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सम्पादक

डॉ. मधु रानी शुक्ला

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सह सम्पादक

सुश्री शाम्भवी शुक्ला



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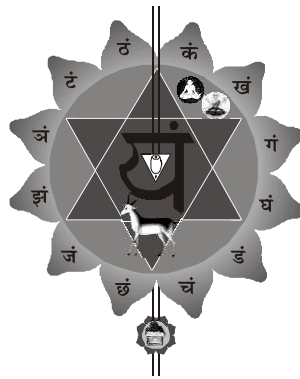
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सम्पादकीय

अनहद लोक, साहित्यिकी विशेषांक आप सभी के शुभ हाथों में सौंपते हुए अत्यंत हर्षित हूँ एवं आपकी मिल रही सकारात्मक प्रतिक्रियाओं से अत्यंत प्रसन्नता का अनुभव कर रही हूँ इसी प्रकार अपनी समीक्षात्मक दृष्टि से प्रतिक्रिया देते रहें। प्रस्तुत अंक, साहित्य व संगीत को समर्पित है, दोनों का अन्तर्सम्बन्ध है -

नाद रूपः स्मृतो ब्रह्मा नाद रूपो जनार्दनः।

नादस्या पराशक्तिर्नादरूपो महेश्वरः॥

भारतीय चिन्तन परम्परा में नाद तत्व की अपार महिमा मानी जाती है, वह सम्भवतः विश्व की किसी विचार धारा में नहीं। पंच महाभूतों में से प्रथम और सबसे सूक्ष्म आकाश का गुण शब्द ही 'वाक्-तत्व' है, जो संगीत और काव्य दोनों का आधार है। इसके दो भेद नदात्मिका वाक् और वर्णात्मिका वाक् माने गए हैं। यही संगीत और काव्य के जनक हैं।

हर्ष, क्रोध, प्रसन्नता, विषाद, भय आदि चित्तवृत्तियों की अभिव्यक्ति का माध्यम नदात्मिका वाक् है, जो ईश्वर प्रदत्त है। पशु-पक्षी, मनुष्य सभी चेतन प्राणी किसी न किसी प्रकार की ध्वनि उत्पन्न करके अपने मनोभावों को अभिव्यक्त करते हैं। पशु की ध्वनि सुनकर भी इतना तो जरूर समझ आता है कि वह हर्ष अथवा कष्ट की स्थिति में हैं। मनुष्य भी समस्त भावों को ध्वनि विशेष के द्वारा ही व्यक्त करता है। इस प्रकार चित्तवृत्ति बोध के मूल में नदात्मिका वाक् ही है, इसलिए संगीत भावाभिव्यक्ति की भाषा है।

वर्णात्मिका वाक् द्वारा निश्चित भावों की अभिव्यक्ति होती है, जो ईश्वर प्रदत्त वाणी के मनुष्यकृत विकास की सूचक है। वर्णों से शब्द या पद बनते हैं और शब्दों से भाषा बनती है, जो सभी प्रकार के लौकिक व्यवहार का आधार है। काव्य में सार्थक शब्द मूल आधारभूत तत्व है।

काव्य और संगीत पृथक क्षेत्र हैं, जिनके आधारभूत तत्व माध्यम तथा प्रभाव भिन्न हैं पर दोनों का समन्वित प्रयोग रसमग्न कर देता है इसलिए संगीत में पद को अनिवार्य अंग माना गया है, पद-रहित संगीत को निर्गीत या बहिर्गीत की श्रेणी में रखा गया है, इसे नाट्यशास्त्र में 'गान्धर्व' कहा गया है। गान्धर्व स्वरतालपदात्मक है, पद उसका अनिवार्य तत्व है यद्यपि संगीत या गान्धर्व के दो ही उपकारक हैं - स्वर और लय; किन्तु पद के कारण अभिव्यक्ति को निश्चित दिशा मिलती है।

वास्तव में काव्य और संगीत की सीमा रेखा बड़ी सूक्ष्म है। जरा सा चूकने पर एक दूसरे के क्षेत्र में पहुँचने की आशंका रहती है। काव्य में जहाँ विचार प्रधान है, वहीं संगीत अभिव्यक्ति प्रधान। काव्य में शब्द और शब्दार्थ या पदार्थ होता है अर्थात् उसका माध्यम और अभिव्यंग्य भिन्न होते हैं। किन्तु संगीत में सिर्फ स्वर ही हैं, वही माध्यम है और वही अनुभूति का विषय है; इसलिए साधन और साध्य का अन्तर वहाँ नहीं

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रहता। शब्द अर्थ की प्रधानता से 'काव्य' होता है और स्वर-लय या श्रुति मधुरता के प्रधान होने पर 'संगीत' होता है। संगीत में भी शब्द और अर्थ है और काव्य में भी स्वर-लय रहते ही हैं किन्तु प्रधानता के आधार पर ही दोनों के क्षेत्र निश्चित होते हैं। जैसे-काव्य पाठ में स्वर लय का सौन्दर्य भी आवश्यक है लेकिन प्रधानता शब्द अर्थ की ही होती है। गायक जब गायन के बीच दोहे, साखी और रुबाइयाँ कहने लगते हैं, तब यद्यपि वह स्वर लय बद्ध होती है, फिर भी श्रोताओं को स्वर-लय योजना का नहीं अपितु शब्द रचना का ही आनन्द प्राप्त होता है, अतः उतने अंश में काव्य ही कहा जाएगा, संगीत नहीं। दोनों श्रव्य कलाओं का आधार वाक्, ध्वनि अथवा 'शब्द' तत्त्व है।

नाट्य के अंग के रूप में भी काव्य और संगीत का अभेद्य सम्बन्ध है लेकिन एक बड़ा अन्तर दोनों में है, जहाँ काव्य के द्वारा निश्चित भावों की अभिव्यक्ति होती है, वहाँ पद निरपेक्ष संगीत में ये सामर्थ्य नहीं है। काव्य के पठन-पाठन के द्वारा होने वाली रसानुभूति (शृंगार, वीर, करुण आदि रसों के रूप में) संगीत में ठीक उसी रूप में नहीं होती। किसी भी भावना की अनुभूति कराने के लिए परिस्थिति का चित्रण आवश्यक है। उस रचना के सूचक शब्द का प्रयोग करने मात्र से उसकी अनुभूति नहीं होती। परिस्थिति चित्रण शब्दों या पदों के माध्यम से हो सकता है। किन्तु संगीत में अभिव्यक्ति का माध्यम मुख्यतः स्वर, लय तथा आघात है जो शब्दों की तरह किसी विशेष विचार के सूचक नहीं है। इसीलिए केवल स्वरों के द्वारा भाव-सामान्य का बोध तो होता है किन्तु भाव के कारणों, परिस्थितियों अथवा वर्गीकृत भावों का बोध नहीं हो सकता। यहीं तक संगीत सार्वभौमिक भाषा (Universal Language) भी है, क्योंकि विशुद्ध नादात्मक संगीत के द्वारा हर्ष, शोक, क्रोध, भय, घृणा आदि भाव-सामान्य की अभिव्यक्ति और अनुभूति होती है।

संगीत का माध्यम 'अभिव्यक्ति' व काव्य 'विचार' प्रधान है, दोनों भिन्नताएं होते हुए भी सीमाएं इतनी सूक्ष्म हैं कि एक दूसरे में प्रवेश हो जाना सम्भव है, दोनों अपनी स्वतंत्र सत्ता रखते हुए भी एक सिक्के के दो पहलू हैं। इस अंक में साहित्य से जुड़े अनेक विद्वतजनों तथा शोधार्थियों के शोध पत्र, पाठकों के लिए संग्रहणीय होंगे। नृतियों के लिए क्षमा मांगते हुए आपकी सकारात्मक प्रतिक्रियाओं के इन्तजार में

डॉ० मधु रानी शुक्ला

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विजयदान देथा की कहानियों का जादू

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विजयदान देथा मानवीय अंतःकरण के बेजोड़ पारखी हैं। व्यक्ति और समाज के समीकरणों के अंतर्गत दोनों किस प्रकार व्यवहार करेंगे इसका विवेचन तो वे करते ही हैं पीढ़ी-दर-पीढ़ी चली आ रही मूल्य चेतना और मानवीय संदर्भों के बीच पाठक की प्रतिबद्धता को भी सुनिश्चित करते चलते हैं। भारतीय संस्कृति के पौराणिक संदर्भों और लोक कथाओं के जादू को पृष्ठभूमि के रूप में रख कर विजयदान देथा ने एक ऐसे कथा संसार का निर्माण किया जिसमें विरासत और आधुनिकता समानांतर रूप से खड़ी दिखाई देती हैं। उनकी कहानियों के संदर्भ में विजय मोहन सिंह लिखते हैं “विजयदान देथा के पास आदिम सी प्रतीत दंतकथाओं का ज़खीरा है और उनकी अधिकांश कहानियाँ उन्हीं में से छनकर आती हैं। इसी छाने जाने की प्रक्रिया में उनका कायाकल्प हो जाता है। हालाँकि न उनका लहज़ा बदलता है और न शब्दावली बदलती है, वह ज्यों का त्यों और रूखे और तीखे राजस्थानी मुहावरों वाली भाषा बनी रहती है। किंतु किसी अदीठ चमत्कार से वह केवल आधुनिक ही नहीं एक सार्वकालिक और सार्वभौमिक कथा कृति बन जाती है।”¹

विजयदान देथा की लगभग सभी कहानियाँ मूलतः राजस्थानी भाषा में लिखी गई हैं। वैसे तो उन्होंने अपनी लेखन यात्रा हिन्दी से शुरू की थी। सन् 1949 से 1952 तक वे ‘ज्वाला’, ‘आग’, ‘अंगारे’ तथा ‘रियासती’ पत्रिकाओं में कॉलम लिखते रहे।

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सन् 1959 में उन्होंने राजस्थानी भाषा में लिखने के लिए जब कलम उठाई तो राजस्थान की लोक और दंत कथाएँ अनायास ही उनकी लेखनी के माध्यम से पुनर्जीवित हो गयीं। ‘बातां री फुलवाड़ी’ शीर्षक से 14 भागों में लोक मन की लगभग आठ सौ कहानियाँ हैं। ‘इन कहानियों की लेखन प्रक्रिया, बकौल बिज्जी, यह रही कि ‘न लिखने से पहले सोचा, न लिखकर पढ़ा और न लिख कर कुछ काटा।’ मशीन के साथ मन से होड़ करते हुए बातां री पुलवाड़ी के 14 भाग तैयार हो गए।”² हिंदी में प्रकाशित कहानियों में ‘अनोखा पेड़’, ‘दुविधा व अन्य कहानियाँ’, ‘उलझन’, ‘चौधराइन की चतुराई’, ‘उजाले के मुसाहिब’, अनेकों हिटलर तथा अन्य कहानियाँ आदि प्रमुख कहानी संग्रह हैं। उनकी कहानियाँ हिंदी में लिखी गई हैं या हिंदी में अनूदित हैं सवाल यह नहीं है, सवाल यह है कि बिना किसी फेरबदल के लोक, जन, समाज से उठाये गए ये पात्र कैसे हर वर्ग की नब्ज़ पकड़ने में सक्षम हो जाते हैं। विजयदान देथा ने अपनी सृजनात्मक यात्रा के मूल में अपने तीन गुरुओं का भी उल्लेख किया है, यथा शरतचंद्र, चेखव और रवींद्रनाथ ठाकुर। रवींद्रनाथ ठाकुर के संदर्भ में अपने उद्गार प्रकट करते हुए वह कहते हैं, “84 के बाद शरीर में मांस-मज्जा के घुले रहने की तरह मुझ में यह बात रम गई कि विश्व में युगों बाद रवींद्र जैसी प्रतिभा पैदा होती है।”³ इन रचनाकारों के लेखन का प्रभाव उनकी चेतना का हिस्सा हो गया है। इस प्रकार ग्रहण अर्जन

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की प्रक्रिया से गुज़रते, मानवीय संवेदनाओं से सराबोर उनकी कहानियों को पाठक पढ़ता नहीं बाँचता है।

देथा की कहानियों की बानगी को 'समग्रता' के भीतर बांधकर निष्कर्ष तक नहीं पहुँचा जा सकता। उनके यहाँ भावनाओं और विचारों के ऐसे रचना सूत्र हैं कि तमाम दुनियावी प्रक्रियाओं की तस्वीरें अनुभव का हिस्सा होती चलती हैं। यह तो तय है कि विजयदान देथा से तो कुछ नहीं छूटा, पाठक उसे कितना पकड़ पाया है यह अलग बात है। करुणा के बिंदु से निसृत उनकी रचनाएँ जीवन के विरोधाभासों को उकेरती चलती हैं। इस दृष्टि से उनकी 'दूरी' कहानी मन की तहों में कहीं अटक जाती है। 'दूरी' कहानी निरीह अनाथ बालिका से लेकर बुढ़ापे तक का रास्ता लांघती हंजा-माऊ की कथा है। काल की गति से हुज्जत किए बिनाए हंजा-माऊ अपने जीवन का निर्वाह करती चली आई है। न कभी आशाओं का स्वरूप जाना न सपनों की बाट जोही। पूरा जीवन बच्चों के लालन पालन, विवाह की रस्मों रियायतों में गुज़ार दिया।" माँ की कोख से छुटकारा पाने के बाद किसी भी टेढ़े-मेढ़े रास्ते से मौत की गोद में पहुँचना है, सो हंजा-माऊ जस तस करीब पहुँच रही थी।"4 ऐसे में जीवन में गतिरोध तब उत्पन्न होता जब हंजा-माऊ का बेटा अचानक बीमार पड़ जाता है और किराए की गाड़ी लेकर बीवी, बच्चे सहित क़स्बे और फिर शहर के अस्पताल चला जाता है। हंजा-माऊ के लिए पहली बार जीवन की राह अदीठ हुई और पहली बार वह एकाकीपन का दंश झेलती है। बेटे तक पहुँचने के लिए अनजानी दुनिया की यात्राएँ बस में ड्राइवर की सीट पर बैठने की दीठता, बस से निकाल कर सड़क पर छोड़ जाने की घटना और अंततः गिरी लाठी को उठा कर एक बार फिर बेटे को पाने की चाह के वशीभूत हंजा-माऊ 'दूरी' की चाल से छली जाती है। स्त्री के अस्मिता विहीन, एकाकी जीवन की त्रासदी को इस कहानी में महसूस किया जा सकता है। हंजा-माऊ के लिए मौत का मार्ग तो अदृश नहीं, लेकिन पुत्र वियोग के अहसास को वह कैसे जिए,

इसका निदान उसके पास नहीं है। नंद भारद्वाज लिखते हैं, "‘दूरी’ इंसान के बदलते स्वभाव, दो जीवन-शैलियों के बीच बढ़ते असंभेपन और आज के परिवेश में व्याप्त संवेदनहीनता पर करारा प्रहार करती है। आज की राजस्थानी कथा-यात्रा में हंजा-माऊ जैसा जीवंत चरित्र खड़ा करना, विजयदान देथा जैसे अनुभवी और संजीदा कथाकार के अलावा शायद ही किसी के लिए संभव होता।"5

स्त्री अस्मिता का प्रश्न 'केंचुल' कहानी में बड़ी बारीकी से उभर कर सामने आया है। कहानी की मुख्य पात्र गूजरी लाछी इसी उधेड़बुन में है की वह किसकी औरत है 'पति जब प्रेम की हामी भरता है तो लाछी नहीं जानती कि यह सच है या स्वांग' गाँव का ठाकुर इसी गुरुर में है कि वह गाँव का मालिक है और रियाया उसकी मनोकामनाओं की आपूर्ति का साधन है, इसलिए लाछी को यौन संबंध के लिए सहज ही हामी भर देनी चाहिए। ठाकुर का कारिदा भोज भी लाछी को पाने का मौका गवाना नहीं चाहता। सौंदर्य के अभिशाप को झेलती लाछी यह निश्चय नहीं कर पा रही कि इस चक्रव्यूह में वह योद्धा है या मोहरा। ठाकुर और भोज का सामना होने पर वह उन्हें फटकारती भी है और मारती भी है। पति उसकी इस हरकत से नाराज़ हो जाता है क्योंकि वह ठाकुर से नाहक ही वैर मोल नहीं लेना चाहता और यहीं से शुरु होती है लाछी की मोहभंग की यात्रा। 'जल्दी ही वहम मिट गया। अब तुमसे किसी की शिकायत नहीं करूँगी। एक ही घड़ी में हजार बरसों की समझ एक साथ आ गई।'6 पति की अवहेलना उसे तोड़ देती है। वह बहुत कोशिश करती है कि पति को भोज की नियत पर शक हो इसलिए वह बार-बार भोज को प्रणय निवेदन कर कहीं-कहीं बुलाती है और हर बार पति संग वहाँ पहुँच जाती है। गूजर एक बार भी भोज को सशंकित दृष्टि से नहीं देखता या फिर शंका ज़ाहिर नहीं करता। स्त्री का मर्म कोई नहीं जान पाता न ही उसका दर्द। पति की उदासीनता से आहत लाछी निर्वसन घर से भोज के

घर के लिए निकल पड़ती है। लेकिन वहाँ भी भोजा अन्य स्त्री समक्ष उसके लिए गाली गलौज़ करता सुनाई देता है। निराश लाली सामाजिक बेड़ियों की केंचुल उतार निर्वसना इस जगत में भटक रही है। इस तरह विजयदान देथा स्त्री जीवन की बेबसी और जिजीविषा को एक साथ पिरो कर रखने ही ज़रूरत को शिद्दत से महसूस करते रहे और संभावनाओं के बिंदु तलाशते रहे।

देथा की 'उलझन' कहानी की बंजारन भी इसी उलझन में है कि कोख से जिस आदमी को जन्म देगी वह मनुष्य होकर पशु होगा या पशु होकर मनुष्य, व्यापारी पति की परित्यक्ता बंजारन जंगल में पले भालू सरीखे पुरुष के संग हो लेती है। उसका मानना है कि आदमी-आदमी होता है बदलाव तो सत्ता और सत्ताविहीन, कमजोर और ताकतवर, कठोर और कोमल के युगों से उपजता है। बंजारन बड़े यत्न से उस युवक को सभ्य और सुशील युवक में बदल लेती है और उससे विवाह कर लेती है। संयोगवश वह युवक राजा का पुत्र निकलता है और राजा उन दोनों को राजमहल ले जाता है। सत्ता के मद में मदहोश युवक अत्यंत क्रूर रूप धारण कर लेता है और पत्नी को भी प्रताड़ित करने लगता है। विवश गर्भवती बनजारन इसी पशोपेश में है कि उसकी कोख से बनमानुष पैदा होगा या राजा। वह नहीं जानती कि देवता और दानव के बीच मनुष्यत्व की उपस्थिति कहाँ दर्ज होगी। विजयदान देथा की कहानियों में रचनाकार लगातार इस दुविधा में है कि व्यक्ति की अहमंयता मानवीय सरोकारों को कैसे विनष्ट कर देती है जहाँ आदमी के आदमी होने की पहचान भी समाप्त हो जाती है। उनकी 'अनेकों हिटलर' कहानी भी जीवन के क्रूर प्रसंगों को रेखांकित करती चलती है।

'देथा की 'अनेकों हिटलर' कहानी ऐश्वर्य की उस दौड़ को परिभाषित करती है जिसमें संपन्नता के मद में साथ-साथ दौड़ने वाले को बर्दाश्त नहीं किया जा सकता।' इस कहानी में जीवन का हर प्रसंग युद्ध हो जाता है। कहानी पाँच भाइयों की कथा है,

जो पैसा एकत्रित कर ट्रैक्टर खरीदने जाते हैं। ट्रैक्टर खरीदने की उतावली और उसके साथ ही साथ उससे जुड़ा मद उन्हें इतना बेफिक्र कर देता है कि जीवन की सामान्य अवस्थाएँ और उससे जुड़े दृश्य उन्हें नागवार गुज़रते हैं। ट्रैक्टर लेकर लौटते हुए एक साइकिल सवार से उनकी होड़ शुरू हो जाती है। साइकिल सवार तेज़ी से साइकिल के पैडल पर पांव मारता आगे निकल जाता है। उन पाँच भाइयों को लगता है कि उन्होंने जो साठ हज़ार रूपये खर्चे हैं, उसके सामने एक अदना सी साइकिल कैसे विजयी हो सकती है। 'दोनों के बीच बढ़ती दूरी ट्रैक्टर चलाने वाले से बर्दाश्त नहीं हुई। उसने रफ़्तार थोड़ी और बढ़ा दी। बोला, माँ का ख़सम, आख़िर तो थकेगा। थोड़ी देर खुश होता है तो होने दो। मंज़ला भाई बोला, ये नंगे सिर वाले छोकरे होते ही उलटे खोपड़ी के हैं!'⁸ बड़ा भाई एक दो बार कहता भी है कि वे नाहक ही उस साइकिल चालक से लड़ रहे हैं, आख़िर साइकिल ट्रैक्टर से कैसे जीत सकती लेकिन छोटे भाई को लगता है कि कैसे एक साधारण साइकिल चलाने वाला आदमी उनके साथ प्रतिस्पर्धा कर सकता है। बराबरी वाले तो एक दूसरे के साथ होड़ कर सकते हैं। एक छोटा आदमी कैसे इतनी हिम्मत कर सकता है। भाइयों के लिए यह युद्ध की स्थिति है। छोटा भाई उसे हराने के वास्ते उसकी साइकिल को ट्रैक्टर से गिरा देता है और उसे रौंदते आगे निकल जाता है। विजयदान देथा बार बार बाज़ और चूहे का उदाहरण देकर उन भाइयों की मानसिकता का खुलासा करते हैं। 'चूहे को चील ने झपट लिया। वह चींचाहट उस मरते हुए चूहे की थी! थोड़ी देर में वह चींचाहट इस दुनिया से लोप हो गई।'⁹

वस्तुतः विजयदान देथा की कहानियों के दंभी पात्र हिटलर होने का चुनाव ही करते हैं। संभवतः शक्ति का अहसास दानवी वृत्तियों में ही तुष्टि प्राप्त करता है। 'राज़ीनामा' कहानी के माध्यम से देथा व्यक्ति के भीतर देवत्व और राक्षस के युद्ध को साकार करते हैं और विडंबना यह कि अंत में जीत सद्वृत्तियों

की नहीं होती। कहानी का पात्र रामकरण विद्यालय में किसी से बात नहीं करता और सबके द्वारा सताया जाता है। इन स्थितियों से परेशान होने के बजाए वह अपनी ही एक दुनिया कायम कर लेता है, जिसमें उन सब हरकतों को अंजाम देता है जो वह साधारण जीवन में सोच भी नहीं सकता था। वह पिक्चर देखने जाता है, चोरी छिपे शराब पीता है, ड्रग्स लेता है और फिर शीशे के समक्ष खड़ा हो स्वयं को डाँटता, फटकारता, पीटता और क्षुब्ध हो सीधी राह पर चलने की कसम खाता है। अंततः उस शीशे से तंग आकर रामकरण उसे तोड़ देता है जो उसके वापिस लौटने का एक मात्र उपकरण है। एक तरह से वह सद्वृत्तियों का जामा उतार फेंकता है 'और आज उसी राजीनामे का यह करिश्मा है कि एक अकिंचन थानेदार होते हुए भी लोग-बाग उसके पास पाँच लाख रुपए की पूँजी कूतते हैं।'¹⁰ 'राजीनामा' कहानी सद-असद के बीच झूलती अंततः असद का चुनाव कर लेती है।

सत्ता का मद और घोर व्यक्तिवादिता का गठजोड़ किस प्रकार संस्थाओं की कार्यप्रणाली का अहित ही करता है, इसकी सशक्त अभिव्यक्ति 'पुटिया-चाचा' कहानी में भी हुई है। डॉ. चेतन स्वामी लिखते हैं कि "राजस्थानी की व्यक्तिपरक सोच की कहानियों में विजयदान देथा की 'पुटियो काको' को श्रेष्ठ कहानी कहा जा सकता है। इस कहानी के पात्र जगत काका आत्मबोध और आत्मकेन्द्रित पात्र हैं। उनके सोचने का नज़रिया आत्मपरक है। वे पद और प्रतिष्ठा के अनुकूल न तो सोच रखते हैं न ही व्यवहार करते हैं। जगत काका की व्यक्तिवादिता, क्रिया और सोच दोनों रूपों में गैर व्यावहारिक है तथा अनुपलब्ध कारी है। देथा ने जगत काका के माध्यम से व्यक्ति बोध की तमाम निम्नताओं को कहानी में साकार करने का यत्न किया है।"¹¹ जगत काका शिक्षा विभाग में उपनिदेशक के पद पर आसीन हैं। वे अपने असली नाम को भूलकर जगत काका के नाम का वरण करते हैं और सभी से इसी संबोधन के प्रयोग की आकांक्षा रखते हैं। उनकी बराबर यही इच्छा होती है स्कूल के

सभी लोग उनके इर्द-गिर्द उनकी चापलूसी करते फिरें। वह विशेष रूप से स्त्रियों के आकर्षण का केन्द्र होना चाहते हैं। स्कूल के उपनिदेशक होने के नाते वह इसे अपना और अध्यापिकाओं का सौभाग्य मानते हैं कि वह उनके बीच आलोक पुंज के रूप में विद्यमान हैं। उनकी लीला में खलल तब पड़ता है जब स्थानांतरण चाहने वाला एक अध्यापक जगत काका संबोधन से अनभिज्ञ उन्हें उनके असली नाम से अर्ज़ी देता है। तबादले के लिए मुरलीधर द्वारा दी गई अर्ज़ी में अपना मूल नाम और उसकी बेरूखी यह दोनों उन्हें नागवार गुज़रती है। वह नाम को मुद्दा बना लेते हैं तथा मुरलीधर को एक सफ़ेद कागज़ पर 108 बार जगत काका नाम लिखने का आदेश देते हैं। उनके अहं को चोट उस समय पहुँचती है जब सुलोचना नामक अध्यापिका मुरलीधर की तरफ़दारी करती हुई उसके तबादले के लिए जगत काका से प्रार्थना भी करती है और आश्वासन भी देती है कि मुरलीधर निश्चित रूप से जगत काका नाम लिख कर देगा। जो जगत काका कभी हिटलर, कभी गोडसे, कभी पुलिस इंस्पेक्टर और कभी शिक्षा मंत्री होने की परिकल्पना का बखान कर अध्यापिकाओं की प्रतिक्रियाओं का मज़ा लेने में मशगूल रहते हैं, सलोचना का प्रेम पाने के लिए व्याकुल हो उठते हैं और स्वयं मुरलीधर हो जाना चाहते हैं। उनको छोड़ कोई और आकर्षण का केंद्र हो जाए यह उन्हें स्वीकार्य नहीं। आत्मतुष्टि की इतनी प्रबल आकांक्षा की व्यक्ति की अस्मिता ही धूमिल हो जाए, इसका स्पष्ट उदाहरण जगत काका हैं। 'इस कहानी के माध्यम से यह भी दिखाया गया है कि आत्मकेन्द्रित सामान्य व्यक्ति भी वैचारिक रूप से हर एक तानाशाह से अपना निकट का रिश्ता जोड़ता है। कथा नायक जगत काका भी बार-बार अपने विचारों की तुलना हिटलर, गोडसे आदि व्यक्तियों से करता है। व्यक्तिवादिता हीनग्रंथियों के कारण उपजती है।³ व्यक्तिवादिता का एक पूरा मनोविज्ञान होता है। इसी मनोविज्ञान का सहारा लेकर रची गई पुटिया काको एक श्रेष्ठ मनोविज्ञानिक कहानी भी ठहरती है जहाँ व्यक्तिवादी दर्शन के तहत आने

वाले सारे मनोविकार उपस्थित हैं।¹²

‘सिकंदर और कौआ’ कहानी में देथा महानता और अमरत्व की धारणाओं को तोड़ना चाहते हैं। महान सिकंदर जब बीमार पड़ता है तो उसे बीमारी की पीड़ा के साथ इस बात की पीड़ा अधिक है कि यदि वह बीमार है तो बाकी सभी स्वस्थ कैसे रह सकते हैं। इस यथा-पूर्व स्थिति को वह समाप्त करना चाहता है। वैद्य के उपचार के उपरांत वह उनसे अमर होने की युक्ति जानने की कामना करता है। वैद्य उसकी उत्कट इच्छा को पूरा करने का उपाय तो बता देते हैं लेकिन मृत्यु विहीन अमरता के अभिशाप की ओर संकेत भी करते हैं। दरअसल देथा व्यक्ति सत्ता के स्थायित्व की परिकल्पना को खंडित करना चाहते हैं। समाज में ‘सुपर ह्यूमन’ की धारणा कहाँ तक ग्रहणीय है ‘यह विचारणीय है। वर्तमान सामाजिक और राजनैतिक संरचनाओं में बदलाव के बिंदु ही किसी प्रगतिशील समाज की पहचान होते हैं इसीलिए अमरत्व की कामना गतिशीलता के विरुद्ध ठहरती है। सत्ता और समाज के बीच की दूरी को रास्ते की तलाश’, ‘खीरवाला राज्य’, ‘असीस’ इन तीनों कहानियों में भी अनुभव किया जा सकता है। ‘असीस’ कहानी में राजा सोचता कि मूढ़ विधाता ने राजा और प्रजा का हुलिया एक सा क्यों कर दिया। ‘यदि विधात्री शुरुवात से ही सतर्क हो जाती तो कुदरत के बजाय धरती के स्वामी को कोई विशेष प्रयत्न नहीं करना पड़ता।¹³ इसलिए राजा की ताकीद के अनुसार राज्य में न कोई बाल रख सकता है और राजा के सामने न कोई खड़ा हो सकता है और तो और सभी अपना परिचय जानवरों की आवाज़ों में ही देते हैं। राजा की मूर्खता की अति तो तब होती है जब राज्य का सारा धन स्वामिभक्त सियार रूपी कर्मचारियों के लिए खर्च होने लगता है। इसी प्रकार ‘खीरवाला राज्य’ कहानी में राजा की कायरता को बेनकाब किया गया है। ‘रास्ते की तलाश’ कहानी राजमार्गों और डगर पर चलने वालों के बीच की दूरी की कथा है। देथा लिखते हैं, ‘राजा लाख जतन करे उसे

सच्चाई का पता नहीं चल सकता। वह झूठ के बीच ही पलता है और झूठ के बीच ही मरता है।¹⁴

विजयदान देथा समाज के विरोधाभासों को उद्घाटित करने में दक्ष हैं। वे अपनी कहानियाँ तुलनात्मक धरातल पर खड़ी करते हैं। सम-विषम, व्यतिरेक-परस्पर इन सबके मिलान से उनकी कहानियाँ अटी पड़ी हैं। चाहे उनकी कहानी ‘रास्ते की तलाश’ हो, या ‘सिकंदर और कौआ’, ‘बड़ा कौन’ या फिर उनकी कहानी ‘असीस’। इन सभी कहानियों के प्रथम अनुच्छेद में ही जीवन के तथ्य, समानताएँ और विषमताएँ, सहमति और विरोध एक साथ आते चले जाते हैं। कई बार ऐसा लगता है पाठक के समक्ष कोई जादूगर अपनी जादू की पिटारी खोलकर विभिन्न उपकरणों को बाहर रखता चला जा रहा हो और दर्शक वर्ग उसे कौतुक की दृष्टि से देखता आह्लादित भी होता है, रोमांचित भी और आशंकित भी। उनकी बहुत सी कहानियाँ का आरंभ इसी प्रकार हुआ है। ‘रास्ते की तलाश’ कहानी का प्रारम्भ ‘धरती का जो रिश्ता हरियाली से हैं, फूल का जो रिश्ता खुशबू से है, पेड़ का जो रिश्ता फूलों से है, पहाड़ का जो रिश्ता झरने से है और चाँद का जो रिश्ता चाँदनी से है उज्जैन का वैसा ही रिश्ता राजा भोज से है, जिसका दरबार एक से एक आला पंडितों का बेजोड़ अखाड़ा था।¹⁵ इसी तरह ‘बड़ा कौन’ का प्रारंभ ‘बड़ी रातों का बड़ा ही भोर। जूनी बातों का नया ही जोर। जिस तरह दूध में मक्खन छिपा रहता है, उसी तरह जूनी बातों में झीना मर्म छिपा रहता है। जिस तरह बीज में समूचा पेड़ और पेड़ ने बीज छिपा रहता है, उसी प्रकार जूनी बातों में ज्ञान छिपा रहता है कि एक था किसान।¹⁶ ‘उलझन’ कहानी का आरंभ, ‘बीज बेहतर या फल बेहतर, अंधेरा बेहतर या उजाला बेहतर, उदय बेहतर या अस्त बेहतर, शुरुआत बेहतर या अंत बेहतर, राह बेहतर या मंज़िल बेहतर, तो सूरज भगवान की किरणों के हिंडोले पर सारी दुनिया झूलती है कि धरती के किसी एक रास्ते पर लक्खी बनजारे का कारवाँ जा रहा था।¹⁷ ‘दिवाले

की बपौती' कहानी का शुरुआत- 'ये बात सूरज जिती पुरानी और उजास जिती नई है। चाँद जिती पुरानी और चाँदनी जिती नई है। बादल जिती पुरानी और बरसात जिती नई है। बीज जिती पुरानी और हरियाली जिती नई है। फूल जिती पुरानी और फल जिती नई है। तो सूरज, उजास, चाँद, चाँदनी, बादल, बीज, हरियाली, फूल और फल तमाम चराचर पर समान ममता छितराए कि किसी पेड़ की छाँह तले एक बामन रहता था।'¹⁸ 'खीरवाला राज्य' कहानी 'कीड़ी को कन और हाथी को मन। राजा को राज और कोढ़ी को खाज। विवाहहितों को रात और बच्चों को बात। गधे को लात और भिखारियों को भात। मछली को पानी और मवेशी को सानी। जिसका मन जो माने, साईं सबकी ताने। तो रामजी सबको ही भले दिन दें। एक था राजा।'¹⁹ इस तरह लोककथाओं की वाचन शैली, रहस्यात्मकता, प्रवाहमयता के साथ विजयदान देथा प्रकृति और मानसिकता में विद्यमान द्वन्द्वों को एक साथ रखने के पक्षधर हैं। वे 'विरुद्धों के सामंजस्य' के भीतर से मानवीयता के संदर्भ तलाशते हैं।

देथा की कहानियों में उपस्थित रहस्यात्मकता उनमें एक जादुई तत्व का समावेश कर देती है। उनकी कहानियों में ब्रह्मराक्षस है, माया है, ईश्वर है, जानवर, भूत-प्रेत, जादू-टोना, पेड़-पौधे, पशु-पक्षी सभी बड़ी कारगर भूमिका निभाते हुए दिखाई देते हैं। विजय मोहन सिंह लिखते हैं 'पता ही नहीं चल पाता कि किस करिश्में या जादुई स्पर्श से वे किसी फ़ैशनेबल जादुई यथार्थवाद (मैजिकल रियलिज्म) को नहीं रचते बल्कि एक सीधे साधे मानवी यथार्थ को सामने लाते हैं।'²⁰ देथा के यहाँ जादुई यथार्थवाद का स्वरूप उनकी कहानियों में राजस्थानी लोककथाओं और पौराणिक कथाओं के समावेश से सहज ही शामिल हो गया है। देथा कि कहानी 'आसमान जोगी' में सेठ की सात बहुएँ और इकलौती बेटी के झूला झूलते आसमान में गायब होने की कथा है। सत्ता का मद, आतंक, प्रताड़ना और इसके विरुद्ध कोशिश, साहस,

और विजय का जादुई खेल कहानी को लोककथा की आकृति से यथार्थ के धरातल पर उतार लाता है। उनकी कहानियों की बानगी अक्सर जादुई यथार्थवाद के जनक गेबेरियल गार्सिया मार्खेस की कहानियों की याद दिलाती हैं। विषयवस्तु के आधार पर जहाँ देथा की कहानियाँ लोक कथाओं के भीतर से संचरित यथार्थ की दुनिया में मिलती हैं तथा कल्पना और यथार्थ के जादुई तत्वों से रची बसी हैं वहीं मार्खेस की कहानियाँ वर्तमान संदर्भों में जादुई हस्तक्षेप के माध्यम से विसंगतियों के ताने-बाने को और अधिक प्रगाढ़ कर देती हैं। मार्खेस की कहानी 'ए वेरी ओल्ड मैन विद एनोर्मस विंग्स' इसका सशक्त उदाहरण है। इस कहानी में, एक पंख वाला बूढ़ा आदमी आसमान से गिरता है और उसे एक गरीब परिवार अपने साथ ले जाता है। शुरु में तो वह सारे गाँव के लिए एक नायाब प्राणी है। पति पेलायो और पत्नी एलीसेंडा उसे मु गियों के बाड़े में रख उसे देखने तक का टिकट भी लगा देते हैं और लोग उसे देखने के लिए दूर-दूर से आते भी हैं। हालाँकि, जैसे-जैसे समय बीतता है, परिवार के लिए वह बूढ़ा आदमी बोझ हो जाता है और यहाँ तक कि उन्हें वह अभिशाप स्वरूप जान पड़ता है। परिवार का कोई भी व्यक्ति उसके जीवित रहने का उपक्रम नहीं करता। फिर अचानक ही उसके नए पंख उगने लगते हैं और एक दिन वह आकाश में उड़ जाता है। मार्खेस जादुई यथार्थवाद के माध्यम से सामाजिक संरचनाओं के बीच विद्यमान संभावनाओं का संकेत करते जिसे सामान्य व्यक्ति अनजाने ही खो देता है। देथा की कथाएँ भी समकालीन चिंताओं के बीच मानवीय पक्षों को रेखांकित करती चलती हैं।

विजयदान देथा की कहानियों को पढ़ते हुए उनकी साफ़गोई पाठक को अचरज में डालती है कि कोई रचनाकार कैसे कहानी की भाषा में रच-बस कर एक दास्तान को साकार कर देता है। राजस्थानी भाषा का मिज़ाज उनकी हिन्दी कहानियों में भी उसी तरह विद्यमान है जो कहानी की तरलता को बनाये रखता

है। विजयमोहन सिंह लिखते हैं- 'अपने कथा कहने की भेदस शैली और भाषा आज की तथाकथित आधुनिकता को भी बहुत पीछे छोड़कर एक नयी आधुनिकता की अवधारणा को निर्मित कर लेती है।'²¹ यदि देखा कि कहानियों में शब्दों पर गौर करें तो सबसे अधिक उसमें 'अदीठ' शब्द की आवृत्ति हुई है। वस्तुतः रचनाकार जीवन में व्याप्त सहज मानवीय बिंदुओं की ही खोज में है जिसे व्यक्ति ने खो दिया है। लोककथाओं में व्याप्त मिथक, बिंब, प्रतीक, दृश्य उनकी रचनाओं की पूँजी है जो उनकी सभी कहानियों की पृष्ठभूमि में विद्यमान रहती है।

अस्मिता के प्रश्न, लोकमन की व्यथा, दमनकारी संस्थाओं की मानसिकता, निरीह समाज की विवशता को समेटे विजयदान देथा के रचनाकर्म को परिभाषित नहीं किया जा सकता। वह है सो है। 'साहित्य और समाज' पुस्तक में विजयदान देथा लिखते हैं एक लेखक के नाते मेरी सबसे पहली और आखरी तमन्ना यही है कि मेरा मगज मेरे पेट की खुराक न बने। शरीर का राजा मस्तिष्क मेरे पेट का गुलाम न बनें। ज़रूरत पड़ने पर शरीर का गोश्त नोच नोचकर पेट की अंतड़ियों के हवाले कर दूँ पर किसी भी क्रीमत पर अपने अक्षरों व अपनी कलम को गिरवी न रखूँ। मेरी कमर झुक जाए पर मेरी कलम नहीं झुके। मेरे अक्षरों को धन की लालसा न हो, मेरे शब्दों को सत्ता का भय न हो, मेरी रचना में यश की बू नहीं हो 'एक लेखक का सबसे बड़ा श्रेय यही है।'²²

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“Salvation through Culture and Literature : Reading Matthew Arnold as a Culture Critic”

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Victorian era is characterized by a unique Victorian sensibility acquired by how society and religion were undergoing colossal change; religion was subjected to moral revival and the methods of production and distribution of wealth were revolutionizing. It was also a long period of peace, prosperity, progress, refined sensibilities and national self-confidence for Britain. Additionally, a lot of interconnected ideas and forces were working simultaneously on the Victorian mind in the fields of science, politics, education, ethics and moral system that created a sense of vagueness, incoherence and indirection. G.M. Young writes :

“English society was poised on a double paradox which its critics, within and without, called hypocrisy. Its practical ideas were at odds with its religious professions, and its religious belief was at issue with its intelligence.” (16)

Doubt, however, was the fuel on which Victorian generation was interminably bred. People found themselves in a very awkward situation when being right was a difficult necessity. “The diffusion of scientific knowledge among the educated,

the spread of old fashioned rationalism downwards through the masses, had created a new problem for the religious teacher.” (69)

Literary greats like Charles Dickens, Thomas Carlyle, John Ruskin, Matthew Arnold and many others were conscious of the changes the society was going through and the mind set it was fashioning forth. Hence, a need was strongly felt to reconstruct a spiritual edifice on the basis of scientific revelation. Matthew Arnold saw redemption possible in the discovery of ‘new rulers with new faith.’ Sydney Eisen observes that “religion was not only a matter of belief but also an integral part of personal and public morality, family life, social position, occupation, and friendship, not to mention education and party politics.”(3)

Matthew Arnold was a religious humanist and an ethical idealist. His literary powers find full flowering in his criticism of English life at large. Russel remarks :

“In all questions affecting national character and tendency, the development of civilization, public manners,

morals, habits, idiosyncrasies, the influence of institutions, of education, of literature, his insight was penetrating, his point of view perfectly original, and his judgment, if not always sound, invariably suggestive.” (12)

It was in accordance with his commitment to nation that he along with Thomas Carlyle played the role of a Victorian prophet and sage. Both appealed for a collective pursuit of truth and perfection. Arnold’s essays invoke the saner aspect of human nature and call for a collective social movement to rework the civilization.

“...let us have a social movement, let us organize and combine a party to pursue truth and new thought... let us all stick to each other, and back each other up. Let us have no nonsense about independent criticism, and intellectual delicacy, and the few and the many. Don’t let us trouble ourselves about foreign thought; we shall invent the whole thing for ourselves as we go along... we are all in the same movement, we are all liberals, we are all in pursuit of truth.” (Arnold, *Matthew Arnold’s Essays in Criticism* 26)

He not only insisted on seeing life steadily and seeing it whole but was himself gifted with seeing it steadily and seeing it holistically. This is what prompted G. W. Russel to evaluate Arnold’s word as “clear, sympathetic, and independent.”(11) However, it would be unjust to compartmentalize his idea of salvation in a rounded and coherent philosophy, instead, he stressed upon the need for cultivating balance and sane perspective for which he offered a set of humanistic ideals.

Arnold discovered the germ of discontent in the stubborn opposition that

Christianity threw at the growing rational ideas and scientific spirit of the age that resulted in pushing to the backseat the Biblical criticism in England. The obstinate refusal of the two schools of thought, science and religion, to reach a synthesis towards the general good of the society comprised of a concern that Arnold held very close to his heart throughout his life. He held Englishmen guilty of affecting Hebraism. In particular, the English middle class received Arnold’s blame in the strongest possible words, for depriving the English society of a sense of totality and perfection that ultimately paves way for culture. Culture in Arnold’s schema indicates harmony, perfection and balance and doesn’t fumble in acknowledging the worth and divinity of religious side in man, instead it comes with a premise that religion is not the whole of man. His idea of ‘sweetness and light’, a term he adapted from Swift, becomes relevant here which enables people with ideological differences to agree upon a common standard.

Religion and culture are deeply connected in Arnold’s : Religion places ‘Kingdom of God’ within man and culture too sees human perfection as an internal condition. In culture, he foresaw means to overcome the crisis and confusion of the Victorian mind. Culture consists of a fine balance between poetry and religion that forms the essence of the refined individual. In culture, Arnold attempted to describe an objective centre of authority to counteract the tendency to anarchy which seems to be threatening the Victorian culture. He applauds culture as something that “is supposed to plume itself on a smattering of Greek and Latin is a culture which is begotten by nothing so intellectual as curiosity; it is valued

either out of sheer vanity and ignorance, or else as an engine of social and class distinction, separating its holder, like a badge or title, from other people, who have not got it” (*Culture and Anarchy* 32)

Similarly, Arnold proposes that both poetry and science are essentially linked since both are the enterprises of the intellect. Both complement each other by insisting upon freedom to flourish as they will. In his essay, “The Literary Influence of Academies”, he explains the proposition in a rather agreeable manner.

“Genius is mainly an affair of energy, and poetry is mainly an affair of genius; therefore, a nation whose spirit is characterized by energy may well be eminent in poetry; and we have Shakespeare. Again, the highest reach of science is, one may say, an inventive power, a faculty of divination, akin to the highest power exercised in poetry, therefore, a nation whose spirit is characterized by energy may well be eminent in science: - and we have Newton.” (*Essays* 40)

When Arnold calls for a revival and reinterpretation of the Bible, he is actually explaining his idea of culture. His idea of progressive revelation is also a means of promoting culture. Culture is the enemy of imperfection because it always strives for bringing about holistic perfection in one’s thoughts and the way of life.

Lionel Trilling argues that Arnold’s idea of culture as a substitute for moral source derives strength from Hellenism of which he was an avowed defender. Hellenism preaches “wholeness of human personality” and “does not, perhaps, give quite sufficient weight to morality, but whatever consideration of morality it does make is always in relation to the rest of

the human faculties.” (Trilling, *Matthew Arnold* 257) Wimsatt, William K. and Cleanth Brooks observe that Arnold does not in any way refute the claims and contribution of religion in the making of human history and civilization yet they have a feeling that “Religion had once done a fairly good job”, but with the change in the circumstances of human condition, “religion now seemed to Arnold to reside mainly in religious ‘organizations,’ and these were only ‘machinery.’ The highest promotion of the sweet, clear inner life would now be the job of ‘culture.’ The text would be the Greek classics.” (Wimsatt and Brooks 449)

Arnold’s ideas about cultural evolution were closely related to those of Edward B. Tylor, the nineteenth century English cultural and social anthropologist. In *Primitive Culture and Anthropology*, Tylor propounded the descriptive and universal theory of culture that was adopted by the emerging discipline of anthropology at about the same time. Echoing Arnold, he presented culture as an evolutionary process achieved after passing through the stages of savagery, barbarism and civilization. Similarly, like Arnold, his idea of culture is a broad term which he defines as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” (Tylor 1) Again, like Arnold, he sees in culture the hope of revival and restoration of a lost sense of wholeness and perfection and a possibility of salvation. For instance, he concludes *Primitive Culture* with an affirmation that “the science of culture is essentially a reformers’ science.” (410). Lastly, he resembled Arnold in so far as his religious

conviction is concerned in that both championed for the essential message or essence of religion disregarding dogma.

In order to eliminate the obsolete, Arnold radically attempted to bring together religion and morality upon the premise acceptable to the growing scientific enquiry. In many ways then, Arnold and the American poet, Emerson resemble in thought especially in their insistence on reconciling Christian thought “with Greek speculation and modern scientific results.” (132) In culture, he saw this synthesis possible by humanizing the knowledge to broaden the basis of life. Culture by pitting itself against anarchy, induces and fosters a complete proportional development of humanity, an unhindered play of fresh thought upon the mundane notions, spontaneity of consciousness, and sweetness and light.

Arnold substituted the god of miracles and metaphysics by the god of experience revealed simply as the operation of a law to place religion on the ground that it could share with science when judged by the touchstone of verifiability. His definition of God as “the Eternal not ourselves that makes for righteousness” (Arnold, *Literature and Dogma* 184) is completely in agreement with the rationalistic spirit of the age.

Arnold’s theory of religion, poetry and culture bear striking similarities: Harmony and synthesis is the key. In poetry, for instance, Arnold found a potential bridging force or a middle path between the demands of science and that of religion. While the idea of human perfection as religion conceives of it is narrow and parochial, science has been virtually unrewarding in fostering a system of

morality. Religion developed the moral fibre of the English race and science assisted men in cultivating free thought by breaking the spell of ecclesiastical domination over their minds. In either of the cases, the result was one-sided and restricted. Poetry with its insistence on the ideal of beauty, sweetness and light yields a harmonious perfection; therefore, it remains the true ideal of perfection.

