‘Kapalkundala’, where similar patterns unfold: the beloved sacrifices herself, but the lover, even in return, fails to respond with depth or commitment. Such narratives resurface across time as literary meditations on longing, betrayal, and the silent suffering of women in a patriarchal society.

* **THE FALL OF DESIRE, LOVE, AND IDENTITY: PHILOSOPHICAL ECHOES OF FEMININE SUFFERING IN ‘TITASH EKTI NADIR NAAM’:**

Advaita Malla Barman’s ‘Titash Ekti Nadir Naam’ (A River Called Titash) unfolds a layered tragedy—of love, motherhood, and cultural survival. Through its two central female figures—Subal’s wife and Anantabala—the novel portrays the profound themes of feminine sacrifice, silent yearning, and existential desolation. One suffers the ache of failed motherhood, the other the betrayal of love; and yet, both are united by a shared undercurrent of unspoken grief.

Anantabala’s love becomes a haunting allegory of life’s cruel waiting. Though rejected by her suitor’s family, she remains steadfast in her devotion to Ananta. Her entire longing is condensed into one fragile yet poignant question:

“Did Ananta Dada send anything for me?”

In this single line lies the depth of her unexpressed love. Yet, reality proves harsh. Banamali’s pained response reveals the futility of her wait—her existence has been erased from Ananta’s memory. Her internal conflict thus transforms into a universal human crisis: the irreconcilable chasm between expectation and fulfillment.

Another dimension of this sorrow emerges through the disintegration of Malo society’s cultural fabric. ‘Titash’ is not just a river-centric novel; it stands as a chronicle of a vanishing community’s identity crisis. When indigenous art forms like ‘lokgaan’ (folk songs), ‘bhatiyali’, and ‘kirtan’ come face to face with the vulgarity of commercial ‘jatra-pala’ (folk theatre), the cultural erosion of the Malo people begins. In this clash, Basanti and Mohan emerge as the final guardians of tradition.

They, “sitting in Mohan’s home, carefully select from the treasure trove of memory and serve the nectar of folk songs to society” (Malla Barman, 2014, p. 215), calling for a collective cultural awakening.

Yet this revivalist effort ends in noble solitude—a magnificent but ultimately defeated endeavor. The deceptive allure of jatra songs reclaims the society, prompting the author’s quietly heartrending lament:

“Only two human beings did not go. They were Subal’s wife and Mohan. Subal’s wife, humiliated, lay bedridden; and from the depth of Mohan’s sorrow, tears began to flood from his eyes.” (Malla Barman, 2014)

This closing image becomes an emblem of the collapse of womanhood, love, culture, and identity. In ‘Titash Ekti Nadir Naam’, the fervent desire to preserve love, motherhood, and cultural legacy—all crumble under the silent but inexorable burden of tragedy. The novel thus paints a deeply human portrait through the eyes of a sorrowful seer, where both personal and collective pain become an indelible contribution to the continuum of literary heritage.

* **TITAS AS A SYMBOL OF THE DECAY AND CRISIS OF FOLK CULTURE: THE DISSONANCE BETWEEN EXPECTATION AND REALITY:**

In the novel ‘Titas Ekti Nadir Naam’ (A River Called Titas), the struggles of characters like Basanti and Mohan do not just represent the effort to preserve a single community’s culture—they stand as a powerful metaphor for a larger cultural crisis. This is the fading chronicle of self-identity, where rural folk traditions find themselves endangered under the relentless tide of modernity. Much like Bibhutibhushan’s ‘Aranyak’, Manik Bandopadhyay’s ‘Putul Nacher Itikatha’, or Debesh Roy’s ‘Tista Parer Brittanto’, this narrative reveals how both individuals and communities gradually lose their essence, and this reactive friction transforms into an inner, existential conflict. (Bibhutibhushan)

Titas is not just the name of a river—it becomes the poignant testimony of a vanishing culture. In the novel’s final chapters, as the river dries up and sandbanks emerge from its depths, a haunting symbolic tableau unfolds—signifying the erosion of the Malo community’s livelihood, dignity, and very existence. For them, the river is not just a source of life but a maternal refuge. In the novelist’s own words,

“Titas will protect them like a mother.” (Mallabarman, 2014, p. 221)

To the women, the river stands as a symbol of dependence and security; to the men, it embodies dreams and the source of their pride and self-worth.

