

Broad: Mahesh Sarat chandra
chattopadhyay
discuss power and its perversion in Mahesh
chattopadhyay's short story Mahesh focuses
on how power is exercised to its base ends.
The story represents a vivid picture of
rural Bengal society during 1920s under
colonial set-up and its guided Zamindar
system, and how people like Gophur, Mahesh
and Amina fought and did not yield into
the submission of power. They fought against
poverty-stricken situations created by people
"in power". There is no surreal escape, no rescue
future defying oppression created by power, by
their courage.

With the protagonist Mahesh in focus, the
story Mahesh tells the tragic story of Gophur
Mian, his stork daughter Amina and his bull Mahesh
who eventually is killed. But his vulnerable death
questions the very alter of power. Gophur with his
family consisting of his daughter Amina and his
old but shockingly assertive and rebellious bull
Mahesh go through the ups and downs of the debt
ridden colonial existence that any peasant goes
through in India.

As the story unfolds Sarat chandra takes his
readers through the clash between Gophur a
peasant in Kashipur village, and Tankaratna, one
of Zamindar's men. Here Tankaratna called Gophur
an atheist, savage, for tying his bull in the sun
all day long without giving him anything to eat
and allowing him to graze himself. However, Gophur
gives reason for it, he says he has been ill for quite a
few days and so he does not have enough strength to
take Mahesh to graze, moreover there is no straw in
his house and no starch of rice to make Mahesh to
eat. So, he asks something from Tankaratna as a
debt to feed his bull but he refuses to give it as
Gophur does not have means to repay. Ironically
enough, the means was blocked by those very men

one demand - the Zamindar and his working hands. Parents like Gophur are always trapped miserably in a vicious circle of inescapable and ever-increasing debt, so much so that they are not even here the food to eat and to feed their pets. People in position of power in society depend wholly on their subjects, but in time of their need, nobody's head to them, not even steps in power pays shadow for such a deed would defile their caste and religion. So, Tarkaratna is afraid of being touched by Gophur, as he is an "untouchable".

violating the caste system is also at work in Mahesh. excommunication. Being untouchable and working at his own will violated the rules of Zamindar and broke the base of caste system. That is why he was even the women to the boundary of the village. Even the women not be spared. Like all other untouchable could Amina was not allowed to take water from shipchar embankment's pond, the only pond in the entire village and the source of water was dried up of heat. She had dug deep in some places to manage a little water, but Amina being an untouchable could not get near to them. She has to wait long until some kind enough she poured a little water in her pot. Someday she became fortunate and someday not so - such was the misery.

On Sarat Chandra's story Mahesh, it's Mahesh who problematizes the Zamindar system by his unconventional way of protest. He can act and speak louder than words. He can spoil the vegetable plants in Zamindar's garden, he can even gore when it's needed. This is what is needed in a corrupt blood-sucking colonial system - a protest, a stand against anarchy. An old Mahesh can not be any help to anyone, neither can he earn food for his family, nor can he be of any help to anybody as he has no strength. But he can protest what's wrong. Actually he dismantles the very construct of law and rule, causes threat to the Zamindar's system. It's imperative for the system that a rebel like Mahesh should be kept under

control and sold thereby wiping out
from path, as Takamatna in the story
Gophur to be Mahesh away from his
invalid in the then socio-economic
like a machine which has earlier given
but presently works no more. Gophur is
left with little choice, he has to kill his
bull and his son for a greater
revolution to come.

Thus, though Zamindar and his men
exploit the peasants, beat Gophur and try to
recommunicate them, the spirit of rebellion of peasants
like Gophur and Mahesh would always be evolved.
Whenever there is oppression and however cruel that
may be there would be always a protest. They
though not turn the law upside down, search it and
instigate future generation to be rebellious against
all things unjust and there lies the hope for
better and regenerated future. Now, bigger
fights await Gophur in phulber, Jute Mill, a place
of no religion and no honour for women. Perhaps
that would be Amin's turn to fight the war
beside Gophur.