Throughout his work, Arnold comes across as a vehement champion of poetry that has power to rescue mankind from the crises it was facing. In doing this, he emerges as a real warrior in his war against the strangulation that culture was facing from brazen materialism. A genuine poet complimented by complete culture consisting of desire for learning and criticism and unfettered thinking can be a great asset for a nation. Exalting poetry over religion and science, he saw it eventually replacing both religion and philosophy as the sources of the system of values by which a society lives. Poetry would successfully fill the spiritual vacuum felt by the age whose faith is uncertain. He prophesies a lasting value for poetry when traditional religion would be no longer relevant:

“There is not a creed which is not shaken, not an accredited dogma which is not shown to be questionable, not a received tradition which does not threaten to dissolve. Our religion has materialized itself in the fact, and now the fact is failing it. But for poetry, the idea is everything; the rest is a world of illusion, of divine illusion. Poetry attaches its emotion to the idea; the idea is the fact. The strongest part of our religion today is its unconscious poetry.” (*Essays* 235)

The Victorian poet, Robert Browning suggests a similar thought in a poetic way:

Emancipate through passion
And thought, with sea for sky,
We substitute, in a fashion,
For heaven-poetry: (485)

George Watson, the twentieth century critic and historian proposes a similar role for poetry:

“...that the poet in an open society and in conditions of expanding literacy must, like priests in the age of priests, offer guidance and instruction, and that the language of such poetry must be very plain, direct, and severe: and it must not lose itself in parts and episodes and ornamental work, but must press forward to the whole.” (111)

Arnold credits literature with a very unique role in life because, in it, he finds the special ability to fuse emotion and conduct. However, one should abstain from expecting poetry to discover and analyse new ideas as the business of poetry is to synthesize and ‘yoke together’ conflicting forces. Poets know the complexities of modern life and world even before taking them up in their work. A poet has a divine purpose of presenting in inspiring combinations the spiritual and intellectual truths he knows. Wordsworth calls poetry “the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge;... the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all science.” (Wordsworth 281.) Shelley also referred to poetry as “at once the centre and circumference of all knowledge; ... that which comprehends all science and to which all science must be referred.” (Dewey 301) The impression therefore is that of poetry being divinely humanistic in the sense that it aims at creating

happiness. Arnold strikes a familiar note when he states that, “It is undeniable that the exercise of a creative power, that a free creative activity, is the highest function of man; it is proved to be so by man’s finding in it his true happiness.” (*Essays* 11) And again, “Poetry is the interpretress of the natural world, and she is the interpretress of the moral world...” (77)

Therefore, poetry has a dual purpose of interpreting in the most sublime words the inward moral and spiritual laws and also the outward course of man’s history. In both the ways, it reconciles him with the universe he inhabits with a deep-felt sense of reality. Arnold strongly believed that literature is constantly involved in serving the interests of religion and society.

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इक्कीसवीं सदी की हिन्दी-कहानी में चित्रित स्त्री जीवन

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बीसवीं सदी का विमर्शमूलक साहित्य अब अपने चतुर्थ चरण में पहुँच गया है। शुरूआती समय में यह केवल वर्णन तक सीमित रहा तो दूसरे चरण के वर्णन में सहानुभूति भी सम्मिलित हो गई। तीसरा चरण उनकी दशा पर वैचारिक आग्रह की माँग करता है जिसे हम विमर्श के रूप में पहचानते हैं। रचनाकार का दायित्व केवल दुःख का वर्णन करना नहीं बल्कि उससे मुक्त होने के उपाय बताना भी होता है, इक्कीसवीं सदी के कहानीकारों ने इस दायित्व का निर्वहन बखूबी किया है। मुक्ति के रास्ते खोजना या विकल्प प्रस्तुत करना विमर्शमूलक साहित्य का चौथा चरण है।

किसी भी समय में रचना का यथार्थ उतना ही बदलता है जितना जीवन का यथार्थ बदलता है। इक्कीसवीं सदी के साहित्य में भी यदि दलित, स्त्री, आदिवासी, किन्नर, बाल, वृद्ध आदि विमर्श मौजूद हैं तो निश्चित ही सदी परिवर्तन के साथ इन वर्ग विशेष के प्रति समाज के नजरिए में कोई विशेष परिवर्तन नहीं हुआ है। इसके कई उदाहरण भी हमें समाज में सरलता से मिल जाते हैं। निर्भया हत्याकांड, अंकिता हत्याकांड, हाथरस काण्ड, मणिपुर में महिलाओं को निर्वस्त्र घुमाने की घटनायें इस सदी में घटित हो रही हैं जिससे महिलाओं की मुक्ति और सशक्तीकरण के दावे खोखले प्रतीत होते हैं इन घटनाओं से इस सदी का कहानीकार भली-भाँति परिचित है और स्त्री

की इस मनःस्थिति को प्रभावी तरीके से चित्रित करते हुए मुक्ति का विकल्प भी प्रस्तुत करता है। कहानीकार द्वारा प्रस्तुत विकल्प से समाज की सहमति और स्वीकृति कितनी होगी यह कह पाना एक जटिल प्रश्न है। इसका महत्वपूर्ण कारण इक्कीसवीं सदी की कहानियों पर वैश्वीकरण का प्रभाव है, जिसको हम सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक संक्रमण के साथ मानवीय और जीवन मूल्यों के क्षरण के रूप में भी देख रहे हैं।

गीत चतुर्वेदी की कहानी 'सावंत आंटी की लड़कियाँ' की महिला पात्र नंदू अपने प्रेम को प्राप्त करने के लिए किसी भी हद तक जाने के लिए तैयार है। नंदू हेमंत के साथ भाग जाती है और हेमंत उसका चौथा प्रेमी है। हेमंत नंदू का पड़ोसी है और बचपन से दोनों एक दूसरे को भाई-बहन मानते हैं या उन्हें मानने पर विवश किया गया है। यह कहानी का एक पक्ष है और भारतीय परम्परा में इस बात को स्वीकार करना एक चुनौती है क्योंकि प्रेम जैसी पवित्र भावना में कोई चार पुरुषों से कैसे जुड़ सकता है। इससे बड़ी बात यह है कि उसका चौथा प्रेमी और पति उसका मुँहबोला भाई है। कहानी का दूसरा पक्ष नंदू का जीवन को जीतने की जद्दोजहद को दर्शाता है। उसके प्रेमी उसकी उम्मीदों पर खरे नहीं उतरते हैं तो वह नया विकल्प तलाश करती है। अपने जीवन की विजय को वह अपनी छोटी बहन सुधा में देखती है

जो विजय शेरबंदी के साथ भाग जाती है। नन्दू का हेमंत से विवाह करना भावावेश नहीं बल्कि तार्किक है, कि अब ऐसा होना संभव नहीं है कि माता-पिता लड़की को जिस के साथ जैसे रहने को बोलेंगे वह चुपचाप स्वीकार कर लेंगी। उसके विद्रोह में आक्रोश साफ दिखाई देता है। 'मैंने तो नहीं बोला था कि मुझसे राखी बंधवाओ। न ही उसने आकर हाथ बढ़ाया था। मेरी आई और उसके बाबा ने कहा कि बाँध दो, तो मैंने बाँध दिया। बाद में तुम लोगों ने भी बाँध दिया। जब मैं सोचने-समझने लायक हुई हूँ मैंने हेमंत को कभी भाई नहीं समझा, न ही उसने मुझे बहन। जब हम दोनों की निगाह में ही उस रिश्ते का कोई मतलब नहीं था जो हम पर थोप दिया गया था, हमारे मा-बाप के असुरक्षा-बोध के कारण तो फिर हम क्यों उस रिश्ते को पालते। हमें प्यार हो गया था और हम एक ही कोख से नहीं आए। जब शादी के बाद पति-पत्नी अपने रिश्ते तोड़कर तलाक ले सकते हैं तो मुँहबोले भाई, बहन आपस में प्यार हो जाने पर अपना रिश्ता तोड़कर नया रिश्ता क्यों नहीं बना सकते।' नन्दू का यह तर्क एक नए दर्शन को जन्म देता है जो शायद भविष्य में स्वीकारणीय हो पाए।

एक समय स्त्री विमर्श के महिला रचनाकारों द्वारा पुरुष सत्ता को अस्वीकृत कर दिया था या पुरुष को खल पात्र की तरह चित्रित किया था। इक्कीसवीं सदी की कहानी में यह धारणा परिवर्तित हुई है और स्त्री मुक्ति के विकल्प के रूप में किसी पुरुष चरित्र को सृजित किया गया है। नन्दू जिसमें अपनी मुक्ति खोज रही है वह उसके प्रेमी हैं। अल्पना मिश्र की कहानी 'मुक्ति प्रसंग' में भी कथानायिका 'वे' की मुक्ति के लिए कहानीकार ने 'वह' पात्र को सृजित किया है जो पेशे से बैंक मैनेजर है। सहज स्वीकार यहाँ भी समस्या है क्योंकि 'वे' विवाहित कामकाजी महिला है। किसी महिला के विवाहेत्तर सम्बन्ध को स्वीकार करना सरल नहीं है। लेकिन जब इसके कारणों की तलाश करते हैं तो पाठक के मन में सहज ही 'वे' के

प्रति सहानुभूति होने लगती है। 'वे' के पति जो पेशे से डॉक्टर हैं उनका महिलाओं के प्रति दृष्टिकोण इस तरह का है- रोटी, कपड़ा, मकान के अतिरिक्त क्या चीजें हैं जिनके लिए घर की महिलाओं को पैसा दिया जाए। औरत के हाथ में पैसे देने से वह बिगड़ जाती है।² अपनी इस बात के समर्थन में उन्होंने अपनी पत्नी के तीन महीने के वेतन को भी अपने ही बैंक खाते में जमा करवाया। उसके बाद भी 'वे' का पूरा वेतन उनके पति अपनी सुविधानुसार खर्च करते हैं। जब हम वैश्विक जगत में हैं तो पढ़े-लिखे होने के बाद भी हमारी सोच में इतना पिछड़ापन होना आश्चर्यजनक है। स्त्री विमर्शों की बड़ी बहसों के बीच में सामान्य घरेलू समस्याएँ जस की तस रह जाती हैं जिस ओर सामान्यतः किसी का ध्यान नहीं जाता है। भारतीय समाज में कामकाजी महिलाएँ यह चाहती हैं कि जिस परिवार के लिए वो घर में काम करती हैं और घर की आर्थिक स्थिति को व्यवस्थित करने के लिए घर से बाहर काम करती हैं इसका सम्मान उनको मिलना चाहिए। वैश्वीकरण के दौर में आर्थिक आधार पर विकसित होते सम्बन्धों के चलते 'वे' के पति को केवल उसके वेतन से लगाव है जिस कारण घर में अशांति का माहौल बना रहता है। दाम्पत्य सम्बन्धों के खालीपन और शांति का विकल्प 'वे' बैंक मैनेजर में तलाश करती है। यह प्रेम का परिवर्तित स्वरूप है जो कहानियों के माध्यम से चित्रित किया जा रहा है।

कहानीकार द्वारा असामान्य विकल्पों की कड़ी नीलाक्षी सिंह की कहानी 'रंगमहल में नाची राधा' प्रस्तुत करती है जो हास्यास्पद ही ज्यादा लगता है। जिस उम्र में मनुष्य को सांसारिक बन्धनों से मुक्ति तलाशनी चाहिए थी उस उम्र में कहानी की महिला पात्र पति के बन्धनों से छुटकारा पाकर प्रेमी के पाश में बंधना चाहती है। कहानीकार ने यह मुक्ति कहानी की पात्र दीवानबाई पर आरोपित की है। 'मैं उसके पास लौटना चाहती हूँ। इस घर के सारे कर्तव्य पूरे

कर दिए हैं मैंने। अभी आपने कहा कि अपने पीछे एक सुखी घर छोड़ जाऊंगी। आपने कहा था आप मुक्ति देंगे। मुझे मुक्ति चाहिए।³ दीवानबाई अब वृद्ध हो गई हैं, घर में उसकी बहुएं हैं, नाती-पोते हैं। अब दीवानबाई और उसके पति सुदामा प्रसाद अपने पारिवारिक और दाम्पत्य जीवन की जिम्मेदारियों से मुक्त हो चुके हैं। इस उम्र में उसे अपने पुराने प्रेमी की पत्नी और बच्चों के मरने के बाद उसके जीवन की जटिलताओं का ध्यान आता है। दीवानबाई जिस उम्र में है जाहिर सी बात है कि उसका प्रेमी भी उसी उम्र का होगा, ऐसी उम्र में लोक-लाज और सामाजिक मर्यादाओं की अनदेखी करते हुए वे अपने युवावस्था के प्रेम की पूर्णता के रास्ते खोज रहे हैं। इस सम्बन्ध में सूरज पालीवाल लिखते हैं कि - 'एक उम्र के बाद स्त्री और पुरुष को देह सम्बन्धों से अधिक घर और उसकी इज्जत प्यारी होती है।'⁴ जिसका यहाँ अभाव दिखाई देता है।

'गोदान' उपन्यास का गोबर कहता है 'प्रेम कोई सीधी-साधी गाय नहीं है बल्कि एक खूंखार शेर की तरह होता है जो अपने शिकार को किसी और को देखने तक नहीं देता है।' यदि दीवानबाई को अपने प्रेमी से इतना ही लगाव और समर्पण था तो उसकी शादी और दाम्पत्य जीवन से लेकर उसके प्रेमी के दाम्पत्य जीवन की समस्त घटनायें उसके सामने ही घटित होती हैं। उस समय दीवानबाई के चरित्र या व्यवहार में कोई विद्रोह या अस्वीकार का भाव कहानीकार द्वारा कहीं भी दर्शाया नहीं गया है। इक्कीसवीं सदी की कहानियों के सम्बन्ध में वैभव सिंह का मानना है कि कहानी में चित्रित घटनाओं के प्रति पाठकों का अविश्वास होना भी आवश्यक है। वे लिखते हैं कि- 'कहानी का एक बड़ा काम स्थितियों एवं घटनाओं के बारे में अविश्वास पैदा करना भी है। उनके अनुसार अधिक विश्वास ने मनुष्य को दास, अनुयायी, सेवक और उपभोक्ता तो बना दिया पर सजग मनुष्य और लोकतंत्र का चौकन्ना नागरिक होने के गुणों से

वंचित कर दिया है।'⁵ वैभव कुमार की यह बात इस कहानी पर सिद्ध होती है जिस पर सामान्य पाठक का विश्वास करना मुश्किल है।

प्रत्याशा की कहानी 'फूलपुर की फुलवारियां मिसराइन' दो स्त्रियों की कहानी है जिनकी जीवन की स्थितियाँ अलग-अलग हैं। कहानी की एक पात्र फुलवारियां मिसराइन और दूसरी पात्र हमीदन है। वैश्वीकरण के प्रभाव से भारतीय समाज में प्रचलित जाति-धर्म, लिंग आधारित विभेद कुछ हद तक कम तो हुए हैं लेकिन उनका जीवन संघर्ष और समस्या जाति-धर्म से इतर एक जैसी ही है। हिन्दू होने पर मिसराइन और मुस्लिम होने पर हमीदन एक ही समस्या से जूझ रहे हैं। एक निःसंतान होने का अभिशाप झेल रही है तो दूसरी का पति उसकी शादी की पहली रात से ही गायब है। कहानी के दोनों पात्रों कि समस्या का समाधान कहानी में ही दिया गया है लेकिन स्वीकृति पर प्रश्न चिन्ह यहाँ भी बना हुआ है। हमीदन विवाह के बारह वर्षों बाद भी माँ नहीं बन पाई तो मुख्तार (हमीदन का पति) की बहन ने अजमेर बुलाया और पीर के दरबार में मत्था टेकने को कहा जिससे संतान कामना पूर्ण होगी। हमीदन एक महीने अजमेर रही और भरी गोद लेकर वापिस आई। कहानी में इस बात का जिक्र कहीं नहीं किया गया है कि मुख्तार भी हमीदन के साथ अजमेर गया था कि नहीं लेकिन इस संशय के सूत्र कहानी में आगे खुलते हैं जब अजमेरी पेट में आया तो हमीदन फ़ैल रही थी और घर की बांकी चीजें सिकुड़ रही थी। जिसमें फसल का बर्बाद होना, मुर्गियों के बच्चों का मरना, मुख्तार को लकवा पड़ना प्रमुख थे। चारपाई में पड़े मुख्तार अपने सभी देखे-अनदेखे दोस्तों से अजमेरी की शक्ल का मिलान करता रहता था। यह बात भारत की उस धारणा का समर्थन करती है कि अनैतिक कार्यों का प्रतिफल हमें इसी जन्म में भोगना पड़ता है हमीदन के गलत निर्णय से भरपूर घर-परिवार भर-भराकर ध्वस्त हो गया।

मिसराइन का पति उसे पहली रात में ही छोड़कर चला गया है इसलिए उसका अतृप्त यौवन अभी भी किसी पुरुष की चाहत को तलाश रहा है। हमीदन का बेटा अजमेरी अब बड़ा हो गया है और वह अब मिसराइन के यहाँ काम करता है। दाम्पत्य सम्बन्धों की रिक्तता का विकल्प मिसराइन अजमेरी में देखती है। उसे एक पुरुष की आवश्यकता है चाहे वो कोई भी हो। किसी हिन्दू ब्राह्मणी और मुस्लिम युवक के अवैध सहचरी को समाज किस दृष्टि से देखेगा यह भी एक अनुत्तरित प्रश्न है। 'अब पता नहीं फुलवारियों का सपना और अजमेरी का सपना पूरा हुआ कि नहीं। फूलपुर ने पहली दफा एक त्यक्ता स्त्री का दूसरा विवाह देखा कि नहीं, कि पहली दफा एक औरत ने अपने से छोटे पुरुष का हाथ थामा कि नहीं, कि पहली दफा एक ब्राह्मण पंडिताइन ने एक मुसलमान मर्द का साथ सुख पाया कि नहीं। कि पहली दफा एक औरत ने अपने सुख साधन के बारे में सोचा, कि अपने मन और शरीर के बारे में सोचा। ऐसा और कई जगहों पर होता आया है पर फूलपुर में अब तक ऐसा नहीं हुआ।'⁶ कहानी में भी इसका भविष्य नहीं दिखाया गया है बस एक विकल्प प्रस्तुत कर परिणति के लिए समाज के सामने रख दिया है। कहानी में प्रस्तुत इन विकल्पों के सम्बन्ध में सूरज पालीवाल लिखते हैं कि- 'केवल दुःख बताने से कहानी प्रभावशाली नहीं बन पाती इसलिए चैतन्य होकर दुःख को दूर करने के लिए किये जा रहे प्रयासों को वे विशेष रूप से बताती हैं। इन प्रयासों को सामाजिक दृष्टि से देखने पर वे दोनों स्त्रियाँ पथभ्रष्ट नज़र आयेंगीं लेकिन अपने दुःखों के प्रसंग में देखने पर वे साहसी दिखाई देंगे।'⁷ यह बात विवेच्य कहानियों के उन सभी पात्रों पर लागू होती है जो अपनी मुक्ति के रास्ते तलाश रहे हैं।

दीपक श्रीवास्तव की कहानी 'सत्ताईस साल की सांवली लड़की' की मुख्य पात्र सविता उर्फ रज्जो को

विवाह के लिए सोलह बार दिखाया गया है और अभी तक वह अविवाहित है। सविता को अस्वीकार करने का पहला कारण तो कहानी के शीर्षक में ही है कि वह सांवली है। इस दाग को पैसों के द्वारा धोया जा सकता है लेकिन बिडम्बना यह है कि वह निर्धन भी है और उसका परिवार दहेज देने में सक्षम नहीं है। जिस लड़की को विवाह के लिए सोलह बार प्रस्तुत और अस्वीकार किया गया हो उसकी मनःस्थिति को समझना आसान नहीं है। इसके बाद भी माता-पिता के लिए वह स्वयं को सत्रहवीं बार विवाह के लिए प्रस्तुत करती है लेकिन इस बार वह स्वयं ही गंभीर नहीं है लेकिन परिणाम इस बार भी कुछ नया नहीं है। कहानी पुरुष के स्वार्थी प्रवृत्ति को अमित के माध्यम से चित्रित करती है, अमित सविता का अच्छा दोस्त है लेकिन सांवली और निर्धन होने के कारण अमित ने भी उसके समक्ष विवाह का कोई प्रस्ताव नहीं रखा। इसलिए इस कहानी में सविता पुरुष सत्ता को खारिज करते हुए स्वतंत्र जीवन को चुनती है जहाँ उसे अब किसी और नुमाइश में नहीं रखा जाएगा। साविता कहानी के अंत में कहती है कि - 'आखिर उसे बताना जरूरी था कि जिसके साथ वह समय काट रहा था, अब उसे किसी की जरूरत नहीं रही, किसी की भी नहीं, न अमित जैसे की न ही किसी राजकुमार से शादी की।'⁸

निष्कर्ष :

इक्कीसवीं सदी की कहानी में स्त्री जीवन को विविध रूपों में चित्रित किया है। विवाह के समय दहेज आज भी एक बड़ी समस्या है जिसकी भेंट सविता जैसी अनेकों लड़कियाँ हर वर्ष चढ़ती हैं। इसमें अधिकांश समय वे अपनी व्यथा को व्यक्त भी नहीं कर पाते थे। आज तकनीकी ने उन्हें यह अवसर दिया है जिससे उनका संघर्ष और पीड़ा समाज तक पहुँच रही है। पारम्परिक बन्धनों से छुटकारा पाना उनके जीवन का लक्ष्य है जिसे पाने में उन्हें सफलता

भी मिली है। स्त्री मुक्ति सम्बन्धी विषयों पर अभी भारतीय परम्परावादी मानसिकता की जकड़ ढीली नहीं हुई है इसलिए स्त्री मुक्ति को स्वीकारने की अपेक्षा वह इसे नैतिक पतन के रूप में भी व्याख्यायित करता है। जीवन के प्रति सकारात्मक दृष्टिकोण को अपनाते हुए विश्वास बनाए कि रफता-रफता सब ठीक हो जाएगा।

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Garos Tribe in Assam : Urbanization and its impact

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Introduction :

Meghalaya as an individual state and an autonomous state of India. It was identified in the 2nd April 1970 and formed as a fully-fledged state in the 21st January, 1972. The Garos have occupied a significant part in the political scenario of the state along with another two major tribes, the Khasi and the Jaintia. Garo Hills district, being a part of the Meghalaya plateau has indeed a checkered evolutionary history. Meghalaya has an existing nomenclature, Meghalaya, a Sanskrit word means “abode of the cloud”. It has become the smallest state amongst the newly formed states since the year 1969 to 1972. Already it is mentioned that the indigenous habitants of Meghalaya are mainly three tribes, viz. the Khasi, the Jaintia and the Garo. Geographically Meghalaya is surrounded by three districts namely Goalpara, Kamrup and Nagaon in north side, by the Mikir Hills, the North Kacher Hills and the Cachher district in the east and by Bangladesh in south part as well as in west. There are three physical divisions in the state, namely Garo (western), Khasi (central) and Jaintia (eastern) Hill divisions.

Out of total Garo population of the Garo Hill District, 22% belongs to other tribes. Those tribes include Hazong, Rava, Koch, Mon and Dulus. The language and culture of those tribes have resemblance to the language and culture of Assamese and Bengali. Koch and Rava have their own culture. They use Assamese as their written language.

This work is specifically related to the Garo Tribe, so have to provide a brief identity and description of the tribe. The Garos are the inhabitants mainly of the Garo Hill district of Meghalaya. In the north this district is surrounded by Goalpara district of Assam, the districts namely Mymensing and Rongpur of Bangladesh are in the west and south part and in the east, the district of Khasi Hill is located.

The Garo Tribe :

Before going to the main theme, it is important to draw an outline of the disarrayed Garo population in and abroad in the district of Garo Hills. The total population of Garo is 9,97,716 out of which 8,21,026 live in Meghalaya and 1,36,077 live in Assam, 12,952 Garo people live in Tripura and near about 1,20,000 live in Bangladesh. In accordance to the present eco-educational

circumstances a portion of the gross population of the tribe has become permanent inhabitant of Canada, Australia and of different countries of Europe. (the latest estimate says that the total population of the Garos is in about 1 million, who spread in Meghalaya, Assam, Tripura, Nagaland, Tripura west Bengal, Bangladesh, the USA, Canada, Australia and Europe). However before the formation of the state Meghalaya, 8,21,716 number was added to the population of Assam. Besides, which data is placed here about the Garo population in Assam, is formed as follows by the original inhabitants + the inhabitants that brought by the British tea planters as tea labourer + the refugees who were made forced to enter Assam for the Pakistan government's atrocities in East Pakistan (today's Bangladesh). In Assam, there are several numbers of villages in where Garo people are living their livelihood in the districts of Goalpara, Kamrupa and Sivasagar (in Sivasagar, the Garo inhabitants are the descendants of the people, who were brought by the British tea planters as tea labourer). There are a number of Garo basties in the district of Khasi Hills too. It is found that some Garo peoples also live in Bangladesh especially in the Mymensingh District. In the beginning of 1964, about a lakh of these Mymensingh plains Garos, mostly Christians, migrated to Assam because of the systematic persecution in Pakistan (as Bangladesh, formerly known as East Pakistan was a province of Pakistan then, naming as East Pakistan).

The Garos call themselves as 'Achik mande' which means 'hill man' (achik means hill and mande means man). The outsiders used to call them Garo as exonym.

It is mentionable that historically the name Garo was used for a large number of peculiar people who leaves on the southern bank of the river Brahmaputra, but today it is used only for the people who call themselves 'Achik mande'. The Garos believe that their original motherland was in Tibet. However, the main groups of the Garos are :

- 1) Ambeng, who inhabit the western area, including Tura.
- 2) Atong confined in the lower Simsang valley.
- 3) Ak'we, who reside on the north-eastern area of the district extended into Goalpara and Kamrup districts.
- 4) Matchi, who settle on the Central highland on the upper Bhuri valley.
- 5) Dual, close to Matchi on the upper reaches of Simsang.
- 6) Chisok, north to the Matchi and Dual.
- 7) Gara Ganching, who dwell on the mid-south eastern portion to the west of Atong.
- 8) Kotchu, on the mid eastern part.
- 9) Kock, on the south-west.

Besides these groups, the whole Garo community is divided into five major clans, vis, Sangma, Marak, Momin, Shira and Areng. According to S Barkataki, only three original clans are there: the Maraks, the Momins and the Sangmas. These are exogamous clans and marriage within the same clan is strictly taboo.

Garo is one of the fractions of the greater linguistic group Tibeto Burman. They have close linguistic resemblance with the other Tibeto Burman tribal races of Assam, the NC hills and Tripura. It can

be assumed that like the above mentioned plains tribes of Assam, the Garos moved into their present location through the north-eastern parts from Upper Burma. This movement was part of a great Mongolian inflow into this part of the north east India in pre-historic times. It is very probable that the influx started originally from Tibet and other parts of the western China.

As stated by Colonel Delton their faces are round and short. Their forehead is not so broad, but projects very little beyond the eyes that are small on a level with the face. The shape of the nose is remarkable. The average height of the male is just above five feet and of the female four and three fourth feet. According to Major Playfair though the women are not so beautiful, they couldn't be describe as ugly. He tells us that the Garo girls are very attractive with their smiling faces. Playfair's description of the Garo peoples' physical features is as similar as with the tribal people inhabiting the plains of Assam.

The Garo dialects cum language derived from the Tibeto Burman linguistic trend and it is one of the tranches of the greater Boro section. The other languages of the branch, i.e., Dimasa, Rava, Tripuri, Lalung, Mising, Deori etc are very close to the Garo language. Mentionable that the language, Garo is a combination of twelve individual dialects inclusive of A'we, Rum'bang, Ruga, Matchi etc. After the formation of the Garo language the Roman script was added for writing purpose. Interestingly some social customs of the Garos are exact to the same customs of the Khasi tribe, but the Khasi belongs to the greater Mon Khmer linguistic group

wherein the Garo belongs to the Tibeto Burman. The Garos follow matrilineal family trend which is similar to the Khasi but no other tribe of Tibeto Burman section of the greater Mongoloid stock follow that custom. However, "machong" is the basement of the Garo society, which term has been translated by Colonel Delton as "motherhood". Noticeable that machong is a term much different from the term family. All members of a machong claim descent from a common ancestress or mother. Machong is usually named after animals, rivers, caves etc., e.g., Rangsan (children of the bear), Dove machong, Wasra (a stream) machong etc.

The religion of Garo is connected with the nature and the main aim of their religion is to protect them with the natural environment and to protect themselves from all the evils. Already over 30% of the total population have been converted to Christianity by American Baptist and Roman Catholic missionaries but the converted people too haven't abandoned some of their original religious faiths and customs. Their conception of the origin of the earth and man, however, resembles more the biblical version for why their customary faith and beliefs haven't got much changed. The Garos believe on the nature's unexpected power. According to their belief, the "Tatara Rabunga", the chief god or spirit in the Garo pantheon, created the earth out of the nebula. They had also the belief that there was no land before the earth was formed and darkness reigned everywhere. Then Tara Rabunga created the earth amidst the vast watery plain sending one of his subordinates Nestu-Nopantu. Nestu Nopantu bring up some clay from under the water sending a

beetle and fashioned the earth. Monkey was the first terrestrial animal according to the Garo mythology. Man was the last to come. The above mentioned creation story is the similar to the creation story of the Hindu mythology. Accordingly they believe in unearthly power. In the early days and they worship the unearthly powers in order to get relieve from diseases alike to the Hindu mythology and beliefs.

With the course of time the Garo religious mythology became more and more prosperous, including more and more unearthly deities and spirits inclusive of Chora-dubi, the protector of crops and Saljong, the god of fertility. It happened when the Garos improved their livelihood trend from hunter-gatherer to cultivator. So the improved religious mythology reflects the people's civilization improvement.

It would be very difficult to discuss in detail about all the tribes living in Garo Hill. Keeping this in mind I have selected the Garos for discussion. The main topic for discussion is the influence of urbanization on Garo people.

In early days the Garo peoples' main occupation and livelihood was agriculture and in remote areas still it is the same. Their principal crops were rice, millet and maize. Researchers into man-land relationship both archaic and modern involve multidisciplinary approach which has become common norm in advanced countries. Jhum or slash-n-burn cultivation is a primitive method of agriculture. Loss is immense in jhumming compared to its output. But the agrarian Garos of Meghalaya practice it, prefer it and ignore ail roses. The Garos during the jhumming

operation cut the vegetation of selected area excepting few tall trees, allow them to dry in, situ, and later on burnt when the jhum field (aba) becomes vegetation free. Tilling is done with the help of a small hoe (gitchi) and seeds are either planted by using a digging stick (matha) or sown by broadcasting method in each strip of rand. It is continued upto two years and later on abandoned. After harvesting the crop the Garos come to native place and celebrate Wangara festival. This festival is alike to Assam's Bhogali bihu. Full of merriment, this festival continue for 4 or 5 days. The old and young drink "Tu" and enjoy through dance and songs.

Before independence the Garos were the fore-bearers of ancient culture. Urbanization prevalent before independence was the result of the enthusiasm of the Christian Missionaries. After independence with the beginning of democracy the Garo culture took a new turn. With the establishment of Garo Hill District Council, a radical change took place in their system of education. The standard of education started to improve. They became more and more interested towards higher education. The number of letters increases. This interesting urge for higher education created the atmosphere for establishment of higher educational institutions.

Urbanization and its impact :

The term urbanization stands for the process of being urban. In other words, it is a demographic process by which an increasing portion of population of a region or a country lives in urban areas. The head quarter Tura has been fast developing into an important town.

However, though there was not even a single class II city in Meghalaya, the educated people become more and more interested in trade and commerce than agriculture. The influence of urbanization is seen in their life style. Urbanization has changed their customs and culture. The pains and miseries of the old transport system have gone and modern transport system brings home modern culture even in the remote areas. Gradually urbanization started spreading into the villages. The new trend completely transformed the socio-economic life of the Garo people.

Impact of the process of urbanization has made vast change in the socio-economic atmosphere of the Garo society. Already it has been mentioned that one of the primary needs of livelihood transportation becomes improved in Garo Hill District which made the people adjusted with the outer improved societies. Besides, it made urbanization easier. Improved communication facilities made the people connected to the outer world and outer systems of livelihood methods, habits and trends. So, the people started using modern conception of utility and implementation, which made the process of urbanization fast-growing. The impact rapidly seen reflected in every aspect of the Garo society, i.e., in dress, cuisine, lifestyle etc. It made them change their old habits and methods of earning livelihood. It should be mentioned here that in accordance to the census of 1971, Tura and Jowai are two class III towns in Garo Hill District having 45,677 and 20,713 population respectively. Besides Tura and Jowai, a number of smaller towns and sub-urban habitations have been growing in the district with the course of time.

Urbanization's impact is seen in the field of habitation primarily. Occupational changing made some people live compact leaving their hereditary livelihood means, like agriculture. So, many of the Garo people have already left village and village life. Parallely they left old fashioned livelihood equipments. In social traditional sector, matrilineal Garo people become less and less matrilineal as the men become more and more advanced and independent. As instance, former chief minister of Meghalaya P A Sangma's father was D C Marak and his mother was C A Sangma. But P A Sangma's sons are Conrad Sangma and James Sangma and his daughter is Agatha Sangma. Urbanization brought this type of social customary changing in the Garo society.

Vast changing has been brought in the field of the Garos' livelihood occupation, agriculture. They have been following shifting cultivation method since the time immemorial, called Jhum cultivation. However, the process of urbanization made them bound gradually to lessen the method, as the process made them aware that shifting cultivation is harmful for Environmental legacy. Still there is a percentage of jhum cultivation there, but it is beyond estimate as especially banana cultivation has started by a number of Garo people and also they initiated some other kinds of permanent natured crops farming in their land, like orange, litchi, coconut, cashew nut, areca nut, black pepper, cotton, sal, bamboo etc. Floriculture is one area which is gaining popularity among the farmers. It is noticeable that the Garo farmers mainly adopted agro-forestry farming technique for their early income generation activity and livelihoods.

Conclusion :

Meghalaya has a very slow growth of urban population. The Garo Hill is not the exception. The slow growth of industrial sector is the main cause of the slow process of urbanization in the district Garo Hills. The Tura town is growing in the basis of tertiary rather than secondary sector. The district headquarter is becoming more and more diversified in its functions. This, of course, is a healthy trend. If more agro-based and forest-based industries are developed, the process of urbanization may get accelerated. It is, therefore, imperative to pay attention towards the

establishment of industrial units at the appropriate places in the Garo Hill district.

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Deconstructing the constructed Identities : A Socio feminist Reading on *The Vine of Desire*

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The behavioral patterns of the majority of Indian woman are constructed through social conditioning where they are conditioned by a power structure that dominates their life. As Butler points out the cultural association of mind creates distinction that maintains an implicit gender hierarchical which is conventionally “produced, maintained and rationalized” (Butler, 1990, p. 12). India holds long history of patriarchy, where men exercised authority over women in familial and societal contexts. These patriarchal dominance influenced the framing of women prioritizing family and responsibilities over the need of her ‘self’. As stated in Foucault’s theory of power exertion, power frames the ideology of right and wrong through literature and rules. A form of panopticon mechanism automatizes power and the other where the presence of ‘other’ is thoroughly recognized and maintained. Power “objectifies those on whom it is applied”(Foucault, 1977, p. 220).The myths of Sita and Savitri in an Indian societal context reaffirmed the patriarchal rule through gradual conditioning. Manu’s idea ‘Na Sthri Swathantramarhathi’ (Women never deserve freedom), is celebrated in this conditioned mind where women is celeb-

rated as Goddess, hiding the reality that these specifications target her position as ‘second sex’ who is to be protected. “Social discrimination produces in women moral and intellectual effects so profound that they appear to be caused by nature” (Beauvoir, 1972, p.18). The conditioned society normalizes the second state of women where the real desires of her unconscious are left unrepresented in the mainstream society. Her conditioned state as ‘other’, places her in an asymmetrical relationship with the self. This self/ subject duality creates a conflicted state in her where she is haunted with her desires which is restricted by her conscience conditioned through power. Quoting Freudian’s definitions, her unsatisfied and unrepresented desires are repressed to the Id (unconscious) and she is placed in a conflict between Ego and Id where she tries to satisfy her unconscious desires by rejecting the conditioned state. The conflict between the conditioned suppression and the desire for self assertion has been the theme of many writers who challenged the traditional subjectified roles of women. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s writings portray the struggles in challenging the conditioned life of women outside the threshold of

their confined space where their unrepresented desires are revealed. This paper intends to discuss how the confined characters in *The Vine of Desire* challenge their conditioned and suppressed state creating a space of their own, where their unrepresented desires are attained.

The Vine of Desire portrays the inner conflict of women who are caught between the rigid rules of tradition and their urge to escape from it. The two female protagonists, Sudha and Anju are torn within their professional interests as their domestic life rooted in demands never favors their desires. The characters are fixed in the imagined expectations of patriarchal thoughts and their struggles for independent space places them in an alienated state. The recollections of the two women echoes the toxic conditioning patriarchal society has inflicted upon them where they recapture their past as, “How we grow addicted to our tortures!” (Divakaruni, 2003, p. 57). The institution of marriage places the characters in demands of performing duties in accordance with the said expectations. The mechanical familial responsibilities place the characters as passive objects where they remained away from their real self. The demand to survive creates a shift in their conditioned thoughts where the characters replace themselves to a new place that favored their needs and interests. The shift transforms them from their state as passive agents in the first phase of their lives to active agents of their own selves. Sudha’s recollection of scrubbing the color of marriage from her forehead reflects her deep desire for freedom. She braved the rules of the new continent as “she wanted more in life than a man to take care of her” (Divakaruni, 2003, p. 129). From the

submissiveness to which she was pasted Sudha regenerates to a new woman who is capable of saying ‘no’. She feels herself relieved as her daughter in the new space will never get chained with demands and rules. “... In India this stubbornness would have been a disadvantage, something to be scolded- even beaten-out of a girl. But here she’s not sure... (Divakaruni, 2003, p. 130)”. The geographical dislocation to the new space and new social surroundings liberate her from the conditioned thoughts. She strongly keeps her daughter away from the conditioned framings to which she was once victimized to. She never longs for a return to her home land. “... I can’t go back to India, to the way I was. Helpless, dependent- I can’t love like that. I can’t bring up my daughter to think that is how a woman needs to live” (Divakaruni, 2003, p. 104). All the rules are different in America, and she knows none of them yet” (Divakaruni, 2003, p. 61)

Her deliberate rejection of social rules can be seen in her divorce, her dislocation to America and her sexual relationship with Sunil, her cousin Anju’s husband. Through her divorce, Sudha challenges the rules of the society which placed her in restrictions and demand. She tries to dislocate herself to a new space where she gets acquainted with the rules of a new world especially through Sara. She felt herself fixed in a “strange responsibility” (Divakaruni, 2003, p. 36). The new space makes her identify and realize her own desires

Sudha’s desire to gain the independent space is revealed when she rejects the demand of her family to abort her baby only because that it is a girl. Against the wishes of her mother-in-law she gives

birth to Dayita and divorces Ramesh, who never considered her desire. Her migration to new land uproots her thoughts not only from her ruined marriage, but also from the ruined laws rooted in expectations and demands of a society that favored patriarchal thoughts. The new rules in the new space teach her confidence to follow the call of her inner self by rejecting the conditioned thoughts to which she is ingrained to. Through her sexual relationship with Sunil she creates a new space free from societal judgments. She strives for a liberated space with more relations but she feels being caught in a “wounded self”(Divakaruni, 2003, p. 91), as she feels herself unsuccessful in satisfying her maternal instinct. She rejects Sunil’s proposal as she was inclined more towards an independent space. She couldn’t succumb her emotions before his desire and she says that his desire slashes her body like a soul. She couldn’t withhold herself completely from the conditioned thoughts of morality and immorality and her escape from Anju’s house is the result of these conflicting emotions. As Kate Millet observes, gender is “the sum total of the parents’, the peers’, and the culture’s notions of what is appropriate to each gender by way of temperament, character, interests, status, worth, gesture and expression” (Millett, 1971, p. 31). Sudha defines her past conditioned life as the product of many desires shaped by her mother, mother in law, husband and all who surrounded her. She was conditioned by the core demands of, “... family honor ... respect. Passion” (Divakaruni, 2003, p. 243). Though placed in a new space out from restricted conditioned duties she couldn’t attain an absolute escape from her past thoughts. Though she tries to alienate

herself from the past, the ruins of past haunts her. She recollects her state in the past as “... I never had a home, only delusions of belonging...”(Divakaruni, 2003, p. 290). She realises how her state as a women was targeted to the conditioned roles that never considered her will or desire.

Sudha’s life with Dayita in the new land places her in the space of new possibilities where she defines herself as new. But an absolute escape from her roots is not attained. She longs to go back to India, but is determined that she can make it a new land. She wishes herself to be in her roots without “... the weight of old memories”(Divakaruni, 2003, p.321). Liberating herself from the conditioned expectations she is determined not to depend on anyone again. Even though she acts according to her desire she couldn’t achieve an absolute escape from her conditioned framing. The societal conditioning to which she was subjected to in her life creates the framings of right and wrong which lies contrary to her desires. By eloping to Myra’s house she tries to escape from her own guilt created from the conditioned thoughts. Her urge to synchronize with her desire can be seen in her words “I have given up sacrificing myself for others. It leaves you with the worst hangover” (Divakaruni, 2003, p. 92). She tries to attain herself, by living not as an image, but as herself before the society. Sudha, in the first phase of her life is caught in the conditioned expectation where she is chained as an image. Her life in America introduces before her the new possibilities where she could satisfy her desires. She gradually shifts from the created image of society. Though the sudden cultural shift in the new land

confuses her at first, she adapts herself to the change. Sara's life teaches her the need to be independent economically, emotionally and physically. She realizes the need for maintaining her own bank account and she finds out her own ways to make it where through she tries to assert an independent space for herself.

The novel lays bare the intricacies of emotional pangs to which the characters are subjected to because of getting targeted as a domestic object. Anju the other female characters is also the product of social conditioning where even her emotions are controlled by the conditioned thoughts. Anju's hysteric state because of her son's death and Sudha's possessive attachment towards Dayita can be read as the effects of conditioned targeting. While Anju spends most of her time in college and creative writing, the traditional patriarchal thoughts in Sunil's mind couldn't resist questioning her. Anju's liberated self questions Sunil, "Why are you being so obsessively patriarchal?" (Divakaruni, 2003, p.158). She sarcastically comments on how an Indian woman is trained to be a martyr quoting the life of "...so many of our Indian heroines. Sita, Savitri, Damayanti. It's like they all trained at the same academy, got the same M.R.S degree... short of martyrs" (Divakaruni, 2003, p.160). Though trying to escape from the confinement of domestic space, she faces the challenges resulting from the conditioned framing of patriarchal judgments. "It is always like that, one rule for you, another for me. Why?" (Divakaruni, 2003, p. 70). Her resistance to the long subjectified state is seen when she announce, 'owed it to myself'. Anju's experience in the new world fills her with the expectations of her 'self' identity

where she longs for an escape from the domesticated status to which she was subjected to. Her journey from Calcutta to America replaces her from the framed identities of the societal needs to her 'self' identity where she explores the possibilities of new world and creates her own space apart from the stereotypical roles created by the society based on demands.

Anju's reversal from the stereotypical roles in her life can be seen in her decision in rejecting all life demands rooted in the objectified status of women. While Sunil considers Anju as a sexual object to satisfy his needs, Anju purposefully maintains a distance with him which results in disturbances in their relationship. She rejects the proposal of Sunil that one share of his salary will be deposited in their joint bank account. She builds her own space in her apartment and manages herself with the meager income that she gets from her job. She struggles to escape from the confinement of all emotional restrictions imposed on her through the institution of marriage which she realises as a social commitment. She teaches herself to be practical by battling with the world of struggle and loneliness.

Apart from the women characters Sudha and Anju who embrace the change, the narration also projects the elder generation of stereotypical women characters like Pishi, Nalini, and Sunil's mother who live not for themselves, but for the family. In contrast to the stereotypical wives and mothers who silently bear victimhood, Anju and Sudha exemplify change through their lives as independent survivors. The character Myra, the American wife of an Indian husband Trideep, in whose house Sudha goes for job, is the representative of women who judge her life away from

the rules of conditioned thoughts. Quoting Simon De Beauvoir in *The Second Sex*, marriage and motherhood are not happy experiences for women in a patriarchal society because it traditionally serves the interest of male. Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* states that men are not the absolute reason for the oppression of women, because some women accept inauthentic roles determined for them by patriarchal ideology. Pishi and Nalini are the characters who support patriarchal ideology, while Anju, Sudha and Myra are voices of new thought that announce change. Sudha's immigration to America can be read as an escape from her family which narrowed down her interest and desire. Her shift to the new land provided her the possibilities to explore the real self which remained chained in the created definitions of society. She alienates herself from all experiences of her past life and decides to move to an unknown land with Trideep's father where she can conceal her identity.

In order to forget the bitter experiences of her married life, Anju creates an imaginary world with Prem, her unborn son. All the oppressed desires of women characters portrayed turns fulfilled in the adopted land. The new land provides them with the possibilities of challenging the traditional roles assigned on them by the patriarchal power society, where they deconstruct the constructed definitions of society to endorse and experiences their real self.