But when this belief collapses in the face of reality, the collective self-identity of the Malo society spirals into a crisis. The contrast between the confidence of the Malos about the Titas and their sympathy for the fishermen of the Bijna River reveals a layered emotional landscape:

“In those villages, they have seen how merciless the river becomes during the Chaitra drought. On one side the water dries up, and on the other, the fish, gasping for air, raise their snouts in desperation. Like the fish, the fishermen too begin to suffocate. …“The Malo community on the banks of the Bijna—they are wretched, brother, truly wretched.” (Mallabarman, 2014)

However, the ecosystem, culture, and identity once rooted in the Titas gradually disintegrate. What was once a sanctuary ultimately disappears. The emptiness of the river transforms into a metaphor for existential void. As Professor Achintya Biswas aptly states: (Biswas)

“The shelter of habitation, trust, motherhood, peace, and dreams that is constructed in the early chapters of ‘Titas’, by the end of the novel, shatters into fragments. In place of water arises thirst, and in place of dreams, darkness looms.” (Mallabarman, 2014)

Therefore, ‘Titas Ekti Nadir Naam’ becomes, at once, a symbol, an embodiment, and an echo—where the soft murmur of folk culture is drowned in the void of modernity. And in place of long-held expectations, all that remains is the barren abyss of unfulfilled outcomes.

* **RIVER AND LIFE: THE SYMBOLISM OF EXISTENCE IN ‘TITAS EKTI NADIR NAAM’:**

In Bengali literature, the river is not just a geographical entity—it often stands as a symbol of an entire worldview. Just as the Padma in ‘Padmanadir Majhi’ emerges as a determining force in the fate of Kuber and his people, similarly, in Advaita Mallabarman’s ‘Titas Ekti Nadir Naam’, the river Titas becomes the “vital wave” of the Malo community—carrier of their dreams, culture, and collective soul. Here, the river is not just a metaphor for the flow of life and an emblem of disruption and decline.

The emergence of new riverine shoals (chars) In ‘Titas’ is not just a natural event—it becomes a symbolic indicator of existential crisis for the Malo people. These changes signify a painful disintegration of their traditional livelihood and the shattering of their communal aspirations. Time becomes indifferent, and people, helpless. a personal tragedy transforms into an epic of collective loss.

“Man desires one thing, but something else happens.” (Mallabarman, 2014)

This harsh truth of fate, which in ‘Putul Nacher Itikatha’ turns humans into puppets of destiny, resurfaces in ‘Titas…’, where the river itself bears the burden of fatalism. The Malo way of life—centered on boats, folk traditions, and fishing—is inseparable from the river. The river’s drying up, therefore, signifies not just ecological change but a profound cultural, economic, and existential decay.

The structure of the novel echoes this sorrowful fragmentation. Divided into four parts and eight chapters, it reads like broken reflections in the mirror of life—disconnected on the surface, yet united by a tragic undertone. Each character becomes a victim of destiny, their lives marked by incompleteness, unfulfilled desires, and haunting emptiness.

“Once, Titas had waves full of vibrant water; now, its breast bears only the shadow of thirst.” (Mallabarman, 2014)

This line stands as a mirror to the intertwined degradation of river and life. The history of the Malo people is etched on the river’s surface—when the water recedes, only dust and sorrow remain as testimony.

Advaita’s poetic vision contrasts sharply with the introspective and philosophical love of Tagore’s ‘Shesher Kobita’. In ‘Titas…’, love is not a path to liberation. Instead, relationships, dreams, and even selfhood dissolve continuously—like water slipping away through one’s fingers. (Tagore)

Therefore, ‘Titas Ekti Nadir Naam’ becomes an epic of silent extinction—an unwritten chronicle of a vanishing people, where the conflict between hope and reality drifts endlessly, like an eternal shadow cast upon the heart of the river.