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रसखान का काव्य-लोक बनाम लोक काव्य

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भक्ति और आस्था का प्राबल्य किसी सिद्ध व चैत्य पुरुष में ही पाये जाते हैं जो जन्मजात भी हो सकते हैं और किसी में देश, काल, समाज और पारिवारिक संरचना-संकल्पना से अनुप्राणित तो कभी परिवेश और परिस्थिति भी उत्तरदायी होते हैं। काल की गति में ऐसा ही क्षण आता है जब सैय्यद इब्राहिम रसखान भक्ति की अविरल स्रोतस्विनी प्रवाहित करते हैं तथा रच देते हैं आस्था का भाव लोक, विचारों की आध्यात्मिकता और कल्पना का वास्तविक क्षितिज। ऐसी कल्पनाशीलता में सगुण ब्रह्म का अद्वैत उभरकर सामने आता है जिससे अखिल मानवता संकल्पित होती और जाति-पंथ, राग-रहस्य आदि से ऊपर मानवीयता का उच्चादर्श।

हिन्दी अनुशीलन, जनवरी-मार्च तथा अप्रैल-जून 2021, अंक 1-2, वर्ष-63 के संवाद लेख में संपादक प्रो. नरेन्द्र मिश्र ध्यानाकृष्ट कराते हुए लिखते हैं- “हिन्दी साहित्य के इतिहास में सर्वाधिक मुस्लिम कवि भक्तिकाल में हुए। रज्जब, जायसी, रहीम और रसखान के बाद के हैं।”¹ निश्चित ही रसखान कृष्ण भक्त कवि हैं। वे भक्ति आंदोलन के बड़े और विशिष्ट कवि हैं। वे एकता के गायक और समरसता के साधक थे। यही उनकी भक्ति का सार था। अतएव इस महान देश को एक बनाए रखने के लिए भक्ति के अलावा कोई दूसरा मार्ग नहीं था। इसलिए रसखान कृष्णलीला का गायन करते हुए प्रेम, मानव-प्रेम की अलख जगाई और ऐसा लोक गढ़ा कि वह प्रेम काव्य

के इतिहास में अमर हो गया। भक्ति और प्रेम का ऐसा समन्वय कि नया काव्य लोक निर्मित हो जाता है तन्दतर ये रचनायें लोक काव्य की आधारभूमि बनीं। ऐसी एकता और समरसता का समाहार कर जीवन में मानव प्रेम, प्रकृति प्रेम को सर्वोपरि बनाया। यह उनकी लोक पक्षधरता है, प्रेमतत्व का औदात्य है।

भारतीय अध्यात्म प्रेरित सांस्कृतिक परम्परा में एक अध्याय इस्लाम का भी है। इस्लाम संत कवियों का आध्यात्मिक चिंतन भारतीय लोक को नये रूप में गढ़ता है यानि भारतीय सांस्कृतिक परम्परा को गतिशील और विकासमान बनाने में मुस्लिम कवियों का विशिष्ट योगदान रहा है। इसीलिए चिंतकों को कहना पड़ा कि- “भारतीय विचाराधारा की अध्यात्म प्रेरित सांस्कृतिक परम्परा निरन्तर गतिमान और विकासोन्मुख रही है।”²

निर्विवाद सत्य है कि रसखान मुस्लिम धर्मावलंबी होकर भी सगुण-साकार ब्रह्मावतार श्री कृष्ण की लीला लोक का परायण करते हुए अनुयायियों का मार्ग प्रशस्त किए और कहे कि-

“मानुष हौं तो वही रसखान बसौं मिलि

गोकुल गाँव के ग्वारन।

जो पसु हौं तो कहा बस मेरो चरौं नित नंद

को धेनु मंझारन।

पाहन हौं तो वही गिरि को जो धर्यौं छत्र

पुरन्दन धारन।

जो खग हौं तो बसेरो करौं मिलि कालिन्दी

कूल कदम्ब की डारन।”³

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यह प्रसंग संसार के एकीकरण का अनूठा प्रयास है इसलिए मौलिक तो है ही मार्मिक भी है। तब व्यवस्था सम्पन्न आध्यात्मिक अनुभूति उत्प्रेरित चिंतक डॉ. राधाकृष्णन को कहना पड़ा कि- “प्रकृति ने अनेक जातियाँ बनाई हैं, जिनकी भाषाएँ, धर्म और सामाजिक परम्परायें भिन्न हैं और उसने मनुष्य को यह काम सौंपा है कि वह मानव जगत् में व्यवस्था उत्पन्न करे और जीवन का ऐसा रास्ता खोज निकाले जिससे विभिन्न समूह आपसी मतभेदों को हल करने के लिए बल का प्रयोग किए बिना शांतिपूर्वक रह सकें।”⁴ जहां ऐसा भाव निहित होगा वहीं व्यक्ति सौहार्द्र और गौरव के साथ रह सकता है इसलिए रसखान कालिन्दी, कूल, कदम्ब के अनुप्रास में ऐसी लीला लोक का विधान किए हैं कि मनुष्य की इच्छा हरदम आपसी मतभेद समाप्त कर समरसता व शांतिपूर्ण ढंग से रहने को उत्कण्ठित है। “एक कोशिश यह भी होती है कि मानवीय संस्कृति में किसी प्रकार की चोट न पहुंचे और मानवता अमिट रहे, मानवता में नई चेतना आए। संतों और साहित्यकारों की वाणी यही चेतना लेकर आती है।”⁵

फिर जो एक बार उस लोक में आ जाता है वह कभी वापस जाने का नाम नहीं लेता बल्कि हर जीवन में अथवा हर जन्म उसी वैभवी लोक को प्राप्त करने की रट लगाता है। मनुष्य के अलावा इतर जीव भी उसी लीला लोक में जन्मने की अभिलाषा रखते हैं। यही प्रेम की अगमता है, अनंतता है, अलौकिकता है। प्रेम लोक में ऐसा सत्य आस्था का कारक बनता है, जिसे रसखान बड़े चाव से अपने इस दोहा छंद में निरूपित करते हैं-

**“प्रेम अगम अनुपम, अमित, सागर सरिस बखान।
जो आवत इहि ढिंग बहुरि, जात नहीं रसखानि।”⁶**

क्योंकि इसी में एकता, समरसता व समन्वय का भाव दिखाई देता है तथा समाज दृढ़ संकल्पित हो पाता है। लोक मर्यादा एवं भक्ति-भाव की अलौकिकता में प्रेम और जीवन पर्याय हो गए हैं बल्कि ईश्वर की साधना का अनुपम आलम्बन हो गए हैं। अतएव यह

कहना अतिशयोक्ति नहीं होगा कि रसखान की भक्ति साधना का वैशिष्ट्य नित्य एकरस व समरस की संकल्पना से आविर्भूत है। दृष्टव्य है उनकी भक्ति-साधना की अलौकिकता में -

**“अति सूक्ष्म, कोमल अतिहि, अति पतरो, अति दूरा
प्रेम कठिन सब तैं सदा, नित इकरस भरपूरा।”⁷**

इस सूक्ष्म और कठिन की सातत्यता सदा नेह की रीत से आप्लावित होता है इसलिए जीवन का प्रेममय और भक्तिमय स्वरूप कवि मर्यादा का साध्य बन जाता है। ऐसी दिव्य और सहज प्रेमानुभूति रसखान के संवेदनशील हृदय का वैशिष्ट्य है। अतएव जीवन के एकरस, समरस तथा समन्वय का बड़ा ही सटीक प्रमाण निम्न पंक्तियों में देखा जा सकता है-

**“इक अंगी बिनु कारनहिं, इकरस, सदा समान।
गनैं प्रियहिं सर्वस्व जो, सोई प्रेम प्रमान।”⁸**

इसलिए संसार के साहित्येतिहास में रसखान के काव्य-लोक या लोक-काव्य की मिसाल दी जाती है, यह कहते हुए-

**“धूरि भरे अति शोभित स्याम जू कैसी बनी
सिर सुन्दर चोटी।
खेलत खात फिरैं अंगना पग पैजनियां कटि
पीरी कछौटी।
वा छवि को रसखान विलोकति वारत काम
कला निधि कोटि।
काग के भाग बड़े सजनि हरि हाथ से ले गयो
माखन रोटी।”⁹**

अनुभूति का ऐसा मार्मिक संसार इनके लोक काव्य की मौलिकता तो है ही अलौकिकता का भी पर्याय बना हुआ है। लोक मर्यादा की ऐसी अलौकिकता एवं आध्यात्मिकता से पाठक के मानस में आस्था का गहरा लोक आलोकित होता है जिसे अपने कंठ में निर्मल भाव से गुनगुनाता है ‘प्रेम अगम अनुपम, अमित, सागर सरिस बखान।’ इस तरह लोक भावों को पूरे सौन्दर्य के साथ सिरजते हैं जिससे स्रोता व पाठक के मन में भक्ति-आस्था का तज्जन्य भाव

प्रस्फुटित होता है। देखिए -

“गाव गुनी गनिका गंधर्व, औ सारद, सेस,
सबै गुन गावत।

नाम अनंत, गनंत, गनेस ज्यौं, ब्रह्मा,
त्रिलोचन पार न पावत।

जोगी जती तपसी अरु सिद्ध, निरन्तर जाहि
समाधि लगावत।

ताहि अहीर की छोहरियां छछिया-भरि छाछ
पै नाच नचावत।”¹⁰

लोक लीला का ऐसा कल्पना लोक जहां सब कुछ शाश्वत और सत्य है। यह साध अखिल समाज के लिए युगान्तकारी संदेश हैं क्योंकि जरा-सी वस्तु के लिए श्रीहरि नृत्य करते दिखाई देते हैं। यह ‘नृत्य’ लोक लीला का वैभवी पुट है जिससे नाच-नाच में रास का भाव उत्पन्न होता है।

फिर उनके काव्य लोक में एक पारिवारिक संकल्पना दिखाई देती है जिसमें भक्ति और लीला की विपुलता है। निश्चित ही रसखान इसके आदर्श कवि तो हैं ही सातत्य व्यक्तित्व भी हैं। इसीलिए विश्व मानवता को संदेश देते हुए कहे कि-

“लाल की लाज छटी ब्रज लोग अनंदित नंद
बढ़्यौ अन्हावत ।

चाइन चारू बधाइन लै चहुं और कुटुम्ब
अघात न यावत।

नाचत बाल बड़े रसखान छके हित काहू के
लाज न आवत।

तैसोई मात पिताउ लह्यौ उलह्यो कुलकी कुल
ही पहिरावत।”¹¹

ऐसा ही आध्यात्मिक लोक अनेकानेक शब्द विधानों से आपूरित है जिसका आदर्श उदाहरण इन पंक्तियों में देखा जा सकता है-

“अति लोक की लाज समूह मैं छोरि कै राखि
थकी बहुसंकट सों।

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पल में कुलकानि की मेड़ नखी नहिं रोकी
रुकी पल के पट सों।।

रसखानि सु केतो उचाटि रही उचटी न
संकोच की औचट सों।

अलि कोटि कियौ हटकी न रही अटकी
अंखियां लटकी लट सों।”¹²

इस संदर्भ में श्री अरविंद का आध्यात्मिक मत सिद्ध सम्मत जान पड़ता है- “हृदयगत भाव जितना अधिक गहरा होगा, भक्ति जितनी अधिक तीव्र होगी, उतनी ही अधिक सिद्धि और रूपान्तर की शक्ति उत्पन्न होगी।”¹³ निश्चित की उनके काव्य लोक का सत्य परकीया नायिकाओं को विशिष्ट स्थान देने में है। उन्हें ही नययिका की पदवी से विभूषित किया गया है। समाज परकीया को इस स्थान के योग्य नहीं मानता किन्तु रसखान ने परकीया नायिका (पर पुरुष से प्रीति करे उसे परकीया कहते हैं- जैसे गोपियां) को स्थान दिलाया। यह लोक कवि-काव्य लोक के ही बूते की बात है। इनके काव्य की यह मौलिक अनुकृति/ अनुभूति है। रसखान उस नायिका का चित्र उकेरे जिसे लोक अपनी दृष्टि से देखता है और रसास्वादन करता है-

“काह कहुं सजनी संग की रजनी नित बीतै
मुकुन्द को हेरी।

आवन रोज कहै मन भावन आवन की न
कबों करी फेरी।

सौतन भाग बढ़्यौ ब्रज मैं जिन लूटत है निसि
रंग घनेरी।

मो रसखानि लिखी विधना मन मारि कै आपु
बनी हौं अहेरी।”¹⁴

लोक की प्रेमाभिव्यंजना को भलीभांति जानने वाला ही ऐसा लिख सकता है अथवा चैत्य पुरुष। रसखान इसी चेतना के साथक थे इसलिए लिखा कि-

“प्रेम मरम जानै बिना, मरिऊऊ जीवत नाहिं।”¹⁵

रसखान विषय वैविध्य और अभिव्यंजकता के कवि हैं इसलिए उनका काव्य-लोक, लोक-काव्य

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बन प्रेममत्त्व की व्यंजना कराता है। रामरतन भटनागर 'इस्लामी काव्य समीक्षा' शीर्षक निबंध में चिंतन करते हुए लिखते हैं कि- "विषय और अभिव्यंजना के संबंध में यह दृष्टि जिसमें सौन्दर्य को बाहर से जुड़ी वस्तु मान लिया जाता है, जिसमें कलाकारिता की प्रधानता है, मौलिकता या नवीनता का यही अर्थ लेती है।"¹⁶ इसी परिप्रेक्ष्य में भक्तिकाल के अध्येताओं का मत है कि- "धर्म एक ऐसा विषय रहा है जिस पर लिखने में बड़े-बड़े लेखकों ने संकोच किया है। इस विषय पर संतों ने पहली बार काव्य के माध्यम से आलोचना की। सभी मतों, धर्मों के संत कवियों ने संकीर्णता से ऊपर उठकर मानव धर्म की स्थापना दी।"¹⁷

इसलिए रसखान का काव्य-लोक अद्भुत सौन्दर्य-रहस्य को उद्घाटित करता है-

**"गोरज बिराजै भाल लहलही बनमालए
आगै गैया पाछै ग्वाल गावै मृदु तान री।"¹⁸**

इस तरह रसखान के काव्य लोक में मत नहीं महत् की संकल्पना है, प्रेम और जीवन की संकल्पना है, लोक और मर्यादा की संकल्पना है। इसलिए लोक मन प्रेम-भक्ति का वैराग्य लिए आशा-आस्था से अनुप्रेरित है। रसखान का काव्य लोक जीवन के उत्कट प्रेम का काव्य है इसलिए वह एक साथ लोक काव्य और प्रेम काव्य बन सका है। अपने काव्य लोक में प्रेम काव्य का वह विराट संसार रचते हैं जो अगम, अनुपम, अमित और अद्भुत है। अस्तु, रसखान का लोक काव्य प्रेम-भक्ति की अनुरंजना कराता हुआ आस्था और विश्वास का लोक रच देता है। इसलिए इनका काव्य-लोक, लोक काव्य का पर्याय बन जाता है।

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A Journey Through Kaleidoscope of Myth and Culture in the Select Novels of Amitav Ghosh

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Introduction :

Amitav Ghosh's novels are celebrated for their intricate narratives that weave together historical facts, cultural insights, and mythological themes. Ghosh's storytelling is not merely an artistic endeavour but a scholarly engagement with the cultural and historical contexts of the regions he portrays. His works often transcend the boundaries of time and space, drawing connections between disparate historical events and contemporary issues. This article aims to explore how Ghosh employs myths and cultural narratives to address themes of identity, colonialism and human endurance.

Literature Review :

Several scholars have examined the role of myth and culture in Ghosh's novels. According to Supriya Chaudhuri (2008), Ghosh's use of myth serves as a narrative strategy to explore cultural identity and historical continuity (p. 27). Priyamvada Gopal (2009) argues that Ghosh's narratives deconstruct colonial histories by embedding them within mythological frameworks, thereby offering a counter-

narrative to dominant historical discourses (p. 89). In *The Hungry Tide*, for instance, Ghosh's invocation of the Bon Bibi myth highlights the cultural syncretism of the Sundarbans (Saha, 2010, p. 112). These studies underscore the significance of myth in Ghosh's works but do not fully explore the breadth of its implications across his oeuvre.

Methodology :

This study employs a qualitative approach, analysing selected novels of Amitav Ghosh through close reading and textual analysis. The novels chosen for this study include *The Shadow Lines*, *The Calcutta Chromosome*, *The Hungry Tide*, and *The Ibis Trilogy*. These texts are examined for their thematic concerns, narrative techniques, and the use of myth and culture. Textual evidence is drawn from these novels to support the analysis, with citations provided for specific passages. This methodology allows for a comprehensive understanding of how Ghosh uses myth and culture to construct his narratives and critique historical and contemporary issues.

Myth as a Cultural Critique :

In *The Shadow Lines* (1988), Ghosh uses myth to critique cultural and national identities. The novel's fragmented narrative mirrors the fragmented nature of memory and history. Ghosh employs the myth of Tridib's death as a symbolic representation of the arbitrary and violent nature of national boundaries. As Ila states, "Every word I spoke was a lie" (Ghosh, 1988, p. 56), highlighting the disjunction between personal identity and national history. In *The Shadow Lines*, Ghosh uses myth to blur the boundaries between past and present, reality and imagination. The novel's exploration of memory and identity is deeply intertwined with mythological references, which serve to question and redefine cultural and national boundaries. For example, the recurrent references to the myth of the partition and the "shadow lines" that divide nations highlight the arbitrary nature of these divisions (Ghosh, 1988, p. 55).

The Interplay of History and Myth :

The Calcutta Chromosome (1995) presents a unique blend of science fiction and historical narrative, using myth to explore the boundaries of knowledge and history. The novel revolves around the myth of Murugan and the Calcutta Chromosome, a mystical entity that offers immortality. Ghosh's narrative suggests that history is not a linear progression but a series of interconnected myths and stories. As Murugan asserts, "Nothing in this world is a coincidence" (Ghosh, 1995, p. 102), emphasizing the cyclical nature of history and myth. *The Calcutta Chromosome* employs myth to explore themes of knowledge, science and cultural identity. Ghosh integrates elements of

Indian mythology with the history of scientific discoveries, creating a narrative that challenges Western notions of knowledge and progress. The myth of the eternal quest for knowledge, represented by characters like Murugan, reflects the blending of scientific pursuit with cultural and spiritual dimensions (Ghosh, 1995, p. 132).

Cultural Syncretism and Identity :

The Hungry Tide (2004) delves into the cultural syncretism of the Sundarbans, using the myth of Bon Bibi as a central motif. Bon Bibi, a guardian deity worshipped by both Hindus and Muslims, symbolizes the cultural harmony and resilience of the Sundarbans inhabitants. Ghosh uses this myth to highlight the region's unique cultural identity. As Fakir chants, "Bon Bibi, protect us" (Ghosh, 2004, p. 78), the myth becomes a powerful narrative device that underscores the community's connection to their environment and heritage. In *The Hungry Tide*, Ghosh draws on local myths and cultural practices to highlight the relationship between humans and the natural environment. The myth of the Bon Bibi, a forest goddess who protects the Sundarbans, serves as a cultural anchor for the characters' interactions with their environment. This myth underscores the symbiotic relationship between the community and the ecosystem, emphasizing the cultural significance of environmental conservation (Ghosh, 2004, p. 201).

Myth and Colonialism :

In *The Ibis Trilogy* (*Sea of Poppies* [2008], *River of Smoke* [2011], and *Flood of Fire* [2015]), Ghosh uses myth to critique colonialism and its impact on cultural identities. The trilogy traces the

lives of characters from diverse backgrounds brought together by the opium trade. The myth of the Ibis, a ship that symbolizes both bondage and liberation, serves as a metaphor for the colonial experience. As Neel remarks, “The Ibis is not just a ship, it’s a world” (Ghosh, 2008, p. 345), encapsulating the transformative and destructive power of colonialism.

Human Resilience in Myth :

Across Ghosh’s novels, myth serves as a testament to human resilience. The characters’ reliance on myths reflects their struggle for survival and identity. In *The Hungry Tide*, Piya’s journey is intertwined with the myth of the Sundarbans, representing her quest for understanding and belonging. Similarly, in *The Ibis Trilogy*, the characters’ stories are woven into the larger myth of the Ibis, highlighting their resilience in the face of adversity.

Narrative Structure :

Amitav Ghosh’s narrative structure is a distinctive feature of his storytelling, often characterized by non-linear timelines and fragmented storytelling. This technique is particularly evident in *The Shadow Lines*, where the narrative oscillates between different time periods and perspectives. The novel’s fragmented structure mirrors the fragmented nature of history and memory, emphasizing the subjective nature of historical narratives. By doing so, Ghosh challenges the notion of a singular, objective history, highlighting how personal and collective memories are interwoven.

In *The Shadow Lines*, for example, the story of Tridib’s death is recounted multiple times from different perspectives, each time revealing new details and

nuances. This narrative fragmentation reflects the idea that history is not a fixed sequence of events but a mosaic of individual experiences and memories. As the narrator reflects, “Every word I spoke was a lie” (Ghosh, 1988, p. 56), suggesting the elusive and often contradictory nature of memory and history. This approach not only engages the reader in piecing together the narrative but also underscores the complex and multifaceted nature of historical truth.

Myth as Metaphor :

In Ghosh’s novels, myths serve as powerful metaphors for broader historical and social processes. Myths are not merely cultural artifacts but are imbued with contemporary significance and used to explore and critique societal issues. In *The Calcutta Chromosome*, the myth of the eponymous chromosome represents the quest for knowledge and the mysteries of human existence. The novel intertwines this myth with the historical narrative of Sir Ronald Ross’s discovery of the malaria parasite, suggesting that scientific progress is as much about myth and imagination as it is about empirical evidence.

Ghosh uses the myth of the Calcutta Chromosome to comment on the nature of scientific discovery and its intersection with cultural beliefs. As Murugan asserts, “Nothing in this world is a coincidence” (Ghosh, 1995, p. 102), the novel blurs the boundaries between science and mythology, suggesting that our understanding of reality is shaped by both rationality and imagination. This metaphorical use of myth challenges the conventional dichotomy between science and myth, emphasizing their interconnectedness in shaping human knowledge.

Cultural Hybridity :

Ghosh's depiction of cultural syncretism in his novels challenges the notion of fixed cultural identities, highlighting the fluid and hybrid nature of culture. In *The Hungry Tide*, the Sundarbans region is portrayed as a melting pot of diverse cultural influences, where the myth of Bon Bibi, a guardian deity worshipped by both Hindus and Muslims, epitomizes this cultural hybridity. The myth of Bon Bibi serves as a unifying force, transcending religious and cultural boundaries and reflecting the region's unique cultural identity.

This cultural syncretism is illustrated through the character of Fakir, who embodies the harmonious coexistence of different cultural traditions. As he chants, "Bon Bibi, protect us" (Ghosh, 2004, p. 78), the myth becomes a living tradition that shapes the community's way of life. Ghosh's portrayal of such hybrid cultural practices underscores the fluidity of cultural identities and challenges the rigid categorizations often imposed by colonial and nationalist discourses.

Colonial Critique :

Amitav Ghosh's novels use myth to critique colonialism and its impact on cultural identities and histories. In *The Ibis Trilogy* (*Sea of Poppies*, *River of Smoke*, and *Flood of Fire*), the myth of the Ibis ship serves as a powerful symbol of colonialism's dual nature—both oppressive and transformative. The Ibis, initially a symbol of bondage for indentured labourers, becomes a vessel of liberation and new beginnings.

The trilogy explores the lives of characters from diverse backgrounds brought together by the opium trade, high-

lighting the interconnectedness of global histories. The myth of the Ibis, as Neel remarks, "The Ibis is not just a ship, it's a world" (Ghosh, 2008, p. 345), encapsulates the complexities of colonialism, which simultaneously destroys and reshapes cultural identities. Ghosh's use of myth in this context reveals the multifaceted impact of colonialism, challenging simplistic narratives of colonial domination and resistance.

Human Condition :

Myths in Ghosh's novels reflect the universal human condition, emphasizing themes of survival, identity, and resilience. Across his works, characters rely on myths to make sense of their experiences and navigate the challenges they face. In *The Hungry Tide*, Piya's journey through the Sundarbans is intertwined with the myth of the region, representing her quest for understanding and belonging. The myth of Bon Bibi provides a framework for interpreting the dangers and mysteries of the Sundarbans, offering both protection and meaning.

Similarly, in *The Ibis Trilogy*, the characters' stories are woven into the larger myth of the Ibis, highlighting their resilience in the face of adversity. The myth of the Ibis becomes a source of hope and strength, enabling characters to endure the hardships of their journey. Ghosh's portrayal of myth as a coping mechanism and source of resilience underscores the enduring relevance of myths in shaping human experiences and identities.

Conclusion :

Amitav Ghosh's novels offer a profound exploration of the interplay between myth and culture. Through his narrative techniques and thematic concerns, Ghosh

uses myth to critique historical and contemporary issues, preserve cultural heritage, and explore the human condition. His works challenge readers to reconsider the boundaries between history and myth, and to appreciate the rich tapestry of cultural identities that shape our world. By intertwining myth with historical and cultural narratives, Ghosh creates a multifaceted literary landscape that invites readers to engage with the complexities of identity, memory, and resilience.

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Badal Sircar's *Pagla Ghoda* : The Dynamics and Complexities Between Men and Women

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Introduction and A cursory Glance of the Play :

The famous Bengali rhyme from which the *Pagla Ghoda*'s leitmotif originates, portrays the wild or mad horse as an untamed force that is beautiful but terrifying in its unbridled power. This is the energy that the Woman who has never experienced passion calls up again and again. The careful, cautious masculine characteristics who are afraid to take chances for fear of social rejection are quite different from this *Pagla Ghoda*. (Katyal, 2015).

The play is piercingly sweet and poignant love story that depicts harsh realities of contemporary society where we are living in. Its exploration of social issues has also sparked important conversations about the role of theatre in addressing societal problems (Bose, 2018). We all are having some or other kind of wild horses within us which we fail to acknowledge. And these wild horses at times make us to move in the direction which we are unable to comprehend. Sometimes we don't come to terms with the realities without knowing of serious consequences that it may cause but it

happens inadvertently and unknowingly which finally lead us to a secluded territory where it becomes a curse to live with such self chosen hydra headed monstrous realities. The play's structure is non-linear, employing a fragmented narrative to reflect the fractured nature of the protagonist's mind and, by extension, the fractured nature of society (Ghosh, 2015).

The playwright has beautifully blended reality and fantasy that has made it a surreal in nature and makes it feel what is plausible is not there and what is not plausible is in existence (Mukherjee, 2020). The turmoil, turbulence and inner conflicts of all the four characters come to the forth.

Dynamics and Complexities of Relationships :

In the Story of Shashi and Malti :

Profession of Shashi : Govt. Postmaster, **Age :** 44 approx, although he was married but his wife had left him. Later on he got to know that he was married off secretly to some other guy.

Shashi: Got to know that stealthily was married off. (Sarkar, 2014, p. 53-54).

Nature : Coward, self conscious, friendly in nature, dealing everyone with courtesy.

Shashi, a simple and decent man of a middle class, loves Malti but Malti is scheduled to marry Pradeep, childhood buddy and cousin of Shashi. She begs him to wed her, calling Pradip a beast for whom she can never care for, and even showing him proof of her physical abuse. Shashi sends her back to her misery because he does not want any kind of social disagreement. He is also not in favour of making his image malign in front of the society by accepting a married girl of his own cousin. During their multi confrontation, she questions :

Malti : Okay. Will depart. Earlier too you threatened to depart and had left. I had proceeded to the path you had told me too. You had always triumphed-always.

Shashi? Triumphed?

Malti : Why, haven't you always won? Haven't you?

Shashi : What victory? Whose victory?

Malti : Yours, whose else. You have always won whenever you have fought with yourself. You have got so much power that you won. You never broke, shattered, or blew away. You always won. You haven't tasted what defeat is. (sobbingly)

Okay i will leave. I very well knew that you will tell me to leave. You can't deprive yourself of the pleasure of your triumph. (Sarkar , 2014, p. 40).

Malti : Know. Very well know. Pradip is your friend, your brother, your paternal cousin. With him you spent since childhood... Know... Very well know... Everything I know.... (screams) Only for this you will separate me from you.... Only for this you won't marry me? For Pradip only?.... What if, without Pradip? If there have been no marriage negotiation with him before, then?.... Even then you will.....? (Sarkar, 2014, p. 49).

The conversation goes on between Malti and Shashi, Malti raises the question that you are deserting me for the simple reason that you won't be able to face Pradip. I am not able to realise the fact that you are disowning me simply because of that person and for me and my unflinching love you have no place. Shashi responded thus:

Shashi: (in a firm voice) I won't be able to face myself not Pradip. I won't be able to happy neither make you happy by tying the nuptial knot in such a way.

Malti : Whether you marry me or not, in no way I will be able to marry Pradip. Even then you will lose?

Shashi : Yes, even then.

Malti : Why?

Shashi : Becuse I won't be able to forget that for sake of me you have destroyed the life of Pradip. (Sarkar, 2014, p. 49-50)

After hearing Shashi's response, Malti collapses internally and accepts her defeat forever. "She returns to her abusive,

loveless situation but kills herself soon after". (Katyal 205- 206). And with these dialogues of Shashi, here is the end of the first act:

Shashi : None of you know? I know. Seeing as a duty you entrust the girl to me and within a year that girl will burn herself after sprinkling oil on her body. Then we will accompany her burnt body during the funeral procession. And we cremate her like this girl in the crematorium. (Sarkar, 2014, p. 69).

In the Story of Himadri and Mili :

Himadri's Profession : Private Tutor,
Age: approx 30, unmarried.

Nature : Stubborn, Idealist, suffers from inferiority complex

This is the second story of the couple Himadri and Mili that the playwright has attempted to rewrite. Mili and Himadri come from different backgrounds. Himadri is the youngest of the male characters and a private tutor teaches the brother of Mili at her home. Mili comes from a very affluent family. Belonging to a prosperous and rich family Mili was very much influenced by western culture and driving, swimming, dancing, drinking, late night parties all were sort of daily routine to her. Once while late night spree she consumes alcohol where coincidentally she had an encounter with Himadri. He was furious and gave her a dressing down. She innocently promises to stop drinking but wanted sometime. This led to a conversation between them:

Mili : Himadri. I know... I know you... But not able to do all the time. The society in which I grew, saw

these people since childhood, with whom I spent most of the time....

Himadri : Why are you telling these things to me, Miss Roy? I teach your brother, If want to tell anything regarding that then....or if I had made any lapses there in, then... say.

Mili : You can't even bear my ordinary fault, why? Daddy is a big shot, this is my big fault, isn't it? (Sarkar, 2014, p. 61).

Born and brought up in a middle class family, Himadri was bound by his limitations, culture and ideologies. With these things in mind, he decides not to offer tuition to Mili's brother and told her that I am leaving your residence. All her begging, pleas and request fell on deaf ear and did not budge. Mili was shattered and asked him to give his whereabouts but to no avail. Love sick and broken, she drove a car recklessly in inebriated condition, hits a tree and meets with an accident and succumb to her injuries.

Himadri : How much people know about anyone? Do you know what it is which people infer as a strength of heart? Obstinacy-the obstinacy of a stubborn man. No body knows about it as much as I know. (Sarkar, 2014, p. 33)

The tragic story of Mili and Himadri very vividly portrays and brings to the forth the cultural, social and ideological differences of the characters and sends out a strong message that this may lead to a fatal end, where the characters may feel like driven with guilt and remorse and torn

between the realities and imagination. Though love should transcend all boundaries, cross all the hurdles and overcoming all the social inequalities of life, lead a way showing to the world that love is supreme and platonic and it can't be extinguished but in sharp contrast the story ruthlessly eliminates the love itself and not the social setup.

Character of Satu :

Profession: Contractor, **Age:** 51, unmarried.

Nature : Straightforward, friendly, physically strong, large hearted, vagabond, low image conscious

Background : Travel to and fro after leaving home since childhood *I had left home at the tender age of 15 only. Since then have been in no contact with home ... In between sometime night spends in well adorned rooms. It incurs much expenditure but that is the place to live in.* (Sarkar, 2014, p. 51-52).

Philosophy of not getting married:

He shares this feeling to Kartik (as mentioned below) but there seems to be a complete transformation in his concept of marriage since Lachhmi comes in his life.

Kartik : Did the wish to get married never arise?

Satu : Why wish? What if I get what people get after marriage? Not only so, if I get the better of others then..... (Sarkar, 2014, p. 37).

The Untold Story of Satu and Lachhmi:

A contractor by profession, Satu is eldest of all the four male characters, a fifty one year old man who doesn't believe in the concept of marriage as what is the

use of marriage if the thing (the lust) can be had without getting married. An extravagant man in nature, he visits different places related to his work and once rescued a girl named Lachhmi from human trafficking when she was about to be sold to some brothel but doesn't give her shelter thinking about the societal setup and gets afraid of being dubbed to be seen with dubious eyes nonetheless, he manages to place Lachhmi at some other contractor's home but she is very badly exploited there. Lachhmi very often requests Satu to allow her to live his house, to which Satu blatantly refuses too, citing the same stereotypical societal setup. Once Lachhmi visits his house at night in the late hours and pleads him to let her live in his house but Satu was adamant. Mentioned here is the conversation between them :

Lachhmi: (in a broken unintelligible voice) can't stay there anymore, Babuji... Babu ji please keep me with yourself.

Satu : If it were possible then could I have sent you there?... How many times I have told you that by giving a shelter my business will come to a standstill. Will fail to get even a single contract. The how will bread and butter be managed? And how will even feed you too?

Lachhmi: Beg you to keep me with you.
Lachhmi:

Satu: Everyone will ask in a suspected manner. How will I be able answer them?... What people will think about me, say? It will affect my business too.

Lachhmi: Don't throw me out Babuji. Let me be with you Babuji

Satu : That is the place for you Lachhmi. They are nice people and wealthy too. Madhav Babu is a big contractor. It would be good for you Lachhmi staying there.

Lachhmi: Why are you keeping me at bay Babuji?

Satu : Go, return to your refuge. Go. (Sarkar, 2014, p. 103-106)

Finally she was once again fell prey to the machinations of human trafficking and at last she meets her tragic end. Once while he was at a brothel, he had some moaning voice of a female from an adjacent room who was reeling in pain and coughing profusely coupled with sympathy and curiosity he went to the room and found that the woman was none other than Lachhmi, who had just breathed her last. Her pet dog Bhulua was keeping a watch on her body and was not letting in anyone come near her. Satu shooed the dog away, take her body in his control and readied to perform her last rite at the crematorium when the question cropped up as to who would lit the pyre. Even this authority was given to him and he too accepted this and thought that he, in fact the right person to be given this responsibility.

The passing of Lachhmi left Satu with several piercing questions that remains haunting him. He is not able to comprehend as to what was his major fault, was it rescuing Lachhmi from human trafficking in the first place, or his strong refusal to not give her refuge in his house, or was it his decision to hand over Lachhmi to Madhav Babu? Bothered by all these haunting

questions, he is a man left with nothing but only guilt and remorse.

The Story of Kartik and the Unnamed Girl :

Kartik's Profession : Compounder,
Age : 49, unmarried.

Nature : Intelligent and witty, mature, resolute, cool and calm

The last story appearing before the audience is that of Kartik and an unnamed girl. Kartik is a compounder by profession who works under the supervision of a village medical practitioner and prescribes medicines too to the villagers at times. Just for the sake of time pass, he narrates a story of an aged man who is besotted to a girl much younger than him. Even he saw that girl growing to a woman but could not muster up courage to express his love. That aged man was committed wholeheartedly to that girl but could not ever express his yearning for that girl. Since the girl was quite young, she was not able to understand or gauge his spirited feeling for her. As the play proceeds we get to know that the devoted man was none other than the storyteller himself i.e. compounder Kartik and that unnamed girl in the story is none other than the girl who is being lit under the funeral pyre. When on the stage there is only Shashi and Kartik then Shashi reportedly asks the cause of the death of the girl.

Sashi : How did this girl die? — do you know?

Kartik : yes

Sashi : (Taking a pause) how?

Kartik : due to stopping of breath.

Sashi : (Taking a pause) by hanging herself?

Kartik : yes.
Sashi : How did you get to know?
Kartik : The doctor declared
Sashi : The doctor didn't give a share?
Kartik : had given.
Sashi : (Taking a pause) you didn't take?
Kartik : (Taking a pause) No. (Sarkar, 2014, p. 112).

The girl was married to a distant place but her marriage was a disaster and one day she finally managed to escape from her in-laws house. He met her after the gap of 7 years. The audience get to know later that the girl had even gone to Kartik to ask for poison, as she no longer wanted to live. The compounder asks the girl the reason to end her life. The girl reveals that her entire life was spent without getting the much desired love. Neither anyone loved her nor she could feel that elusive desire. Thus she wants to bring an end to her loveless life. But Kartik tries to persuade her to believe in love and life and reiterates that everything is possible in being alive. Some parts of the conversation between Kartik and the girl is being mentioned here:

Kartik : Will you give me some more time?
Girl : Time? Why?
Kartik : So that I could make you understand. Could make a believe.
Girl : (nodding head slowly) then it won't.
Kartik : After that you may do whatever you like. I could give you even poison, if you want to.

Girl : Really.
Kartik : Yes, I will. Give me seven days. Come at this very time, after seven days. If I failed to make you believe that day, I will give you whatever you want.
Girl : Done?
Kartik : Done. (Sarkar, 2014, p. 116).

The week does come after seven days but the girl doesn't and Kartik comes to know that the girl ended her life by hanging herself. Hearing this news he is overcome by guilt and thinks alas I could have revealed my feelings. Besides, he feels regret that I will no longer be able to express my feelings forever. And the girl's death also took place without even realising that she rekindle the flame of love in anyone's heart. Thus the play proceeds towards the end and only Kartik left alone on the stage. He has brought with him a bottle of poison which his friends were unknown to. He uncorks the bottle of poison and thinks of drinking it. But at the spur of the moment the words given to the girl "that everything is possible in being alive" strikes him and he loses the wish to end his life at the opportune time. The play comes to an end here with a positive note, and conveys the message that love is sublime and platonic with a power to rekindle the flame in any craving heart. The play unfolds the truth that life is precious and to be alive and kicking is more important than death.

Conclusion :

The portrayal of all four male characters are enmeshed in exploitative mindset who don't have the guts, grits and gumption to challenge the social order and seem to be devoid of any feeling of inner

consciousness. With their dead souls they cut a sorry picture of the males who are filled calculative mindset without any emotional attachment. They even failed to keep pace with the love that came their way, and just only succumbing to the societal structures and status quo, they lost their love in the process. The male characters appear to be frightened and cowardly in nature who failed to take the risk when it matters most, in contrast the female characters are ore straight forward, bold and devoted to love life. The play portrays the women to be fearless and bold who are ready to face any eventuality when it comes to realising their goals and fulfilling their wishes, come what may. This portrays these women to be tough in nature but soft by heart. The play makes it crystal clear that the male characters in the play seems to be sailing through a soft pitch who fumbles and shy away to take bull by the horn when its required, their attitude simply reflect that to fall in love is easy but to make it successful is very difficult. They seem to be escapist in nature. Whereas

on the other hand and in sharp contrast the female characters make no bones to express their love nor fail to sacrifice their life for the sake of fulfilling their love.

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आधुनिक हिन्दी नाटकों पर महाभारत का प्रभाव

डॉ. सुवर्णा पाण्डेय

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भारतीय साहित्य का मूल उद्गम और प्रेरणास्रोत भारतीय वाङ्मय है। विभिन्न कालखण्डों में भिन्न-भिन्न तरह से भारतीय वाङ्मय का विस्तार होता रहा है। वाङ्मय के इस विस्तार में भारतीय साहित्य का अमूल्य योगदान है। भारत की सभी भाषाओं में भारतीय वाङ्मय के आधार पर स्तंभ ग्रन्थ 'रामायण' और 'महाभारत' की ही अनुगूँज सुनाई देती है। संस्कृत, तमिल, तेलुगू, कन्नड़, पंजाबी, उड़िया, असमिया, बंगाली, पालि, प्राकृत, अपभ्रंश से होते हुए हिन्दी साहित्य तक यह परंपरा अविच्छिन्न रूप से प्रवाहित होती रही है।

आधुनिक युग में विचारों की नयी श्रृंखला ने साहित्य के एक नये खण्ड को जन्म दिया। जिसे गद्य के नाम से जाना गया। गद्य ने अपने लिए एक नयी भाषा का चुनाव किया। जो कि उसके प्रसार के लिए सर्वाधिक उपयुक्त प्रतीत हुआ। इसी भाषा को खड़ी बोली की संज्ञा दी गयी। खड़ी बोली में विचारों के आदान-प्रदान की प्रक्रिया में सरलता प्राप्त हुई।

आधुनिक हिन्दी साहित्य में गद्य-खण्ड का आविर्भाव नाटकों से माना जाता है। आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल का मानना है कि "विलक्षण बात यह है कि आधुनिक गद्य साहित्य की परम्परा का प्रवर्तन नाटकों से हुआ।" आचार्य शुक्ल का यह कथन गद्य-खण्ड के अन्तर्गत नाटकों की महत्ता को प्रतिपादित करता है।

गद्य के अन्तर्गत नाटक के अलावा कहानी उपन्यास, निबन्ध, आलोचना, संस्मरण, रिपोर्ताज आदि विधाओं का भी जन्म हुआ। इन विधाओं में हमारी कल्पना शक्ति ने विचारों की अवलम्ब ग्रहण किया। अब साहित्य आदर्श से नग्न यथार्थ की ओर अग्रसर हुआ। यथार्थ के धरातल पर प्रतिष्ठित गद्य साहित्य जन-सामान्य का पक्ष प्रबलता से लिया।

नाटक श्रव्य एवं दृश्य होने के कारण आम-जनमानस में सर्वाधिक लोकप्रिय हुआ। गद्य की अन्य विधाओं में नाटक अपनी उपादेयता व प्रासंगिकता दोनों में वृद्धि करता रहा है।

आधुनिक हिन्दी साहित्य पर हमारी प्राचीन ज्ञान परम्परा व मिथकीय परम्परा दोनों का संयुक्त प्रभाव देखा जा सकता है। इस परम्परा में 'रामायण' और 'महाभारत' सर्वाधिक प्रमुख ग्रन्थ हैं। इन ग्रन्थों में हमारी जातीय अस्मिता, सांस्कृतिक गौरव, राष्ट्रीय चेतना व ज्ञान परम्परा को सुन्दर निदर्शन मिलता है।

'महाभारत' की विशालता, ऐतिहासिक, पौराणिकता, मिथकीय विधान, सांस्कृतिक चेतना, धर्म संबंधी चिंतन और वृहत्तर मानवीय जीवन की व्याख्या ही इसे उपजीव्यता प्रदान करती है। 'महाभारत' का प्रत्येक पात्र अपने गहन अन्तर्द्वन्द्व से जुड़ा रहा है। 'महाभारत' की कथा अनेक अर्थध्वनियों व गहन व्यंजनाओं के साथ हर युग का सत्य कहने में समर्थ है। यह समर्थता ही उसे विकसनशील काव्य का दर्जा प्रदान

करती है। अतः 'महाभारत' एक सम्पूर्ण युग की रचना है।

'महाभारत' जितना शास्त्र सम्मत है उतना ही लोक सम्मत। महाभारतकार ने लोक-जीवन के व्यापक अनुभव को यथार्थ के धरातल पर प्रतिष्ठित किया है। 'महाभारत' लोक जीवन का श्वास-प्रश्वास है। लोक के समक्ष जब भी किसी प्रकार का चारित्रिक संकट, धर्म मर्यादा, व्यवहार, नीति व नैतिकता संबंधी संकट पैदा होता तब 'महाभारत' के चरित्र और उसके कथा-अंशों की नवीन सर्जनों कर लोक तात्कालिक समस्या से निजात पाता है। 'महाभारत' पर काल का कोई प्रभाव नहीं है। वह कालातीत हो गई है। उसकी अर्थवत्ता काल से परे है। अतः यह रचना अनंतकाल तक दिक्-दिगान्तर में व्याप्त मनुष्य व मनुष्ये प्राणियों का कण्ठहार बनी रहेगी।

रामधारी सिंह दिनकर का कहना है कि- "महाभारत भारतीय संस्कृति का आधार ग्रन्थ है। जब-जब हमारी संस्कृति में परिवर्तन आते हैं, महाभारतीय चरित्रों की नवीन व्याख्या प्रस्तुत की जाती हैं और उसके द्वारा संस्कृति के परिवर्तनों पर प्रकाश डाला जाता है।"²

हिन्दी नाटक अपने उद्भव काल से लेकर अद्यतन 'महाभारत' के पात्रों और घटनाओं की अद्यतन व्याख्या उन सारी संभावनाओं के साथ करती आयी है, जिसका हल्का-सा भी मनोवैज्ञानिक स्पर्श मूल स्रोत में मिलता है। 'महाभारत' की कथा और उसके पात्र आधुनिक युग की जटिलताओं को व्यक्त करने में सक्षम है।

सामान्य पाठक अपने आप में इस बात का निर्णय नहीं कर पाता कि जिस द्रौपदी को वह इतना अपमानित होते हुए अनुभव कर रहा है, वह शक्तिमती होते हुए भी अशक्त क्यों है? या जिस भीम और अर्जुन को वह चुप साधे देख रहा है, वह अपनी शक्ति का प्रयोग क्यों नहीं करते, जबकि वे जानते हैं कि उनका पक्ष धर्म का पक्ष है। और 'महाभारत' के लिए कहा भी गया है -

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**धर्म अर्थे च कामे च मोक्षे च भरतर्षभा
यदिहास्ति तदन्यत्र यन्नेहास्ति न तत् क्वचित्।³**

"यदि धर्म, दर्शन और सांस्कृतिक प्रयोजन को छोड़ा भी जाये तो भी 'महाभारत' का मानवीय प्रयोजन बहुत विराट और सर्वकालिक है। और उनके रचनाकारों को इस मानवीय प्रयोजन ने ही बार-बार 'महाभारत' के समीप पहुँचाया है।"⁴

'महाभारत' की वैचारिक पृष्ठभूमि इतनी उर्वरक है कि प्रायः सभी विचारधारा के नाटककारों ने अपने-अपने विचार का उत्स दृढ़ लिया है। 'महाभारत' किसी भी विचारधारा की सीमा में निबद्ध नहीं किया जा सकता। 'महाभारत' सभी प्रकार के बन्धनों से मुक्त सर्वथा मनुष्य की जययात्रा व उसके आत्मसंघर्षों का महाकाव्य है।

आधुनिक सृजन के पक्ष में सबसे बड़ा प्रश्न मानवीय अर्थवत्ता का है। और इसी आधार पर हमें 'महाभारत' से प्रभावित रचनाओं की एक लम्बी परंपरा मिलती है। आधुनिक हिन्दी नाटकों के परिदृश्य पर कुछ कहने से पूर्व हमें आरम्भिक नाटकों की चर्चा करना स्वाभाविक है। 'महाभारत' से प्रभावित नाटकों में प्रारम्भिक नाटक के तौर पर आचार्य चतुरसेन शास्त्री द्वारा रचित 'गांधारी' और लक्ष्मीनारायण मिश्र के 'अश्वमेध' नाटक की चर्चा करना उपयुक्त प्रतीत होता है। यही से 'महाभारत' की पुनर्व्याख्या व पुनर्सृजन का स्वर्णिम दौर जारी होता है। जिसकी अनवरत यात्रा आज भी जारी है।

'गांधारी' की रचना कौरवों-पाण्डवों से सम्बन्धित है। लेकिन अपने नाम की सार्थकता को प्रमाणित करती यह रचना 'गांधारी' के उदात्त चरित्र व उसकी अन्तर्व्यथा का सफल चित्रांकन किया गया है।

लक्ष्मीनारायण मिश्र का नाटक 'अश्वमेध' पाण्डवों द्वारा अश्वमेध किये जाने से सम्बन्धित है। यह नाटक अपने युग के अनुरूप इतिवृत्तात्मकता को लिए हुए है। यह नाटक घटना प्रधान है। इन दो

साहित्यिकी (वर्ष-10, 2024)
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नाटकों के साथ-साथ उदयशंकर भट्ट का 'विद्रोहिणी अम्बा', गोविन्द दास का 'कर्ण', रांगेय राघव का 'स्वर्ग भूमि का यात्री' आदि नाटक मिलते हैं। इन नाटकों में एक अलग तरह की प्रश्नकूलता देखने को मिलती है। भट्ट जी 'विद्रोहिणी अम्बा' के माध्यम से नारी जाति के स्वाभिमान, स्मिता और अस्तित्व संबंधी प्रश्न उठाये हैं। अम्बा का विद्रोह उसकी संघर्ष चेतना का प्रमाण है। प्रस्तुत नाटक में बोलिबल दार्शनिकता के कारण वस्तु तत्त्व का स्वाभाविक विकास नहीं हो पाया है।

सेठ गोविन्द द्वारा रचित 'कर्ण' नामक नाटक भी दो महत्वपूर्ण सामाजिक समस्याओं की ओर हम सबका ध्यान आकृष्ट करता है। जिसमें पहला है- अविवाहित मातृत्व की समस्या। और दूसरी समस्या है- निम्न वर्ग के व्यक्ति को, जो प्रतिभावान भी हो, समाज में अपेक्षित सम्मान न मिलना।

रांगेय राघव का नाटक 'स्वर्ग भूमि का यात्री' महाभारत के युद्ध के बाद की कथा पर आधारित है। इसमें लेखक प्राचीन कथा के माध्यम से गांधी जी की सत्य-अहिंसा, हिन्दू-मुस्लिम एकता आदि प्रश्नों की अर्थवत्ता पर जोर दिया है। यह नाटक महाभारत कालीन आर्य संस्कृति की हासोन्मुखता का भी चित्रण प्रस्तुत करता है। इस समय अवधि में लगभग सभी नाटक इसी प्रकार के पिष्टपेषण से अँटा पड़ा है। नाटक नयी अर्थवत्ता के रेखांकन से कम इतिवृत्तात्मकता से ज्यादा प्रभावित है। इन नाटकों में कथा की प्रतीकात्मकता को तद्युगीन सन्दर्भों में कम रेखांकित किया गया है। डॉ. रामकुमार वर्मा का कर्ण पर लिखित नाटक भी कथा की यथास्थिति का चित्रण है। सन् 1950 के बाद हिन्दी नाटक में परिवर्तन का जो बिंदु दिखाई दे रहा था, वह निश्चित रूप से समसामयिक अर्थवत्ता व उत्तर-आधुनिकता की देन था। इसलिए समकालीन परिदृश्य में 'अंधायुग' से लेकर 'कोमल गांधार', 'यक्ष प्रश्न', राक्षस से गुजरते हुए 'युयुत्सु' तक 'महाभारत' की कथा जो भी सन्दर्भ

ग्रहण किया गया। उसकी समकालीन और मानवीय अर्थवत्ता ही उन रचनाओं की प्रासंगिकता और उपादेयता स्थापित करती है।

आधुनिक युग का बहुचर्चित काव्य-नाटक 'अंधायुग' धर्मवीर भारती का अनुपम कृति है। यह रचना 'महाभारत' के अंतिम दिन की युद्ध घटना पर आधारित है। यह रचना त्रासदी व उसके उदात्त पक्ष को प्रस्तुत करती है। 'अंधायुग' इसलिए अंधायुग है कि उसे काल के लोग किसी न किसी रूप में सत्य को देखने की क्षमता का उपयोग करने से भयभीत थे। आचार्य द्रोण, कृप और भीष्म जैसे महारथी और ज्ञानी भी सत्य और धर्म को जानते हुए भी सत्याचरण और धर्माचरण नहीं कर पा रहे थे। यही लेखक की रचनात्मक उपलब्धि है। धर्मवीर भारती ने अपनी रचना 'अंधायुग' के माध्यम से युद्ध और शांति, धर्म और अधर्म, मर्यादा और सत्य के द्वन्द्व का सफल रेखांकन प्रस्तुत किया है। वर्तमान युग का सत्य अर्द्धसत्य के रूप में परिणत हो चुका है। धर्मराज भी अब सत्य नहीं अर्द्धसत्य का सहारा लेते हैं। मर्यादों दोनों पक्षों के लोग तोड़ रहे हैं। धर्मानुसार आचरण करने वाले अर्द्धसत्य का सहारा लेकर व अधर्मानुसार आचरण करने वाले अनीति का सहारा लेकर।

**टुकड़े-टुकड़े हो बिखर चुकी मर्यादा
उसको दोनों ही पक्षों ने तोड़ा है।⁵**

'अंधायुग' की मूल भावना का प्रतिपादन अश्वत्थामा ने किया है। युधिष्ठिर का अर्द्धसत्य उसके हिंसक और अमानवीय बना देता है। वह प्रतिशोध की अग्नि में बराबर जलता है। उसकी मनोवृत्ति इतनी दूषित हो जाती है कि वह हिंसक पशु बन जाता है। जब व्यास अश्वत्थामा को पशु कहते हैं तो वह उत्तर देता है-

था मैं नहीं

मुझको युधिष्ठिर ने बना दिया।⁶

लक्ष्मीनारायण लाल के नाटक 'यक्ष प्रश्न' की कथा भूमि भी महाभारत है। इसकी मूल कथा इस

प्रकार की है वन में प्यास लगने पर युधिष्ठिर अपने भाईयों से पानी लाने को कहते हैं। और उनके भाई पानी लाने के लिए जंगल के बीचो-बीच एक सरोवर के पास जाते हैं। जल पीने और भरने से पहले किसी अज्ञात व्यक्ति की आवाज सुनाई देती है कि पहले मेरे प्रश्नों का उत्तर दे दो तब जल का पान करों अन्यथा तुम जल नहीं पी सकते। बिना प्रश्नों के उत्तर देने पर यदि तुम जल का पान किये तो अचेत हो जाओगे यही क्रम चारों भाईयों के साथ चलता रहा और जब अन्त में कोई भाई लौट कर जल नहीं लाता। तो युधिष्ठिर को चिन्ता होती है और वह स्वयं जलाशय के पास जाते हैं। युधिष्ठिर के साथ भी वही घटना होती है। परन्तु युधिष्ठिर यक्ष के प्रश्नों का समुचित उत्तर देते हैं। प्रसन्न होकर यक्ष कहता है कि अपने किसी एक भाई को जीवित करा सकते हो। युधिष्ठिर सहदेव का जीवन माँगते हैं। यक्ष युधिष्ठिर की बात सुनकर आश्चर्यपूर्वक पूछता है कि तुमने अपने वीर भाइयों के जीवन को न माँगकर सहदेव का जीवन क्यों माँगा? युधिष्ठिर उत्तर देते हैं कि मैं कुंती का एक पुत्र जीवित हूँ। अतः माता माद्री का भी एक पुत्र जीवित रहना चाहिए। यह सुनकर यक्ष सभी भाईयों को जीवित करता है।

‘यक्ष प्रश्न’ नाटक की मूल समस्या यह है कि मनुष्य इतना अहंकार ग्रस्त क्यों है? और दूसरों की प्रतिकूल नियति देखकर क्यों नहीं सीखता। मनुष्य स्वयं को सर्वज्ञाता और सर्वज्ञ क्यों मानता है? मनुष्य छोटे की महत्ता क्यों नहीं स्वीकार करता है।

इस सन्दर्भ में डॉ. शंकर शेष के दो नाटकों ‘कोमल गांधार’ और ‘राक्षस’ का उल्लेख आवश्यक है। ‘कोमल गांधार’ की कथा भीष्म के गांधार प्रदेश से गांधारी के साथ धृतराष्ट्र के विवाह-प्रस्ताव से लेकर महाभारत के युद्धोपरान्त अग्नि में देह छोड़ने तक फैला हुआ है। लेखक ने सम्पूर्ण कथानक में संवेदना के स्तर पर गांधारी के चरित्र को एक दूसरा आयाम दिया है। ‘कोमल गांधार’ में गांधारी को यह

पता हस्तिनापुर में आकर चलता है कि उसका पति अंधा है। अतः उसे लगता है कि उसका कोमल गांधार नष्ट हो गया है। इस तरह नाटक में शंकर शेष ने स्त्री के लघुत्व से उसके निरंतर उदात्त होते चित्ति का अनुसंधान किया है।

‘राक्षस’ में भी कथानक की मूल प्रेरणा महाभारत है। एक चक्रानगरी के कथानक को आधुनिक पात्रों के माध्यम से प्रस्तुत किया है। वस्तुतः इस नाटक में सामान्य व्यक्ति के निरंकुश सत्ता के विरोध में संगठित होकर संघर्ष करने का व्यापक चित्रण किया गया है।

राजेश शर्मा का नाटक ‘युयुत्सु’ में महाभारत के विवश युयुत्सु को आधुनिक जीवन का पीड़ित और भटकता मनुष्य मानकर चित्रित किया गया है। लेखक युयुत्सु के माध्यम से यह बताना चाहता है कि सत्य का पक्ष लेने वाला हमेशा कष्ट और दुःख ही पाता है। वर्तमान युग सत्याचरण का नहीं चापलूसी और अच्छे बने रहने का है। इस युग का मनुष्य सत्य की आँच नहीं झेल सकता है। युयुत्सु की तरह सत्याग्रही अंत में अकेला पड़ जाता है। अतः वर्तमान युग की भयावह स्थितियों में इस शाश्वत संत्रास को चुपचाप भोगते रहना सत्यनिष्ठ व्यक्ति की नियति बन चुकी है।

उपर्युक्त नाटकों के अतिरिक्त आधुनिक नाटककारों ने अनेक नाटक महाभारत को आधार बनाकर लिखे हैं जिनमें ‘सूतपूत्र’ (विनोद रस्तोगी) ‘अरण किरण’ (बसंत देव) ‘एक प्रश्न मृत्यु’ (डा. विनय) ‘अग्नि पुरुष’ (विजेंद्र) ‘एक चक्रानगरी’ (ज्ञानेन्द्रपति) ‘एक और द्रोणाचार्य’ (शंकर शेष) आदि विशेष रूप से उल्लेखनीय हैं। इन सभी नाटकों में महाभारत की प्रेरणा लेकर वर्तमान जीवन के ज्वलंत प्रश्नों को उद्घाटित करने का प्रयास किया गया है।

कुल मिलाकर हम निष्कर्ष रूप में कह सकते हैं कि ‘महाभारत’ का प्रभाव हिन्दी साहित्य में ही नहीं अपितु सम्पूर्ण विश्व साहित्य पर अमिट है। ‘महाभारत’ की कथा में अनंत सम्भावनाएँ हैं। जिसका उपयोग हम

अपने रचनात्मक कौशल से कर सकते हैं। इसकी नवीन व्यंजनों व अर्थ ध्वनियाँ इसे प्रासंगिक व उपादेय बनाती हैं। महाभारत हमारी संस्कृति का सच्चा सम्वाहक ग्रन्थ है। इसी तरह आगे के रचनाकारों के लिए महाभारत प्रेरणास्रोत बना रहेगा।

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Exploring Gender, Identity and Sexuality in Indian Art : An Appraisal

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Over millennia and across civilizations, people have been quite interested in and divided about the examination of gender, identity, and sexuality in artwork. Within the framework of Indian art, this investigation takes on special relevance shaped by the nation's rich cultural legacy, sophisticated social structures and changing views of gender and sexuality. This work attempts to give a thorough evaluation of how these ideas have been expressed, contested, and changed in Indian art from prehistoric times to the present.

With its numerous millennia of artistic legacy, India provides a large canvas for analyzing the representation of gender roles, sexual identities and the flux of these ideas. From the androgynous figures in modern installations to the voluptuous yakshis of ancient temple sculptures, Indian art has often addressed topics of gender and sexuality, often in ways that both reflect and question society conventions.

Furthermore, especially in light of the increasing LGBTQ + movement in India, we will look at how Indian art could provide voice for neglected gender and sexual identities. The paper will also examine how creative manifestations of gender and sexuality in recent years have been shaped

by globalization and digital media.

Ancient temple art and sculpture lay the foundation for Indian art's examination of gender and sexuality. These early depictions offer an insight into the sophisticated knowledge of gender and sexual identities in ancient Indian civilization.

Particularly in temples like Khajuraho and Konark, ancient Indian temple art is notable for its abundance of erotic sculptures. "Far from simple decorative accents, these sculptures were crucial visual texts conveying views about gender roles, sexual behavior, and spiritual beliefs. The overt character of these representations points to a society in many respects more open in its attitude to sexuality than modern India." (Desai, 2000)

Especially remarkable is the way ancient Indian art presents feminine figures, sometimes known as yakshis. "Often shown in sensual stances, these voluptuous female figures were not only fertility emblems but also life-giving power of nature. Challenging oversimplified ideas of gender and sexuality, the yakshis embodied a nuanced interaction between the sacred and the sensual." (Dehejia, 1997).

Comparably important is the portrayal of men, especially in terms of gods and legendary heroes. In ancient Indian art, the masculine ideal sometimes mixed elements usually linked with both masculinity and femininity. "For example, the god Krishna is often shown with a thin, almost feminine body, accessorizing with jewels and dancing-activities linked in many civilizations with femininity." (Nanda, 1999).

Particularly in the portrayal of gods, the idea of androgyny is among the most intriguing features of gender representation in ancient Indian art. Perhaps the most famous instance of this is the composite form of Shiva and Parvati, the Ardhanarishvara. "Half-male and half-female, this figure questions the binary view of gender by synthesizing masculine and feminine energies." (O'Flaherty, 1980)

Other gods, including Vishnu in his Mohini avatar (a feminine form), highlight even more the flexibility of gender in Hindu mythology and its creative expressions. These images imply a perspective in which gender was understood as fluid and contextual rather than as fixed or binary.

Without considering the "Kamasutra" and its impact on creative representations, no examination of sexuality in ancient Indian art would be whole. Although common knowledge of the Kamasutra is sometimes limited to a manual of sexual positions, in actuality it is a sophisticated text covering many facets of love, relationships, and social life.

Found in temples and illustrated books, the creative representations motivated by the Kamasutra present a complex picture of gender norms and sexual behavior in ancient India. "These pieces challenge ideas of feminine passivity by showing

women as active participants in sexual contacts in addition to a great spectrum of sexual behaviors." (Doniger, 2002)

New artistic movements seeking to define a particularly Indian aesthetic while underlining the demands of imperial modernity also arose during the colonial era. Led by Abanindranath Tagore, the Bengal School of Art was essential in this endeavor.

Often turning to legendary subjects and idealized depictions of Indian womanhood, the Bengal School artists sought to produce a "national" art. Though often based on gods or historical people, the female figures in these paintings mirrored modern ideas of feminine beauty and virtue. "While honoring Indian culture, these images also supported some gender stereotypes and helped to define a "respectable" Indian femininity." (Guha-Thakurta, 1992)

Raja is through his paintings and extensively circulated oleographs, one of the most powerful Indian artists of the 19th century, Ravi Varma significantly helped to shape public attitudes about gender and sexuality. Particularly his representations of goddesses and heroes from Hindu epics, Varma's renditions of mythological situations and individuals become quite famous and powerful.

Although Varma's work was revolutionary in many respects-especially in its use of European realist techniques to show Indian subjects-it also helped to define some standards of feminine beauty and virtue. "Often idealized and sanitized, yet frequently modeled on actual women, his gods and heroes became models for the portrayal of Indian womanhood in popular culture." (Kapur, 2000)

Modernist movements-especially the Progressive Artists' Group established in Mumbai in 1947-marked a dramatic change in Indian art throughout the middle of the 20th century. Breaking away from conventional shapes, artists like as F. N. Souza, M. F. Husain, and Tyeb Mehta started investigating fresh approaches of depicting the human form and human experiences.

Many times, these artists questioned accepted depictions of sexuality and gender. For example, F. N. Souza's bold and confrontational nudes questioned the audience's expectations and gaze. "Though praised for their life and vigor, M. F. Husain's images of women have spurred discussions concerning the portrayal of the female form in Indian art." (Dalmia, 2001)

Amrita, one of the forerunners of modern Indian art, Sher-Gil gave the portrayal of gender and sexuality a fresh viewpoint. Sher-Gil's work, as a woman artist in the early 20th century, provided a counterweight to the mostly male perspective that had predominated in Indian art. Often showing women in private, home environments, Sher-Gil's paintings offered a more complex and sympathetic picture of female life. Her strong, unrepentant self-portraits questioned accepted ideas of feminine self-representation and modesty. "Not only in terms of style but also in its honest examination of female sexuality and identity, Sher-Gil's work was revolutionary." (Sundaram, 2010)

As abstract art emerged in India in the later part of the 20th century, it presented fresh avenues for investigating gender and sexuality. Abstract artists might interact with these subjects in more subdued and philosophical ways by eschewing symbolic

images. By means of their non-representational works, artists like V. S. Gaitonde and Nasreen Mohamedi pushed audiences to consider beyond traditional lines of gender and sexuality. "Focused on form, color, and line rather than identifiable individuals, their work created fresh areas for considering identity and embodiment." (Hoskote, 2011)

Particularly with the rise of openly queer artists and queer aesthetics, the late 20th and early 21st centuries have seen a notable change in the way that gender and sexuality are represented in Indian art. The worldwide LGBTQ + movement and shifting social attitudes inside India have both helped to shape this change in some measure.

In this sense, pioneers were artists like Bhupen Khakhar. Often showing intimate interactions between males, Khakhar's paintings were revolutionary in their honest depiction of homosexuality in the Indian setting. "In Indian art, his work not only questioned social taboos but also widened the visual language for capturing same-sex desire." (Hyman, 2020)

Modern Indian artists have explored themes of fluidity, ambiguity and multiplicity, therefore challenging binary conceptions of gender. Using photography, video art, and installations among other media, artists like Tejal Shah and Chitra Ganesh challenge accepted ideas of gender identity. For example, Tejal Shah's art frequently plays with gender roles and expectations, generating strange and provocative pictures that blur the distinctions between man and female, human and animal. "Often using Hindu and Buddhist symbolism, Chitra Ganesh's work reinterpretes mythical stories from a queer feminist standpoint." (Mathur, 2011).

With artists examining how gender and sexuality interact with other facets of identity including caste, class and religion, intersectionality has become increasingly important in Indian art recently. More subtle and sophisticated depictions of gender and sexual identities have come of result from this method.

Rekha Rodwitiya, for instance, explores issues of empowerment, aggression and resiliency while typically confronting the several layers of female identity in the Indian setting. "Likewise, although without specifically addressing gender or sexuality, Nilima Sheikh's paintings frequently subtly question patriarchal systems and honor female unity." (Sambrani, 2005)

Examining gender and sexuality in modern Indian art has found a potent vehicle in performance art. Using their bodies as venues of artistic expression, artists like Pushpamala N. and Nikhil Chopra have subverted accepted ideas of gender, beauty, and identity.

Through her images, which capture several female archetypes from Indian civilization and history, Pushpamala N.'s captures a critical analysis of how women have been portrayed in popular culture and art. "Nikhil Chopra questions established ideas of identity and explores the performative aspect of gender by means of his durational performances, in which he often morphs into new characters across gender and cultural borders." (Sood, 2010)

Social media and digital platforms have democratized creative expression, therefore enabling more varied and unvarnished depictions of gender and sexuality. Platforms like Instagram have evolved into venues where artists could

display work deemed too provocative for conventional galleries or museums.

Using these venues, young artists are investigating and communicating their identities, questioning social conventions, and interacting with like-minded groups. As a result, "art addressing LGBTQ + issues, body positivity, and non-binary identities is now abounded." (Jain, 2018)

Emerging technologies like virtual reality (VR) are opening up new possibilities for exploring gender and sexuality in art. VR art allows for immersive experiences that can challenge viewers' perceptions of bodies, identities and spaces in ways that traditional media cannot.

Some Indian artists are beginning to experiment with these technologies, creating virtual environments that allow for fluid and transformative experiences of gender and sexuality. "While still in its early stages, this field holds significant potential for future artistic explorations of identity." (Kumar, 2019)

The exploration of gender and sexuality in Indian art has not been without controversy. Many artists have faced legal challenges and public protests over work deemed offensive or obscene. The case of M. F. Husain, who faced numerous lawsuits and eventually went into self-imposed exile over his depictions of Hindu deities, is a prominent example.

More recently, "artists exploring LGBTQ+ themes have sometimes faced backlash from conservative groups. These controversies highlight the ongoing tensions between artistic freedom and social conservatism in India." (Ramaswamy, 2011).

The threat of controversy and legal action has led to a degree of self-censor-

ship among some Indian artists. This has potentially limited the range of expressions related to gender and sexuality in Indian art, particularly in public spaces. “However, it has also led some artists to develop more subtle and nuanced ways of addressing these themes, using symbolism and allegory to convey challenging ideas.” (Kapur, 2007)

Examining gender, identity, and sexuality in Indian art reveals a complicated and changing story that reflects the more general social and cultural developments in Indian society. From the honest and sometimes explicit depictions in ancient temple art to the sophisticated and demanding creations of modern artists, Indian art has constantly interacted with these basic elements of human existence. The path of this creative inquiry mirrors the conflicts between tradition and modernism, conservatives and progressives that define most of Indian life. It also emphasizes how art could question conventions, generate ideas and motivate transformation.

With its appreciation of different gender forms and sexual themes, ancient Indian art points to a culture in many respects more liberal in its attitude to these concerns than modern India. The colonial era brought major changes including new moral and social mores that still shape public opinion and creative output.

In Indian art, the modernist movement challenged conventional wisdom and brought more personal and varied viewpoints, therefore opening new opportunities for depicting gender and sexuality. Inspired by local realities and worldwide movements, contemporary Indian art has widened this inquiry even more by giving voice to

underprivileged identities and tackling intersectional concerns of gender, sexuality, caste and income.

The digital era has democratized artistic expression, therefore enabling more varied voices to be heard and new avenues for artistic inquiry of identity. Still, difficulties including censorship and social reaction still influence the scene of artistic expression in India. Looking ahead, Indian art is probably going to be still very important in influencing debates on sexuality, gender, and identity. Artists will surely find creative means to investigate these subjects as society develops and new technology surface, therefore testing preconceptions and stretching the limits of depiction.

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भारतीय संस्कृति समग्रता एवं दिव्य संस्कृति है। यदि सामाजिक उपादानों की ओर दृष्टिपात करें तो संस्कृति और सभ्यता में घनिष्ठ सम्बन्ध है व परस्पर पूरक हैं। लौकिक एवं अलौकिक उन्नति हेतु मनुष्य द्वारा किया गया प्रयास ही संस्कृति है। जिस तरह आत्मा के बिना शरीर का कोई महत्व नहीं, उसी प्रकार संस्कृति के अभाव में सभ्यता का कोई महत्व नहीं होता है। सभ्यता से हमें मानव जीवन के विकास का पता चलता है, जबकि संस्कृति से उसके गुणों का। अन्य शब्दों में कहें तो सभ्यता बाह्य वस्तु है और संस्कृति आन्तरिक वस्तु है। वैयक्तिक अनुभूति जब प्रवाहित होकर सामाजिक अनुभूति बन जाती है और स्वयं को अभिव्यक्त करती है तो उसे संस्कृति कहते हैं। संस्कृति मनुष्य के समग्र जीवन का सार है। मनुष्य को श्रेष्ठ बनाने में और उसे सांसारिक सुख से ऊपर उठाने में, उसे सुसंस्कृत मनुष्य बनाने में संस्कृति का बहुत बड़ा अभिदान है। वास्तविक रूप में संस्कृति मनुष्य जीवन का संविधान है, दिव्य जनों के संकल्प को समझने और उनके द्वारा भारतवर्ष को महान् बनाने के लिए किये गये तप, साधना व उनके जीवन मूल्यों व सिद्धांतों को समझने का एक माध्यम है। महर्षि अरविन्द के अनुसार किसी भी जाति व समुदाय की संस्कृति उनके जीवन की पुस्तक होती है, ऐसे में हमें यदि किसी भी देश व प्रदेश के लोगों को जानना व समझना है तो उसके लिए उनकी संस्कृति को जानना अति आवश्यक है, तभी हम उसे बेहतर

समझ सकेंगे। उन लोगों की सांस्कृतिक चेतना स्वयं को आदर्श, आत्मिक प्रबलता, उन्मुख संकल्प, सर्जनशील, गुणग्राही सौन्दर्य बोध, प्रज्ञा को प्रकट करती है।¹

भारतीय संस्कृति की अपनी अस्मिता है। 'वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्' अर्थात् (सम्पूर्ण ब्रह्माण्ड एक परिवार है) का सन्देश देना भारतीय संस्कृति की विशिष्टता है। गौरवशाली इतिहास, समन्वयवादी चिन्तन, सहिष्णुता की भावना, सुसंस्कार, परस्पर प्रेम व भाई-चारे की भावना इत्यादि भारतीय संस्कृति को विश्व की अन्य संस्कृति से भिन्न करते हैं। महर्षि अरविन्द का प्राकट्य भारतीय सभ्यता और संस्कृति का संस्कार लेकर हुआ है। जब वे आध्यात्मिक जीवन में कदम रखते हैं तो उन्होंने भारतीय संस्कृति, दर्शन और धर्म को गहनता से समझा और उसे व्यावहारिक रूप में लागू किया। यही कारण है कि महर्षि अरविन्द का दर्शन भारतीय संस्कृति से पूरी तरह प्रभावित हैं। ब्रह्म सत्य है और विश्व अपूर्ण सत्य है। अपनी दिव्य दृष्टि से उन्होंने भारतीय संस्कृति को जाना और अद्वैतवाद का प्रतिपादन व उसके विचारों का अनुशीलन भारतीय संस्कृति के परिप्रेक्ष्य में ही किया है। या यूँ कहें कि उनके दर्शन में भारतीय संस्कृति की छाया सीधे तौर पर दिखाई देती है। हम यदि उनके सामाजिक-राजनीतिक विचार पर दृष्टिपात करें तो वो भी वेदान्त परम्परा के अनुसार ही है। यही वजह है कि उनकी तत्व मीमांसा के साथ-साथ उनके सामाजिक और

राजनीतिक दर्शन में भी आध्यात्मिक चेतनायुक्त सत्ता की प्रधानता प्रतिक्षिप्त होती है।

सम्पूर्ण मनुष्य जाति भौतिक, प्राणमय, भावना एवं मनोमय प्रकृति में समान है। मनुष्य प्रकृति का एक मनोमय प्राणी है। मनुष्य जब पैदा होने से वृद्ध होने तक उसके जीवन में तरह-तरह के मनोविकार आते हैं। उन्हीं मनोविकारों से मनुष्य प्रभावित होता है और दूसरों की तरक्की से उसे ईर्ष्या होने लगती है। ये क्रम मनुष्य की मृत्यु तक चलता रहता है। अरविन्द के अनुसार मनुष्य जीवन की सार्थकता उसके जीवन व्यतीत करने में नहीं है कि उसने जीवन को बेहतर तरीके से जिया है बल्कि इसमें है कि उसका जीवन में जगत के लिए कितना अभिदान रहा है।¹²

महर्षि अरविन्द मनुष्य जीवन को तभी सार्थक मानते हैं यदि वो अपनी संस्कृति और सभ्यता को समझता है और उसके लिए आत्मसात कर लेता है। 'भारतीय संस्कृति आधार' नामक ग्रन्थ में जहाँ एक तरफ भारतीय संस्कृति पर निरन्तर हो रहे बाह्य हस्तक्षेप के कारण आसन्न संकट के प्रति आत्मरक्षा की आवश्यकता का अनुभव करते हैं वहीं यूरोपीय संस्कृति के प्रभाव व विसंगतियों का विश्लेषण करते हुए उनके आक्षेपों का निराकरण करते हैं तथा भारतीय संस्कृति में दर्शन, जीवन मूल्यों व उसके मूल तत्वों को समझने पर बल दिया है।

मनुष्य की तरक्की का मूल आधार भौतिक सुख-सुविधों है। मनुष्य इस विश्व में एकाकी प्राणी नहीं है, उसके साथ यहां पर पशु-पक्षी, तमाम वनस्पतियां इत्यादि शामिल होते हैं। वास्तव में मनुष्य को इन सभी की प्रकृति को भी समझना पड़ता है चूंकि मनुष्य की भौतिक तरक्की का आधार ये सब चीजें ही हैं। फलतः उसके मन और प्राण पर इन्हीं का आधिपत्य होता है। भौतिक मन के दबाव में आकर ही मनुष्य मन में प्रतिकूल विकार उत्पन्न हुए। एक-दूसरे के प्रति नफरत, लूट-पाट, काम, क्रोध, लोभ, मोह, विवेकहीनता, भय से अभिभूत होना जैसे

मनोविकारों से मनुष्य स्वयं को महान समझने की कोशिश करता है। अमानवीय तत्वों के कारण ही मनुष्य स्वयं के मौलिक जीवन से ऊपर उठकर दूसरे समाज विरोधी कार्य करना आरम्भ कर देता है। ऐसे में प्रकृति माँ की भूमिका में नज़र आती है, यदि वो देखने की कोशिश करें। चूंकि मनुष्य हर चीज़ प्रकृति व परिवेश से सिखाता है। नियत क्या चीज़ है, वो प्रकृति ही सिखाती व योग्य बनाती है व जीवन जीने की कला भी सिखाती है। अतीत से शिक्षा ग्रहण कर अपनी अनंत संभावनाओं पर दृष्टिपात करना और अनवरत तरक्की की राह पर अग्रसर होते रहना मनुष्य के लिए नियत है।¹³

महर्षि अरविन्द किसी भी संस्कृति में निहित प्राणशक्ति और उन्नति का मानक तीन आधारों पर मानते हैं, प्रथम है जीवन के आदर्श, आदर्श कार्य करने की प्रेरक शक्ति, जीवन के प्रति मौलिक चिन्तन की शक्ति। संस्कृति के विषय में महर्षि अरविन्द का स्पष्ट दृष्टिकोण है। उनके अनुसार वेद भारतीय संस्कृति का आध्यात्मिक और मनोवैज्ञानिक बीज है एवं उपनिषद सर्वश्रेष्ठ आध्यात्मिक ज्ञान व अनुशंसा की अभिव्यक्ति का माध्यम है। 'सत्यमेव जयते' अर्थात् सत्य की जय हो भारतीय संस्कृति की उत्तम धारणा व ध्येय रहा है। इसी ध्येय ने जीवन व मनुष्य जाति को आत्मा की अभीप्सा की ओर प्रेरित किया है। वेद और उपनिषद ये दो दिव्य व धर्मी ग्रन्थ इसके वांगमय और सृजनात्मक अभिव्यक्ति के सर्वप्रथम महत प्रयत्न का ही प्रतिफल है। ये विशुद्ध आध्यात्मिक मन की भाषा परिकल्पित एवं वर्णित है।¹⁴

ऋषि-मुनियों द्वारा प्रदत्त सन्देश से यद्यपि आज भी मनुष्य अनभिज्ञ हैं, लेकिन मनुष्य को सुसंस्कृत मनुष्य बनने के लिए इन सन्देशों को समझना अपरिहार्य है। ऋषि-मुनि अमूमन युग दृष्टा थे और उनके सिद्धांतों पर चलना हमारा कर्तव्य है, तभी हमारा मानस जीवन सार्थक होगा। ऋषि भौतिक जगत की सुख-सुविधाओं से मुक्त होकर परमार्थ के हितार्थ

कार्य करता है। भौतिक जगत से जुड़े तमाम भोगों, सुख-सुविधाओं का खण्डन करना ही ऋषि-मुनियों का परम धर्म है। वर्तमान में हम ज्ञान-विज्ञान से परिचित हैं, नूतन प्रयोग विज्ञान के क्षेत्र में किये जा रहे हैं, ये सब हमारे ऋषि-मुनियों की कठोर साधना व तप का प्रतिफल है।⁵

वर्तमान परिप्रेक्ष्य में सम्पूर्ण विश्व एक परिवार बन चुका है। महर्षि अरविन्द मानते हैं कि मानस, मानस से ऊपर उठकर समाज के हित में कार्य करें, लेकिन इतना ऊपर भी न उठे कि अपनी जड़ें काट लें या यूँ कहें कि अपनी सभ्यता व संस्कृति को ही विस्मृत कर बैठे। वैज्ञानिक विकास भी अपरिहार्य है, लेकिन उसके साथ अपनी अस्मिता भारतवर्ष की महान संस्कृति से भी जुड़े रहना जरूरी है। वैज्ञानिक युग में बड़े-बड़े आविष्कार व परीक्षण किये जा रहे हैं, आणविक शक्ति परीक्षण से मानव जाति खौफ व संकट में दिखाई देती है। मनुष्य यदि अपनी संस्कृति व सभ्यता को समझेगा और तह तक जायेगा, तभी विश्व में शान्ति की स्थापना हो सकती है, चूंकि विश्व में कोई भी संस्कृति ऐसी नहीं है जिसने नफ़रत व सांप्रदायिकता का वर्धन किया है। सुसंस्कृत मानव बनना ही विश्व में परस्पर भाई-चारे की एकमात्र उम्मीद है, तभी मानव जाति संरक्षित हो सकती है।⁶

अरविन्द अति मानस का आगमन केवल एक-दो व्यक्तियों में नहीं, अपितु सम्पूर्ण समाज में चाहते हैं। उनका एकीकृत योग व्यक्ति विशेष तक सीमित न होकर समग्र विश्व के हितार्थ है। वास्तविक रूप में योग साधना जब तक एक व्यक्ति या कुछेक व्यक्तियों तक ही सीमित रहेगी, तब तक योग वास्तव में एकीकृत नहीं हो सकेगा। सच्चे अर्थों में साधक वही सफल माना जायेगा, जो विश्व के तमाम प्राणियों में इसका संचार करेगा व परस्पर प्रेम भाव और विश्व व्यापी सूत्र अनुभव करेगा। गीतू प्रदेश के श्लोक हैं

‘योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः।

सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्पि न लिप्यते।’

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अर्थात् जिसका चित योग सम्पन्न है, अन्तःकरण विशुद्ध है और जो स्वयं पर नियंत्रण रखना जानता है एवं सभी प्राणियों में स्वयं की परछाई देखता है, वह कभी भी ग़लत कर्म में आसक्त नहीं हो सकता है।

वैसे ही अन्य श्लोक हैं

सर्व भूस्थमात्मानमं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि।

ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः।।⁸

सर्वत्र बुद्धि रखने वाला योग सम्पन्न व्यक्ति सब प्राणियों में स्वयं को देखता है वह स्वयं की अनुभूति होती है, वो वास्तव में सुसंस्कृत मनुष्य है।

महर्षि अरविन्द मानते हैं कि विज्ञान ने हमारी संस्कृति को अपने रंग में रंगा है। दूसरे यह बात निर्विवाद सत्य है कि वर्तमान परिप्रेक्ष्य में भी मनुष्य जन्म से मृत्यु तक संस्कृति के अनुसार ही कर्म करता है। उदाहरण के लिए कोई मनुष्य जब मरता है तो उसके परिवार वाले कितने भी सभ्य क्यों न हो, उसका संस्कार संस्कृति व परम्परानुसार ही करते हैं, यही तो भारतीय संस्कृति की विशिष्टता और अस्मिता है जो दूसरी संस्कृति से भिन्न बनाती है। मनुष्य की स्थिति वर्तमान परिप्रेक्ष्य में प्रतिस्पर्धात्मक दिखाई देती है। यदि कोई सृजन कार्य करता है तो उसे सृजन करने से पूर्व ही स्वयं की प्रशंसा के सपने दिखाई देते हैं। विचार, कला और साहित्य बहुत हेय हो गये हैं। लेखक को ध्यान रखना चाहिए कि वो आम जनमानस को मध्य नजर रखते हुए सृजन कार्य करें, तभी उसका सृजन संसार सफल माना जायेगा।⁹

महर्षि अरविन्द भारतीय संस्कृति के सच्चे संरक्षक व दूत रहे हैं। उनके अनुसार संस्कृति में जो विज्ञान का समावेश हुआ है वो थोड़ा उपयुक्त नहीं है। विज्ञान ने भले ही संस्कृति के बाह्य कलेवर को जन व्यापक बनाया हो, परन्तु निम्न स्तर से बहुतायत मात्रा में अर्धशिक्षित मनुष्यों के आ मिलने से संस्कृति के स्तर में संशोधन हुआ है या उसे दृढ़ता प्राप्त हुई हो तो ऐसा नहीं लगता चूंकि वर्तमान परिप्रेक्ष्य में भी उत्साहित प्रधान कर्मवाद ही मनुष्य का प्रेरक है और

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उद्यम ही आधुनिक सभ्यता का केन्द्र है। या यूँ कहें कि आज भी मनुष्य की दशा व दिशा असंस्कृत, मनोमय सता की कर्मशील और उत्तेजना मय प्रवण ही है। नतीजतन विचार, कला व साहित्य हेय हो चुके हैं। ऐसे में ये बात निर्विवाद सत्य है कि सृजनकार या लेखक को सहृदय की भावनाओं और ईप्सा के अनुरूप ही सृजन कार्य करना चाहिए।¹⁰

लेखक को सृजन कार्य में शब्दों का सही चयन करना चाहिए, अर्थात् असंस्कृत शब्दों व संस्कृति के विरुद्ध शब्दों का प्रयोग न हो तो सही रहेगा। एक शब्द में उच्च मनोयोग जीवन अच्छे और बुरे दोनों परिणामों के साथ लोकायत, संवेदनप्रधान तथा क्रियाशील बन गया है। विशेषकर शिक्षा की नूतन व्यवस्था, समाज के नूतन सिद्धान्त व क्रियात्मक सम्भावना के क्षेत्र में आने आरम्भ हो गये हैं, जिनमें सम्भवतः एक दिन ऐसी घटना घटित होगी जो अभी अप्राप्य है अर्थात् भविष्य के लिए संकेत उचित नहीं है। ऐसे में यदि मनुष्य जाति को कोई संरक्षित कर सकता है तो वो संस्कृति ही है।¹¹

यह बात निर्विवाद सत्य है कि भारतवर्ष की इस महान व दिव्य संस्कृति से सम्पूर्ण विश्व प्रभावित हुआ है। भारतवर्ष की संस्कृति इस ब्रह्माण्ड के सम्पूर्ण मनुष्य जाति की आत्मा है। महर्षि अरविन्द मानते हैं कि भारतीय संस्कृति जीवन को सही दिशा में ले जाने वाला वाहन है। जो मनुष्य इस संस्कृति को जानता व समझता है, निश्चय ही वो मनुष्य से देव मनुष्य तुल्य हो जाता है और स्वयं के जीवन को राष्ट्र हित समर्पित कर देता है। 'ह्यूमन साईकिल' ग्रन्थ में महर्षि अरविन्द मानते हैं कि यूरोपीय चिन्तकों का दृष्टिकोण वैज्ञानिक होने के कारण भारतीय संस्कृति के आगे मिथक दिखाई देता है चूंकि उस वैज्ञानिक दृष्टिकोण की जड़ भारतीय संस्कृति में है, अर्थात् वेदों, उपनिषद व गीता में है। यूरोपीय वैज्ञानिकों ने केवल उसे सुसज्जित किया है। ऐसे में यदि वो पाश्चात्य विद्वान स्वयं को ईश्वर तुल्य समझते हैं कि

हमने वैज्ञानिक खोजें करके महान व बड़ा नेक कार्य किया है, मनुष्य जीवन को सुगम बनाया है तो वो उनका कोरा भ्रम है। चूंकि उन सभी का आधार व जड़ भारतीय संस्कृति ही है। महर्षि अरविन्द संस्कृति में निहित प्राणशक्ति का मानदंड तीन आधारों से मापते हैं और उसमें प्रथम है जीवन के प्रति मौलिक चिन्तन की शक्ति क्या है। जीवन का आदर्श क्या है और तीसरा आदर्शों के अनुरूप कार्य करने की प्रेरक शक्ति क्या है। उपरोक्त तीनों आधार पर भारतीय संस्कृति की श्रेष्ठता शीर्ष स्तर पर स्थापित है। महर्षि अरविन्द के अनुसार 'वेद भारतीय संस्कृति का आध्यात्मिक व मनोवैज्ञानिक बीज है और उपनिषद् सर्वश्रेष्ठ ज्ञान एवं अनुभव के सत्य की अभिव्यक्ति है। या यूँ कहें कि सत्य भारतीय संस्कृति का प्रथम स्रोत है। 'सत्यमेव जयते' भारतीय संस्कृति की विशिष्टता है। इसी ध्येय की ओर अग्रसर होना और यही सन्देश भारतीय संस्कृति देती है। भारतीय संस्कृति को समझने के दो महान ग्रन्थ वेद और गीता है। इन दोनों ग्रन्थों की काव्यमय और सर्जनशील आत्माभिव्यक्ति के सर्वप्रथम महत प्रयत्नों का प्रतिफल है। ये विशुद्ध अंतरात्मा एवं दिव्य मन के विचारों में परिकल्पित व वर्णित है।¹²

इस बात पर यदि सूक्ष्म चिन्तन किया जाये कि महर्षि अरविन्द ने धर्म, दर्शन, कला और सुव्यवस्थित जीवन के लिए सृजनात्मक कार्यों का उद्गम स्थल मन को ही स्वीकार किया है तो इसमें कोई अतिशयोक्ति नहीं होगी। मनोस्थिति के अनुसार ही मनुष्य को सबल व समृद्ध बौद्धिक व्यवहारिक कर्मों के कुशलतापूर्वक क्रियान्वयन की प्रबल शक्ति प्राप्त होती है। मानसिक व आध्यात्मिक परिवर्तन की इसमें बड़ी भूमिका रहती है। भले ही हमारी संकल्पित शक्ति श्रेष्ठ है, परन्तु ये केवल मन में ही उदित होती है।

महर्षि अरविन्द के मतानुसार धर्म व दर्शन का मणि कंचन संयोग अपरिहार्य है और इनका समन्वित रूप ही संस्कृति है। भारतीय दर्शन सिद्धांतवादी व

सह क्रियात्मक है। 'वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्' भारतीय संस्कृति का सिद्धान्त है। भारतवर्ष में सैकड़ों वर्षों तक बाह्य शासकों का साम्राज्य रहा है और वो भी इसका बाल बांका नहीं कर सके चूंकि इस संस्कृति की अपनी अस्मिता है। ईश्वर द्वारा प्रदत्त व संरक्षित ये संस्कृति है। ये केवल भारतीय जनता की ही नहीं विश्व की एकता का प्रतीक है। सम्पूर्ण विश्व की प्रेरक शक्ति है।¹³

महर्षि अरविन्द स्वीकार करते हैं कि भारतीय संस्कृति मनुष्य की तरक्की का आधार है। मनुष्य को सुसंस्कृत मनुष्य बनाने वाली भारतीय संस्कृति है। सत्य, सम्मान, प्रेम, भ्रातृत्व भावना, अहिंसा, त्याग, संवेदना, सहनशीलता, दानशीलता व शुचिता आदि सद्गुणों का भण्डार है और इन तमाम गुणों को स्वयं और समाज में विकसित करने पर महर्षि अरविन्द जोर देते हैं।

उपसंहार :

निष्कर्ष में हम कह सकते हैं कि महर्षि अरविन्द भारतीय संस्कृति के सच्चे संरक्षक थे और इस दिव्य संस्कृति को आधार बनाकर वो मनुष्य को जीवन जीने के लिए प्रेरित करते हैं। 'आत्मानं विधि' अर्थात् यही सन्देश ऋषि-मुनियों द्वारा प्रदत्त है। मनुष्य भारतवर्ष की महान संस्कृति की मदद से सम्पूर्ण ब्रह्माण्ड को एकजुट कर सकता है। भारतीय संस्कृति में वो ताकत है जो मनुष्य को देवता बना सकती है। हमें केवल इसे समझना व जानना होगा तभी हम सुसंस्कृत मनुष्य बन सकते हैं। सम्पूर्ण विश्व या ब्रह्माण्ड को नफरत की भयावहता से बचाने वाली भारतीय संस्कृति

है। अतः हमें चाहिए कि नूतन नस्लों को इस दिव्य संस्कृति से परिचित करवायें ताकि वो अपने जीवन को बेहतर रूप में जी सके, जो व्यष्टि हित में न होकर समष्टि हित में कार्य करें।

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A Philosophical approach to Culture : Discuss and examine

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In daily life, concepts of culture are commonly linked with literature and art, education and upbringing, and educational endeavors. A cultured individual is someone who possesses knowledge, is well-informed, and understands proper societal conduct. Culture also signifies the level of proficiency in a specific type of activity. In this context, discussions revolve around work culture, professional and everyday etiquette, communication norms, and the culture of speech and cognition. The British are a fascinating and distinctive people, self-reliant and one-of-a-kind. Their culture is diverse and abundant, exerting significant influence on a global scale. Philosophy and culture are interrelated concepts, exhibiting a strong connection between them. Culture is the foundation for every philosophy, shaping its existence and giving meaning to its ethics. Philosophy provides the analytical perspective that protects us from anachronism, enabling us to contemplate, question, critique and ultimately embrace or discard any idea. There are cultural elements in philosophy and philosophical aspects in every culture.

The primary interpretation of this paper is that culture serves as a foundational resource for philosophical inquiry. It is posited that this understanding encompasses all other interpretations. This paper thus contends that culture constitutes the foundation and raw material for intellectual contemplation, while culture emerges from a structured thought process, it does not equate to philosophy, just as the mere handling of countable items or currency does not render that activity mathematical. Therefore, philosophy should be recognized as an academic pursuit characterized by a rigorous and deep exploration of the truths of reality. In this context, philosophy, utilizing its hermeneutical tools, seeks to rationalize cultures. It also aims to provide a solid framework for the acceptance or rejection of specific cultural elements in a world that has experienced significant cultural fragmentation. At this point, the significance of philosophy becomes crucial in addressing the current conflicts among global cultures that are evident in our unstable world.

Philosophy : A Basic Definition The study of philosophy should not be pursued with the expectation of obtaining definitive answers to its inquiries, as such answers are typically uncertain. Instead, it is the questions themselves that merit our attention, for they enhance our intellectual creativity, broaden our understanding of possibilities, and reduce the rigid certainties that inhibit open-minded exploration. Most importantly, by engaging with the vastness of the universe that philosophy examines, the mind is elevated and attains a profound connection with the universe, which represents its ultimate fulfillment.

Culture And Its Doctrine Sociologists and anthropologists characterize culture as the collective attributes that define the existence of a community within a society, serving as the foundation of their social life. The term culture is derived from the Latin word “culture,” which translates to the act of tilling or cultivating the land. Lapierre (1973: 27) articulates culture as “the heritage of wisdom, or more accurately, the entirety of inventions and discoveries that are accumulated and transmitted by each successive generation.” He identifies the components and shared values that constitute a comprehensive culture, distinguishing it from what is termed basic culture. When viewed abstractly, culture encompasses the skills involved in the creation and utilization of tools. It also includes the frameworks of human relationships and symbolic instruments, such as language, concepts, relevant motivations, sentiments, values, and other human characteristics that facilitate the application of these skills and frameworks. In this context, Lapierre perceives culture

as a system, wherein each of its numerous elements exhibits a degree of functional interdependence with the others.

Schaefer and Lamm (1997:1) gave an abridged definition of culture when they stated that “*Culture includes the ideas, values, customs, and antiques of groups of people*”.

A Historical Overview of Philosophy and Culture :

The embeddedness of philosophy in Indian culture reflects a unique understanding of philosophy. According to Bhatt, philosophy in India, known as Darshana, differs from Western traditions because it involves reflection on lived experience. Darshana is primarily a systematic self-reflection activity that entails practices with a purpose and an end. Culture, viewed as a humanly-formed nature, contributes to this activity and is normative in many respects. Bhatt believes that since Darshana is rooted in Indian culture, it presents a model of philosophy that has emerged from culture and holds broad relevance.

In our analysis of the concept of culture, we highlighted its political dimension. It was noted that culture not only fosters a sense of cultural nationalism but also instills in its members a commitment to its preservation, protection and expansion. This commitment arises from the accompanying nationalist sentiment, which may manifest as envy, hostility, or hospitality towards other cultures. We also drew parallels between the terms culture and society. Historically, culture was associated with specific traits of tribal groups and ethnologists employed the term to

distinguish the unique characteristics of various ethnic groups. This concept was further broadened to encompass race, as culture can indeed signify the shared attributes of a racial group. At this advanced level of cultural application, it evolves into civilization. It is not surprising that scholars such as Ogugua and Oguejio refer to it as the essence of civilization or the spiritual core as described by German thinkers. Civilization denotes human society characterized by sophisticated social structures. It encompasses the culture and lifestyle of a society or nation during a specific historical period. Civilization serves as a term to describe the cultural accomplishments of a particular society, ethnic group or race. It represents a celebration of these cultural achievements. The expansive nature of this celebration has contributed to the prominence of Egyptian civilization, while its spiritual essence has facilitated the progress of various cultures. These dynamics can be observed in historical events such as the German Holocaust and the oppressive rule of the Roman Empire, both of which are rooted in the cultural advancements of civilization. Philosophical discourse has sought to provide a rationale, albeit flawed, for the expansionist and hostile tendencies of these civilizations.

The field of philosophy has always possessed two intriguing characteristics. First, unlike disciplines such as physics, painting, or political science, it does not have a clearly defined subject matter that belongs only to it. Instead, like a skilled and purposeful thief, it appropriates and adapts the valuable ideas of other fields to serve its own unique purposes. The act

of philosophizing is essentially a reflection on experiences. Depending on whether one reflects on experiences related to art, history, or the state, one may develop an aesthetics, political philosophy or philosophy of history. Consequently, a philosopher's particular area of passion and perplexity will shape the problems they ponder and influence the outcome of their philosophical system.

It is no secret that throughout its history, western philosophy has largely borrowed its problems and modeled its constructions on the principles of mathematics and the natural sciences. For instance, Plato's metaphysics can be best understood through his obsession with mathematics and the type of existence that a realm of natural numbers might be expected to possess. Aristotle's mature system, focused on the concept of growth and development, is incomprehensible without considering his activities as a taxonomic and experimental biologist. The Cartesian revolution was deeply influenced by Descartes' mathematics and inseparable from the coordinate geometry that he developed. Leibnitz's cosmology, which asserts an infinite number of centers of energy and the centrality of a principle of continuity in nature, is essentially an animated model of the infinitesimal calculus that he discovered. Even John Locke's exploration of "the new way of ideas" and his empiricist successors' attempts to provide a theory of knowledge were closely tied to the conclusions of the mathematical physics of Newton that dominated their era.

However, about a hundred years after Locke's Essay Concerning Human Under-

standing and Leibnitz's Monadology (in 1807, to be precise), an unprecedented event occurred in philosophy: the publication of Hegel's Phenomenology of the Spirit. This work is so profound and has had such a complex and controversial impact since Hegel's time that its epoch-making character is often overlooked. Contrary to popular belief, I think its significance did not lie in its dialectic, absolute idealism, or theory of development per se, but rather in the fact that, for the first time since Aristotle, the subject of philosophizing was considered to be not a particular science, aspect of social living, or segment of external nature, but rather the entire scope and breadth of human culture as a unified, evolving entity.

The Interrelatedness of Philosophy and Culture :

It is essential to recognize that philosophy and culture are intricately connected concepts, distinguished by a subtlety that has often led to considerable confusion. This relationship has fostered a tendency to conflate philosophy with culture, a phenomenon particularly evident in contemporary African philosophy. The responsibility for this conflation does not rest solely with African philosophers; it is also influenced by the methodologies established by the pioneers of philosophy. To begin with, the roots of philosophy can be traced back to a sense of wonder, as Aristotle suggests, asserting that "It is through wonder that men now begin and originally began to philosophize" (982b: 10). In his work, *The Republic*, Plato, as cited in Bodunrin (1985: 1), states that "there is no other beginning of philosophy than this wonder." Heidegger further

emphasizes that the experience of astonishment is not merely an introductory phase of philosophy, akin to a surgeon washing their hands before an operation; rather, astonishment is a fundamental aspect that permeates philosophical inquiry. This initial wonder that sparked philosophical thought was centered on the universe, exploring the organic unity and interconnections among its various components, as well as the tangible realities of everyday life. Such daily experiences arise from the interaction between humanity and nature, as well as from the social existence of individuals. Human social existence is deeply embedded in culture, which significantly influences the behaviors and life patterns of individuals within society. Consequently, philosophy's initial focus on nature was parallel to its exploration of the complexities of social existence and culture. The historical account of Socrates serves as a poignant reminder of this connection. Socrates criticized the moral failings of his contemporaries, a philosophical stance that ultimately led to his demise. Indeed, the two primary branches of philosophy—Ethics and Social and Political Philosophy—are closely linked to cultural philosophy.

Related views :

Both domains aim to regulate human behavior, which constitutes the primary substance, emphasis and objective of culture. Consequently, a philosophical understanding of these areas inherently leads to a philosophical understanding of culture. Furthermore, philosophy engages with humanity, placing man at the core of cultural discourse; without humanity, culture cannot exist. In a related discussion,

Omeregbe, as cited in Bodunrin (1985: 2), asserts emphatically and accurately that: Philosophical inquiry can indeed originate from the human individual. In fact, the human being possesses a more profound reservoir of philosophical thought than the physical world. The wonders and intricacies of human existence surpass those found in the physical realm. The transience of human life, the fluctuations of existence, humanity's dominance over nature, along with its strengths and vulnerabilities, joys and sorrows, achievements and setbacks, finitude and experiences of suffering, hardship, illness, mortality and decay, as well as the duality of human greatness and despair, have all prompted profound contemplation and philosophical exploration globally. A deeper reading of Omeregbe reveals that culture not only gives rise to philosophy by supplying the foundational elements necessary for philosophical endeavors but also facilitates the connection we aim to establish. Culture is likened to a menu that contains the vital components upon which philosophy relies and flourishes. Okere (1983: 14), in his renowned work highlighting African philosophy as a crucial interpretative activity concerning African culture, elaborates on this notion further.

He argues :

“Philosophy is the definitive endeavor to understand and comprehend reality as a cohesive whole. It diligently seeks to unveil the essence of life and culture. It stands as an unwavering interpretation of life and culture, serving as the centerpiece of

existence. Philosophy unequivocally emerges as a product forged from raw materials, requiring the formidable shaping of thoughts from cultural components. It represents a resolute act of intellectual creation, birthing new meaning from the amalgamation of one's complete experience.”

The analysis is seen as important because philosophy originated from curiosity about the universe and human culture. It's important to recognize that while philosophy is universal, it is also influenced by culture. Any philosopher who ponders on culture or the universe, no matter how objective they may seem, is still influenced by their culture. This is because culture shapes behavior and impacts an individual's perception and mindset. As a result, a person's interpretation of the world reflects the fundamental ideas of their culture. Additionally, the experiences that lead to philosophical activity are unique to their culture. Therefore, a philosopher's worldview is deeply rooted in their own culture and does not transcend it. That's why many philosophers argue that every philosophy must reflect the cultural and moral standpoint of the author.

We argue that this forms the foundation of regional ontology philosophy. Essentially, it serves as the basis for the presence of racial, regional, and cultural philosophies. Today, due to the inseparable link between culture and philosophy, we encounter references to Asian philosophy, Indian philosophy and African philosophy, as well as American, Greek,

and British philosophies, among others. This same rationale leads to the emergence of philosophies within religious sects and institutions. The existence of these cultural philosophies is not solely due to communal thought, but rather because the philosophies of the philosophers are often shaped by a collective perspective influenced by the culture or social environment in which they philosophized. This aspect also clarifies the categorization of the beliefs, ideologies and actions of certain individuals, institutions, or societies as philosophical. It is believed, and this might be the case, that since individual philosophers from each culture may have arguments for or against their culture (as Socrates did) and professional philosophy accommodates this, then such cultural practices may have a philosophical foundation. Furthermore, since philosophy is rooted in free thinking, as previously discussed and since all human conduct and principles are based on reasoning, they can be considered philosophical. In essence, all these factors illustrate the connection between philosophy and culture.