* **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:**

The interdisciplinary analysis of Titas Ekti Nadir Naam yields a multifaceted understanding of the novel's narrative, thematic, and symbolic structures. Drawing from literary theory, feminist critique, sociology, and philosophy, the findings reveal the text's rich polyphony and its capacity to function as a cultural archive of marginal voices.

**1. Narrative Polyphony and Collective Consciousness:**

The study confirms that Mallabarman's narrative is not structured around a singular protagonist or a linear plot but around an ensemble of fragmented voices. This rhizomatic structure mirrors the fluidity of the river and the disjointed lives of the Malo community. The result is a narrative space where marginal lives are not peripheral but central, creating a choral effect that challenges dominant narrative hierarchies.

**2. WOMEN AS SILENT PILLARS OF MEANING:**

Feminist readings reveal that the women in Titas—particularly Ananta’s mother, Basanti, Subal’s wife, and Anantabala—exist in a paradoxical space of silence and strength. While they are structurally marginalized, they carry the emotional and philosophical weight of the novel. Their stories, often marked by longing, betrayal, and spiritual endurance, expose the entrenched patriarchal norms that render them nameless and voiceless. Yet, these women embody profound resilience, becoming metaphors for cultural and existential continuity.

**3. RIVER AS SYMBOL AND AGENT OF CULTURAL DISINTEGRATION:**

The river Titas emerges not just as a setting but as a living metaphor—simultaneously nurturing and destructive. As the river dries and shifts, so does the cultural fabric of the Malo community. The study finds a direct symbolic correlation between the river’s decline and the erosion of collective identity, folk tradition, and economic livelihood. This ecological symbolism reinforces the novel’s elegiac tone and aligns with broader environmental and anthropological discourses.

**4. PHILOSOPHICAL DEPTH: WAITING, LOSS, AND INCOMPLETION:**

Philosophical analysis reveals that Titas is less concerned with resolution and more with depicting the ontological condition of incompletion. The characters are caught in cycles of desire and denial, with love often thwarted by fate or social constraint. Concepts like “bare life” (Agamben) and the metaphysics of waiting are exemplified in the maternal and romantic suffering of key female figures. The absence of closure becomes a form of existential commentary.

**5. CULTURAL COLLAPSE AND RESISTANCE:**

Sociologically, the novel documents the decline of Malo folk culture under the pressures of modernity and commercialization. However, the research also uncovers subtle forms of resistance: Basanti and Mohan’s attempt to preserve oral traditions, the women's silent but potent emotional labor, and the community's shared rituals. These elements reflect an ongoing struggle for cultural survival, underscoring the tension between memory and erasure.

**6. COMPARATIVE INSIGHTS:**

The comparative framework situates Titas within a global literary tradition of marginalized geographies and communities. Similar to The Grapes of Wrath, Things Fall Apart, or Godaan, Titas presents a microcosmic view of cultural loss and individual suffering. What distinguishes Titas, however, is its lyrical fusion of realism and symbolism, its emotional cadence shaped by Bengali folk aesthetics, and its insistence on the epistemic value of the subaltern voice.

**CONCLUSION:**

‘Titash Ekti Nadir Naam’ by Advaita Mallabarman is, at once, a tragic life-epic, a cultural palimpsest of society, and a deeply artistic portrayal of the inner conflicts of the female psyche. Like the river it is named after, the novel flows—silent, profound, yet constantly carrying the weight of sorrow. The namelessness of women, the instinct of motherhood, their longings and rejections—all become a lyrical metaphor for the identity crisis of the Bengali woman.

Just as a river eventually runs dry, so too do the structures of patriarchy, the veils of culture, and the sanctuaries of human relationships begin to disintegrate, one by one. This novel is, therefore, not just the story of a particular time—it is an elegy for the silent extinction of a cultural identity. The resonance of that elegy still echoes in the reader’s heart, like the name of a river—silent, yet eternally unforgettable.

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**Footnotes:**

1. The term ‘polyphonic’ is used throughout this article in the Bakhtinian sense; see Mikhail Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics, Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1984.