Conclusions :

The idea of culture as a structured system, establishing principles to guide a community toward anticipated prosperity, can be considered a form of philosophy, although not in the strict academic sense. The existence of philosophy in traditional Africa needs clarification and resolution due to the challenges in transmitting ideas and thoughts. Philosophy, as acknowledged by Omoregbe and others, progresses through three stages culminating in the completion of these stages. The first stage involves the wonder that arises from a

person's interaction with themselves and the world around them, leading to fundamental questions - the second stage. The culmination of philosophical activity occurs when individuals begin to reflect on these questions in search of answers - the third stage. Therefore, for a philosophy to be genuine, it must progress from wonder to questioning and finally to potential answers. Any halt at a single stage would result in philosophy falling short and becoming quasi or semi-philosophy. This process of philosophical development is also evident in other cultures, such as African culture, where wise sayings, stories, myths and folklore often remain at the initial stage of philosophizing. According to Okere, Black Africans can develop their own authentic philosophies derived from their culture, but merely having a culture is insufficient for the existence of a philosophy. To bridge the gap between culture and philosophy, a transition is necessary. Culture is present at the initial level of philosophical activity but has not developed into pure philosophy. Philosophy, on the other hand, exists at the advanced stage of reflective activity. It is crucial to acknowledge that philosophical activity does not originate in isolation but emerges from a community's culture, making philosophy a reflective activity within a particular cultural context.

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Menal : Growth of Tourism Industry in Rajasthan through the Conflation of the Heartwarming Natural Beauty and Astonishing Ancient Temple Art

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Geographical Location of the Menal village :

Menal village lies in the South-eastern part of Rajasthan at the crossing point of 25° 09' Northern latitude and 75° 12' Eastern longitude. Geographically it is situated on the Uparmal plateau, a division of Hadoti plateau (Rajasthan) while administratively it comes under the Begun sub-division of Chittorgarh district (Rajasthan). It is situated on National Highway 27 (NH-27) which runs from Porbandar (Gujarat) to Silchar (Assam).

The Menal River, born on the Uparmal Plateau, flows through this area and forms a waterfall 'Menal'. Further this river flows in the north-western direction till Triveni village (Bigod, district Bhilwara). In Triveni village, the waters of Menali River and Berach River coming from Chittorgarh district meet the main river Banas. Thus, Menali and Berach rivers are the main tributaries of Banas which form 'Triveni Sangam' in Bhilwara district.

Menal Waterfall :

It is purely a natural waterfall located on the Uparmal plateau. Major land area of the Uparmal Plateau is made up of red sandstone. It is noteworthy that red sandstone is a type of sedimentary rock. Due to it being brittle and finely porous, it is permeable to water and due to being flaky, it is soft by nature. A depressed water reservoir has been created here by vertical erosion on the soft sandstone rocks by the Menali River (Fig: 1.1). In this water reservoir, the Menali river falls from a height of 150 feet and forms the Menal waterfall .

Due to the Menal area being water-filled and covered with greenery all around, the temperature of this place remains much lower in summers as compared to the rest of the Uparmal plateau area. There was a time when this waterfall used to flow continuously for 6 months, but with time the upper flow area of Menali river kept getting encroached due to which the inflow of water started getting disrupted and as a

result the flow period of the waterfall get limited to only 2 to 3 months.

Earlier, tourists were allowed to go till the depression of this waterfall, but due to the moss present in the pool and the slippery and round-smooth stones generated by it, tourists had to face accidents many times. Some tourists also died due to slipping. Taking precautions, the administration has completely banned the movement of tourists towards the pool of Menal waterfall. Keeping in mind the safety of the tourists, the concerned department has installed iron railings around the pool of the waterfall so that they cannot go to take bath under the waterfall.

The beauty of Menal waterfall is at its peak during the rainy season. During this time it appears like a huge cascading milk stream. During this time, tourists flock here to get relief from the excessive heat, humidity and stickiness. Especially on the day of 'Hariyali Amavas (Shravan Month of Hindu Calendar)', a huge crowd of tourists can be seen here.

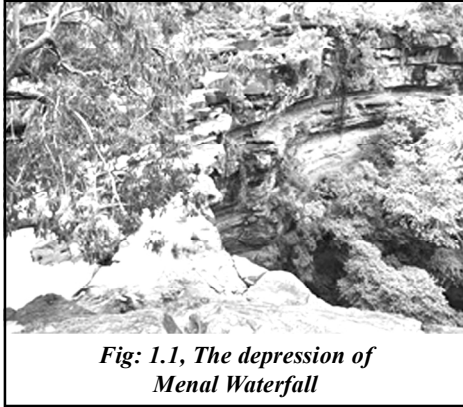


Fig: 1.1, The depression of Menal Waterfall

The beauty of Menal waterfall is further enhanced by the artistic beauty of the temples located near it. The unique architecture and decoration of these temples keep the history of this region

alive. According to archaeologists, these temples were built by the then Chahamana rulers in the twelfth-thirteenth century. These temples were the famous pilgrimage of that time. Prominent among the temples of Menal is 'Mahanaleshwar Temple', the description of which is given below.

Mahanaleshwar Temple :

This is a historical Shiva temple which was built in 1169 AD by a sage Bhavabrahmamuni during the reign of Prithviraj II, the Chahamana ruler of Delhi and Ajmer. Actually, a water well is built in the rear part of this temple from which a stone channel has been made leading towards the temple. The water from the well has been brought to the temple through this stone canal. With this water, Jalabhisheka of the Shivalinga installed in the temple is done. Probably because of this canal, this temple of Mahadev might have been named as the Mahanaleshwar.

The outermost entrance of the temple is located on the main road and was constructed by the Archaeological Department. The path leading from the outer entrance to the second entrance (main entrance) of the Menal temple complex is approximately 50 meters long. Beautiful gardens with dense trees and grass have been planted on both sides of this entry road. The second entrance (main entrance) of the Menal temple complex is made of red sandstone, is three-storeyed and quite high. The walls of this entrance are very wide and strong. A pavilion is installed on the top part of the door and the statue of the first revered deity Shri Ganesh ji is installed on the left side.

The entire Mahanaleshwar temple complex is built of red sandstone available in abundance in the Uparmal plateau

region. All the temples of the temple complex are built in Bhoomij style at a height of about 3 feet on a base made using red sandstone. The stones used in the main temple Mahanaleshwar have been beautifully carved with fine carvings by the artisans of that time. This proves the skill and patience of the contemporary architects and artisans. The entrance gate of the temple is very grandly constructed on which statues of Yaksha-Yakshini, Devanganas, Kinnars, heavenly Apsaras, gatekeepers, male-female couples and flowers and leaves have been carved. Statues of lion and elephant have been installed on the top part of the entrance. Just in front of the entrance, a huge statue of Nandi is seated in a pavilion. The roof of Mahanaleshwar temple is very attractive and looks like a huge pagoda (Fig: 1.2). A huge and tall peak is built on the central part of this roof, on the top of which a Kalasha made of stone is installed.



Fig: 1.2, Mahanaleshwar Temple

In fact, the Mahanaleshwar temple, famous for its craft and sculpture, appears to be equivalent to the temples of Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh. This is the reason why Mahanaleshwar Temple is also called the 'Mini Khajuraho' at the local level. The Mahanaleshwar temple has been described in the Bijauliyan inscription as a famous pilgrimage site of the 'Lakulisha sect' of

Shaivism. Mahanaleshwar Shiva is seated in the form of a body at a depth of about 3 feet from the ground in the sanctum sanctorum of the temple.

Just in front of the Mahanaleshwar temple, there is a group of small and big ruined temples. Among this group of temples, one seems to be special which is constructed with white stones unlike other temples. Probably this temple might have been constructed as an experiment. The passage leading to Menal waterfall passes near these ruined temples. At the end of this passage leading to the waterfall, a very simple entrance gate is built whose length is 7 feet and width is 3.5 feet. Craftsmanship is completely absent at this entrance.

After crossing the shallow area of Menali river flowing at the top of the waterfall, another Shiva temple is visible which was built under the guidance of Queen Suhiya Devi, wife of Prithviraj II. Since Suhiya Devi was an ardent worshiper of Lord Shiva, this temple was named 'Suhaveshwar Temple' by her .

According to the information received by the researcher from the priest appointed at Mahanaleshwar temple during the research work, Prithviraj Chauhan-III or Raipithora used to come to enjoy the natural beauty of Menal waterfall and visit Mahanaleshwar Shiva temple to get relief from the painful summers .

For the systematic maintenance of the Menal temple complex, it was brought under the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) by the Government of India on 15 December 1956 .

Tourism Activities in Menal :

Although Menal is located in Begun sub-division of Chittorgarh district, it is an

important tourist destination for Bhilwara district also. The nearest town to Menal is Mandalgarh (Bhilwara). Mandalgarh is the main stopping point for the tourists coming here. The nearest railway station and bus stand to Menal is also Mandalgarh. 'Menal Water Fall Resort Private Limited' is situated about 1 km away from the Menal temple complex with excellent facilities for food and accommodation for the tourists. A view point has been built in this resort from where Menal waterfall and the densely covered green valley of Menali River with trees appear very beautiful and attractive.

Generally, tourists come to Menal from places like Chittorgarh, Bundi, Kota, Mandasaur, Neemuch etc. Apart from Menal, the tourists coming here compulsorily visit places like Mandalgarh Fort, Triveni Sangam, Tilsawan Mahadev etc. This tourism activity provides an auspicious sign of creation of possibilities for development of the tourism circuit in this area.

Menal waterfall is located at almost equal distance from Udaipur's Dabok Airport and Kota Airport. The nearest railway station to Menal is Mandalgarh. Due to connectivity by rail, road and air services, tourists can be brought here from any corner of the country.

Problems and Suggestions for the development of tourism in Menal :

Menal temple and waterfall are located in the border areas of two districts, namely Chittorgarh and Bhilwara. Although it comes under Begun subdivision of Chittorgarh, tourism in Menal has not been adequately developed due to its location in the border region.

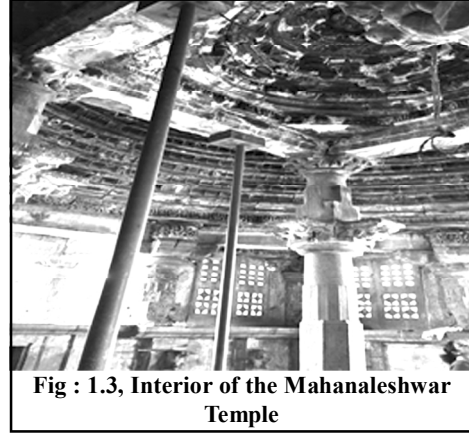


Fig : 1.3, Interior of the Mahanaleshwar Temple

The roof of Mahanaleshwar, the main temple of Menal, had become weak with time and was on the verge of collapse. However, after coming under the control of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), the roof of the temple which was collapsing has been supported with iron pillars (Fig:1.3). Due to this, the beauty of the temple has been slightly distorted but this problem has definitely been temporarily resolved.

The garbage spread around the Menal complex indicates that cleaning work is not done here regularly. Apart from this, there are not a sufficient number of dustbins installed here and most of the dustbins are broken. In this way, the required number of dustbins and at appropriate places can be installed here. Apart from this, broken dustbins can be replaced with new dustbins.

Keeping in mind the safety of the tourists, some of the railing bars installed here have been rusted and destroyed and some have been broken by mischievous elements. Due to this, careless tourists start trying to reach the slippery area towards the waterfall by crossing the broken railing. If this broken railing is repaired in time,

then tourism activities here can be conducted in a safe and orderly manner.

Neither government guides nor private guides are available for the convenience of tourists in the Menal temple complex. In such a situation, tourists coming from other states have to visit this place without any information. If guides are arranged here then tourists will be able to get official and authentic information. For this, local people can be trained by Rajasthan Tourism Department and appointed as guides here. In this manner the social significance of tourism can be characterized.

To deal with the misbehavior or snatching of foreign tourists by anti-social elements, neither any arrangement for closed circuit cameras has been made here nor has any tourist assistance force been deployed here. Apart from this, there are no preventive arrangements against anti-social elements from causing any kind of damage to these valuable historical buildings. By providing the facilities of Tourist Assistance Force and Closed Circuit Cameras, a safe environment can be provided to the tourists and tourism and other related activities can be promoted here.

There is a widespread lack of publicity material regarding Menal or it has not been publicized properly. This is the reason why tourists neither have sufficient information regarding this place nor do they have any source available to gather information. With government efforts, informational documents can be prepared regarding it through researchers and writers and better marketing can be done through advertising agencies. Through this research paper, an attempt has been made by the researcher to create such information providing documents.

Free tour facility has been provided to the tourists in the Menal temple complex. No kind of income is generated from this. If entry fee is started and is collected from the tourists coming to the Menal temple complex, then it will also generate income and the fee received can be used in the development works done here. Not only this, by providing paid entry, the entry of mischievous people who are insensitive towards tourism development in the Menal temple complex will also be controlled.

According to the information received from a tourist from Pune (Maharashtra) who visited Menal, only one option for food and accommodation is available near the Menal complex, 'Menal Water Fall Resort Private Limited'. Apart from this, tourists have to go to Mandalgarh town of Bhilwara for food and accommodation which is situated at a distance of about 15 km from here. Hotels with excellent facilities can be provided in the area adjacent to the Menal temple complex. If this is done then a necessary increase can be brought in the number of tourists here.

Generally, every tourist wants to cherish the memories related to a particular place and take it with himself. In such a situation, shopping facilities can be provided to the tourists in the Menal complex. Marketing of handicrafts made in Bhilwara and Chittorgarh districts including the Phad painting (District Shahpura), Dabu print sheets (Akola, Chittorgarh), Kavad wood art (Bassi, Chittorgarh) etc. can be done by providing shop facilities to the tourists in Menal complex. Apart from this, marketing of literary material related to Bhilwara District Darshan, Chittorgarh District Darshan, Rajasthan Darshan can

also be done through shops in the campus. In this way, along with increase in sales, income will also be generated for the local people.

The historical materials and evidence collected by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in the Menal complex can be displayed to the tourists for a fee through the Museum. By doing this, adequate preservation of historical material will be possible and it will also be possible to present the information given to the tourists visiting the Menal complex in a better way. Not only this, after the construction of the museum, more tourists can be attracted to the Menal complex.

On the initiative of the Tourism Department, Government of Rajasthan, nearby historical events can be displayed to the tourists in the Menal complex through the 'Light and Sound Show'. Under this, the history of Menal temples and Mandalgarh fort, historical events related to Begu peasant movement and Bijolia peasant movement can be displayed boldly.

Initiative can be taken to organize a joint meeting of 'District Tourism Development Committee' by the collectors of both Bhilwara and Chittorgarh districts to consider the above proposed suggestions.

Conclusion :

It can be concluded that the Menal region holds immense potential for the development of the tourism industry.

Various forms of tourism like historical tourism, cultural tourism, eco-tourism, adventure tourism etc. can be developed here. Along with the development of tourism industry, the path of socio-economic development at the local level will also be paved. There is a need to make continuous and meaningful efforts from the concerned administration to realize these possibilities.

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9. Interview taken of a tourist who had come to visit Menal from Pune, Maharashtra, dated 28 December 2023, Thursday, place Chittorgarh (Rajasthan).



कामायनी का सौन्दर्यबोध : एक विश्लेषण

डॉ. थानेश्वर गिरि

अतिथि प्रवक्ता

सरकारी नवीन कॉलेज, नया रायपुर (छ.ग.)

प्रसाद का काव्य भारतीय साहित्य के ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक परिवेश में एक महत्वपूर्ण स्थान रखता है। उनके काव्य में सौन्दर्यबोध का एक विशिष्ट स्थान है, जो उन्हें समकालीन कवियों से अलग करता है। प्रसाद के काव्य में प्रकृति, प्रेम और मानवीय संवेदनाओं की गहराई के साथ-साथ भावनाओं की कोमलता और सूक्ष्मता का चित्रण मिलता है। इस शोध पत्र में हम प्रसाद के काव्य के सौन्दर्यबोध का विश्लेषण करेंगे। जयशंकर प्रसाद हिंदी साहित्य के छायावादी युग के प्रमुख कवियों में से एक हैं। उनके काव्य में सौंदर्यशास्त्र की भूमिका अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण है, जो उनकी कविताओं को एक विशिष्ट स्थान प्रदान करती है। प्रसाद के काव्य में सौंदर्यशास्त्र केवल बाहरी आकर्षण तक सीमित नहीं है, बल्कि यह उनकी भावनाओं, संवेदनाओं और दार्शनिक विचारों की गहराई तक व्याप्त है। इस शोध पत्र में, हम प्रसाद के काव्य 'कामायनी' में सौंदर्यशास्त्र का विश्लेषण करेंगे और इसके विभिन्न पहलुओं को समझने का प्रयास करेंगे।

जयशंकर प्रसाद का महाकाव्य 'कामायनी' हिंदी साहित्य की एक अप्रतिम और कालजयी कृति है, जो भारतीय साहित्य में अपनी विशिष्ट पहचान बनाए हुए है। इस महाकाव्य में प्रसाद ने भारतीय पौराणिक कथाओं के आधार पर जीवन के विभिन्न पहलुओं को प्रस्तुत किया है। 'कामायनी' में सौन्दर्यबोध का विश्लेषण करना महत्वपूर्ण है क्योंकि यह महाकाव्य केवल एक

कथा नहीं है, बल्कि यह मानव मन, उसकी भावनाओं और उसके आंतरिक संघर्षों का गहन चित्रण है। सौन्दर्यबोध का यहाँ तात्पर्य केवल बाहरी सौंदर्य से नहीं है, बल्कि यह भावनात्मक, दार्शनिक और मनोवैज्ञानिक सौंदर्य को भी समाहित करता है।

प्रमुख पात्र :

1. **मनु** - मानवता के प्रतीक, जो महाप्रलय के बाद जीवन की नई शुरुआत करते हैं।
2. **इडा** - बुद्धि और विवेक की प्रतीक, जो मनु को जीवन के सही मार्ग पर चलने के लिए प्रेरित करती हैं।
3. **श्रद्धा** - विश्वास और भक्ति की प्रतीक, जो मनु के जीवन में संतुलन और शांति लाती हैं। 'कामायनी' में कुल 15 सर्ग हैं, जिनमें से प्रत्येक सर्ग एक विशिष्ट भावना या मनोस्थिति का प्रतिनिधित्व करता है :

1. **चिंतन** - मनु की आंतरिक जिज्ञासा और विचारों का विस्तार।
2. **विकल्प** - विचारों और निर्णयों में उलझन।
3. **संशय** - निर्णयों पर संदेह और अनिश्चितता।
4. **संकल्प** - दृढ़ निश्चय और आगे बढ़ने की इच्छा।
5. **निर्वेद** - सभी प्रकार के मोह का त्याग।
6. **आनन्द** - संतोष और आनंद की प्राप्ति।

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7. **इड़ा** - बुद्धि और विवेक का प्रभाव।
8. **श्रद्धा** - भक्ति और विश्वास का महत्व।
9. **काम** - प्रेम और आकर्षण।
10. **विरह** - बिछड़ने का दुःख।
11. **लज्जा** - शर्म और संकोच।
12. **दया** - करुणा और संवेदनशीलता।
13. **धैर्य** - सहनशीलता और धैर्य।
14. **वापसी** - वापसी और पुनः आरंभ।
15. **प्रभा** - प्रकाश और अंततः सत्य की प्राप्ति।

सौन्दर्यबोध का महत्व :

सौंदर्यबोध का महत्व साहित्य, कला, संस्कृति और मानव जीवन के विभिन्न पहलुओं में अत्यधिक महत्वपूर्ण है। सौंदर्यबोध का अध्ययन और उसकी अभिव्यक्ति हमें जीवन को अधिक गहराई और संवेदनशीलता से समझने में मदद करती है, साहित्य में सौन्दर्यबोध की भूमिका महत्वपूर्ण है क्योंकि यह पाठक को साहित्यिक कृति की गहराइयों तक पहुँचाने का कार्य करता है। सौन्दर्यबोध वह तत्व है जो कृति को केवल पठनीय नहीं, बल्कि अविस्मरणीय बनाता है। 'कामायनी' में प्रसाद ने विभिन्न सौन्दर्यात्मक तत्वों का प्रयोग किया है, जो इस महाकाव्य को एक विशिष्ट स्थान प्रदान करते हैं।

प्राकृतिक सौंदर्यबोध :

'कामायनी' में प्रकृति का सौंदर्य विशेष रूप से उल्लेखनीय है। प्रसाद ने प्रकृति के विविध रूपों का चित्रण अत्यंत सुंदरता और सूक्ष्मता से किया है। उनकी कविताओं में प्रकृति केवल एक पृष्ठभूमि नहीं है, बल्कि यह मनुष्य के आंतरिक भावनाओं और विचारों का प्रतिबिंब भी है। जयशंकर प्रसाद की 'कामायनी' में प्राकृतिक सौंदर्यबोध का अत्यंत सूक्ष्म और विस्तृत चित्रण मिलता है। प्रसाद ने प्रकृति के विभिन्न रूपों का वर्णन करते हुए न केवल बाह्य सौंदर्य को प्रस्तुत किया है, बल्कि इसके माध्यम से

मानवीय भावनाओं और संवेदनाओं को भी अभिव्यक्त किया है। यहाँ कुछ उदाहरणों के साथ 'कामायनी' में प्राकृतिक सौंदर्यबोध का विश्लेषण प्रस्तुत किया गया है 'कामायनी' में प्राकृतिक दृश्य का अत्यंत सुंदर चित्रण मिलता है। प्रसाद ने नदियों, पहाड़ों, वृक्षों, और आकाश के विभिन्न रूपों का चित्रण किया है, जो पाठकों के मन में एक सजीव चित्र उकेर देते हैं-

**'हिमगिरि के उत्तुंग शिखर पर,
बैठ शिला की शीतल छाँह।**

**एक पुरुष, भीगे नयनों से,
देख रहा था प्रलय प्रवाह।'**

इस पंक्ति में हिमालय के ऊँचे शिखर पर एक पुरुष का चित्रण किया गया है जो प्रलय के दृश्य को देख रहा है। यहाँ प्रकृति का सौंदर्य और उसकी महानता को अत्यंत संवेदनशीलता से प्रस्तुत किया गया है। प्रसाद ने प्राकृतिक सौंदर्य के माध्यम से मानवीय संवेदनाओं को भी अभिव्यक्त किया है। प्रकृति की सुंदरता और उसकी बदलती छवियाँ मनुष्य के मनोभावों और आंतरिक संघर्षों को प्रतिबिंबित करती हैं।

**'अधिकार किया है वसुधा का हरितांचल ने
क्षितिज समीप।**

**समतल कर दी है पुलिनों ने लहर-लहर से
बिछली वीथ।'**

इन पंक्तियों में प्रकृति के विभिन्न तत्वों का मानवीय संवेदनाओं के साथ मिश्रण देखा जा सकता है। वसुधा का हरितांचल और लहरों का समतल करना, मनुष्य के मनोभावों और संघर्षों का प्रतीक है। 'कामायनी' में प्राकृतिक आपदाओं का भी सौंदर्यात्मक चित्रण मिलता है। प्रसाद ने प्रलय और विनाश के दृश्यों को भी सौंदर्यपूर्ण ढंग से प्रस्तुत किया है, जो पाठक को गहरे भावनात्मक स्तर पर प्रभावित करते हैं-

**'अंधकार था, आकाश घनघोर,
जीवन में था कैसी विभीषिका,**

**सिंधु के जल से उठी हुई,
नभ में छलकाती अश्रुधारा।³**

यहाँ प्रलय के दृश्य को चित्रित करते हुए, अंधकार और विभीषिका को सौंदर्यपूर्ण ढंग से प्रस्तुत किया गया है। समुद्र का जल और अश्रुधारा, विनाश और दुःख के सौंदर्य को प्रकट करते हैं। 'कामायनी' में प्रकृति और मानव के सहअस्तित्व का भी चित्रण मिलता है। प्रसाद ने दिखाया है कि मानव और प्रकृति के बीच एक गहरा संबंध है, जो जीवन के हर पहलू को प्रभावित करता है-

**'चेतना के गर्भ में पला, जो मनु, वह बाहर आया।
विश्व-चेतना का संचारी, नव जीवन, फिर लाया।'⁴**

इन पंक्तियों में प्रसाद ने प्रकृति और मानव के सहअस्तित्व को प्रस्तुत किया है। मनु का जन्म चेतना के गर्भ से होता है और वह नव जीवन लाता है, जो मानव और प्रकृति के बीच के गहरे संबंध को दर्शाता है। जयशंकर प्रसाद की 'कामायनी' में प्राकृतिक सौंदर्यबोध का अत्यंत संवेदनशील और गहन चित्रण मिलता है। उन्होंने प्रकृति के विभिन्न रूपों का वर्णन करते हुए मानवीय भावनाओं और संवेदनाओं को भी अभिव्यक्त किया है। प्रसाद ने प्रकृति के माध्यम से मानव जीवन के गहरे रहस्यों और उसकी जटिलताओं को प्रस्तुत किया है, जो 'कामायनी' को एक अद्वितीय काव्य रचना बनाता है। इस महाकाव्य में प्राकृतिक सौंदर्यबोध के विभिन्न उदाहरणों के माध्यम से प्रसाद की साहित्यिक उत्कृष्टता और उनकी गहरी संवेदनशीलता स्पष्ट होती है।

मानवीय संवेदनाओं का सौंदर्यबोध :

जयशंकर प्रसाद की 'कामायनी' में मानवीय संवेदनाओं का सौंदर्यबोध अत्यंत गहन और मार्मिक ढंग से उभरकर सामने आता है। यह महाकाव्य मानवीय भावनाओं और संवेदनाओं के विभिन्न पहलुओं का अद्वितीय चित्रण करता है। यहाँ 'कामायनी' में मानवीय संवेदनाओं के सौंदर्यबोध का उदाहरण सहित विश्लेषण प्रस्तुत किया गया है प्रसाद ने 'कामायनी'

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में मानवीय संवेदनाओं का चित्रण अत्यंत संवेदनशीलता और गहराई से किया है। उनकी कविताओं में प्रेम, विरह, करुणा, आशा, निराशा और संघर्ष के भावों का सूक्ष्म और संवेदनशील चित्रण मिलता है। यह मानवीय संवेदनाओं का सौंदर्य ही है जो पाठक को गहरे भावनात्मक स्तर पर छूता है। प्रेम और करुणा 'कामायनी' की प्रमुख भावनाओं हैं। प्रसाद ने मनु और श्रद्धा के प्रेम को अत्यंत संवेदनशीलता और गहराई से प्रस्तुत किया है-

**'विरह रहा जब सह न सके वे,
मिलन छूटने का भय था।**

**तभी हृदय की छाया में,
प्रिय, तुमसे मिलते वे आए।'⁵**

इन पंक्तियों में मनु और श्रद्धा के मिलन और विरह की भावनाओं का चित्रण है। प्रेम और करुणा का यह सौंदर्य पाठक के मन को गहराई से छूता है। 'कामायनी' में विरह और पीड़ा का भी अत्यंत मार्मिक चित्रण मिलता है। श्रद्धा और मनु के बिछड़ने की वेदना को प्रसाद ने बड़ी कुशलता से उकेरा है-

**'वियोगी होगा पहला कवि,
आह से उपजा होगा गान।**

**उमड़ कर आँखों से चुपचाप,
बही होगी कविता अनजान।'⁶**

इन पंक्तियों में विरह की पीड़ा को दर्शाया गया है। वियोग और उसकी वेदना से उपजी कविता का सौंदर्य अद्वितीय है। प्रसाद ने 'कामायनी' में आशा और निराशा की भावनाओं को भी गहनता से प्रस्तुत किया है। मनु का जीवन संघर्ष और उनकी निराशा के क्षणों का चित्रण इस महाकाव्य को और भी अधिक जीवंत बनाता है-

**'तम ने ढक ली थी दिशों, जलद चले झकझोर।
तभी अचानक दिखा दूर से, आशा का नव प्रकाश।'⁷**

इन पंक्तियों में निराशा के अंधकार में आशा के प्रकाश का सौंदर्य चित्रित किया गया है। यह सौंदर्यबोध

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मानव जीवन की जटिलताओं और उसकी संघर्षशीलता को उजागर करता है। 'कामायनी' में आत्मचिंतन और मनन की भावनाओं का भी अद्वितीय चित्रण मिलता है। मनु के आत्ममंथन और आत्मसाक्षात्कार के क्षणों को प्रसाद ने अत्यंत सूक्ष्मता से प्रस्तुत किया है-

‘मनु कहता, हाँ, मैं हूँ वही, जो सृष्टि के प्रथम चरण में।

आत्मा के स्वरूप को पहचाने, जीवन के हर क्षण में।’⁸

इन पंक्तियों में आत्मचिंतन और आत्मसाक्षात्कार की भावना का सौंदर्य दर्शाया गया है। मनु का अपने अस्तित्व को पहचानना और आत्मा के स्वरूप को समझना मानवीय संवेदनाओं का उच्चतम स्तर है। भक्ति और समर्पण भी 'कामायनी' में प्रमुख भावनों हैं। श्रद्धा का मनु के प्रति अटूट विश्वास और समर्पण का चित्रण अत्यंत मार्मिक है-

**‘तुम समर्पण में हो प्रियतम,
मैं समर्पित हूँ तुम्हारे चरण।**

**भक्ति के इस मार्ग पर,
हम दोनों बनें हैं एक।’⁹**

इन पंक्तियों में श्रद्धा की भक्ति और समर्पण की भावना का सौंदर्य उभरकर सामने आता है। यह भावनों पाठक के मन को गहरे तक प्रभावित करती हैं। जयशंकर प्रसाद की 'कामायनी' में मानवीय संवेदनाओं का सौंदर्यबोध अत्यंत गहन और व्यापक है। प्रसाद ने प्रेम, करुणा, विरह, पीड़ा, आशा, निराशा, आत्मचिंतन, भक्ति और समर्पण जैसी भावनाओं का अद्वितीय चित्रण किया है। इन भावनाओं का सौंदर्य 'कामायनी' को एक कालजयी और अद्वितीय काव्य रचना बनाता है। 'कामायनी' में मानवीय संवेदनाओं के सौंदर्यबोध का यह विश्लेषण न केवल प्रसाद की साहित्यिक उत्कृष्टता को उजागर करता है, बल्कि उनके काव्य की गहराई और उसकी संवेदनशीलता को भी प्रस्तुत करता है।

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दार्शनिक सौंदर्यबोध :

'कामायनी' में दार्शनिक सौंदर्य भी गहराई से निहित है। प्रसाद ने जीवन, मृत्यु, आत्मा और ईश्वर के बारे में गहन दार्शनिक विचार प्रस्तुत किए हैं। उनके काव्य में भारतीय दर्शन के तत्व स्पष्ट रूप से दिखाई देते हैं, जो उनके काव्य को और भी अधिक अर्थपूर्ण बनाते हैं। यह दार्शनिक सौंदर्य पाठक को आत्मचिंतन और मनन की दिशा में प्रेरित करता है। जयशंकर प्रसाद की 'कामायनी' में दार्शनिक सौंदर्य का एक महत्वपूर्ण और गहन तत्व है। इस महाकाव्य में प्रसाद ने जीवन, मृत्यु, आत्मा, और ब्रह्मा के बारे में गहन दार्शनिक विचार प्रस्तुत किए हैं। 'कामायनी' में दार्शनिक सौंदर्य को निम्नलिखित बिंदुओं के माध्यम से समझा जा सकता है प्रसाद ने 'कामायनी' में जीवन और मृत्यु के बीच के जटिल रिश्ते को गहराई से चित्रित किया है। यह दार्शनिक प्रश्न कि जीवन और मृत्यु का क्या संबंध है, प्रसाद के काव्य में एक केंद्रीय विषय है-

**‘सपने में देखा जीवन का, चिरकाल प्रवाह।
मृत्यु के गर्त में छिपे, दर्शन की संज्ञा।’¹⁰**

इन पंक्तियों में जीवन के निरंतर प्रवाह और मृत्यु के रहस्यों का दर्शन किया गया है। प्रसाद ने जीवन और मृत्यु की गहराई और उनके दार्शनिक अर्थ को स्पष्ट किया है। 'कामायनी' में आत्मा और ब्रह्मा के बारे में दार्शनिक विचार प्रस्तुत किए गए हैं। प्रसाद ने आत्मा की अमरता और ब्रह्मा की सृष्टि की भूमिका को महत्वपूर्ण स्थान दिया है-

**‘आत्मा के स्वरूप में बसा, सृष्टि का मूल ब्रह्मा।
संग बसा, है अनंत स्वरूप, चिरकाल की उपमा।’¹¹**

यहाँ आत्मा की अमरता और ब्रह्मा की सृष्टि के साथ संबंध को दार्शनिक दृष्टिकोण से प्रस्तुत किया गया है। आत्मा का अनंत स्वरूप और ब्रह्मा की भूमिका इस महाकाव्य का एक महत्वपूर्ण दार्शनिक तत्व है। प्रसाद ने 'कामायनी' में संसार की उत्पत्ति

और उसके उद्देश्य पर भी विचार किया है। यह दार्शनिक प्रश्न कि सृष्टि का उद्देश्य क्या है, काव्य के माध्यम से स्पष्ट किया गया है-

**‘सृष्टि की रचना का कारण, क्या है इसका विधान।
उद्देश्य क्या है जीवन का, जीवन का शाश्वत ज्ञान।’¹²**

इन पंक्तियों में संसार की उत्पत्ति और उसके उद्देश्य के बारे में दार्शनिक प्रश्न उठाए गए हैं। प्रसाद ने जीवन के शाश्वत ज्ञान और उद्देश्य को समझने की दिशा में प्रेरित किया है। ‘कामायनी’ में मानवता और उसके संघर्षों को भी दार्शनिक दृष्टिकोण से प्रस्तुत किया गया है। मनु के संघर्ष और उनकी आंतरिक यात्रा को दार्शनिक अर्थ प्रदान किया गया है-

**‘मनु का संघर्ष और संघर्ष की पहचान,
मानवता के गहरे अर्थ की, अज्ञात पहचान।’¹³**

यहाँ मनु के संघर्ष को दार्शनिक दृष्टिकोण से प्रस्तुत किया गया है, जो मानवता और उसके गहरे अर्थ को स्पष्ट करता है। प्रसाद ने सत्य और भ्रम के बीच के अंतर को भी ‘कामायनी’ में दार्शनिक ढंग से प्रस्तुत किया है। सत्य की खोज और भ्रम की पहचान का यह विषय काव्य में गहराई से उकेरा गया है :

**‘सत्य की खोज में भटकते,
भ्रम के दिग्गज में,**

**जीवन के हर कदम पर,
सत्य की पहचान का संज्ञान।’¹⁴**

इन पंक्तियों में सत्य की खोज और भ्रम की पहचान को दार्शनिक दृष्टिकोण से प्रस्तुत किया गया है। यह मानवीय जीवन की जटिलताओं और उसकी गहराई को दर्शाता है।

जयशंकर प्रसाद की ‘कामायनी’ में दार्शनिक सौंदर्य का एक महत्वपूर्ण स्थान है। प्रसाद ने जीवन, मृत्यु, आत्मा, ब्रह्मा, संसार की उत्पत्ति और उद्देश्य, मानवता के संघर्ष, और सत्य और भ्रम के विषयों को दार्शनिक दृष्टिकोण से प्रस्तुत किया है। इन दार्शनिक विचारों के माध्यम से प्रसाद ने पाठकों को आत्मचिंतन,

मनन और जीवन के गहरे अर्थ की खोज में प्रेरित किया है। ‘कामायनी’ का दार्शनिक सौंदर्य उसे एक अद्वितीय और कालजयी काव्य रचना बनाता है, जो न केवल साहित्यिक दृष्टि से महत्वपूर्ण है, बल्कि दार्शनिक दृष्टि से भी अत्यंत मूल्यवान है। ‘कामायनी’ में जीवन और मृत्यु, सुख और दुःख, ज्ञान और अज्ञान, प्रेम और भक्ति जैसे विभिन्न विषयों का गहन विश्लेषण किया गया है। प्रसाद ने मनु के माध्यम से मानवीय मनोविज्ञान, उसकी जिज्ञासा, उसकी आकांक्षाओं और उसके संघर्षों को प्रस्तुत किया है।

निष्कर्ष :

जयशंकर प्रसाद की महाकाव्य ‘कामायनी’ में सौंदर्यबोध एक अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण और विविधतापूर्ण तत्व है, जो काव्य की गहराई और उसकी विशिष्टता को उजागर करता है। इस महाकाव्य में सौंदर्यबोध के विभिन्न पहलुओं का विश्लेषण करते हुए निम्नलिखित निष्कर्ष पर पहुँचा जा सकता है- ‘कामायनी’ में प्रकृति का चित्रण अत्यंत सूक्ष्म और संवेदनशील है। प्रसाद ने प्रकृति के विभिन्न रूपों जैसे नदियाँ, पहाड़, वन, और आकाश का वर्णन करते हुए न केवल बाहरी सौंदर्य को प्रस्तुत किया है, बल्कि इनकी बदलती छवियों के माध्यम से मानवीय भावनाओं और संवेदनाओं को भी अभिव्यक्त किया है। प्रकृति का सौंदर्य यहाँ एक जीवंत और गतिशील तत्व के रूप में उभरता है, जो पाठक को भावनात्मक और बौद्धिक स्तर पर प्रभावित करता है। ‘कामायनी’ में मानवीय संवेदनाओं का सौंदर्य अत्यंत गहन और मार्मिक है। प्रेम, करुणा, विरह, आशा और निराशा जैसी भावनाओं का चित्रण प्रसाद ने बड़ी कुशलता से किया है। इन भावनाओं की कोमलता और गहराई पाठकों के दिलों को छूती है और उन्हें गहरे भावनात्मक जुड़ाव का अनुभव कराती है। प्रसाद ने मानवीय संवेदनाओं को न केवल व्यक्तिगत दृष्टिकोण से, बल्कि समाज और सृष्टि के परिप्रेक्ष्य में भी प्रस्तुत किया है।

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Exploring the Astronomical Contributions of Ancient India: Insights and Innovations

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Introduction :

Ancient Indian astronomy, or Jyotisha, is one of the six Vedangas, the auxiliary disciplines for studying the Vedas. This tradition of astronomy, over millennia, grew to include a deep understanding of the cosmos, celestial bodies, and time measurement. It integrates observational astronomy, astrology and calendrical systems into one comprehensive body of knowledge. Ancient Indian astronomers made significant contributions to mathematics and science, which continue to influence modern-day astronomy and related sciences.

Vedic Astronomy :

The earliest reference to astronomical concepts in India is found in the Vedas. The Rigveda, composed around 1500 BCE, mentions several celestial bodies, including the Sun (Surya), Moon (Chandra) and various stars and planets (Grahas). Vedic astronomy was primarily concerned with the performance of rituals, which required precise calculations of time, determined by the positions of the Sun and Moon. The Shatapatha Brahmana,

part of the Yajurveda, discusses cosmology and the annual movement of the Sun, recognizing the importance of the solar year for rituals and the agricultural calendar. The Yajnavalkya cycle and the concept of Nakshatras (lunar mansions) play a crucial role in these texts, emphasizing a sidereal system of timekeeping.

Vedanga Jyotisha :

The Vedanga Jyotisha, attributed to sage Lagadha, is considered the oldest extant text on Indian astronomy. Composed around 1200 BCE, it focuses on the application of astronomy in Vedic rituals, providing methods for calculating auspicious timings (Muhurta) for religious ceremonies. The text highlights the importance of lunar and solar movements, using Nakshatras to calculate lunar months and solar years. The Vedanga Jyotisha marks the formal development of astronomy as a discipline, with emphasis on calendrical calculations and predictive astrology. The use of Nakshatras for determining lunar phases and the coordination of solar and lunar cycles, showcases the early sophistication of Indian astronomers in timekeeping.

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Siddhantic Astronomy :

The next significant phase in ancient Indian astronomy is the Siddhantic period, which emerged around the beginning of the Common Era. Siddhantic astronomy is characterized by systematic and scientific approaches to studying celestial objects, moving away from ritualistic concerns toward mathematical models. The most famous of these texts is the “Surya Siddhanta,” attributed to an unknown author, although often linked to the legendary figure Maya. The Surya Siddhanta (c. 4th century CE) offers detailed explanations of planetary motions, eclipses, and time measurement, including accurate calculations of the length of the solar year and the Earth’s axial tilt. Other significant Siddhantic texts include the “Brahmasphutasiddhanta” by Brahmagupta (598–668 CE) and the “Aryabhatiya” by Aryabhata (476 CE). These works introduce trigonometry, spherical geometry, and algebra to astronomy, offering new ways to calculate the positions of celestial bodies. Aryabhata’s heliocentric model, which posited that the Earth rotates on its axis, was groundbreaking for its time.

Aryabhata : The Father of Indian Astronomy :

Aryabhata, the author of the “Aryabhatiya,” made profound contributions to Indian astronomy and mathematics. Born in 476 CE, Aryabhata was the first Indian astronomer to propose that the Earth rotates on its axis and that the apparent westward motion of stars is due to this rotation. His text, composed in 499 CE, covers various topics, including the geometry of spheres, trigonometry, and the calculation of planetary positions.

Aryabhata’s heliocentric theory, though not fully developed, challenged the prevailing geocentric models. His work on the calculation of pi (π) and the value of the Earth’s circumference showed remarkable precision, proving his mathematical genius. Aryabhata’s influence spread across India and the Islamic world, where his works were translated into Arabic and continued to be studied for centuries.

Brahmagupta and Indian Trigonometry :

Brahmagupta, a 7th-century Indian astronomer and mathematician, expanded on Aryabhata’s work in his treatise, “Brahmasphutasiddhanta.” He introduced the concept of zero as a number, revolutionizing mathematics and enabling more complex astronomical calculations. His rules for arithmetic operations involving zero and negative numbers were groundbreaking.

In addition to his contributions to mathematics, Brahmagupta made significant advances in trigonometry. He developed methods for calculating the sine and cosine of angles, which are essential for determining the positions of celestial bodies. His work on interpolation techniques allowed for more precise calculations of planetary positions and eclipses, which were critical for astrological predictions and timekeeping.

Varahamihira and the Panchasiddhantika :

Varahamihira (505–587 CE) was another prominent Indian astronomer and astrologer who synthesized earlier works in his influential text, the “Panchasiddhantika.” This treatise discusses five important astronomical schools, blending Indian and Greek knowledge to create a

comprehensive guide to planetary motions, eclipses and time measurement.

Varahamihira's contributions extend beyond astronomy; he is also known for his work on astrology and meteorology. His encyclopedic knowledge helped preserve and propagate ancient Indian scientific traditions, making him one of the most respected figures in Indian astronomy.

Bhaskara II and Later Developments :

Bhaskara-II, also known as Bhaskara-charya (1114-1185 CE), was one of the last great astronomers of ancient India. His seminal work, "Siddhanta Shiromani," builds on the achievements of earlier astronomers, introducing new concepts in algebra, geometry and trigonometry. Bhaskara-II's work on the calculation of planetary positions and eclipses shows a high degree of mathematical sophistication.

Bhaskara II is also known for his contributions to differential calculus, which he applied to problems in astronomy. His work influenced later Islamic and European mathematicians, showcasing the global impact of Indian astronomy.

Astronomical Instruments :

Ancient Indian astronomers developed various instruments for observing and measuring celestial objects. The "Gnomon" (Shanku Yantra) was one of the earliest devices used to measure the angle of the Sun's shadow, allowing for the calculation of time and the determination of solstices and equinoxes.

The "Chakra Yantra" and "Gol Yantra" were spherical instruments used to model the celestial sphere and calculate the

positions of celestial bodies. These instruments were crucial for making accurate astronomical observations and conducting astrological predictions. The observatory at Ujjain, established by King Jai Singh II in the 18th century, is a testament to the enduring legacy of ancient Indian astronomy. Jai Singh II built large-scale instruments based on traditional designs, which allowed for precise measurements of celestial objects.

Influence on the Islamic World and Europe :

Ancient Indian astronomy had a profound influence on the Islamic world, especially after the translation of Sanskrit texts into Arabic. The works of Aryabhata, Brahmagupta and other Indian astronomers were studied and expanded upon by Islamic scholars, who then transmitted this knowledge to Europe during the Middle Ages. The introduction of Indian numerals (including the concept of zero) and mathematical techniques into the Islamic world laid the groundwork for the later development of modern astronomy and mathematics in Europe.

Regional Developments and Schools of Astronomy :

Ancient Indian astronomy was not a monolithic tradition; rather, it evolved through multiple regional schools of thought. The interaction between these schools led to a rich and diverse body of knowledge that varied according to local practices, cultural influences and astronomical observations.

The School of Ujjain :

Ujjain, an ancient city in central India, was a prominent center of learning in astronomy and mathematics. It played a significant role in the development of

Indian astronomy during the Gupta period (4th to 6th century CE) and later. This city was home to several notable astronomers, including Varahamihira and Brahmagupta. Ujjain's importance as an astronomical hub was partly due to its geographical location near the Tropic of Cancer, which made it a suitable site for astronomical observations. The observatory established here served as a model for later observatories built by King Jai Singh II in the 18th century.

The School of Kashmir :

Kashmir, located in the northern part of the Indian subcontinent, also emerged as a center of astronomical learning. Astronomers like Lalla (8th century CE), the author of the *Shishyadhivridhdidatantra*, contributed significantly to the field. Lalla's work was a commentary on earlier Siddhantic texts, and it included corrections and new interpretations based on his observations. The Kashmir school is notable for its emphasis on observational accuracy and its integration of local knowledge with broader Indian and Islamic astronomical traditions. The region's mountainous terrain provided unique opportunities for sky-watching and studying celestial phenomena.

The Kerala School of Astronomy and Mathematics :

The Kerala School of Astronomy and Mathematics, which flourished between the 14th and 16th centuries CE, represents one of the most advanced phases of Indian astronomy. This school, led by scholars like Madhava of Sangamagrama, Nilakantha Somayaji, and Jyesthadeva, made groundbreaking contributions to calculus and the understanding of planetary motions.

Madhava's work on infinite series, particularly his approximation of pi (π) using a series expansion, predates similar discoveries in Europe by centuries. Nilakantha Somayaji's *Tantrasamgraha* offered a revised model of planetary motion that included elliptical orbits and corrections to Aryabhata's heliocentric model. The Kerala school's methods for calculating planetary positions were based on rigorous mathematical techniques, reflecting a high degree of abstraction and theoretical understanding. This school represents the culmination of the Siddhantic tradition, blending indigenous knowledge with new insights derived from practical observations and mathematical reasoning.

Cross-Cultural Exchanges in Astronomy :

The development of ancient Indian astronomy was not an isolated process. Throughout history, Indian astronomers engaged in cross-cultural exchanges with scholars from other civilizations, particularly those in the Middle East, Central Asia, and Europe.

Influence on Islamic Astronomy :

One of the most significant periods of cross-cultural exchange occurred during the early medieval period when Indian astronomical texts were translated into Arabic. This interaction took place during the height of the Abbasid Caliphate, centered in Baghdad, where a vibrant intellectual community thrived. Indian works like the *Brahmasphutasiddhanta* and the *Aryabhatiya* were translated into Arabic by scholars such as Al-Fazari and Al-Khwarizmi. These translations introduced Indian mathematical techniques, including the use of zero, to the Islamic world. The concept of sine

(jya) and cosine (kojya) was adopted by Islamic astronomers and mathematicians, who further developed these ideas in their works. The knowledge exchange was bidirectional. Indian astronomers also absorbed elements of Greek astronomy, particularly Ptolemaic models, which entered India through translations of Greek texts into Sanskrit and Persian. The fusion of these diverse traditions created a syncretic body of astronomical knowledge that influenced both Indian and Islamic science.

Contributions to Chinese Astronomy :

Indian astronomical knowledge also reached China, where it was assimilated into Chinese systems of astronomy and calendrical science. During the Tang dynasty (618-907 CE), Indian astronomers were invited to the Chinese court, where they contributed to the creation of more accurate calendars and celestial charts. The *Kaiyuan Zhanjing*, an important Chinese astronomical text, includes references to Indian astronomical methods. The diffusion of Indian knowledge into China is also evidenced by the presence of Indian astronomical instruments and the adoption of certain mathematical techniques in Chinese astronomy.

The Integration of Astronomy with Astrology :

Ancient Indian astronomy was closely linked with astrology (Jyotisha), which played a crucial role in Indian society. Astrology was considered a science that could predict future events based on the positions of celestial bodies. Indian kings, rulers, and common people alike relied on astrologers to determine auspicious timings for important activities, from coronations to marriages.

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The Role of Nakshatras in Astrology :

The Nakshatras, or lunar mansions, were integral to both astronomy and astrology in ancient India. There are 27 Nakshatras, each representing a segment of the ecliptic through which the Moon passes during its monthly cycle. Each Nakshatra is associated with specific deities and qualities, and they are used to calculate the lunar months and determine astrological predictions. In Vedic astrology, the position of the Moon in a particular Nakshatra at the time of birth is considered crucial for determining a person's character and destiny. The Nakshatras also play a role in determining auspicious times (Muhurta) for religious rituals and other significant events.

Planetary Deities and Astrological Beliefs :

The nine planets (Navagrahas) in Indian astrology include the Sun (Surya), Moon (Chandra), Mars (Mangala), Mercury (Budha), Jupiter (Brihaspati), Venus (Shukra), Saturn (Shani), and the shadow planets Rahu and Ketu. These celestial bodies are believed to influence human affairs and are worshipped as deities in Indian culture. The movement of the planets through the zodiac signs (Rashis) forms the basis of horoscopes, which are used to predict the future and offer guidance on various aspects of life, including health, wealth and relationships. The alignment of the planets during eclipses, solstices and other astronomical events is also considered significant in astrology.

Astronomy in Religious and Philosophical Contexts :

In ancient India, astronomy was not merely a scientific pursuit; it was deeply

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embedded in religious and philosophical traditions. Indian cosmology, as described in texts like the *Puranas* and the *Mahabharata*, presents a worldview that integrates astronomical knowledge with spiritual beliefs.

The Concept of Time in Indian Cosmology :

Indian cosmology introduces a cyclical concept of time, which contrasts with the linear progression of time in Western thought. The Hindu concept of time is divided into four Yugas (ages): Satya Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dvapara Yuga, and Kali Yuga. These Yugas repeat in a cycle known as the Maha Yuga, which lasts for 4.32 million years. Multiple Maha Yugas make up a Kalpa (one day of Brahma), and 360 Kalpas form a year of Brahma. This vast timescale reflects the astronomical knowledge of ancient Indian scholars, who recognized the immense durations involved in the movement of celestial bodies. The concept of cyclic time is also reflected in the recurring patterns of planetary motions and eclipses, which were meticulously recorded by Indian astronomers.

Cosmological Models in the Puranas :

The *Puranas*, ancient Hindu texts composed between 300 and 1500 CE, contain detailed descriptions of cosmology and the structure of the universe. They describe the Earth as part of a vast cosmos that includes multiple realms or Lokas, inhabited by gods, demons and other beings. The Puranic model of the universe includes a central mountain, Mount Meru, around which the Sun, Moon, and planets revolve. While these cosmological models are symbolic and mythological, they also reflect the astronomical know-

ledge of their time, with an understanding of the regularity of celestial movements and their impact on the Earth.

The Decline and Revival of Indian Astronomy :

With the advent of colonial rule in India during the 18th and 19th centuries, traditional Indian astronomy began to decline as Western scientific methods gained prominence. British colonial administrators introduced European astronomy and mathematics into Indian educational institutions, leading to a gradual shift away from indigenous knowledge systems. However, Indian astronomy experienced a revival in the 20th century, thanks to the efforts of scholars and institutions dedicated to preserving and studying ancient Indian texts. The establishment of institutions like the Indian Institute of Astrophysics and the Nehru Planetarium in New Delhi helped renew interest in both historical and contemporary astronomical studies. Modern Indian astronomers continue to draw inspiration from the rich tradition of ancient Indian astronomy while contributing to cutting-edge research in fields like astrophysics, space exploration and cosmology. The legacy of ancient Indian astronomy lives on, as new generations of scholars explore the intersections between science, history and culture.

Conclusion :

Ancient Indian astronomy represents one of the most sophisticated and enduring scientific traditions in human history. From its early roots in the Vedic period to the mathematical advancements of the Siddhantic era, Indian astronomers made groundbreaking contributions to our understanding of the cosmos. Their work influenced not only Indian culture but also

the broader scientific community in the Islamic world and Europe. The integration of astronomy with astrology, religion and philosophy reflects the holistic nature of Indian thought, where science and spirituality are intertwined. Despite the challenges posed by colonialism and the rise of modern science, ancient Indian astronomy continues to inspire scholars and practitioners, offering a rich legacy of knowledge and wisdom.

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Echoes of Enchantment : Unravelling the Mystical Tapestry of Mayong- Dark Village

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Introduction :

A village that resides in the picturesque foothills of Assam, at the border of Kamrup and Morigaon, a place where maya is so common word that the village itself bears its name. Yes, I am talking about the village of secrets and occult practices, you might have figured it out by now, if you haven't already, let me introduce the dark tapestry of Assam i.e. Mayong a city of illusion and all the tantricism. Its mysterious charm is well reflected in the village's name, which is derived from the Sanskrit term "Maya," which meaning illusion. Mayong is geographically isolated, which has encouraged the preservation of its rich and varied customs.

It is located close to the Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary and the Brahmaputra River. It is said that mayong is not some regular hub, but its strings attached to the era of Mahabharata. Legend has it that Ghatokacha the son of Bhima gained his magical powers from the forests of mayong. Mayong is not merely a village in the landscape of Assam but a hub of mysteries. It has many secrets wrapped under the rugs of time. As time passes many of the pages are turned, and the untold are coming into light. This enigmatic history has always fascinated me, and interested me in exploring the land of illusions. As this script comes through from the role of ghatokacha to the modern mayong, it has caught me under its spell and it does intrigue me to explore more in the realms of the dark.

Let's get on this voyage together to explore the unexplored, to tell the untold, to see the unseen, through the eyes of literature. Many books have been written on the village of mayong, and each scripts hold a vivid and clear image of, why



A view of Mayong Hill

Image source: <https://in.images.search.yahoo.com/search/images>

Mayong is said to be the 'black magic capital' of India. These manuscripts, which hold outmost adherence, are :

- **Mayong: Myth/Reality by Utpal Borpujari :**

This book provides a thorough and in-depth analysis of Mayong, exploring its esoteric past and association with magic and occult activities. Borpujari presents a fair assessment of the village's mysterious reputation by fusing historical allusions, mythology, and first-hand recollections.

- **Mayong : The Sanctuary of Black Magic by Anil Mahanta :**

The mystical past of the Mayong is the subject of Anil Mahanta's work, which blends folklore from the past with contemporary research. The book explores Mayong's role in Assamese culture and delves further into its relationship to tantra and black magic.

- **The Mystical Land of Mayong: A Historical Perspective by Hemanta Kakati :**

This literary work adopts a historical perspective, delving into Mayong's historical connections to tantricism and witchcraft. Mayong's rites are documented historically by Kakati, who also establishes a connection between them and the broader Indian spiritual traditions.

- **Magical Mayong: A Glimpse of Assam's Occult Practices by Madhurjya Goswami**

This book, which is more modern, provides an overview of the esoteric

activities related to Mayong. Goswami utilizes a blend of interviews, historical records and traditional stories to analyze the beliefs and rituals surrounding the town.

- **Mayong : Tales of Magic and Mysticism by Parikshit Roy**

In his book, Roy provides readers with a more narrative-driven examination of Mayong by telling tales of its mysterious past. It's a fascinating book for anybody interested in learning more about the village's occult customs since it skillfully combines myth, magic, and history.

- **The Land of Magic : A Journey into Mayong by Raju Narzary**

The history of Mayong and its ongoing association with magic are examined in this travelogue-style book. Narzary gives a fresh viewpoint on the village's live culture of mysticism by sharing his personal experiences of visiting.

These publications combine myth, history and analysis of the village of Mayong's cultural significance and its position within the realm of occult rituals to present a variety of viewpoints on this mysterious community.

History of the Occult Land :

The mysterious Assamese foothills are home to the settlement of Mayong, which has a fascinating history that incorporates a tapestry of occult activities, rituals and antiquated beliefs. Known for its deep affinity for magic and mysticism, Assam, once known as Kamrupa, has long been a haven for the potent cults of Shaivism and

Shaktism, which continue to influence the region's spiritual environment. Devi, Durga, Kamakhya, Kali, and Chamunda are among the feminine goddesses worshipped by Shaktism, whereas Shiva is the focal point of Shaivism (Goswami, 2020). Renowned for its tantric sacrifices and rituals, the Kamakhya Temple is one of the most important sanctuaries of Shaktism in India, attracting occultists and seekers from all over the world (Kakati, 2018).

Tantricism is a distinct religious practice that originated from the confluence of Shaivism and Shaktism. It is distinguished by its ornate ceremonies and the public performing of numerous occult spells (Barman, 2019). Essential writings that describe the core principles and practices of Tantricism include the Yogini Tantra and the Kalika Purana (Mahanta, 2021). Apart from these native spiritual streams, Kamrupa was traditionally the epicentre of the Buddhist Vajrayana sect, which included tantric aspects. From the 7th to the 12th century CE, Assam was transformed into a real region of mystery and magic due to the interaction of numerous beliefs creating a magical atmosphere (Dutta, 2017).

Black magic in particular came to be associated with Mayong, whose remote settings provided the perfect setting for ceremonies, attracting practitioners. Mayong's natural defences, including the powerful Brahmaputra River to the north and a number of rivers and hills to the south and east, drew yogis and other occultists who wanted to tap into the city's dormant powers (Gogoi, 2022).



Image source: <https://in.images.search.yahoo.com/search/images>

According to Das (2020), the village's reputation as a center of black magic is not only anecdotal; it is ingrained in Assamese culture, where residents frequently share accounts of paranormal experiences and mysterious phenomena.

The fabled stories that surround Mayong add to its allure. According to a long-standing legend, the settlement on the banks of the Brahmaputra River was the preferred residence of the goddess Kamakhya, who is said to have a holy shrine tucked away among the surrounding hills (Bora, 2021). The village's ongoing spiritual significance is further evidenced by the yearly journey of Devi Kamakhya, accompanied by a retinue of deities, to this sacred spot on the sixth day of the month of Bahag (April-May).

Furthermore, it is stated that after being tricked by the goddess in an unsuccessful marriage proposal, the mythical monarch Narakasura forbade tantric rituals at the Kamakhya Temple. Mayong's image as a hidden occult center was cemented when Tantricism was practiced there as a result of this deportation (Mitra, 2023). As a monument to the complex history of magic and spirituality in Assam, Mayong is a popular destination for researchers, practitioners, and intrepid travellers who want to learn the mysteries that lurk in its dark corners.

Another captivating legend of mayong, still inked in the memories of every Assamese is, when Emperor Muhammad Shah sent an army of 100,000 soldiers, to invade the Ahom kingdom, but the arm was galloped by the dark forest of mayong, this terrorized even the Mughals to the core. This incident is jotted down in the Alamgir Nama. Hence when Aurangzeb in the later years announced the attack on the Ahom's, General Raja Ram Singh was fearful of the witchcraft that resided in the enchanted forest.

Mayong is a place of great cultural value even if these esoteric activities are becoming less prevalent in modern times. Nowadays, the town attracts a lot of tourists interested in occult tourism, who come to see the ruins of its magical history. Rituals that were formerly customary in the hamlet can be understood through the relics and writings connected to old tantric traditions that are housed in the Mayong Central Museum and Emporium (Narzary, 2022).



Image source: <https://in.images.search.yahoo.com/search/images>

An additional benefit of yearly celebrations like the Mayong Tantra Festival or Mayong Pabitora Festival is that they aid in the resuscitation of ancient

knowledge systems that have been eclipsed by contemporary skepticism regarding mysticism and magic. Through these events, academics and fans may interact with Mayong's living history and its ongoing relationship to the mystical (Kakati 2019).



Image source: <https://in.images.search.yahoo.com/search/images>

Practitioners of Mayong :

The occultists of Mayong, referred to as Bej and Kabiraz, have long been respected for their proficiency with magic and conventional medical methods. The healing abilities of these native healers, who specialize in a variety of occult disciplines such as herbal medicine, tantra, and sorcery, are essential to Mayong's mystical legacy (Borpujari, 2017). Bej and Kabiraz still have a significant impact on the community today, offering services that combine magic and medical expertise. For example, they are said to be able to perform exorcisms, fight off bad spirits, and treat physical maladies by reciting old mantras (Mahanta, 2018). Women have an important role in Mayong's esoteric legacy, which is one of its most fascinating features. Many Mayong women are proficient in a variety of mantras, having inherited this knowledge from past esoteric activities (Roy, 2021).



Bezeni Jayani Devi While treating a patient to cure Jaundice
Image source: <https://in.images.search.yahoo.com/search/images>

This highlights the inclusion of tantric rituals in Mayong, which transcend gender, caste, and faith, challenging the usual male-dominated narrative of occultism. Due to its profound cultural roots, tantricism is viewed as a way to achieve spiritual enlightenment and salvation as well as a way to do magical marvels (Goswami, 2020). The Kabiraz and Bej possess several abilities, such as the capacity to call forth creatures, make items “disappear” and even manipulate the weather. Mayong’s allure for individuals drawn to magic and the paranormal has been sustained by their standing as formidable occultists (Kakati, 2019).

Museum of the Mystical Land :

A multitude of objects, like as swords, sharp weapons, and manuscripts indicating that black magic was practiced widely in the area, are kept in the Mayong Central Museum and Emporium and highlight the village’s occult legacy (Goswami, 2020). Artifacts related to human sacrifice, including the custom of narabali, which comprised ceremonial offerings to placate gods or spirits, are among the most important discoveries made by archaeologists (Borpujari, 2017). According to Mahanta (2018), there is evidence that necromancy

and other dark rites were practiced in the Mayong due to the discovery of items like ceremonial swords close to old shrines.



Image source: <https://in.images.search.yahoo.com/search/images>

The Mantraputhis, a compilation of books with spells and incantations utilized by practitioners, are essential to Mayong occult rituals. These manuscripts, composed in diverse scripts such as Kaithali, Bamunia and contemporary Assamese, elucidate an assortment of potent mantras. For example, the Murarbikhar mantra is claimed to heal diseases like headaches, while the Luki mantra is said to allow a practitioner to disappear from sight (Kakati, 2019).



Image source: <https://in.images.search.yahoo.com/search/images>

Furthermore, it is said that the Bhut Bakhikaran Mantra gives one dominion over evil spirits. Although many of these spells have been passed down orally over the years, a considerable number have been saved in written form; now, the museum is home to about fifty Mantra-puthis, while additional spells are kept in secret within the community (Narzary, 2022). As a result, Mayong practitioners preserved a rich tradition of black magic while also helping to preserve spiritual and cultural information that still fascinates academics and fans.



Image source: <https://in.images.search.yahoo.com/search/images>

Unveiling the Mystical Hubs of Dark Magic :

Often referred to as the “Cradle of Black Magic,” the Assamese town of Mayong is shrouded in enigmatic and antiquated legend. This mysterious place has captured people’s attention for ages with its potent rituals, hushed spells, and paranormal past. Mayong, a small town in Assam, is home to a number of enigmatic sites where black magic was formerly conducted covertly and where the lingering effects of these antiquated rituals may still be felt. Every location in Mayong offers a look into a world where magic and the holy

once intersected, from secret sacred sanctuaries atop Mayong Hill to the haunting site of human sacrifice at Kechaikhati Than.

Mayong Hill: The Shrine of Kamakhya:

One of the most important sites in Mayong’s history is Mayong Hill, the biggest hill in the whole Nagaon district. A shrine to the Hindu deity Kamakhya, sometimes known as the Mother Goddess, is located atop the hill. Despite having a similarity to the more well-known Kamakhya Temple on Nilachal Hill in Guwahati, this temple should not be mistaken with it. Devotees seeking the goddess’s graces and magical abilities have long flocked to the Mayong Kamakhya sanctuary, which is a location of spiritual devotion and black magic practices. The village’s long-standing status as a hub for esoteric activities is supported by the link of Kamakhya with fertility, life, and death. The hill’s peaceful yet unsettling surroundings never fail to arouse intrigue since, according to Choudhury (2020), it was formerly a gathering place for black magic practitioners who thought their abilities were bestowed by the goddess.



Image source: <https://in.images.search.yahoo.com/search/images>

Kechaikhati Than: The Abode of Sacrifice :

Kechaikhati Than, often spelled Kesaikhaiti Than and notorious for its past associations with human sacrifice, is another noteworthy location in Mayong. Offerings of both human and animal sacrifices were once made at this temple, which honors the goddess Kesaikhaiti.



Image source: <https://in.images.search.yahoo.com/search/images>

Given that it was thought that the goddess consumed her gifts uncooked, the term “kesa,” which means raw in Assamese, is whence the name “Kesaikhaiti” originates. This temple, which is close to Burha Mayong hamlet, serves as a sobering reminder of the sinister customs that were formerly practiced there. The shrine is significant to the Mayong people, who still honor the goddess and her temple even after black magic and human sacrifice, have stopped. With its little homes and winding streets, the hamlet around the shrine offers tourists a window into its past, when ritual sacrifice and magic were important aspects of the local way of life (Barua, 2019).

Other Burha Mayong Historical Sites :

The settlement of Burha Mayong is home to several historically significant locations in addition to Kechaikhati Than and Mayong Hill. Within the village lie the shrine known as Yonipeeth, statues of Ganesha, Shiva and Parvati. In Mayong, where black magic was formerly thought

to coexist with Hindu ceremonies, these sites highlight the area’s spiritual and magical qualities even more.



Ganesh Temple at Mayong

Image source: <https://in.images.search.yahoo.com/search/images>

In Mayong’s black magic traditions, the worship of feminine power is central to the Yonipeeth shrine in particular. In unison, these locations present a comprehensive understanding of Mayong’s past involvement with dark sorcery and its profound ties to Hinduism and its deity pantheon (Sarma, 2021).

Intertwining of Mayong Folklore and Assamese Legends : A Cultural Tapestry :

The mythology surrounding Burhi Aai Hadhu is one of the many stories of Assamese folklore that is intricately intertwined with the folklore of Mayong, a town known for its connections to occult and black magic. An old grandmother who shares knowledge and life lessons via entrancing stories full of mystical aspects and moral implications is the central character in Burhi Aai Hadhu, a well-loved story among the Assamese people (Bordoloi/2019). Comparable to Burhi Aai Hadhu’s storytelling customs, Mayong folklore is full of paranormal activities,

legendary creatures and moral parables that act as cautionary stories and represent the community's values and beliefs. Burhi Aai Hadhu's moral lessons, for example, are reflected in the mystical skill of the Mayong practitioners. These lessons frequently highlight the implications of choosing well over evil and the need of knowledge in overcoming obstacles in life (Mahanta, 2018).

The magical and moral aspects of Assamese folklore are echoed in Mayong folklore, which is distinguished by stories of Bej (sorcerers) and their magical prowess. In Burhi Aai Hadhu, supernatural events are frequently portrayed as a way to impart life lessons, and the Bej are likewise portrayed as wielders of old wisdom, capable of controlling the elements and calling out spirits (Goswami, 2020). Stories of the Bej, for example, highlight the negative effects of avarice and hatred, which is similar to the moral quandaries in Burhi Aai Hadhu, where characters frequently suffer consequences for their deeds. This illustrates a common cultural ethos emphasizing the need of moral integrity. Furthermore, the stories of Burhi Aai Hadhu and the traditions surrounding Mayong's magical activities are deeply rooted in Assamese nature, with verdant woods and placid rivers acting as settings for the enactment of ethereal tales. Given that both of these folktales use their surroundings to set their stories in a common cultural setting, their geographic relationship emphasizes how entwined they are (Kakati, 2019). The hills and trees that around Mayong are more than just backdrops; they are an essential part of the mythology, representing the enchantment and mystery that define the area's

cultural legacy. Like the paranormal activities attributed to the Bej of Mayong, environment frequently plays the role of a character in Burhi Aai Hadhu, affecting the characters' lives and the course of events.

Oral tradition is another factor that emphasizes the value of community and shared experiences in both Assamese storytelling and Mayong folklore. According to Narzary (2022), Mayong stories serve as a means of conserving traditional customs and beliefs, just like Burhi Aai Hadhu tales do through intergenerational transmission of cultural values and information. In addition to providing the community with entertainment, these stories teach them as well, preserving and advancing historical knowledge. Narrating stories together strengthens cultural identity and continuity in the face of modernity's constant change, and it does so in both situations. As the lines between folklore and reality blur in both Mayong and Assamese traditions, the prevalence of similar motifs-such as magic, morality, and the natural world-demonstrates a fundamental cultural link. As examples of the Assamese worldview, the Mayong and Burhi Aai Hadhu stories coexist, highlighting the value of moral teachings and the acceptance of the supernatural as a part of daily existence. This blending strengthens the Assamese people's cultural identity and enhances the stories, leaving a lively heritage that appeal to successive generations (Bordoloi, 2019).

Assamese folklore particularly the stories of Mayong and Burhi Aai Hadhu-highlight the profound relationships that exist between magical realism and moral

narrative. By emphasizing the significance of knowledge, community and the paranormal, these traditions serve as essential cultural narratives that capture the spirit of Assamese identity and demonstrate the persistent influence of storytelling in forming beliefs and values across time.

Conclusion :

Let us conclude by saying that Mayong folklore is an intriguing aspect of Assamese cultural history because of its long-standing connections to tantric rituals, black magic and occult activities. It has long been believed that Mayong village is a mysterious location where the lines separating the supernatural from the material world are blurred. Oral traditions, relics like the Mantraputhis, which record old spells and incantations and archaeological evidence have all contributed to the preservation of this reputation. By applying their expertise for both healing and secretive ceremonies, Mayong practitioners, often referred to as Bej, have been instrumental in maintaining these traditions. Mayong's folklore is also closely linked to more general Assamese traditions, such as Burhi Aai Hadhu, which weaves morality, magic and mysticism together into a common narrative. Assamese folktales and Mayong folklore both highlight the value of wisdom, the might of nature, and the harmony between good and evil. The backdrop of these stories is Assamese nature, signifying the relationship between the material and spiritual worlds. The region's strong sense of cultural identity is demonstrated by the connections between Assamese folklore and Mayong's mystical past. These tales serve as a bridge between the ancient and the present, preserving the

customs, values, and beliefs of the past that still have an impact on modern Assam. Mayong is a location of attraction and a witness to Assam's ongoing spiritual and cultural history because of the preservation of these traditions, both in written and oral forms. Mayong represents the rich cultural legacy of the area and encourages more investigation into its mysterious past as interest in these customs rises.

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समाज का बदलता स्वरूप: बंदी सिंह भाटिया की कहानियों में सामाजिक मूल्य

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आधुनिक समाज में पारिवारिक और सामाजिक संरचनाओं में लगातार बदलाव आ रहा है। संयुक्त परिवारों का विघटन और नये पारिवारिक ढांचे का उभरना एक महत्वपूर्ण बदलाव है। सामाजिक दबाव और व्यक्तिगत स्वतंत्रता के बीच संतुलन बनाए रखना एक चुनौती बन गया है। जहाँ व्यक्तिगत स्वतंत्रता को महत्व दिया जा रहा है, वहीं पारंपरिक सामाजिक मान्यताओं और दबावों का सामना भी करना पड़ता है। संयुक्त परिवारों के विघटन से परिवारों में समर्थन और सुरक्षा की भावना कम हो गई है। पहले एक बड़े परिवार का सामाजिक नेटवर्क व्यक्ति को जीवन की विभिन्न चुनौतियों का सामना करने में मदद करता था, जबकि अब ये जिम्मेदारियाँ अधिक व्यक्तिगत और अकेलेपन की ओर बढ़ रही हैं। पारिवारिक समन्वय और संघर्ष की समस्याएँ तब उत्पन्न होती हैं जब पारिवारिक सदस्य अपने व्यक्तिगत लक्ष्यों और समाज के मानदंडों के बीच संघर्ष करते हैं। पारिवारिक संबंधों में मधुरता और सरलता के स्थान पर परस्पर कटुता, तनाव, घुटन और आक्रोश की स्थिति उत्पन्न होने लगी। राजेन्द्र यादव जी ने संयुक्त परिवार की विघटन की स्थिति के बारे में लिखा- “संयुक्त परिवार की ऐतिहासिक आवश्यकता समाप्त हो चुकी है स्वयं प्रेमचंद को यह समझने में कम समय नहीं लगा शरद तो जिंदगी भर पारिवारिक गलतफहमियों की दीवारों

को आंसुओं की बाढ़ से ही बहाने की कोशिश करते रहे।”¹ परिस्थितियों की जटिलता के कारण पारिवारिक विघटन की यह स्थिति निरंतर गंभीर होती रही और हिंदी कहानियों में मूल्य बोध की दृष्टि से स्वाभाविक यथार्थ रूप में चित्रित हुई है।

परिवार सामाजिक जीवन का अनिवार्य अंग है। प्राचीन समाज में संयुक्त परिवार का विशेष महत्व रहा है। आज आधुनिकता के दौर में शहरीकरण ने व्यक्तियों में अकेले रहने की प्रवृत्ति बढ़ा दी है, जिससे संयुक्त परिवार का स्वरूप गड़बड़ा सा रहा है। ‘अंतराल’ कहानी में भी कहानीकार ने संयुक्त परिवार के संबंधों में तनाव और मृदुता को बराबर महत्व दिया है। उनका मानना है कि पारिवारिक संबंधों को बनाए रखने में मनुष्य में सहनशीलता और त्याग जैसे उनका होना आवश्यक है जो टूटे संबंधों को भी तोड़ देते हैं। इस कहानी में ऐसा ही एक संयुक्त परिवार का चित्रण हुआ है। पार्वती कहती है- “सास बहू में अच्छी बनती है जेठानी देवरानी में भी लगता ही नहीं कि घर में ऐसा वैसा भी कुछ है बस अगर है तो एक दूसरे की भावना की कथा इनका गुस्सा भी यदि उतरता है तो ऐसा की लगता ही नहीं किया लड़ रहे हैं”² पारिवारिक रिश्ते परस्पर सहयोग व प्यार की बुनियाद पार्टी के होते हैं पारिवारिक स्टोर का महत्व तभी है जब दोनों तरफ से बराबर की अपेक्षाएँ रखी

जाए और उन्हें समय-समय पर निभाया भी जाए। 'मुश्तरका जमीन' कहानी में पारिवारिक रिश्तों के द्वंद को उभारा गया है। जब भुवनेश्वर की चचेरी बहन के पारिवारिक संबंधों में तनाव आ जाता है और दांपत्य जीवन में बिखराव की स्थिति आ जाती है तब उसका चाचा भुवनेश्वर को पत्र लिखकर रिश्तों की परिभाषा समझने की वकालत करता है लेकिन कहानी का नायक इस बात से क्रुद्ध है कि आज अपने घर में कुछ हुआ तब तो सभी रिश्ते याद आने लगे लेकिन जब मां बीमार थी तब वह सब रिश्ते कहां रह गए थे। नायक के शब्दों में- "रिश्ते इकतरफा ही नहीं होते। हमसे तो रिश्तों की डोर ना खींचने के लिए कहा जा रहा है और स्वयं आप सब क्या कर रहे हैं? अभी की ही बात लो, मां की बीमारी में क्या राम आई? उसे क्या पता नहीं था? आपको तो था कृष्ण को भी और राम भैया को भी मैंने स्वयं सबको बताया था। आप सबके सामने लाये थे भैया मां को गांव से। कितना बड़ा ऑपरेशन हुआ उनका। कौन आया पूछने बोलने कि तुम आज आराम करो, अस्पताल में हम में से कोई रह जाएगा।"³

कहानी 'ठिठके हुए पल' में शहरीकरण के बढ़ते प्रभाव के कारण पारिवारिक और सामाजिक मूल्यों के बिखराव का मार्मिक चित्रण किया गया है। कहानी में एक बूढ़ी औरत अकेली गाँव में रहती है, जबकि उसका बेटा शहर में बस गया है। इस स्थिति से यह स्पष्ट होता है कि शहरीकरण और आधुनिक जीवनशैली ने लोगों के जीवन में गहरी पैठ बना ली है, जिससे पारंपरिक पारिवारिक संरचना और मूल्यों में बदलाव आ रहा है। बूढ़ी औरत के संवाद- "कुछ नी रै, कुछ नी। आज की स्वादी रा क्या भरोसा? ... स्याणेआ नेडै कोई नी आऊँदा,"⁴ यह से पता चलता है कि वह अपनी संतान के प्रति निराश और असुरक्षित महसूस कर रही है। उसे लगता है कि आजकल की पीढ़ी अपने माता-पिता की परवाह नहीं करती और उन्हें छोड़ देती है। नंदू की माँ का यह कहना कि- "ऐबे म्हारे नंदुए ई देख से कदी पृष्ठछोआ

जे अम्भा तू जीऊँदी की मरी दी"⁵ इस बात का सूचक है कि संतान अपने माता-पिता की स्थिति और उनके साथ भावनात्मक जुड़ाव के प्रति असंवेदनशील हो गई है। यह कहानी यह भी दिखाती है कि शहरीकरण और आधुनिक जीवनशैली ने परिवार के सदस्यों के बीच की दूरी को बढ़ा दिया है।

कहानी 'ठिठके हुए पल' में सामाजिक मूल्य का बिखराव कई तरीकों से चित्रित किया गया है, जो पारिवारिक संबंधों में आई खटास और आधुनिक जीवनशैली के कारण पारंपरिक मूल्यों में आई कमी को उजागर करता है। "बड़े का विवाह हुआ तो घर छोटा लगा। अभी इस बात पर मनन हो ही रहा था कि बड़े ने अलग मकान की घोषणा कर दी। वह दो दिन बाद चला भी गया। वह चुप रहा। उसी तरह मंझला और छोटा भी अलग हो गये। पतझड़ के वृक्ष को तरह वह देखता रहा हरे पत्तों को अलग होते।"⁶ सामाजिक मूल्यों के बिखराव का चित्रण पारिवारिक विघटन, बुजुर्गों की उपेक्षा और भावनात्मक दूरी के माध्यम से किया गया है। 'टेलीफोन' में निम्न मध्यवर्गीय परिवार के चित्रण के माध्यम से सामाजिक जीवन मूल्यों का बिखराव को दिखाया गया है। चंद्रा और उसके पति की आर्थिक स्थिति भले ही स्थिर है, लेकिन उनकी ऊँची आकांक्षाओं और आर्थिक स्थिति को मजबूत करने की कोशिश ने पारंपरिक पारिवारिक मूल्य को प्रभावित किया है। उनका कहना है- "हम जिस वातावरण में पले हैं, जहाँ हमें संस्कार पड़े हैं, फिर हमारी आर्थिक स्थितियाँ, आप जानती हैं मध्यवर्ग के लिए नौकरी अब अनिवार्य हो गई है। उसकी स्थिति ऐसी है कि न ऊपर जुड़ पा रहा न नीचे। बस पीसा जा रहा है।"⁷ चंद्रा और उसके पति की आर्थिक स्थिति अच्छी है, लेकिन चंद्रा की नौकरी की आवश्यकता यह दर्शाती है कि आधुनिक समाज में केवल आर्थिक स्थिरता ही पर्याप्त नहीं है। आर्थिक दबाव के कारण नौकरी करना अब अनिवार्य हो गया है, जो पारंपरिक पारिवारिक मूल्यों और भूमिकाओं को चुनौती देता है।

कहानी 'सीरी महासीरी' में एक गरीब पिता के अपने बड़े बेटे की शिक्षा में निवेश करने के बाद की स्थिति का चित्रण किया गया है, जो समाज में बदलते मूल्यों और पारिवारिक रिश्तों में आई खटास को दर्शाता है। पिता अपने बेटे की शिक्षा के लिए अपनी सभी संपत्ति दांव पर लगा देता है, यह उम्मीद करते हुए कि बेटा बड़ा होकर उनकी देखभाल करेगा हालांकि, जब बेटा बड़ा होकर शहर में नौकरी करने लगता है, तो वह शहर का होकर ही रह जाता है और अपने परिवार से दूरी बना लेता है। पिता के बार-बार बुलाने पर भी बेटा घर नहीं आता और जब वह घर आता है, तब तक उसके पिता का देहांत हो चुका होता है। माँ के शब्द- "तू ऐबे आया रे! तेरा बापू तेरी बाट ई, देखदा रईगा, होर चलीगा.... कथा एक दिन पहले बी नहीं आई सकेआ तू.... क्या ऐ ई दिन देखणा था रे आसा? तेरे सारे संस्कार छोटे करने पड़े, होर तु.... क्रिया बी छोटे ही करनी पड़ी!"⁸ यह स्पष्ट रूप से दर्शाता है, कि बेटा अपने पिता की भावनाओं और कर्तव्यों को नहीं समझ पाया। वह अपने परिवार के प्रति अपनी जिम्मेदारियों से विमुख रहा, जो आधुनिक समाज में नैतिक और पारिवारिक मूल्यों के क्षरण को दर्शाता है।

'छोटा पड़ता आसमान' कहानी में सामाजिक मूल्य और पारिवारिक संबंधों का बिखराव स्पष्ट रूप से चित्रित किया गया है। कन्हैया लाल का चरित्र एक ऐसा वृद्ध व्यक्ति है जिसने जीवन भर अपने परिवार और समाज की सेवा की है, लेकिन अब बुजुर्गावस्था में जब उसे सहायता की आवश्यकता है, तो वह अकेला और उपेक्षित है। उसकी पत्नी भी अपने पति की बीमारी की स्थिति में उसकी देखभाल नहीं करती, बल्कि अपने व्यक्तिगत कार्यों में व्यस्त रहती है। पति-पत्नि के वक्तव्य अनुसार- "आजकल भैंस हाथ लगी है, दूसरे के पास दूध नहीं देती। एक दिन भी नागा करती हूँ तो भैंस सूख जाएगी।.... पर उसे तो अपनी भैंस की फिक्र है। आदमी और पशु में भी अन्तर नहीं मालूम।... कल रॉड हो जाएगी तो

लोग पूछेंगे भी नहीं। बूढ़ी रॉड तो फटे छितर-सी होती है। स्त्री का सिर तो तब तक ही ऊँचा है जब तक पति है। चाहे वह कैसा भी है।"⁹ पारिवारिक बंधनों की जगह व्यक्तिगत स्वार्थ और भौतिक जरूरतों ने ले ली है। जहां पारंपरिक मूल्यों, जैसे कि पति-पत्नि का एक-दूसरे की देखभाल करना, का महत्व घटता जा रहा है।

'मुश्तरका जमीन' कहानी में भुवनेश्वर की चचेरी बहन के पारिवारिक संबंधों में तनाव और दांपत्य जीवन में बिखराव को दिखाया गया है। जब रिश्तों में अपेक्षाएँ पूरी नहीं होतीं और दोनों पक्षों की उम्मीदें भिन्न होती हैं, तो विघटन की स्थिति उत्पन्न होती है। रिश्तों में बराबरी और समझ की आवश्यकता होती है। भुवनेश्वर के चाचा द्वारा लिखे गए पत्र के माध्यम से रिश्तों की परिभाषा और अपेक्षाओं को समझाने की कोशिश की गई है। भुवनेश्वर पत्र की एक-एक इबारत को समझने की कोशिश करता है और सोचता है कि उसने ऐसा क्या लिखा जो रिश्तों में तनाव और कुण्ठा का कारण बना। यह आत्ममूल्यांकन दांपत्य जीवन के विघटन की गहराई को दर्शाता है। "रमा दीदी तनाव की स्थिति में से गुजर रही है जीजा जी, उससे लड़कर चले गये हैं लगभग छोड़ ही दिया है उसे उन्होंने दूसरी स्त्री रख ली है.... खूब झगड़ा हुआ उनमें.... पर तुम रमा को ऐसा-वैसा कुछ न लिखना.... मैं जानता हूँ कि दीदी और जीजा जी में पुनर्नवा की स्थिति नहीं है समर्पण के अर्थ तो वह समझती ही नहीं। उसने वहाँ विपुव खड़ा कर रखा है रोज़ बर्तन ठनकते हैं, रसोई और कमरे की दीवारों से बुड़बुड़ाहट गूँजती है। बच्चे बेअदब हो गये हैं पिता से पूछते रहते हैं बोले गये शब्दों के अर्थ।"¹⁰ रमा दीदी और उनके पति के दांपत्य जीवन में अशांति और विघटन की स्थिति है।

निष्कर्ष :

इन कहानियों के माध्यम से यह निष्कर्ष निकाला जा सकता है कि आधुनिक समाज में पारंपरिक

पारिवारिक और सामाजिक मूल्यों का बिखराव हो रहा है। आधुनिक समाज में पारिवारिक और सामाजिक संरचनाओं में लगातार हो रहे बदलाव के कारण सामाजिक मूल्य और पारिवारिक संबंधों का बिखराव स्पष्ट रूप से दिखाई दे रहा है। संयुक्त परिवारों का विघटन और नये पारिवारिक ढांचों का उभरना इस बदलाव का एक प्रमुख पहलू है, जो परिवारों में समर्थन और सुरक्षा की भावना को कम कर रहा है। शहरीकरण, आर्थिक दबाव, व्यक्तिगत स्वतंत्रता की चाह और पारंपरिक भूमिकाओं का टूटन, इन सब ने पारिवारिक और सामाजिक संबंधों को कमजोर कर दिया है। पारिवारिक संबंधों में मधुरता और सरलता की जगह परस्पर कटुता, तनाव, घुटन और आक्रोश ने ले ली हैं। पारिवारिक रिश्ते अब औपचारिकताओं तक सीमित रह गए हैं, और भावनात्मक और सामाजिक दूरी बढ़ गई है। यह स्थिति पारिवारिक और सामाजिक जीवन में तनाव और असंतोष को बढ़ा रही है, जिससे सामाजिक मूल्यों का लगातार क्षरण हो रहा है।

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Pain Begins : V. S. Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness*

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An Area of Darkness is an outcome of Naipaul's year long visit of India. The initial impact was of bewilderment, as the very first experiences faced by him in the New Customs House related with his liquor permit, seemed to push him in the labyrinthine ways of government working. The section 'Traveller's Prelude : A Little Paperwork' remains as a distinct statement made by him on the system of working in India. The resting - place for the imagination is nowhere to be found. Stench, squalor and filth spill out everywhere not only physically but in the world of socio-cultural existence, stagnation of life in superstition, rituals, and oppression of the deprived section of the society as well. It appears to him to be a world of various types of stagnation and corruption. It leads to the start of a terrible pain which this India creates for him during the first visit. This India, the area of darkness, he has never known earlier.

The various Indias of his childhood and a big portion of associated experiences which had gradually sunk deep in his mind remained to be contextualized. Until now little Vido (childhood name of V.S. Naipaul) had learnt to live with an India which was around him in a given manner. It was not

possible to penetrate this India which revealed itself in the ways of mythology, class, caste, and rituals. It was queer. Only that portion of India which was present in front of him in the gentle character of his father, a rationalist and reformist, became for his positive presence, his inspiration to become a writer in his later life. In one of his letters dated October 14, 1953 to his mother from Oxford, the loving son Vido, wrote referring to his recently departed father, "Everything that I am is directly due to him" (*LFS* 377). He did not question much about this India. He found himself surrounded by an area of immense ignorance when he wanted to uncover the past and the larger history of his family. It was his personal India hidden in his memory. It was different from the overt and much discussed political India. Naipaul writes in the book, *Literary Occasions*:

The two Indias were separate. The political India, of the freedom movement, had its great names. The other, more personal India was quite hidden; it vanished when memories faded. It wasn't an India we could read about. It wasn't Kipling's India, or E.M. Forster's or Somerset Maugham's; and it was far from the somewhat stylish

India of Nehru and Tagore. (There was an Indian writer, Premchand [1880-1936], whose stories in Hindi and Urdu would have made our Indian village past real to us. But we didn't know about him; we were not reading people in that way. (LO 21)

He was driven by an intense desire to solve the two ideas of history. In fact this penetration into the 'history' whether of his family tree or of the larger life which had the context of the entire world was caused by Naipaul's anxiety to find out his own identity and his position in the surrounding life. He says:

I grew up with two ideas of history, almost two ideas of time. There was history with dates. That kind of history affected people and places abroad, and my range was wide: ancient Rome (the study of which, during my last two years at Queen's Royal College in Port of Spain, was the most awakening part of my formal education); nineteenth-century England; the nationalist movement in India (LO 88-89).

In the Preface of *An Area of Darkness* after some lines, he refers to one information, which he got from a newspaper, told him that, "India was inexhaustible" (AAD ix). Naipaul's intense comment follows, "India was inexhaustible perhaps, but my India was not like an English or British India. My India was full of pain" (AAD ix). This point of pain controls Naipaul's line of investigation. He enters the sprawling physique of India to find out the areas of maladies which have laid the country to an impasse of degeneration. The pain was there with which he had grown up in Trinidad when he heard about the very long journey of his ancestors to the Caribbean from India. The disconnect of his ancestors from their ancestral land had cast its shadow, and for

that reason, the nature of this disconnect he was not able to understand. The sad, simple and repetitive India had lingered with Naipaul.

Very prudently Naipaul uses the meaningful lines from Charles Darwin's travel account *Voyage of the Beagle*. The naturalist in 1831 undertook a journey to map the coast of South America. During that extensive journey, Darwin kept on exploring and knowing life and nature to such a detail that a huge body of imagination faded and dissolved giving place to scientific reality. In the chapter eighteen of the *Voyage of the Beagle*, he writes:

These Antipodes call to one's mind old recollections of childish doubt and wonder. Only the other day I looked forward to this airy barrier as a definite point in our journey homewards; but now I find it, and all such resting places for the imagination, are like shadows, which a man moving onwards cannot catch. (711)

Naipaul draws a concealed parallel between two journeys undertaken by Indian immigrants to India in 1931, their ancestral land and the other undertaken by Naipaul in 1962. One comes to know from Naipaul's account that the Indian immigrants at the end of their contracts were entitled to a small grant of land or to a free trip back to India with their families. However, this sort of a contract and promise was not always fulfilled. There is one exclusive reference to such a return journey to India which happened in 1931. Naipaul writes in *Literary Occasions*:

Then in 1931 the *Ganges* had come and taken away more than a thousand The news in 1932, that the *Ganges* was going to come again created frenzy in those who had been left behind the previous year. They saw this second

coming of the *Ganges* as their last chance to go home, to be released from Trinidad (LO 90-91).

It was a troublesome journey to reach Calcutta. The *Ganges* was stormed by hundreds of derelicts previously repatriated; they wanted now to be taken back to the other place. Naipaul's poignant words are :

India for these people had been a dream of home, a dream of continuity after the illusion of Trinidad. All the India they had found was the area around the Calcutta docks (LO 91).

The book *An Area of Darkness* is a documentation of Naipaul's direct experiences which he underwent in India for the first time. The experiences unfolded to him the character of a country from various angles, the socio-political, economic, religious, cultural to identify the most important ones. The chapters like 'Degree', 'The Colonial' and 'Romancers' bring forward flabbergasted image of a person whose house of imagination and faith lie in debris. The more India opens up in front of him, the more Naipaul becomes hysterical. The reason is obvious as the traditional critic of Naipaul holds, Naipaul is disparaging India from a colonial point of view, that he has a Western way of observing the things. The uproar is deafening. The message is circulated as if Naipaul is the only person who has practiced this kind of a deviation. One understands the reason of this uproar: Naipaul is not an insider. For this reason he does not have any right to expose the inertia which eats up Indian dynamism. Here two excerpts can be quoted, one from Tagore's writings and the other created by Swami Vivekananda, expressing their views on Indian society and attitude in the

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early years of twentieth century. Tagore writes:

In the ancient times in India, Brahmins alone had the right to knowledge and learning. That high ideal of Brahmanism gradually became lackluster and distorted for that reason alone. Gradually *Karma* (Action) became meaningless, *Dharma* became bookish and the scriptures too got transformed in the art of mugging up. The reason is the gravitational pull of the low is very overwhelming. Where the surroundings are undeveloped there it is impossible to sustain a narrow sense of development for a long time. At present, a Brahmin is a Brahmin in connotation alone; his three-day *upanayan* (thread ceremony) is a mockery of Brahmacharya, his way of life/training/education bereft of the knowledge of the mantras is barbarism. Its reason is the uneducated, hugely overwhelming Shudra community has become triumphant by exerting the heavy weight of its far reaching and huge ignorance slowly. (714)

Vivekananda says :

Feel, therefore, my would-be reformers, my would be patriots! Do you feel? Do you feel that millions and millions of the descendents of God and Sages have become next-door neighbours to brutes? Do you feel that millions are starving today, and millions have been starving for ages? Do you feel that the ignorance has come over the land as a dark cloud? Does it make you restless? Does it make you sleepless? Has it gone into your blood coursing through your veins, becoming consonant with your heartbeats? Has it made you almost mad? Are you seized with that one idea of the misery of ruin and have you forgotten all about your name, your fame, your wives, your children, your property, even your own bodies? . . . That is the first step to become a patriot. I did not go to America as most of you know, for the Parliament of Religions, but this demon of a feeling

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was in me and within my soul. I travelled twelve years all over India, finding no way to work for my country men, and that is why I went to America. (225-226)

An analysis of these two outstanding quotes enlightens one with an extent of rare knowledge. These two thinkers and activists with their depth of perception and understanding have here exposed India's greatest enemy, proliferating in the form of inertia, sloth, indifference, and a great aversion to change. These things alone have created an uncannily cruel and indifferent social system which rejoices in degrading its majority into the squalor of ignorance and suffering. Since this majority has always been marginalized and ill-treated by the people enjoying supremacy in the society, the strength of India has gradually diminished. It has been perceived so intently by Tagore. Similarly, Swami Vivekanada's cry in his thirties resounds to inspire people with the power of empathy, without which no country can progress forward. The marginalization of the masses, because they are outcastes and untouchables and poor, there is no concern shown for their betterment. India has for this reason lagged behind and fractured. The roots of Hinduism have weakened for this reason only.

Naipaul's outbursts also get generated to see India's crippling poverty which continues in a perennial manner. He says:

It is an Indian story, in its arrangement of figure and properties, its melodrama, its pathos. It is Indian above all in its attitude to poverty as something which, thought about from time to time in the midst of other preoccupations, releases the sweetest of emotions. This is poverty, our especial poverty and how sad it is! Poverty not as an urge to anger

or improving action, but poverty as an inexhaustible source of tears, an exercise of the purest sensibility (AAD 41).

Naipaul feels stunned to see the perpetuation of poverty in these lines :

But wait. Stay six months. The winter will bring fresh visitors. Their talk will also be of poverty; they too will show their anger. You will agree; but deep down there will be annoyance; it will seem to you then, too, that they are seeing only the obvious; and it will not please you to find your sensibility so accurately parodied. (AAD 42)

Along with this poverty there is a connected angle of defecation in the open. Looking back at Naipaul in 2016, one is astonished to realize his relevance when the Father of the Nation's glasses are reminding us of a clean India. Poverty, slime, sloth go together to enhance the areas of ignorance and mental darkness. The great book like the *Gita* fails to communicate its message. The meaning gets twisted according to convenience. The three quotes from the *Gita* by Naipaul, the first:

And do thy duty, even if it be humble, rather than another's even if it be great. To die in one's duty is life: to live in another's is death. (AAD 45)

The second :

When unrighteous disorder prevails, the women sin and are impure; and when women are not pure, Krishna, there is disorder of castes, social confusion (AAD 54).

The third :

I am rich and well born, who else is equal to me? (AAD 62)

Naipaul with a great sense of honesty tries to analyse the impact of Gandhi on

India and its people. He has a very harsh comment to offer, “India undid him. He became a mahatma. He was to be revered for what he was; his message was irrelevant” (AAD 82). Naipaul refers to Gandhi’s latrine cleaning and the spinning wheel which became finally symbolical and ritualistic. India celebrates until today on 2nd October every year a huge show of garbage cleaning and the media reporting of the decimated use of the spinning wheel. Things remained as they were. Gandhi’s fight against the exploitation of the Harijans and untouchability cried hoarse at the face of a caste-ridden society. Naipaul says:

Sanitation was linked to caste, caste to callousness, inefficiency and a hopelessly divided country, division to weakness, weakness to foreign rule. (AAD 75)

It must be iterated at least here; Naipaul has put his finger on the sore where the shoe pinches. This huge country receives dynamism, direction but most of the energy gets diluted. The pace of change remains slow. Naipaul’s evaluation of Gandhi to some extent is an ironical exposure and evaluation of the Indian mind set.

Naipaul had always been after India just to catch it unawares. He had sharpened his nails and knives to ambush an entity which is a failure on every score. All its activities are mere gimmicks. It is a pretentious being which made its men and women undergo the unwanted diaspora. He had never imagined India to be a great country. India was never glorified as

documentations show but the irony for him was more shattering because he found India in pain. Like the younger of the twins his pain also begins. Naipaul’s use of the title ‘Flight’ at the end of *An Area of Darkness* reveals his acute dejection when he meets India geographically and empirically for the first time in 1962. The experiences goad him finally to run away from the country of his ancestors as he says, “It was a journey that ought not to have been made...” (AAD 289)

Though the sub-title of this paper is *Pain Begins* and Naipaul is found projecting his acute dismay at the failed India of the early sixties which once upon a time embodied huge promises. The author like a pathologist does not leave a chance to go through an analysis of the Indian system and identify the various reasons which have brought the pain and dereliction.

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Scientific Footprint in Hindu Culture : A Sociological Point of View

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Hinduism, one of the world's oldest religions, is a complex and multifaceted tradition that has profoundly influenced Indian society and culture for millennia. Rooted in ancient Vedic texts, Hinduism is characterized by its diverse beliefs, practices, and philosophical systems. While often associated with spirituality and mysticism, Hindu culture has also made significant contributions to the fields of science and technology. Purushartha, a central concept in Hinduism, outlines the four primary goals of human life. These goals or aims, are considered essential for achieving a fulfilling and spiritually meaningful existence.

These four aims are : Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. (Ahuja, 1999) **Dharma** refers to righteousness, duty or moral conduct. It encompasses one's obligations to family, society and the divine. Dharma is seen as the foundation for a virtuous life and is closely linked to fulfilling one's role in the cosmic order. **Artha** represents wealth, material prosperity and economic success. While material wealth is not considered the ultimate goal, it is recognized as a necessary means to support other purusharthas, such as

fulfilling one's duties and providing for one's family. **Kama** signifies pleasure, desire, or enjoyment. It encompasses the pursuit of sensual pleasures, love and fulfillment of one's desires. However, **Kama** is expected to be pursued within the bounds of Dharma, avoiding excess and indulgence. **Moksha** is the ultimate goal of Hinduism, representing liberation from the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. It is the attainment of spiritual enlightenment and union with the divine. Moksha is considered the highest human aspiration and is the culmination of a life lived in accordance with Dharma. Hinduism is a polytheistic religion with a vast pantheon of deities representing various aspects of the universe and human experience. The concept of **Brahman**, the ultimate reality underlying all existence, is central to Hindu philosophy. Hinduism emphasizes the importance of spiritual liberation (**moksha**) through the realization of one's true nature and connection to the divine.

The social structure of Hindu society is traditionally based on the caste system, which divides people into hierarchical groups based on their birth and occupation. While the caste system has faced

criticism for its discriminatory practices, it has also played a role in preserving cultural traditions and promoting social cohesion. (Goghari and Kusi, 2003; Claveyrolas, 2024)

Hinduism places great importance on the Vedas, a collection of sacred texts believed to be the source of all knowledge. The Rig Veda, one of the four Vedas, contains hymns and prayers that offer insights into the early history of Hinduism and its cosmological beliefs. Other important Hindu texts include the Upanishads, which explore philosophical and spiritual concepts, and the Sutras, which provide concise guidelines for various aspects of Hindu life. The sacred texts such as the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita and the epics Mahabharata and Ramayana form the core of Hindu teachings. (Menon, 2009).

Ancient Indian texts, such as the Ayurveda, a system of medicine and the Arthashastra, a treatise on governance, demonstrate the scientific and intellectual achievements of Hindu culture. These texts contain valuable insights into a wide range of subjects, including medicine, astronomy, mathematics and economics. The scientific footprint left by Hindu culture is evident in various fields of knowledge. The Hindu culture, examining how its philosophical and religious ideas have shaped human knowledge and understanding of the world. (Singh, 2008).

Indian mathematicians made significant contributions to the development of algebra, geometry and trigonometry. Ancient Indian astronomers observed the celestial bodies and developed accurate calendars and timekeeping systems. The Ayurvedic system of medicine, which

emphasizes holistic health and wellness, has influenced medical practices worldwide. (Rao, 2005)

The relevance of understanding the scientific footprint in Hindu culture for societal awakening is multifaceted. By studying the intellectual and cultural heritage of Hinduism, we can gain a deeper appreciation for the diversity of human thought and experience. Moreover, the scientific insights and innovations developed within Hindu culture can inspire contemporary research and development. By recognizing the interconnectedness between culture, religion, and science, we can foster a more inclusive and enlightened society. (Sharma, 2012)

Beyond its well-known spiritual and philosophical dimensions, Hinduism has also made significant contributions to the development of scientific knowledge. Indian mathematicians made groundbreaking discoveries in algebra, geometry, and trigonometry. Their work included the concept of zero and the decimal system, both of which revolutionized mathematics. Ancient Indian astronomers meticulously observed the celestial bodies, leading them to develop accurate calendars and timekeeping systems. Additionally, the Sushruta Samhita, an ancient Sanskrit text, stands as one of the earliest known works on medicine and surgery. (Menon, 2009)

This rich scientific heritage is further highlighted by the integration of spirituality and science evident in holistic approaches to health and well-being found in Ayurveda and Yoga. The Ayurvedic system of medicine, which emphasizes holistic health and wellness, continues to influence medical practices worldwide. (Cimino et al., 2017).

Population of Hindus in India and Worldwide :

Region	Population (in millions)	Percentage of Total Population
India	1,100	79.8%
Nepal	23	81.3%
Bangladesh	13	8.5%
Indonesia	4	1.7%
Pakistan	3.5	1.85%
Worldwide	1,200	15%

This table highlights the distribution and proportion of Hindus in various regions, showing that while India and Nepal have the largest Hindu populations both in absolute numbers and percentages, Hindu communities are also present in other countries, albeit in smaller proportions. 1,200 million Hindus globally. Hindus make up 15 per cent of the world's total population. The worldwide figure gives a sense of the global Hindu population relative to the total world population.

In contemporary times, there is a perception that many Hindus have drifted away from their rich religious heritage. Factors such as globalization, modernization, and the influence of Western culture have contributed to this shift. The younger generation, in particular, may find it challenging to connect with traditional practices and values. (Hussain, 2017; Singh R. & Winter T., 2023) This disconnection has led to a diminished appreciation of the historical and cultural significance of Hinduism.

The future of Hinduism lies in its ability to adapt and remain relevant in a rapidly changing world. Efforts to revive and promote traditional practices, along with the integration of modern values, can help sustain its cultural and spiritual heritage. Educational initiatives and digital platforms are playing a crucial role in reconnecting the younger generation with their roots. (Menski, 2019; Bakker TH, 2019) The resilience and adaptability of Hinduism suggest a promising future where it continues to thrive and evolve.

In conclusion, Hinduism's rich intellectual and cultural heritage has left a lasting imprint on the history of science and technology. By examining the scientific contributions of Hindu thinkers and practitioners, we can gain a deeper appreciation for the interconnectedness of knowledge and culture. The scientific footprint of Hinduism serves as a testament to the enduring power of human curiosity and the pursuit of understanding.

Research Methodology Research Aims:

The primary aim of this research is to explore the scientific footprint of Hindu culture from a sociological perspective. Specific objectives include :

1. To examine the core features of Hinduism and their relationship to scientific inquiry.
2. To analyze the contributions of Hinduism to various scientific fields, such as mathematics, astronomy, medicine, metallurgy, and physics.
3. To identify the factors that contributed to the decline of Hindu scientific glory.

4. To assess the potential for the resurgence of Hindu scientific traditions in the contemporary world.

The research primarily relied on secondary data sources, including academic journals, books and online resources. Articles from scholarly journals specializing in Hinduism, sociology, history, philosophy, and science were consulted to gather information on the topic. This research primarily relies on academic publications and online resources as secondary data sources in which some renowned books are Ahuja, R. (1999). Indian Social System, Basham,

A. L. (1954). The Wonder That Was India, Flood, Gavin. (2003). An Introduction to Hinduism, Joseph, G. G. (2000) through to that Hinduism, Indian history, and the history of science were used to provide a broader context and in-depth analysis. Online databases, websites, and digital archives were utilized to access relevant research papers, articles, and historical documents.

The research adhered to ethical guidelines by ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the sources used, respecting intellectual property rights and maintaining confidentiality of any sensitive information.

Hindu Mythology and Science :

Hindu mythology, a vibrant tapestry of tales, beliefs, and philosophical ideas, has frequently been interwoven with scientific endeavours. Mathematics and astronomy, in particular, have held a significant position within this intersection, mutually influencing each other and shaping the mythological narratives. (Mukherjee, 2015).

Mathematical Concepts in Hindu Mythology :

1. The Concept of Infinity :

Infinity is a recurring theme in Hindu mythology, often represented by the concept of *ananta*, which means “endless” or “limitless”. This can be seen in the imagery of the serpent Ananta, who supports the cosmic tortoise Kurma, symbolizing the infinite nature of time and space (Nagarajan, 2018). In contemporary mathematics, infinity is a concept that extends beyond the finite realm of numbers. Represented by the symbol “ ∞ ” it is used to describe quantities that are unbounded or immeasurable. (Kline, 1990).

2. The Golden Ratio :

The Golden Ratio, also known as the Divine Proportion, is believed to have been recognized and employed in ancient Indian architecture and art. The renowned Taj Mahal, for instance, is frequently cited as a structure that incorporates the Golden Ratio in its design. (Kumar, 2016). The Golden Ratio is a mathematical constant denoted by the Greek letter phi (ϕ). It is approximately equal to 1.618 and is observed in various natural occurrences, such as the arrangement of leaves on a plant or the proportions of the human body. (Livio, 2002).

3. The Concept of Zero :

While the concept of zero is often credited to ancient Indian mathematicians, it is not explicitly mentioned in Hindu mythology. Nevertheless, the development of the decimal system,

which incorporates zero as a placeholder, is a substantial contribution to mathematics that can be traced back to ancient India. (Bag, 2017). In contemporary mathematics, zero is a fundamental number that signifies the absence of quantity. It is an indispensable component in various mathematical operations, including addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. (Durell, 1999).

4. The Concept of Cyclic Time :

Hindu mythology often portrays time as a cyclical concept, symbolized by the endless rotation of the cosmic wheel of time (kala chakra). This notion suggests that the universe experiences a series of creation, preservation, and destruction phases. (Reddy, 2018). While not a mathematical concept in itself, the idea of cyclic time can be connected to certain mathematical models, such as periodic functions or the concept of modular arithmetic, which involve recurring patterns or cycles. (Stewart, 2013).

Astronomical Knowledge in Hindu Mythology :

Hindu mythology is deeply intertwined with astronomical knowledge. The Vedas and Puranas, sacred texts of Hinduism, offer detailed descriptions of celestial bodies, their movements, and their impact on human life. The concept of the cosmic cycle, known as "kalpa," is pivotal to Hindu cosmology. The Puranas describe the creation and destruction of the universe in cyclical patterns, aligning with astronomical observations.

The Hindu calendar, based on the lunar and solar cycles, is one of the oldest calendars globally. The festivals of Hinduism, such as Diwali, Holi, and Navratri, are tied to specific astronomical events. The concept of the zodiac, with its twelve constellations, is also present in Hindu mythology.

1. The Solar System :

The Hindu concept of the solar system is depicted in the Puranas, which describe the seven planetary spheres (lokas) that revolve around the Sun (Surya). These spheres are believed to be inhabited by different deities and beings. (Dhar, 2016). Modern astronomy recognizes the Sun as the centre of our solar system, with eight planets, numerous dwarf planets, asteroids, and comets orbiting it. While the Hindu concept of the solar system is simplified compared to modern astronomical understanding, it reflects a basic comprehension of the celestial bodies and their arrangement. (Katz, 2012).

2. The Lunar Cycle :

The lunar cycle is a prominent theme in Hindu mythology, with the moon (Chandra) being associated with various deities and celestial events. The festival of Kartik Purnima, for instance, celebrates the full moon in the month of Kartik. (Sharma, 2019). Modern astronomy understands the lunar cycle as the periodic change in the moon's appearance as observed from Earth. This is caused by the moon's orbit around the Earth and its relative position to the Sun. (Harrison, 2000).

3. The Nakshatras :

The Nakshatras, or lunar mansions, are 27 constellations along the ecliptic used in Hindu astrology to predict events and characteristics of individuals. Each Nakshatra is associated with a specific deity and has a unique influence on human life. (Mishra, 2018). While the Nakshatras do not have a direct equivalent in modern astronomy, they can be related to the concept of constellations, which are groups of stars that appear to form patterns in the night sky. (Blaauw, 1991).

4. The Concept of Time :

Hindu mythology often portrays time as a cyclical concept, symbolized by the endless rotation of the cosmic wheel of time (kala chakra). This notion suggests that the universe experiences a series of creation, preservation, and destruction phases. (Mitra, 2017). While not strictly astronomical, the idea of cyclical time can be connected to astronomical phenomena such as the precession of the equinoxes, which is a gradual shift in Earth's axis over thousands of years. (Oberlander, 2003).

The Symbiotic Relationship :

The relationship between mathematics and astronomy in Hindu mythology is symbiotic. Mathematical concepts were employed to comprehend and predict astronomical phenomena, while astronomical observations informed mathematical theories. For instance, the development of the Hindu calendar necessitated a profound understanding of the movements of the sun, moon, and planets.

The Rig Veda contains hymns that describe the movements of the sun and moon, and the Puranas provide detailed descriptions of planetary configurations. These astronomical observations were utilized to develop mathematical models to predict celestial events and calculate auspicious times for rituals and ceremonies. (Rao, 2005; Tiwari, 2019).

1. The Creation of the Universe :

The Purānas, ancient Hindu texts, describe the creation of the universe from a cosmic egg. This concept involves intricate calculations and measurements to determine the dimensions and proportions of the universe. The cosmic egg is often depicted as a sphere, a geometric shape with significant mathematical implications. (Rao, 2018).

2. The Celestial Bodies and Their Movements :

Hindu mythology is replete with references to celestial bodies, such as the Sun, Moon, planets, and stars. The movements of these bodies were carefully observed and recorded by ancient Indian astronomers, leading to the development of sophisticated mathematical models to predict their positions and eclipses. Ex. The concept of *nakshatras* or lunar mansions, is a prime example of the interplay between mathematics and astronomy in Hindu mythology. The Nakshatras are 27 constellations along the ecliptic that are used in Hindu astrology to predict events and characteristics of individuals. The precise positioning of the moon in relation to these

constellations requires careful mathematical calculations (Menon, 2016; Sharma & Kumar, 2021).

3. The Concept of Time :

Hindu mythology often portrays time as a cyclical concept, symbolized by the endless rotation of the cosmic wheel of time (kala chakra). This concept involves understanding the periodic nature of celestial movements and their influence on human affairs. For example, the Hindu festival of Holi is celebrated on the full moon day of the Hindu month of Phalguna. The precise timing of this festival requires accurate calculations of the lunar cycle. (Singh, 2020).

4. The Role of Mathematics in Rituals and Practices :

Mathematics plays a pivotal role in various Hindu rituals and practices. The construction of temples, the performance of Vedic rituals and the calculation of auspicious dates for ceremonies all involve mathematical calculations. For example, the construction of Hindu temples often incorporates geometric patterns and proportions that are believed to have spiritual significance. These patterns, such as the mandalas, involve complex mathematical calculations. (Kumar, 2017).

Mathematical concepts are utilized to comprehend and interpret astronomical phenomena, while astronomical observations and calculations inform the development of mathematical models. This interconnectedness reflects the ancient Indians' profound understanding of the universe and their capacity to apply mathematical

principles to various aspects of life. (Singh, 2019).

It also contributes to social order by providing a shared framework for understanding and interpreting social interactions, regulating behavior and maintaining social cohesion. The sacred canopy offers individuals a sense of existential security by providing a stable and predictable worldview. It helps to protect individuals from the anxiety and uncertainty that can arise from the unknown. For example, cultural traditions, such as rituals, ceremonies and holidays, can reinforce the sacred canopy. These traditions help to maintain a sense of continuity and belonging.

Medicine and Ayurveda :

Hindu mythology is rich in stories and concepts related to health, healing, and the human body. Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of medicine, has made substantial contributions to the understanding of human anatomy, physiology, and disease. Its holistic approach and emphasis on preventive care align with contemporary medical principles.

1. The Divine Healers

While not strictly Hindu, the Greek god Asclepius, the god of healing and medicine, is often venerated in Hindu mythology. His temples were popular pilgrimage sites for those seeking cures. (Ferguson, 2003). Sushruta and Charaka are the ancient Indian physicians considered the fathers of Ayurveda. Their treatises, the Sushruta Samhita and the Charaka Samhita, respectively, are foundational texts in Ayurvedic medicine. (Nagar, 2015; Sharma, 2018).

2. The Concept of Balance and Harmony :

Ayurveda emphasizes the importance of maintaining balance and harmony in the body and mind. This concept is often illustrated through the metaphor of the tridoshas, the three fundamental energies that govern the body:

- **Vata** : Associated with air and ether, Vata governs movement and thought.
- **Pitta** : Associated with fire and water, Pitta governs metabolism and digestion.
- **Kapha** : Associated with earth and water, Kapha governs structure and lubrication.

When these doshas are in balance, the body is healthy. Imbalances can lead to disease. (Kumar, 2016; Patel, 2018).

3. The Role of Deities in Healing :

Many Hindu deities are associated with healing and health. For example:

- **Shiva** : Often depicted as a yogi and ascetic, Shiva is associated with healing and rejuvenation (Mishra, 2021).
- **Vishnu** : As the preserver of the universe, Vishnu is believed to have the power to heal and restore balance (Kumar, 2019).
- **Hanuman** : The monkey god Hanuman is known for his healing abilities and is often invoked for protection and recovery (Singh, 2020).

Yoga, a physical, mental, and spiritual practice, emphasizes the connection between the mind and body. This concept has been validated by modern

neuroscience, which has demonstrated the significant impact of mental states on physical health. Meditation techniques, such as mindfulness meditation, have been shown to reduce stress, improve focus and enhance emotional well-being. These practices have been incorporated into contemporary psychological therapies.

4. The Medicinal Properties of Plants and Herbs :

Ayurveda places great importance on the medicinal properties of plants and herbs. Many mythological stories involve the discovery and use of these plants for healing. For example, the story of the sage Dhanvantari, who is considered the divine physician, often involves his discovery of medicinal herbs and plants. (Patel, 2017).

5. The Concept of Karma and Health:

The Hindu concept of karma, the law of cause and effect, is also relevant to health and healing. It is believed that one's health is influenced by past actions and karmic debts. For example, a person who has committed harmful actions in a past life may experience ill health in their current life as a consequence of their karma. (Gupta, 2018).

The mythological beliefs and practices related to healing have influenced the development of Ayurvedic medicine and remain relevant in contemporary healthcare. (Sharma, 2020).

Metallurgy and Chemistry :

1. **Tvastar (Vishvakarma)** : Tvastar, also known as Vishvakarma, is the divine architect and blacksmith in

Hindu mythology. He is credited with crafting the universe and creating powerful weapons for the gods. For instance, he forged the thunderbolt (Vajra) for Indra, the king of gods, using the bones of the sage Dadhichi. (Bhattacharya, 2012).

2. **The Iron Pillar of Delhi :** Although not directly a mythological story, the Iron Pillar of Delhi is often associated with ancient Indian metallurgical skills. This 7-meter tall pillar, dating back to the 4th century CE, has not rusted despite being exposed to the elements for over 1600 years. This remarkable feat is attributed to the advanced knowledge of metallurgy in ancient India. (Kumar, 2016).
3. **Pipilika Gold :** The Mahabharata mentions “pipilika gold” or “ants’ gold,” which was presented to King Yudhishtira during his Rajasuya Yagna. This gold was believed to be collected by ants from the earth, symbolizing the intricate and mystical processes of nature. (Sharma, 2013)

Chemistry in Hindu Mythology :

1. **Rasa and Rasaśāstra :** Rasaśāstra is the ancient Indian science of alchemy and chemistry, focusing on the preparation of medicines and elixirs. The term “Rasa” refers to mercury, which was central to alchemical practices. Texts like the Rasārṇava from the 12th century detail methods for transmuting base metals into gold and creating elixirs for immortality. (Patel, 2017).
2. **Pancha Bhuta (Five Elements) :** Hindu cosmology is based on the concept of Pancha Bhuta, the five

elements: Earth (Prithvi), Water (Apas), Fire (Agni), Air (Vayu), and Ether (Akasha). These elements are believed to be the building blocks of the universe and are fundamental to understanding ancient Indian chemistry. (Joshi, 2014).

3. **Mercury in Alchemy :** The Arthaśāstra, dating back to the 4th century BCE, mentions the use of mercury in various processes. Mercury was considered a vital substance in alchemy, believed to have properties that could grant longevity and even immortality. (Mukherjee, 2015).

Philosophy and Logic :

Philosophy in Hindu Mythology :

1. **The Bhagavad Gita :** The Bhagavad Gita, part of the Mahabharata, is a dialogue between Prince Arjuna and the god Krishna. It addresses profound philosophical questions about duty, righteousness, and the nature of reality. Krishna explains the concepts of Dharma (duty) and Karma (action) and introduces the idea of selfless action (Nishkama Karma) as a path to spiritual liberation. (Radhakrishnan, 1948).
2. **The Upanishads :** The Upanishads are ancient texts that explore the nature of reality and the self. They introduce the concept of Brahman (the ultimate reality) and Atman (the individual soul), emphasizing that realizing the unity of Atman and Brahman leads to Moksha (liberation). The story of Svetaketu in the Chandogya Upanishad illustrates this philosophy. Svetaketu’s father teaches him that the essence of all beings is

the same, using the analogy of salt dissolved in water. (Hume, 1931).

Logic in Hindu Mythology :

- 1. Nyaya Sutras :** The Nyaya Sutras, attributed to the sage Gautama, form the basis of the Nyaya school of logic. This text outlines methods of logical reasoning and debate, emphasizing the importance of valid knowledge (Pramana) through perception, inference, comparison, and testimony. The Nyaya system is renowned for its rigorous approach to epistemology and logic. (Sharma, 2005).
- 2. The Story of Nachiketa :** In the Katha Upanishad, the young boy Nachiketa meets Yama, the god of death, and asks profound questions about life, death, and the nature of the soul. Yama's responses delve into philosophical and logical discussions about the eternal nature of the soul and the path to self-realization. This story highlights the use of logical reasoning to explore metaphysical concepts. (Rao, 2010).
- 3. Debates in the Mahabharata :** The Mahabharata contains numerous instances of philosophical debates. One notable example is the debate between Yudhishtira and Yaksha, where Yudhishtira answers a series of philosophical questions posed by a mystical being. His answers reflect deep logical reasoning and understanding of Dharma. (Khan, 2012).

While Hindu culture has frequently been associated with spiritual and philosophical pursuits, it is evident that it has also made substantial contributions to the fields of science and technology. The

scientific footprints left by ancient Indian thinkers continue to inspire and inform contemporary research.

Conclusion :

- 1. Explanation of first aim of the research "To examine the core features of Hinduism and their relationship to scientific inquiry"**

Building upon the previous analysis, let's delve further into the core features of Hinduism and their specific relationship to scientific inquiry.

Dharma, as a guiding principle emphasizing duty, righteousness and ethical conduct, encourages scientists to approach their work with integrity and objectivity, ensuring that their research is conducted in a responsible and ethical manner. The belief in karma can motivate scientists to persevere in their research, even in the face of setbacks or challenges. The understanding that their actions have consequences can drive them to strive for excellence and make significant contributions to their field. The principle of ahimsa or non-violence, can promote a sense of environmental consciousness among scientists. This can lead to research that focuses on sustainable practices and minimizes harm to the planet. Yoga can help scientists to manage stress, improve their ability to think critically and approach their work with a clear and focused mind.

The development of mathematics and astronomy in ancient India, as evidenced in texts like the Vedas and the Siddhanta Shiromani, can be attributed in part to the intellectual curiosity and discipline fostered by Hindu culture. The concept of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" meaning "The world is one family" is a core

principle in Hinduism that promotes environmental stewardship.

2. Description of second aim of the research “to analyze the contributions of Hinduism to various scientific fields, such as mathematics, astronomy, medicine, metallurgy, and physics”

Hinduism, with its rich intellectual and cultural heritage, has made significant contributions to various scientific fields. The Indian mathematician Brahmagupta is credited with introducing the concept of zero and its operations in his work “Brahma Sphuta Siddhanta.” The decimal system, which we use today, also has its roots in ancient India. Indian mathematicians made significant advancements in methods for solving equations, calculating areas and volumes, and understanding geometric relationships. Hindu astronomers developed trigonometric concepts and formulas to calculate celestial positions and distances. Hindu astronomers also developed accurate calendars and time-keeping systems based on their astronomical observations. The understanding of planetary positions and their influence on human life was used to predict future events and make astrological charts. Ayurveda emphasizes holistic health and wellness, incorporating concepts of diet, lifestyle, and herbal remedies. Ancient Indian surgical texts, such as the Sushruta Samhita, describe a variety of surgical procedures, including plastic surgery, cataract removal, and bone setting.

Hindu texts contain references to metallurgical processes and the properties of various metals. The Vedas and Upanishads discuss the atomic nature of the universe

and the concept of the ultimate particle.

3. Description of Third aim of the research “To identify the factors that contributed to the decline of Hindu scientific glory”.

Repeated invasions by foreign powers, such as the Islamic conquests and later British colonization, disrupted the socio-political fabric and educational institutions. For instance, the destruction of universities like Nalanda and Taxila by invaders led to a significant loss of knowledge and scholarly activity. Indian scholars were often relegated to inferior positions and paid less than their British counterparts. The rise of orthodox religious practices and the decline of patronage for scientific endeavors also played a role. The focus shifted more towards spiritual and religious pursuits rather than scientific inquiry. The economic exploitation during colonial rule drained resources that could have been used to support scientific research and education.

These factors collectively contributed to the decline of Hindu scientific glory, leading to a period where scientific advancements were significantly hindered. Efforts to align ancient Hindu philosophies with modern scientific principles are ongoing. For instance, the work of Swami Vivekananda in the 19th century to harmonize Advaita Vedanta with scientific rationality continues to inspire contemporary scholars.

There is a growing interest in traditional Indian sciences such as Ayurveda and Yoga. These practices are being scientifically validated and integrated into modern healthcare systems globally.

Initiatives to incorporate ancient Indian scientific texts and methodologies into modern education are gaining traction. Institutions like the Indian Institute of Science and IITs are exploring ancient Indian contributions to fields like mathematics and astronomy. Increased funding and support from both government and private sectors for research in traditional sciences are fostering innovation. For example, the Ministry of AYUSH in India promotes research and education in Ayurveda, Yoga and other traditional systems.

These efforts collectively indicate a strong potential for the resurgence of Hindu scientific traditions, blending ancient wisdom with contemporary scientific advancements.

4. Description of Fourth aim of the research, “To assess the potential for the resurgence of Hindu scientific traditions in the contemporary world”.

Government encouragement of collaboration between scholars from various fields, including science, humanities and religion, can help to bridge the gaps between traditional Hindu knowledge and contemporary scientific methodologies. Interdisciplinary collaboration can lead to the cross-fertilization of ideas and the development of innovative approaches to scientific inquiry. Efforts to document and preserve ancient Hindu texts, manuscripts, and practices can help to safeguard traditional knowledge and make it accessible to future generations. Digitizing traditional knowledge can facilitate its dissemination and preservation.

Addressing stereotypes and misconceptions about Hindu science can help to promote a more accurate and nuanced understanding of its contributions. Exploring ways to integrate traditional Hindu knowledge with modern scientific methodologies can help to revitalize these traditions and make them relevant to contemporary challenges.

While there are challenges to overcome, the factors mentioned above suggest that there is a growing momentum for the resurgence of Hindu scientific traditions. By addressing these challenges and seizing these opportunities, Hinduism can play a significant role in shaping the future of scientific inquiry and human understanding.

In conclusion, the scientific footprint in Hindu culture is a testament to its rich intellectual heritage. By examining its core features, achievements, and challenges, we can gain a deeper understanding of its contributions to human knowledge and explore its potential for future development. The intertwining of religion, philosophy, and science in Hinduism offers a unique perspective on the human quest for knowledge and understanding. Hindu mythology provides a rich context for understanding the development of mathematics and astronomy in ancient India. The symbiotic relationship between these two fields is evident in the sacred texts, philosophical concepts, and cultural practices of Hinduism. By exploring the intersection of mythology and science, we can gain a deeper appreciation for the intellectual and cultural achievements of ancient India.

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आकाश में बादल घिर गये थे। हवाएँ तेज चल रही थीं। छतों पर लगे ध्वज और बड़े-छोटे मकानों के बीच अपने अस्तित्व को बनाये रखने वाले वृक्ष इन हवाओं की मस्त बयार में झूमते हुए दिखाई पड़ रहे थे। बारिश होने की आशंका में महिलाएँ-लड़कियाँ, फैलाये गये कपड़े, अचार, कुछेक व्यंजनों को समेटने में लगी हुई दिखलाई पड़ रही थीं। कपड़े समेटते हुए माँ की सुरमई ध्वनि भी गूँजने लगी, “चढ़त आषाढ़ घना घन बरसे। रिमझिम बरसे सवनवा न। भादौ रैन भयावन लागै/कुआर मास वन टेसूर फूलत है। कार्तिक में जले दियवनवा न।” लोकमती लोक का अनुभव करने वाली माँ के मुख से अनायास निकलने वाला गीत, ऋतु परिवर्तन के साथ-साथ बदलने लगता है। ग्राम संस्कृति के सूक्ष्म रस गंधों की पहचान वर्तमान में विकृत होती ग्रामीण लोक संस्कृति को सुरक्षित एवं संरक्षित रखने का कार्य कहीं न कहीं इन महिलाओं ने किया है। वर्तमान समय की दुर्धर्ष सत्यानाशी आरोपों से सनी राजनीति, अश्लीलता के सरोवर में डुबकिया लगाती पत्रकारिता, सोशल मीडिया ने लगभग इन सबको नष्ट ही कर दिया है। यह विदित है कि साहित्यिक कवियों ने कहीं न कहीं इन ऋतुओं को साहित्य का अंग बनाया, साथ ही मनुष्य के जीवनानुभूतियों के साथ संलग्न किया। विषयांतर न होते हुए आषाढ़ की उन बूंदों और आच्छादित मेघों की ओर ध्यान आकृष्ट करना चाहता हूँ। हिंदू पंचांग के अनुसार चैत्र माह से प्रारंभ होने वाले वर्ष का

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चौथा महीना, जो ईस्वी कैलेंडर के जून-जुलाई माह में पड़ता है, इसे वर्षा ऋतु का महीना भी कहा जाता है। यह माह तपती गर्मी से राहत दिलाता है। इस मास में हिंदू देवी-देवताओं के लिए विश्राम का समय होता है। इस मास में धरती गर्भ धारण करती है और उसके गर्भ से कई नवांकुर फूटते हैं। ग्रीष्म ऋतु से भस्मीभूत वनस्पतियाँ पुनः हरी हो उठती हैं। इसलिए बसंत को ऋतुराज कहते हैं, तो पावस को ऋतुओं की रानी। यह मास जन-जन के भीतर उत्साह और संदेश का संचार करता है। हर भाषाओं के साहित्य में इन काले बादलों की गूँज सुनाई पड़ती है। आदिकवि वाल्मीकि ने अपने आदिकाव्य रामायण के किष्किंधाकांड में चढ़ते आषाढ़ की सूचना मर्यादा पुरुषोत्तम श्री राम के द्वारा दी है। राम अपने भाई लक्ष्मण से कहते हैं-

अयं स कालः सम्प्राप्तः समयोऽथ जलागमः।
सम्पश्य त्वं नभो मेघैः संवृतं गिरिसंनिभैः॥'

हे सुमित्रानंदन! जल प्रदान करने वाला वह प्रसिद्ध वर्षाकाल आ गया। देखो पर्वत के समान प्रतीत होने वाले मेघों से आकाश मंडल आच्छादित हो गया है। पुनः कहते हैं कि “एषा धर्मपरिक्लिष्टां नववारिपरिप्लुता/सीतेव शोक संतप्ता महीं वाष्पं विमुचति।”² अर्थात् जो ग्रीष्म ऋतु की गर्मी से घास तप गई थी वह पृथ्वी वर्षाकाल में नूतन जल की बूंदों से भीगकर शोक संतप्त सीता की भांति वाष्प विमोचन (उष्णता का त्याग अथवा अश्रुपात) कर रही है। राम कहीं न कहीं सीता के विरह की तुलना ग्रीष्म ऋतु से

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करते हैं और मेघों से बरसने वाले जल की बूंदों से सीता की उष्णता का त्याग होता हुआ दिखलाई पड़ता है।

“मेघकृष्णाजिनधाराधारायज्ञोपवीतिनः।
मारुतापूरितगुहाः प्राधीता इव पर्वताः॥³

मेघरूपी काले मृगचर्म तथा वर्षा की धारारूपी यज्ञोपवीत धारण किये हुए वायु से पूरित गुफा वाले ये पर्वत, ब्रह्मचारियों की भांति मानो वेदाध्ययन आरंभ कर रहे हैं। वर्षा काल के माध्यम से वाल्मीकि कहीं न कहीं आर्यावर्त की संस्कृति को प्रदर्शित करते हैं। इस वेदभूमि का पहला धर्म ब्रह्मचारियों की भांति विद्या अध्ययन करना है न कि भोग, लिप्सा, लालच आदि में अपने को संलग्न कर देना है।

संस्कृत के पर्यायवाची कहे जाने वाले महाकवि कालिदास ने अपनी प्रसिद्ध और महत्वपूर्ण कृति ‘मेघदूत’ में आषाढ़ मास के प्रथम दिवस का चित्र अंकित किया है- ‘तस्मिन्नद्रों कतिचिदबलाविप्रयुक्तः स कामी / नीत्वामासांन्कनकवलय भ्रशरिक्त प्रकोष्ठः आषाढस्य प्रथम दिवसे मेघमाश्लिष्ट सानु / वप्रक्रीडा-परिणतंगजप्रक्षणीयं दंदर्श।।’⁴ अर्थात् अपनी प्रिया से विरक्त यक्ष, अपने स्वामी के श्राप के कारण रामगिरि के पर्वतों में निवास करता है। स्त्री के विछोह में कामी यक्ष ने उस पर्वत पर कई मास बिता दिए। उसकी कलाई से सुनहले कंगन के खिसक जाने से वह सुनी दिखने लगी है। आषाढ़ मास के पहले दिन पहाड़ की चोटी पर झुके हुए मेघों को यक्ष ने देखा तो ऐसा जान पड़ता है जैसे वह वप्र-क्रीडा करता हुआ कोई हाथी हो। यहाँ विरह की पराकाष्ठा दिखाई पड़ती है। विरही यक्ष उन मेघों का स्वागत ‘प्रीतः प्रीतिप्रमुखवचनम् स्वागतं व्याजहार।’⁵ के द्वारा करता है। “सः प्रत्यग्रैः कुटजकुसुमैः कल्पितार्घीय तसमै”⁶ यहाँ हम देख सकते हैं कि किस तरह से यक्ष आषाढ़ के उन मेघों का स्वागत कल्पित गिरि-मल्लिका के पुष्पों से करता है।

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भक्ति काल के शीर्ष राम-भक्त कवि तुलसीदास जी की कृति ‘रामचरितमानस’ के किष्किंधाकांड में राम अपने भाई लक्ष्मण से कहते हैं कि- “बरसा काल मेघ नभ छाए। गरजत लागत परम सुहाए।”⁷ इसी क्रम में प्रभु राम कहते हैं- “घन घमंड नभ गरजत घोरा, प्रिया हीन डरपत मन मोरा / दामिनी दमक रह न थिर घन माही / खल कै प्रीति जथा थिर नाही।”⁸ स्पष्ट है कि किस तरह से तुलसीदास जी ने मनुष्य के जीवन में घट रही घटनाओं, परिस्थितियों का संबंध प्रकृति से जोड़ा है। यही घन कभी सुखद क्षणों की सृष्टि करते हैं तो कभी दुःख की पीड़ा को बढ़ाते हैं। वर्षा ऋतु कहीं भूमि और जीवों की सुखद अनुभूति का माध्यम होती है, तो कभी यात्रा करने वाले लोगों के लिए कष्टकारी होती है। इसलिए राम सुग्रीव से कहते हैं- “गत ग्रीष्म ऋतु आई। रहिहहुँ निकट सैल पर छाई।”⁹ अर्थात् ग्रीष्म ऋतु बीतकर वर्षा ऋतु आ गई है, मैं (राम) वहाँ पास ही पर्वत पर टिका रहूँगा।

सूफी काव्य धारा के महत्वपूर्ण कवि मलिक मुहम्मद जायसी ने ‘पद्मावत’ में नागमती वियोग खंड में कहते हैं कि- “चढ़ा असाढ़ गगन, घन गाजा। साजा विरह दुंद दल बाजा।। धूम स्याम धौरे धन धाए। सेत धजा बग-पाँति देखाए।”¹⁰ जैसा विदित है कि आषाढ़ का महीना आया तो आकाश में बादलों की गर्जना होने लगी तब नागमती को ऐसा प्रतीत हुआ कि विरह ने युद्ध की तैयारी की है और उसकी सेना ने कूच का नगाड़ा बजाया है। धुमैले, काले और भूरे रंग के बादल आकाश में दौड़ने लगे और उनमें उड़ती हुई बगुलों की पंक्तियां धवल ध्वज के समान दिख रही हैं। अर्थात् नागमती इस आषाढ़ मास के गर्जना करने वाले मेघों को देखकर चिंतित होती है कि इस वातावरण में मेरे प्रिय की अनुपस्थिति में मुझे कौन आदर देगा? इस उन्मादक वातावरण में जो काम के लिए उचित है, इस विरह से आकर आप मेरी रक्षा कीजिए। महलों की रहने वाली नारी अपना रानीपन भूलकर सामान्य नारी की तरह विषादमग्न हो उठती है।

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सेनापति कृत कवित्त रत्नाकर में ऋतु वर्णन में कवि कह उठता है- “गरजत घन, तरजत है मदन लर/जत तन मन नीर नैननि बहति है।”¹¹ संस्कृत साहित्य से लेकर हिंदी के रीतिकालीन कवियों ने आषाढ़ मास को इतना महत्वपूर्ण बना दिया कि काव्य का सौंदर्य अत्यधिक मनोरम हो गया। जीवन के सुख-दुःख की अनुभूति कराता यह मास कहीं न कहीं संपूर्ण साहित्य के काव्य जगत को प्रभावित करता रहा है।

आधुनिक काल और भारतेंदु मंडल के रचनाकारों के यहां भी स्वाभाविक रूप से आषाढ़, उनकी कविताओं का विषय बन ही जाता है। बालमुकुंद गुप्त ने अपनी कविता ‘वर्षा’ में कहा है- “छाये घोर चहुँ ओर मेघ, पावस की परी फुहार/घन गरजत चपला अति चमकत फरफर उड़त फुहार/अब नहीं छटपटात नारी नर जलाविहीन ज्यों मीन।”¹²

ग्रीष्म ऋतु की गर्मी से तपते लोग पावस ऋतु में काले मेघों के बरसने से तृप्त हो गये, अब उनकी स्थिति जलविहीन मछली की तरह नहीं है। वर्षा न होने से समान्य जन की स्थिति कितनी दयनीय हो जाती है। अकाल, भुखमरी, गरीबी, संत्रास न जाने कितने दानव उत्पन्न हो जाते हैं। ब्रिटिश कालीन भारतवर्ष में निलहे, गोरंग-प्रभु, लार्ड-गवर्नर, बनकर लूटने वाले अंग्रेजों ने तो भारत की जनता को मृत्यु के घाट उतारा ही साथ ही प्रकृति ने भी कभी-कभी अपनी भयावहता से आतंकित किया है जिसका उदाहरणस्वरूप भाव गुप्त जी प्रस्तुत करते हैं।

प्रगतिवादी व्यंग्य और प्रकृति के महत्वपूर्ण कवि बाबा नागार्जुन मानसरोवर की यात्रा के दौरान उसी बादल को देखते हैं और उनके कंठ से अनायास ही फूट पड़ता है- “बादल को घिरते देखा है/अमल धवल गिरि के शिखरों पर/बादल को घिरते देखा है/छोटे-छोटे मोती जैसे/उसके शीतल तुहीन कणों को।/मानसरोवर के उन स्वर्णिम कमलों पर गिरते देखा है।”¹³ साथ ही ‘ऋतु संधि’ कविता में पुनः उस

दृश्य को अभिव्यंजित करते हैं- “आज है आषाढ़ यदि षष्ठी/उठा था जोर का तूफान/उसके बाद/सघन काली घन घटा से/हो रहा आच्छन्न यह आकाश।”¹⁴ इसके अलावा ‘मेघ बजे’ (1964), ‘काले-काले’ (1981), ‘बादल भिगो गए रातों रात’ (1984) आदि कवितों हैं।

त्रिलोचन मानवीय संघर्ष के कवि तो हैं ही साथ ही साथ प्रकृति के नैसर्गिक सौंदर्य को उकेरने वाले कवि हैं। केदारनाथ सिंह ने कहा कि “निराला की तरह त्रिलोचन ने भी पावस के अनेक चित्र अंकित किए हैं और बादलों के कठोर संगीत को अपनी अनेक कविताओं में पकड़ने की कोशिश की है। परंतु ऐसा करते हुए वे किसी विलक्षण सौंदर्य लोक का निर्माण नहीं करते बल्कि अपनी चेतना के किसी कोने में दबे हुए किसान का मानो आह्वान करते हैं- “उठ किसान ओ, उठ किसान ओ, बादल घिर आये।”¹⁵

इसी परंपरा को आगे बढ़ाते हुए छायावाद के सूर्य ‘निराला’ बादल राग (1922) कविता में कह उठते हैं- “तुझे बुलाता कृषक अधीर ऐ विप्लव के वीर/चूस लिया है उसका सार/हाड़ मात्र ही है आधार/ऐ जीवन के पारावार।”¹⁶ निराला की ‘आए घन पावस के’ जैसी कविता ने कहीं न कहीं पावस के सौंदर्य और चेतना को स्वाभाविक रूप से प्रदर्शित किया है। त्रिलोचन भी उस हरे-भरे सौंदर्य को देखकर श्रम करने वाले एक किसान की तरह रोमांचित हो उठते हैं। ‘झांपस’, ‘बादलों में लग गई है आग दिन की’, ‘संध्या ने मेघों के कितने चित्र बनाए’, ‘चारों ओर घोर बाढ़ आई’ इत्यादि कवितों इनका उदाहरण हैं। ‘उजले बादल आकाश में’ कविता कहीं न कहीं स्वतंत्रता के महत्व को दर्शाती हैं पराधीन मनुष्य कैसे घुटन भरे जीवन में जीवित रहने के लिए संघर्ष करता है। “स्वतंत्रता का कितना मान है/मुझको अब इसका अनुमान है/सामने वह पिंजरे में तोता है/उसे देख दर्द आज होता है।”¹⁷

प्रसाद, पंत, वर्मा आदि कवियों ने अपनी अनुभूति से अलग अलग ढंग से आषाढ़ को कविता का विषय बनाया है। अज्ञेय ने अपने काव्य संग्रह 'इत्यलम' में भी आषाढ़ को विरह मास के रूप में देखा है। ग्रीष्म ऋतु से तपती विरहिणी किस तरह वर्षा की बूंदों के पड़ने पर विरह की उष्णता का परित्याग करती है। "ओ पिया पानी बरस/ओ पिया पानी बरसा/आषाढ़ की निशानी/ओ पिया पानी।"¹⁸

पूरा साहित्य जगत ऋतुओं से अलग नहीं रहा है। प्रायः सभी कवियों ने ऋतु के मनोवैज्ञानिक बोध से जोड़ने की कोशिश की है, वहीं पावस ऋतु के महत्व को प्रतिपादित करने में कोई कसर नहीं छोड़ी। जब पावस का प्रसंग आता है तो आषाढ़ और आषाढ़ के प्रथम दिवस की अभिव्यंजना और भी मार्मिक हो जाती है। कारण कि ग्रीष्म काल की तपन के बाद का शीतल अनुभव प्रथम दिन ज्यादा प्रभावकारी हो जाता है। शीतलता का आगमन हो जाता है धरती की उर्वरता बढ़ जाती है। मनुष्य मात्र का मन आह्लादित हो जाता है। वाल्मीकि के शब्दों में अंत किया जाये तो कहना होगा कि -

“रजः प्रशान्तं सहिमोघ वायुर्निदाघदोजप्रसराः

प्रशान्ताः ल

स्थिता हि यात्रा वसुधाधिपानां प्रवासिनो
यान्ति नराः स्वदेशान्।”¹⁹

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Twenty Love Poems: A Blending of Physical Love With Spiritual Love To Create Ethereal Representation

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Pablo Neruda, a world famous poet belongs to the pedigree of Spanish American Literature. He was one of the greatest gems in the Chilean literature who wrote in Spanish language. Later all his literary works were translated into English language and made the place in the heart of the readers from every corner of the world. Gabriel Garcia Marquez considers him, “the greatest poet of the 20th century and in India, he is one of the most read and translated poets of any foreign language”. (Maurya 1)

The most important quality of the Neruda’s poetry is that here the poetry and the lives of the people are twisted together. As Tapscott once said in *Twentieth-Century Latin American Poetry: A Bilingual Anthology*:

“From introspect to protest, spirituality to eroticism, the poet first illuminates culture, colonialism, tyranny, war, liberation and love over the course of the cataclysmic twentieth century, praising the beauty of the land and lamenting the elusiveness of justice”. (Stephan, Tapscott. *Twentieth-Century Latin American Poetry: A Bilingual Anthology*)

Pablo Neruda is mainly known as the poet of love which is the breath of his poetry. He discovered a new way to present love in the literature. He did not present love in distorted form rather presented it in naked form with its real attributes. Pablo Neruda wrote his poetry by breaking and violating all societal rules and regulations. This violation filled a new spirit in his poetry. In his *Memoirs*, he once said :

“If my poetry has any meaning at all, it is this tendency to stretch out in space, without restrictions, and not be happy to stay in a room. I had to break out of my limited world by myself, not having traced it out within the framework of a distant culture”. (262)

Twenty Love Poems and A Song of Despair is one of the most famous poetic collections of Pablo Neruda and it bestowed world- wide fame upon him. He wrote this collection of vibrant poetic verses at a very tender age. When he was only 20 years old, the fame of this sensational work was added to his name. This poetic work created a sensation not only in the Chile rather in every corner of the world. In these twenty untitled poems, the

speaker expresses his passionate feelings of love. The speaker was living in Chile and working on an administrative post so, it was impossible for him to express the feelings of love in direct manner. Therefore, he took the help of nature to express his love feelings for his beloved. In nature and its natural elements, he sees the image of his beloved and beautifies it as taking it the body of her beloved. In this way, through the help of nature, he presents his physical love with spiritual love. The way in which he presents his physical love is not coarse rather it has a spiritual and platonic touch. The blending of physical love with spiritual love can be seen in the very first poem of this collection:

Body of a woman, white hills,
white thighs
You appear as if a world lying in
surrender. (1- 2)

In this poem, the speaker uses 'white' word to describe the beauty of his beloved. As Divine beings and angels are often portrayed with white glow, or white auras surrounding them. In the same way, he sees the aura of white radiant light around his beloved which symbolizes chastity, innocence, spiritual awakening and cleanliness. The word 'white hills' is used as a metaphor to describe the surroundings. White color is also associated with healing and protection. Therefore, the presence of his beloved amid the natural elements under the white radiant light helps the speaker to remove his pain and suffering and provides him strength. Through this spiritual presence, he accumulates the courage to live in this mundane world even in the absence of his beloved. He takes his beloved as a 'world' that means his world begins from his

beloved and ends on her. It ultimately shows that the love of the speaker is not physical rather it is spiritual because the presence of the body of his beloved doesn't matter to him. He loves the soul of his beloved not her body. Once Rene de Costa stated:

“Traditionally, love poetry has equated women with nature. Neruda took this established mode of comparison and raised it to a cosmic level, making woman into a veritable force of the universe.” (The Poetry of Pablo Neruda)

Further, the speaker addresses his beloved as Mother Earth. He takes the help of natural elements to give spiritual touch to his love for his beloved. He draws the similarity between nature and female and says that both are equal in the matter of fertility. As nature bestows her gifts upon human beings without selfish motive, in the same way mother serves her children with selfless love or without any expectations. This comparison also shows that the love of speaker is not physical rather having the touch of cosmic level. He says:

My body, savage and pleasant,
undermines you
And makes a son leap in the bottom of
the earth. (3- 4)

In the comparison of his beloved's white, soft, tender and attractive body, he considers his body as ugly, savage and unattractive. The speaker takes the help of nature to give the expression of his intimacy with his beloved. He does not use intimacy and the word sexual intercourse anywhere directly. Rather on the place of these he uses the word 'dig' in the reference of nature which indirectly gives

the sense of intimate moments. He says as the earth is dug to sow the seeds and later these seeds come out in the form of crop, in the same way he unites with his beloved and sows the seeds in the womb of his beloved during these beautiful moments which take place between both of them. Later these memorable moments come out after nine months in the form of a sweet child. The moulding of language and the indirect use of words shows that the speaker is creating an environment to give ethereal representation to his love for his beloved. Once Pablo Neruda said about this collection in his *Memoirs*:

“When I wrote my first lonely book, it never entered my mind that with the passing years I would find myself in squares, streets, factories, lecture halls, theatres, and gardens reading my poems. I have gone into practically every corner of Chile, scattering my poetry like seeds among the people of my own country.” (72)

In the next verse of this collection *Ah Vastness of Pines*, the speaker addresses his beloved Albertina, who remained the muse of many poems of Pablo Neruda. This was the another point that his love for Albertina remained unfulfilled. The speaker begins the poem with these lines:

Twilight falling in your eyes, toy doll,
Earth shell, in whom the earth sings!
(1- 4)

The speaker makes the use of the word ‘twilight’ recurrently in the Twenty Love Poems. The meaning of this twilight word can be taken in two ways. At first, it may be that it is indicating towards the end of the day and second meaning may be that by using this word, the speaker is indicating towards the end of his relation-

ship with his beloved. The eyes of his beloved play a great role because by peeping inside the eyes of his beloved, the speaker comes to know that there is no sign of love. All the signs of love have fallen and in order to support this observation, he also uses the metaphor of “waves breaking”. Most of the places to show his love for his beloved, he takes the help of natural elements and compares his beloved with nature. Mother nature is the symbol of purity and chastity and whenever the speaker is drawing the comparison between nature and his beloved, he is raising his love for his beloved up to a cosmic and spiritual level. Even to show their physical and intimate moments in a sober way, he juxtaposes amatory elements with telluric forces and gives ethereal representation to his poetry. As he says :

Thus in deep hours I have seen, over
the fields,
the ears of wheat tolling in the mouth
of wind. (15- 16)

The next verse of this vibrant poetic collection is *The Morning is Full*, and the word morning refers to his beloved. This verse is considered as one of the most erotic verses of this collection but in the very first reading no one will be able to see this eroticism. The language of the poem is used in such an artistic way that it seems completely a pure poem of nature, where the beauty of nature is adorned on a grand level. In two or three readings, the hidden meaning begins to appear on the surface level and readers come to know that through the beauty of nature, the beauty of his beloved’s limbs is expressed. And the purpose of speaker behind this disguised meaning is to give

spiritual touch to his love and with it he wants to show that his love for his beloved is not like ordinary lover rather has a touch of spirituality. He begins the poem with these lines:

The morning is full of storm
In the heat of summer. (1- 2)

Here this natural storm refers to the physical storm, where the speaker is with his beloved and they both are passionately involved in lovemaking. The love of his beloved is the source of speaker's strength and through it, he gets the motive to live in this mundane world even in the absence of his lover. His beloved is not present physically in this world but in spite of it there is no diminishment in his passion. And this proves that his love is spiritual not physical. He is connected with the soul of his beloved, so the presence of body does not matter to him. He feels her in every object of nature. When the wind blows and touches the body of the speaker, he feels the soft and gentle touch of his beloved in the blowing wind. It seems to him as if his beloved is caressing his hair with love and passion. It all gives way to arouse his desires and after it he dreams of a beautiful world where he is enjoying the company of his beloved and says:

Love me, companion. Don't forsake
me. Follow me.
Follow me, companion on this wave
of anguish. (22- 23)

In the verse entitled "I Remember You as You Were", the speaker talks about the season of autumn. He says that the season of autumn has its own beauty and charm because it brings a number of vast and tremendous changes in the nature. As one side it makes the nature ugly because in the season of fall, most of the deciduous

trees shed their leaves but on another side it gives way to the ripening of crops and fruits. Through the change of season, he wants to show the change of his beloved's body which took place in her limbs after his love. 'Dry autumn leaves' indicate the past which will remain fresh forever in his memories because his beloved resides in his every breath. He uses the metaphor of 'climbing plants' to express those moments when his beloved embraced him. Their bodies met each other and the breathing sounds increased. This meeting took place in the season of autumn. The season of autumn is the season of fall when all leaves fall from the trees and scatter on ground. When the wind is touching these falling leaves, it is making cursory sound. This natural cursory sound has lowered the voice of the breath of both the lovers or it may be said that the wind is also trying to make the pace with the breathings of the lovers that is released during the love cherished moments.

The next verse entitled "Leaning into The Afternoons" also mixes erotic feelings with natural forces and then represents them. He mixes unstoppable passion with the force of nature. The beauty of nature has infatuated Pablo Neruda since his childhood. When he was a child he used to love to live amid the lush green beauty of nature. He was impacted by the beautiful elements of nature as rain, sea, ocean and green trees. He used to hear the mellifluous songs in the blowing sounds of breeze, in the chirping sounds of the birds and in rising and falling sounds of the waves. The sounds of waves always derives Neruda towards itself and reminded him the love moments when his beloved rose like the waves of the sea at the time

of embracing him. He mixes unstoppable passion of his beloved with the force of nature. He begins the poem with these lines:

Leaning into the afternoons I cast my
sad nets

Towards your oceanic eyes. (1- 2)

He again blends the physical love with natural elements to give spiritual touch to his love with his beloved. He begins the poem with the time of afternoon which indicates the last gasp of his love relationship and very soon the darkness will devour it. He compares the eyes of his beloved with ocean and through it wants to say that her eyes are as deep as ocean. As the fathom of the sea cannot be measured, in the same way nobody can tell how many mysteries are hidden in the eyes of his beloved. He wants to love his beloved and refers it through a metaphor “casting the net”.

Thus to conclude, it can be said that Pablo Neruda, the greatest poet of love, longing, passion, despair and nature has blended the elements of physical love with spiritual love in a very beautiful manner. He has used nature as a medium to juxtapose physical love with spiritual love to create ethereal representation. By blending of love, he has attained the peak of spirituality in the poems of his collection Twenty Love Poems. He has described the beauty of his beloved but not in a coarse way rather in a very descent and genuine

manner. He has beautified his beloved’s limbs with an implied meaning of natural elements and it’s all giving the spiritual touch to his love for his beloved. The way used by Neruda to express adolescent love in his poetry is matchless in the history of Latin American Literature. When Pablo Neruda reached Stockholm to receive the honor of the Nobel Prize, it was asked to him that what is prettiest word him then he replied after making a pause:

“I am going to reply in a fairly vulgar way, like in a radio song, with an extremely hackneyed word: the word ‘love’. The more you use it, the stronger it gets. And there is no harm abusing the word either”. (Prasad)

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Podcasting as the Neo- technological Creative Form: An Investigative Analysis of the Digital Forum

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Introduction :

Podcasting in recent times have emerged as a major cultural phenomenon. The kind of popularity that podcasts have gained makes it one of the most important socio-cultural tropes. Various podcasts are getting traction among the youth due to its personalized appeal. While attempting a definition of podcasting, Brown (2020) writes, “The word podcast is a noun and verb; it signifies both the production of a discrete audio text and the produced text itself. While the noun *podcast* often signifies an audio file, the object is a combination of an audio MP3 file, an XML (Extensible Mark-up Language) metadata file and an RSS (Real simple syndication) feed that makes distribution and listening possible. Colloquially the term podcast generally refers to an episode or series of audio-content downloaded or streamed from the internet on demand or via a subscription service.” Commenting on the proliferation of podcasts in recent times and its effect on communication, Kavya & Viswanath (2024) say, “Podcasting has fostered a more effective form of

listening, allowing for longer and more in-depth discussions on various topics, thereby increasing listener engagement. Furthermore, it has provided a platform for previously underrepresented voices, thereby diversifying the media landscape and offering a broader range of perspectives to the audience. The blurring of traditional communication boundaries has also been observed, as podcasting allows for more direct and interactive communication between content creators and their audience, directing to a more participatory media environment”. Describing more about podcasts, McGregor (2022) comments, “Podcasts are sites of new artistic creation-including documentaries, fiction and scripted or improvisational comedies as well as sites of critical conversation organized around fandoms, media properties, reading communities and more. The range of production values is just as wide as the range of genres and styles, from amateur producers recording unedited conversations on a smartphone to radio producers with decades of industry experience creating finely crafted audio documentaries and everything in between.”

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Rationale of the study :

Podcasts are essentially carriers of information. Podcasts deviate a lot from traditional interviews in the sense that the stringent barriers imposed by the media and communication channels are diluted to a great extent in podcasts. Podcasts allows the interviewers to discuss about varied issues- ranging from politics, sports, business to spirituality and theology. While analysing podcasts from a cultural perspective, it is imperative to understand the modus operandi of podcasts. Podcasts are seen as democratising tools that allow people from marginalized sections to engage with the mainstream through explicit and implicit methods. The paper intends to understand the role of podcasts as a technological creative form and how it facilitates the art of story-telling in the present times thus converting itself into a significant socio-cultural tool.

Podcasting as a socio-cultural tool :

Interviews in the bygone era were mainly an elite affair. A coterie of journalists and media-personnel were allowed to take interviews of politicians, sports-persons, businessmen and other celebrities. The questions were censored according to the demands of the interviewee rather than the interviewer. In the present times, individual podcasts have allowed greater liberty for the interviewer. As it is mostly an individual platform in most of the cases, the interviewer is not constrained by limitations of propriety. As seen in most of the cases, the interviewers are young entrepreneurs who symbolize self-reliance in the modern times. As such, podcasts can be seen as the signifier of the changing

times. The interviewers often take the questions of the common viewers and present it before to the interviewees. A common man is automatically granted an agency in this mediated conversation. This agency is instrumental in transforming this podcasts as a socio-cultural phenomenon rather than a mere communication practice. Any cultural tool is able to create cultural consciousness among the masses. It is one of the important tools for opinion formation. Podcasts bring multiple interpretations to the fore. It allows people to express their feelings and emotions in an uninhibited manner. Podcasts allow for a greater transmission of thoughts from a source to the world. Just like movies, they can be considered as audio-visual texts which pluralize thoughts and opinion. Podcasts allow for greater flexibility and freedom in communication channels.

Podcasts allow for contrasting opinions to find space in the mainstream. It facilitates people in the opposite sides of the spectrum to voice their concerns, aspirations and opinions. For example, in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, podcasts played a great role in the mobilization of opinion and consolidation of support. In the upcoming American Presidential elections, podcasts are playing a significant role in informing the electorate about different facets of the election and enabling them to choose the best possible candidate. Podcasts allow for greater flexibility in thought-experimentation also. In the recent times, scientists and researchers have been on podcasts also. They have shared valuable information on projects like Chandrayaan and have made the conversations an immersive experience

for the audience. Cultural tropes assimilate the facets of ancient culture and the modern technological gizmo. Podcasts do the same: they add a dash of congruence to both the past and the present by communicating with the testifiers of the past as well as the witnesses of the present. Podcasting as a form of communication is also a means of decentralising technological effect through the use of technology itself. Podcasting revives the intra-personal and inter-personal communication culture that is being constantly challenged by the technology induced individuation in the present times. Podcasting promotes democratisation of thoughts allowing the marginalized voices to speak. Podcasting allows intersectional analyses of various societal distinctions including caste, creed, gender, language etc. The medium of podcasting allows the individuals to enact their personal roles in a way that they desire- a quiet contrast to the restricted paradigm of personal and social conduct institutionalized by the society. Podcasts can be termed as modern day equivalents of radio broadcasts in many ways. Certain popular podcasts create a collective feeling: of nostalgia and a belonging to 'home'. The advantage with podcasts is that people can listen to it and soak in the experience without hampering their daily routine. Podcasting facilitates detailed explanation of events and memories. Memory-making is one of the most important functions of a cultural trope. Podcasts helps us relive memories- either good or bad. Thus, the perpetuation of memories is aided by the podcasting practice.

Podcasting is a straight-forward process of content creation. Just like any other form of digital media, it is instantaneous and can be recorded for future purposes. It would not be an exaggeration to say that podcasting has the ability to curate new age history. Even in covering incidents of national importance, podcasts have played a concurrent role along with traditional media. Podcasts have emerged as a form of parallel media which facilitates the negation of fake news and agenda-driven narratives. In an age where the credibility of media houses is under perennial scrutiny, podcasts allows diverse viewpoints to stake its claim in the milieu of discourse making thus respecting the plurality of news-making. Podcasting, as a cultural tool, is also important as it helps to make and unmake new age histories of a certain locality, city or region. Defining a city, region or locality has always been the victim of spatial politics. The 'center' always defines the peripheral regions according to its own liking. Podcasts not only go a long way in reconstructing and reconfiguring the idea of an individual or community at an individual level or a region at a macro level. Cultural and tourist podcasts helps us to assess the diversity of different places.

According to Sharon (2023, p. 327), "Podcasting can be defined as a cultural practice. Since the relationship between technology and society is never unidirectional, another way of theorizing podcasting as a field is to focus on the human agents who create, consume, and communicate through podcasts, which in effect constructs what podcasting means. The author further argues, "In short,

looking at podcasting through socio-cultural glasses means considering it the collection of practices, interactions, and power relations that dictate the meaning of the technology. In many respects, this tradition is more outreaching than the technological one in terms of the varied manifestations its research endeavor can take. It engages with the creators, the audiences, the industry, and even the phenomenological implications of our 'doing-being' with podcasts" (Sharon, 2023, p. 327). Crouch (2024) comments, "When a technology is adopted into sociocultural systems it takes on a degree of cultural relevance, which can then have meaningful impact on society, good or bad. He further says, "Story telling is a fundamental survival mechanism within human cultures. We told stories not just for entertainment, but to share our realities with one another. Sharing our realities enables us to understand one another and, most importantly for human survival, to form social systems, to be able to work together. Culture itself is humanity's primary survival mechanism because biological evolution alone moves too slow for us." This story telling approach of podcasts builds a common consensus which is essentially for the perpetuation of societal norms. In Podcast Inc's (2024) statement on "*How Podcasts are redefining pop culture in today's world*" it has been stated, "In an age where social media dominates headlines, podcasts have quietly become cultural catalysts, sparking conversations that resonate far beyond the confines of earphones. Shows like "Crime Junkie" have turned listeners into amateur sleuths, while conversational podcasts like "The

Daily" have become essential listening, shaping public discourse on pressing issues. Podcasts, it seems, have found a way to infiltrate our daily lives with an intimacy that other mediums struggle to achieve." In another blog titled, "The Great Comeback of Podcast culture" by Irfan (2024) it is stated that "The intimate nature of podcasts creates deeper connections between hosts and listeners compared to social media. Listeners report feeling a strong bond with their favourite podcasters, who can delve deeply into trending cultural topics and create their own cultural moments. In an interview with Miller (n.d.), Soren Brunsgaard says, "Another interesting aspect about the podcast as a medium, is that it allows the listener to come behind the facade of whoever is the sender of the podcast. A possible explanation for why podcasts are a good way to communicate with the audience on a deeper level could be that audio storytelling is seen as a more intimate way of communicating. This way of communicating on a deeper level allows learning more about the behind-the-scenes of a brand, such as its production and employees, which ultimately can create a stronger relationship between sender and receiver." Bonini (2022) commenting on the interplay of the technological and the non-technological component associated with podcasting says, "Podcasting then is a complex hybrid cultural form constantly reproduced by an evolving network of different, and dynamic, clusters of human (audio producers, editorial curators, software developers, graphic designers, listeners) and non-human actors (platforms, recommender algorithms, mobile

media devices, distribution technologies and internet infrastructures.” Vrikki & Malik (2019) while commenting on the intrinsic relationship between podcasting and its effect on augmenting the voices of the marginalized say, “Described as an open platform for communication, podcasting is seen as an extension of the everyday discussions between the hosts of each podcast and as a space where, alongside guests, they can explore issues that interest or concern them. The presence of the audience offers new opportunities for public, personal and political articulations that often go unheard. In today’s highly racialized political climate, podcasts serve as a public sphere for anti-racist consciousness and create a framework for progressive political activity.”

Conclusion :

Podcasting is an episodic form of communication which has entrenched its presence in the educational sector also. Modern day teaching allows the podcasting mode of transmitting information in order to align with the receptiveness of students who live in a world dominated by visual imagery. The paper looks at the different aspects of podcasting as a socio-cultural tool. In an age where unhindered use of Artificial Intelligence is blurring the lines between human and machine, it is imperative that a conversational mode of communication like podcasts retains human essence. Discussions on podcasts can range from quotidian issues to issues of global concerns. The advantage with podcasts is that it has the ability to deliver messages in an entertaining manner. Thus, serious issues like climate change, future investments, health and lifestyle can be

deliberated upon without much didacticism. Podcasts in the recent times have looked upon issues like wars and conflicts. Infact, it has emerged as a method for disagreeing parties to communicate their concerns and find feasible solutions. Podcasts have touched upon sensitive issues like racism, linguistic bias, religious intolerance, spatial distinction and much more with panache and has been able to nurture social awareness about these topics. We can conclude by saying that podcasts have emerged as a novel form of socio-cultural practice which forges a sense of unity among different demographics and cultures.

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समकालीन हिन्दी कविता : जल, जंगल और ज़मीन का प्रतिरोध

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रहिमन पानी राखिए। बिन पानी सब सूना।
पानी गए न उबरे। मोती मानुस चून।

हिन्दी साहित्य में शायद पहली बार कविवर रहीम ने पानी की महत्ता पर बल दिया है। मानव जीवन के लिए अपेक्षित पानी के अभाव में तमाम जीवन का सूखना उपर्युक्त दोहे में संकेत किया गया है। फिलहाल पानी की समस्या विकराल होती जा रही है। पानी दिन-प्रतिदिन दूषित हो रहे हैं। मुख्य जल स्रोतों को हम खोते जा रहे हैं। ऐसी आशंका है कि अगला विश्व युद्ध पानी को लेकर होगा।

एक जर्मन कहावत है कि जब जंगल मरता है तब उसके साथ इंसान भी मरता है। दरअसल जंगल मानव के अस्तित्व, विकास, प्रगति तथा उत्तम व्यवस्था के लिए अपरिहार्य है। लेकिन फिलहाल विकास के नाम पर या कहिए औद्योगीकरण, फ्लाट व माल संस्कृति के तहत जंगलों की अंधाधुंध कटाई हो रही है। इसके फलस्वरूप एक ओर बाढ़, सूखा, भूस्खलन जैसी आपदाएँ उभरी हैं तो दूसरी ओर जलवायु असंतुलन, पर्यावरण प्रदूषण, मौसम में अनियंत्रित बदलाव आदि दिखाई पड़ती हैं। 'विकास के नाम पर जंगल और भूमि की लूट के साथ प्राकृतिक संसाधनों के अवैज्ञानिक दोहन ने इस धरती की हरियाली मिटा दी। आदिवासी समुदाय जो सदियों से वंचित, शोषित

और विकल्प हीन रहे हैं, उनकी हालत बहुत ही बदतर और चिंताजनक है।'

बहरहाल समय के तेज़ रफ्तार में मुख्यधारा के विकास की परिधि दिन-प्रतिदिन विस्तृत होती जा रही है। यह सब कुछ प्राप्त करने हेतु तमाम चीज़ों को निगलने के लिए मौजूद है। उनके समक्ष जल, जंगल, ज़मीन (प्रकृति-पर्यावरण) सब नगण्य है, यही नहीं वे सिरमौर बन जाने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं। ऐसे में कविता प्रकृति और संस्कृति की सुरक्षा के लिए लड़ रही है। चूंकि समकालीन कविता का स्वर प्रतिरोध है। जल और ज़मीन से जुड़ी संवेदना समकालीन आदिवासी कविता का केंद्र स्वर है। चूंकि उनका जीवन धरती से ज़्यादातर संपृक्त है। उनकी बड़ी आबादी जंगलों में ही बसे है। इसलिए ही जल और ज़मीन से खिलवाड़ करने वाले सभ्य समाज के निर्मम करतूतों से वे भली-भांति अवगत हैं। 'आज तक आदिवासी समाज को खासकर भारत में, तथाकथित धार्मिक हिन्दू कट्टरवादियों, मैदानी मध्यमवर्गीय मानसिकता वाले समुदाय ने जो जातीय दंभ से लैस भी रहा, यानि जीवन्त मनुष्य एक जंगली मनुष्य के क्रम में मढ़ दिया गया, जो उनसे अधिक संवेदनशील, अधिक कलात्मक, उदार, उदात्त, सहनशील, सरल है, ताल-लय, स्वर में पारंगत है और वह जीवन का

व्यापार नहीं करता, बस, जीने के नियम जानता है। हर विपरीत स्थिति में जीता है- प्रकृति की आपदा को सहता है पर प्रकृति को नष्ट नहीं करता, उसको पालता-पोसता है जबकि मैदानी मनुष्य प्रकृति को नष्ट करता आया है'²

प्राकृतिक धरोहरों को बचाने की खातिर आदिवासी कविता पर्यावरण विमर्श को भी अपने में समाहित करती है। विकास बनाम विनाश ही यहाँ कायम है। विकास के नाम पर ज़मीन का सर्वाधिक शोषण किया जा रहा है। पर्वत पृथ्वी का मापदंड होता है। भूमि का संतुलन बनाए रखने में पर्वतों की नितांत आवश्यकता है। आजकल जो प्राकृतिक विनाश हो रहे हैं जिसके लिए सभ्य समाज ही कारण है। यानि कि मनुष्य निर्मित विनाश ही यहाँ कायम है।

पत्थलगड़ी आंदोलन झारखंड के मुंडा आदिवासियों द्वारा संप्रभु क्षेत्र के अधिकार सहित अपने अधिकारों का दावा करने के लिए एक प्रतिरोध अभियान के रूप में शुरू किया गया था। 'पत्थलगड़ी' का शाब्दिक अर्थ है पत्थर को तराशकर खड़ा करना। पत्थर सिर्फ आदिवासी ज़िंदगी व संस्कृति के गवाह नहीं है, बल्कि उनके प्रतिरोध, सहजीविता और स्वायत्तता के प्रतीक बन गये हैं। कवि अनुज लुगुण के लफ्जों में, 'औपनिवेशिक समय में जब शासन ने आदिवासियों से उनकी ज़मीन का मालिकाना सबूत माँगा तो कचहरी में आदिवासियों के साथ पत्थर भी खड़े हुए। अंग्रेज़ों की अदालत ने आदिवासियों के पक्ष में पत्थरों की गवाही को स्वीकार नहीं किया। उनकी ज़मीन पर सेंध लगाने के लिए अंग्रेज़ों ने उनके 'पत्थरों' के प्रयोग पर निषेध लगाया। उसके बाद जब-जब आदिवासियों ने अपनी ज़मीन का दावा किया, तब-तब शासन ने उनकी 'पत्थलगड़ी' पर निषेध लगाया। दुःखद है कि आज भी कई आदिवासी गाँव 'पत्थलगड़ी' करने के आरोप में देशद्रोही माने गये हैं। आज जब फिर से आदिवासियों से उनकी ज़मीन का पट्टा माँगा जा रहा है तो वे फिर से उनके पक्ष में

गवाही के लिए खड़े हुए हैं। इस बार आदिवासियों के साथ केवल पत्थर ही नहीं खड़े हैं बल्कि उनके साथ कविता भी खड़ी हो गयी है'³ जैसे,

भाषा का यह फेर पुराना है

सरकार आदिवासियों की भाषा नहीं समझती है
वह उन पर अपनी भाषा थोपती है

आदिवासी पत्थलगड़ी करते हैं

और सरकार को लगता है कि वे बगावत कर रहे हैं'⁴

आदिवासी जन-जीवन पर मँडराते सभ्यता-प्रेषित खतरों को जानना और पहचानना और नागरिक सभ्यता के बढ़ते समय में जंगलों-पहाड़ों की तरफ बढ़ते विकास की पैशाचिक मुद्राओं के बरक्स कारगर प्रतिवाद दर्ज करना अमूमन जसिंता केरकेट्टा की कविताओं की खासियत रही हैं। उनकी सहज और संवादात्मक शैली में लिखी सपाटबयानी कविताएँ आदिवासी समाज के दुःख-दर्द को समग्रता के साथ ज़ाहिर करती हैं। 'ईश्वर और बाज़ार' संग्रह में संकलित कई कविताएँ ऐसी हैं जो शोषण व दमन के चालाक साज़िशों में ईश्वर की अवधारणा और असहाय जन-मानस में उसके भय की भूमिका का बयान करती हैं -

आदमी के लिए

ईश्वर तक पहुंचने का रास्ता

बाजार से होकर क्यों जाता है?

पर्वतों को मिटाने की मानसिकता के प्रति ग्रेस कुजूर की कविता 'हे समय के पहरेदारो!' का बयान देखिये -

पर्वतों के पत्थर

तोड़ रहे हो

बारूदी गंध से

और कुंवारी हवाओं को

हर बार छेड़ा है।⁶

यह बात ज़ाहिर है कि आदिवासी कविता का सरोकार पेड़-पल्लव, नदी, पर्वत, गीत-संगीत आदि से है। ऐसी ही संवेदना की एक कविता ग्रेस कुजूर की 'एक और जनी-शिकार' है।

अब कहाँ है वह अखरा?

किसने उगाये है वहाँ

विषैले नागफनी।

बतौर इसके, सुशील कुमार ने 'बांसलोय में बहतर' मेंस थाल परगना की एक पहाड़ी नदी की व्यथा को प्रस्तुत किया है। नदियों के प्रति भी उनका गहरा लगाव है। जंगल का काटना नदी के लिए हानिकारक है। प्रकृति की नैसर्गिकता को बरकरार रखने हेतु अनुज लुगुन की कविता 'हमारी अर्थी शाही नहीं हो सकती' आवाज़ बुलंद करती है-

पेड़ की जगह पेड़ ही देखें

नदी कि जगह नदी

समुद्र की जगह समुद्र

और पहाड़ की जगह पहाड़।

मौजूदा दौर देश के मजदूरों, किसानों और समस्त मेहनतकश जनता के लिए एक बहुत ही चुनौतीपूर्ण दौर है। भारतीय राजसत्ता बहुत ही मुखर रूप से तमाम पूंजीवादी कॉर्पोरेट घरानों के साथ मिलकर मेहनतकश जनता का शोषण-उत्पीड़न कर रही है। देश के विभिन्न भागों में प्राकृतिक संसाधनों की लूट के लिए देशी-विदेशी बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपनियों बहुत ही तेजी से अपने पैर फैला रही हैं। वह देश के कोने-कोने में जाकर वहाँ निहित प्राकृतिक संसाधनों, कोयला, यूरेनियम इत्यादि, पर अपना कब्जा जमा रही हैं। ज़्यादातर खनन के क्षेत्र आदिवासी बहुल इलाकों में पड़ते हैं। फिर वह चाहे झारखण्ड हो, छत्तीसगढ़ हो, मध्य प्रदेश हो ओडिशा हो राजस्थान हो या केरल। इन आदिवासियों का अपने जंगल

और ज़मीन पर सार्वभौमिक अधिकार है। यह जंगल और ज़मीन ही इनकी पहचान हैं, इनका वजूद हैं। एक तरह से कहा जाए तो यह जंगल ही इनकी जीवन रेखा हैं। लेकिन उन्हें अपनी विरासत से वंचित कर अब बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपनियों अपने मुनाफे को बढ़ाने के लिए जल, जंगल, ज़मीन पर अपना कब्जा जमाना चाहते हैं और केंद्र तथा राज्य सरकारें इन मामलों में कंपनियों का ही साथ दे रही हैं। 'आदिवासियों का पलायन और विस्थापन सदियों से होता रहा है और ये आज भी जारी है। आदिवासियों के जंगलों, ज़मीनों, गांवों, संसाधनों पर कब्जा कर उन्हें दर-दर भटकने के लिए मजबूर करने के पीछे मुख्य कारण हमारी रही है। वे केवल अपने जंगलों, संसाधनों या गांवों से ही बेदखल नहीं हुए बल्कि मूल्यों, नैतिक अवधारणाओं, जीवन-शैलियों, भाषाओं एवं संस्कृति से भी वे बेदखल कर दिये हैं'।⁹

राम दयाल मुंडा की कविता 'कथन शालवन के अंतिम शाल का' में भी विकास के दर्द को ही रेखांकित किया गया है।

ज़रूरी है शायद

सभ्यता का पतन

ज़रूरी है शायद।¹⁰

आदिवासी कवि अनुज लुगुन 'अधोषित उलगुलान' नामक कविता में कहते हैं कि उन्होंने बस कोशिश की है कि बाज़ार और पूंजीपतियों के शोषण से जूझते लोगों की बात रखने की। वो कहते हैं कि आदिवासी द्रंद से गुज़र रहा है कि वो जल जंगल ज़मीन के बगैर विकास का रास्ता ले या फिर कोई और रास्ता चुने -

बढ़ रहे हैं कंक्रीटों के जंगल

दांडू जाए तो कहाँ जाए

कटते जंगल में

या बढ़ते जंगल में।¹¹

उलगुलान यानी आंदोलन। आदिवासी अंचल में उलगुलान को बिरसा मुंडा से जोड़कर देखा जाता है और अनुज ने इसी शब्द को लेकर एक पूरा ताना-बाना बुना है आदिवासियों की समस्याओं का। दांडू एक प्रतीक है जिसके ज़रिए जल जंगल और ज़मीन खोते आदिवासियों की व्यथा सामने आई है।

हरि राम मीणा ने भी 'सुबह के इंतज़ार में' नामक कविता में इसी बात का संकेत किया है। जन नायक बिरसा मुंडा की याद में लिखी गई कविता में जंगलों की सुरक्षा के लिए आदिवासियों की मर मिटने की संकल्पबद्धता को अभिव्यक्त किया है-

मैं केवल देह नहीं
मैं जंगल का पुश्तैनी दावेदार हूँ
पुसते और उनके दावे मरते नहीं
मैं भी मर नहीं सकता¹²

मुझे कोई भी जंगलों से बेदखल नहीं कर सकता।

आज के इस पूंजीवादी दौर में आदिवासियों का वजूद ख़तरे में पड़ गया है। यह व्यवस्था केवल विकास के नाम पर आदिवासियों का शोषण कर रही है। हालांकि आदिवासी जनजातियों ने पर्यावरण के संतुलन को सर्वथा बनाया रखा चूंकि वे जानते हैं कि प्रकृति ही जीवन है, वहीं उनका बसेरा है। 'दरअसल आदिवासी अपने श्रम के बल पर सदैव आत्मनिर्भर और स्वावलंबी रहा है। अपने समूह और समाज से जुड़कर, प्रकृति का साथी बनकर जीना उसकी शैली और स्वभाव रहा है'¹³ जंगल के माटी में रेचे-बसे आदिवासियों का सबसे बड़ा दुख यह है कि उन्हें अपनी ज़मीन से बेदखल किया जा रहा है। रमणिका गुप्ता की 'दिलावन-दिलावन' नामक कविता यह बात ज़ाहिर हुई है -

पहचान तेरी
दिनों दिन मिटाकर
तुझे बस बताते

अनहद-लोक ISSN : 2349-137X
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लगे कैसे गौड़?

दिलावन-दिलावन आयु-बाबाहोड़।¹⁴

यहाँ मानव सभ्यता के आदि पुरुषों की संतान आदिवासियों को अपनी पैतृक ज़िदगी जीने से दरकिनार कर देने की पहल जारी है।

फिलहाल आदिवासी विस्थापन की समस्या से जूझ रहे हैं। चूंकि अब उसके पास पेट भरने के लिए कमाने का साधन नहीं बचा है। ऐसे में इन आदिवासियों को हाथ में बंदूक थमाकर, नक्सलवाड़ी घोषित कर, उनको खत्म करने का एक बहाना मिल जाता है। अर्थात् आदिवासियों को सरकार मुजरिम घोषित करती है और उनको जंगल से हटाने के लिए 'ग्रीन हंट' अभियान चलाती है। 2009 को रेड कॉरीडोर में बसे आदिवासियों के साथ ऐसा ही सलूक किया गया था। जबकि आदिवासियों की संस्कृति में 'प्रकृति प्रेम, वन्य-जीवों के स्तर पर सह अस्तित्व, निखार लानेवाली जड़ी-बूटियों का परंपरागत व अनुभूत ज्ञान, सामूहिकता, श्रम का सम्मान किसी भी प्रकार के वर्चस्व के नकार एवं अनेक तत्व मौजूद है'¹⁵ बहरहाल आदिवासियों को जबरन पलायन करने की कूटनीति सरकार की हो या मीडिया की शरमनाक है। वर्तमान वैश्विक परिदृश्य में बाज़ारतंत्र तमाम दुनिया पर हावी हो चुका है।

हरिराम मीणा ने 'सभ्यता का विस्तार: एक हादसा' में पर्यावरण को विषैले बनाने वाले या सभ्यता का विस्तार करने वाले सभ्य समाज के खिलाफ आदिवासियों को सचेत करने की कोशिश जारी है -

देखो! तुम्हारे पेड़ गिर रहे हैं
समुद्र मैला हो रहा है

और तुम चुप हो?

आखिर क्यों?

आदिवासियत, नदियों की निर्मलता और पहाड़ों का मौन यानि पहाड़ों की संस्कृति तभी बच रह

साहित्यिकी (वर्ष-10, 2024)
(UGC CARE - Listed Journal)

सकती है जब वहाँ औद्योगीकरण न हो। आदिवासियों के गीतों की धुन भी तभी बच सकती है जब सभ्य कहलानेवाले भी इन गीतों को गुनगुनाने की पहल करें जिसमें आदिवासी संस्कृति विद्यमान है। अतः आदिवासियों की संस्कृति को बचाने हेतु निर्मला पुतुल के शब्द नगाड़े की तरह बजते हैं -

अपनी बस्तियों को

नंगी होने से

शहर की आबोहवा से बचाएँ उसे

अपने चेहरे पर सथाल परगना की माटी का रंग।¹⁷

युग-युगों से प्राकृतिक धरोहर का जतन करनेवाले इन आदिवासियों को उजड़नेवाले कोई और नहीं, बल्कि उनकी ही नस्ल वाले इंसान हैं - जो तरक्की के नाम पर उनकी अस्मिता को मिटाने का षट्यंत्र रच रहे हैं।

शंकर लाल मीणा की 'परदेसी सौदागर - चार' नामक कविता में फिलहाल बढ़ रहे बज़ारीकरण, सौदागरीकरण और उपभोक्तावाद को भी समझने की सूझ द्रष्टव्य है-

बहरहाल काफी कुछ आ रहा है

सौदागर के यहां से

तंबाकू के साथ

तपेदिक की टेबलेट्स

वीडियो गैम्स के साथ¹⁸

आदिवासियों के खिलाफ हो रही तमाम साजिशों को हिंदी कविता अपना विषय ही नहीं बनाती बल्कि उनके खिलाफ प्रतिपक्ष की सुदृढ़ ज़मीन भी तैयार करती है। महादेव टोप्पो ने 'जंगल का कवि' में जंगल को बचाने की खातिर विद्रोह पहल की है -

जंगल के हरेपन को

बचाने की खातिर

जंगल का कवि

माँदर बजाएगा

बांसुरी बजाएगा

चढ़ा कर प्रत्यंचा पर कलम।¹⁹

ऐसे में कविता अपने समाज के लोगों को सचेत रहने की सीख देने के साथ ही साथ उसके खिलाफ प्रतिशोध भी करती है। लिहाज़ा अपने जल, जंगल और ज़मीन को बचाने की खातिर आदिवासी कविता का जो प्रतिरोध समकालीन दौर में अधिकाधिक तेज़ होती आ रही है। यह प्रतिरोध समकालीन कविता के आस्थावादी स्वर को मुखरित करते हैं। डॉ. बी.सी. भारती के लफ़्ज़ों में -

घबराओ नहीं

समय आ गया है

हवा का रुख

पहचानो

पहचानो

पहचानो।²⁰

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From Oppression to Empowerment : A Feminist Approach in The Sea of Poppies

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Introduction :

'Feminism' is a broad term or philosophical theory therefore it's difficult to describe it in a phrase or single sentence. But it can be said that all those who had struggled for the rights of women as right to earn, right to freedom, right to vote and right to equality. All the feminist shares together the central concern that is patriarchal system, despite of different concepts of feminism. They feel that system of patriarchy works like a villain in all kinds of prejudice or discrimination against women. Even the economic and political systems are only auxiliaries not the root cause. Simon De Beauvoir, the famous French feminist argued in her famous work that men are able to mystify women. She further says "one is not born, rather becomes a woman". The patriarchy makes use of sexual difference so as to maintain the atmosphere inequality among men and women. Beauvoir argues in the same book that femininity is not in-born but is only a social construction imposed on women by men to keep them down.

In the present novel Sea of Poppies, there are many women characters as Deeti, Munia, Heeru and Pauletti who are repre-

senting Indian women's pain, anxiety, exploitation, subjugation, helplessness, and identity-crisis in the patriarchal society. American feminist Elaine Showalter in her theory of feminist criticism has talked about three historical phases of women writer :

1. Feminine (1880- 1920)
2. Feminist (1880- 1920)
3. Female (1920- till now)

She claims that the idea of femininity is one in which a woman must conform to social norms and play traditional roles in a patriarchal culture. The woman is unaware of her identity or her rights during the first phase, which is called Feminine. A feminist woman fights for her rights and objects to masculine constructs during the second phase of her movement. She makes an attempt to reject the ideological mold and asserts her individuality and rights. In the last stage, the feminine, the person makes a lot of effort to learn about herself and even goes so far as to revolutionise her identity. One by one, she began to develop her individuality.

When talking about Amitav Ghosh's Sea of Poppies, Deeti, the representative

of all Indian women, can be included in all of these statements. A modest rural girl named Deeti, who lives fifty miles distant in east Banaras along the Ganga, is introduced in the first chapter of the book. Her life was ruled by the patriarchal system from childhood until the book's conclusion. This patriarchal dominance also affects her marriage. The age difference between Deeti and her spouse, Hukum Singh, is significant. However, Deeti is forced to wed him since Kesri Singh, her own brother, proposed the union without consulting her.

Hukum Singh was not only too old but also infirm, opium addicted and impotent. Thus, with her mother's help, Hukum Singh forced her to swallow opium on the first night of their marriage. Plan states that while under the influence of opium, her brother-in-law Chandan Singh, along with Bhyro Singh and her mother-in-law, sexually assaulted her. Although her mother-in-law was inebriated from opium and did not know about this horrible murder, she eventually came to terms with the fact that Chandan Singh, not her husband, was the father of her daughter Kabutri. Kabutri's identity was severely shocked to learn the truth about her birth. Her powerlessness, however, was not much of a support in this situation.

Typically, women in patriarchal societies are forced to submit to the schemes of men who dominate their values, aspirations, and family matters. Deeti experienced the same thing; she was inadvertently sexually assaulted in order to uphold the family's honour rather than her own. As a representation of the patriarchal society, Chandan Singh has a bad attitude towards Deeti and is always willing to take advantage of her.

Deeti's spouse is near death and she doesn't even have any food for her daughter to eat at home. Chandan approaches her home feigning sympathy although having no regard for her improve-rishment or Hukum Singh's miserable state. Since he believes that Hukum Singh's death will complete his evil aim and that Deeti will have no one to turn to but him for comfort. He reaches for her thighs. He sits close to his brother's bed, staring at her and reaching through the folds of his dhoti to try and caress himself. Chandan gets so close to Deeti that he brushes her breast with his knee while she kneels to give Hukum Singh water or medication. After his brother's passing, Chandan tells her that she is merely amusement for him.

"Listen to me Kabutri- ke-ma, he said. You know very well how your daughter was conceived, why pretend? You know that you would be childless today if not for me And this is why I say to you: wouldn't it be best for you to do willingly now what you did before without your knowledge. Your husband and I are brothers after all of the same flash and blood." (Sea of Poppies, 157)

But now some awareness has emerged in Deeti about her right, respect and identity so she retorts with anger as-

"Listen to my words: I will burn on my husbands' pyre rather than myself to you" (158).

She would therefore rather die on her husband's pyre or adopt the sati system than continue to live under the rapist Chandan. She is rejecting her brother-in-law's suggestion to rely on Chandan and accept the celebrated death as Sati, which may be considered her feminist phase. Here, Amitav Ghosh sheds light on the

Sati system, which is another method of patriarchal dominance over women. Because of the inhumane attitude of society towards women, the burning of a living creature beside a dead person (an opium addict who is impotent) might be seen as the height of female oppression. Because, like Heeru's husband did in the current novel, a husband can leave his wife at any time and for any reason, and a woman has no right to survive once her husband passes away. After Heeru's first child died, her husband convinced her to travel to the Hariharnath temple to try for a second pregnancy at a distance.

"If she was ever to bear another son, she would need to do a pooja at the temple of Hariharnath during fare".
(242)

However, her husband's plan to divorce this woman and then remarry someone else was a ruse. Heeru was convinced to go there by her husband, but she got confused about the route in accordance with his plan. After months of unsuccessful searching, she was unable to locate her spouse. She encountered her neighbour one day, who informed her that her husband had wed someone else when she got lost in the fare. She could now clearly see that her spouse had purposefully left her behind. Heeru must therefore enroll as indentured labour in order to live a life of charity among the familiar people. All independence has been granted to men by the patriarchal system, not to women. Munia, another victim of patriarchy in the book, serves as a vehicle for the author's portrayal of the patriarchal mindset. Munia is a straight-forward girl who is in love with a Ghazipur-based agent, but he does not feel the same way about her. She works in the opium

factory in Ghazipur and is a poor girl. Without getting married, the agent seduces the girl and gets her pregnant. Later on, her pregnancy will cause her family to experience rejection. To the amazement of the community and society, however, her parents supported her in accepting her expulsion from it. They went to the representative to ask for financial assistance in order to care for the child:

"When the child became eighteen months old her parents went to the agent's house not to threaten or blackmail but just to show him that he had given them another mouth to feed."
(244)

The agent demonstrated great cunning by listening to them calmly and pledging to assist them going forward. However, on occasion, his men would light Munia's home on fire at night. Munia was, by coincidence, sleeping outside in the field rather than inside the home. She watched helplessly as her mother, father, and even her kid were burned alive in the hut. She therefore signed up as enslaved labour on the Ibis ship after realising she had no chance of surviving in the community. As we all know, indentured labor-a.k.a. slavery-represents a dark period in Indian history. The indentured labourers are required to sign certain documents and are obligated to work for others for a predetermined period of time, usually in exchange for maintenance and travel expenses. The British men's reps treat them cruelly.

As a result, patriarchal exploitation drives women to imperialist exploitation throughout the entire narrative. Deeti gave up her identity as a prisoner before enlisting as indentured labourer. She rebels against patriarchal laws by wed locking Kalua, a

law caste guy, who, because he likes her, saves her from the funeral pyre. Deeti changed her name from Deeti to Aditi during her female phase, renouncing her previous identity. She was chosen to represent girmitiyas or underprivileged labourers. She serves as a “pole star” for all women who suffer, guiding them away from the cruelty of men. For the sake of women, she is willing to battle at all times on the Ibis. Concerned about Munia’s situation, she and Kalua proceeded to the English agents’ and Silahdars’ room where Munia was being held. In addition, she fearlessly urges every other man and woman there to protect the girl from the lust of the English spies from Ibis.

However, based on Bhryo Singh’s trap, she was called inside the room alone. Kalua accompanied her as well, but in order to keep him silent, the Silahdars bound his wrist with a rope outside the room. Bhryo Singh mistreated her and called her a “whore” and “bitch” in the room. Deeti asked Bhryo Singh why she had come by herself as she couldn’t understand his plans. He responded,

“What does anyone want from a whore? His hand slipped through the neck of her choli and began to fumble for a hand hold”. (477)

Here, Bhryo Singh offends her by disclosing yet another detail about her past. He informs Deeti, in a mocking manner, that he sexually assaulted her on her wedding night, saying, “Who do you think it was, who held your legs spread on your wedding night? Did you really believe your brother-in-law, that green twig of a launda, could have done it by himself?” (477) Breaking the rope with a hook or cook, Kalua sensed Deeti’s presence

within the chamber. He entered and took Bhayro Singh’s life. However, following this episode, all of the English spies and Silahdars prepared to exact revenge on Kalua. Deeti bravely devised a strategy to protect Kalua from Captain Mr. Crowle’s brutality after learning that Silahdars were torturing him with chabuk. She assisted Kalua in getting off the Ibis with the aid of Pauletti and others. Because of her revolutionary attitude-which came about as a result of being exploited in the name of femininity in a patriarchal society-Deeti’s character can thus be classified as a bildungsroman, as she evolved from a feminine phase to a female phase. Ever since her teenage years, she has been dealing with issues. Her early experiences in life, however, led her to understand that society exists solely for the enjoyment, wealth, or prestige of men (her burning on her husband’s funeral pyre will enhance the Hukum Singh family’s status in the community) and that women ought to rebel against such a patriarchal culture. Because it gives no room for a woman’s happiness, respect, desires, dreams or feelings; instead, it gives men complete control over women’s labour and sexuality through the concept of fatherhood. With the aid of societal norms, conventions and rituals, Amitav Ghosh has skillfully shown the world of Indian women and their evolving mentality.

Therefore, “Sea of Poppies” can be perceived as a real post-modern feminist novel that brings about the true condition of women in a patriarchal milieu. Amitav Ghosh weaves the lives of multiple characters into historical events to present the stark reality of female world and elucidates the feelings felt by them during the stormy phase of indentured service for Mauritius.

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काली चाट उपन्यास में चित्रित किसान त्रासदी

डॉ. सुनीता देवी

सहायक आचार्य

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‘काली चाट’ उपन्यास में लेखक ने किसान जीवन की भयावह त्रासदी का वर्णन किया है। यह उपन्यास काल्पनिक न होकर तत्कालिक किसान जीवन की अनुभूतियों से परिचय करवाता है। यह उपन्यास मालवा के सिंद्राणी गांव के लोगों की वास्तविक अनुभूतियों की औपन्यासिक कृति है।

‘काली चाट’ से अभिप्राय काली चट्टान या पत्थर है इस चट्टान को तोड़ते-तोड़ते किसान आखिरकार एक दिन खुद टूट जाते हैं। यह चट्टान सम्पूर्ण भारत में समग्र समतल एवं रेगिस्तानी इलाकों में अपने परिवर्तित रूप में हर जगह विद्यमान है। लेखक ने उपन्यास में सांमतवादी प्रथा, साहूकारों द्वारा शोषण, बाजारवाद एवं कॉरपोरेट कम्पनियों के द्वारा किसानों को जमीन बेचने के लिए बाध्य करना, कर्ज की समस्या, प्रशासनिक तबके की उदासीनता, भ्रष्टप्रशासन, सरकार द्वारा योजनाओं को सुचारू ढंग से लागू न करना, बैंक कर्मचारियों व पटवारियों और एंजेंटों द्वारा शोषण, जमीन बेचने व बचाने के लिए संघर्ष करते किसान, सिंचाई की समस्या, फसलों का उचित मूल्य न मिल पाना व महिला किसानों के संघर्ष के शोषण को उजागर किया है।

‘काली चाट’ उपन्यास में भीमा सांमती वर्ग का प्रतिनिधि है और उसके शोषण के हथियार ज्यादा नफीस एवं घातक हैं। साहिबु और उसकी पत्नी रेशमी व युनुस उसके शोषण का शिकार बनते हैं। ये दोनों किसान साहूकारों, बैंक कर्मचारियों व बिचौलियों द्वारा शोषित

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व प्रताड़ित हैं और अंत में संघर्ष करते-करते कर्ज की चिंता के कारण आत्महत्या कर लेते हैं।

साहिबु एक लघु किसान हैं। उसे जब भी कर्ज जरूरत होती है तो वह भीमा बा से लेता है। भीमा बा पानी की आड़ में लोगों का शोषण करता था। जिस समय साहिबु अपने बैलों को जोतकर अपने खेत की निंदाई करने के लिए जा रहा था, तो रास्ते में भीमा बा ने उसे पानी का ड्रम घर ले जाने के लिए कहा लेकिन साहिबु ने मना कर दिया। उसी समय भीमा बा साहिबु से आर-पार की बात करते हुए कहता हैं, ‘तो या ही सही... आज क बाद तू भी मदद वास्ते म्हारा दरवाज्जे मत आओ।’ लाचार साहिबु अपने खेतों की निंदाई को छोड़कर बड़े ही बेमन से बैलगाड़ी को ले जाने के लिए तैयार हो जाता है और मन ही मन सोचता है कि रात-बेरात हारी-बीमारी में पैसे-कौड़ी की जरूरत पड़ने पर भीमा बा का ही तो सहारा है इसी समय साहिबु का पांव बैलगाड़ी के नीचे आ जाता है। उसके पास इलाज के लिए पैसे भी नहीं थे वह भीमा के पास अपनी जमीन गिरवी रखकर अपना इलाज करवाता है। जमीन गिरवी रखे जाने की पीड़ा उसके चेहरे पर स्पष्ट दिखाई देती है, जो निम्न शब्दों के माध्यम से द्रष्टव्य है- ‘साहिबु अब मेहनत का काम नहीं कर सकता और भीमा के यहां हाली रहते हुए वो अपनी जमीन कैसे छुड़वाएगा। लाख सोचने पर भी उसे कोई रास्ता नज़र नहीं आता।’ वह अपनी पत्नी से कहता हैं, ‘रेशमी शेर का मुंडा से निवालों

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छुड़ाना सहज है पर भीमा से जमीन छुड़ानों आसान नहीं हैं।, 'किसान को कर्ज के कारण गिरवी रखी जमीन की चिंता रात-दिन रहती है। वह अथक परिश्रम करता है, ताकि अपनी गिरवी रखी जमीन छुड़ा सके। रेशमी स्पष्ट शब्दों में कहती है कि, 'मैं मजदूरी करके भीमा बा को एक-एक पैसा चुका दूंगी और हमारी जमीन छुड़ा लूंगी।' इस प्रकार किसान की सारी जिंदगी कर्ज उतारते-उतारते चली जाती है, पर वो कर्ज नहीं उतार पाता।

खेती - किसानों का घाटे का सौदा है कारण यह है कि इसमें लागत बहुत लगती है। यदि समस्त खर्च का हिसाब लगाया जाए तो सही तरीके से किसान को मजदूरी भी नहीं मिलती। उपन्यास का पात्र जगदीश कहता है, "रिस्क तो उठानी पड़े। पिछले साल मैंने पाँच पैकेट कपास लगाया था। एक क्विंटल कपास भी नी हुआ। किसानों को काम ही रिस्क को है।" इससे स्पष्ट प्रतीत होता है कि खेती-किसानों का कार्य जोखिम भरा है। अक्सर उसे उसके परिश्रम का मूल्य भी नहीं मिल पाता। किसान प्राकृतिक आपदा का भी शिकार होता है। कई बार फसल चार-पाँच बार निंदाई करने पर भी नहीं उगती। इसी कारण किसान का कर्ज दिन-प्रतिदिन बढ़ता जाता है। वह कर्ज लेकर खेती के लिए उतम श्रेणी के खाद-बीज खरीदता है और बर्बाद होने पर मौत की भेंट चढ़ जाता है। एक गणना के अनुसार '1991 में विदर्भ इलाके में एक एकड़ खेत में कपास की खेती पर 2500 रुपये का खर्च बैठता था वहाँ आज के दिन में नए बीटी ब्रांड बीजों से खेती करने में 13000 रूपयों से ज्यादा का खर्च आता है इसका आकलन करें तो हम पाते हैं कि प्रति एकड़ खेती की लागत में 500 फीसदी वृद्धि हुई है और यह जानलेवा है इसका बोझ नहीं उठाया जा सकता।' इससे स्वतः स्पष्ट है कि वर्तमान में खेती घाटे का सौदा है। इसी कारण किसान कर्ज के बोझ तले दब जाता है।

सिंचाई की समस्या भी किसानों के जीवन में कष्ट व अंधकार ला देती है। इस उपन्यास में युनुस

नाम का पात्र पानी की समस्या से छुटकारा पाने के लिए दिन-रात अपनी पत्नी एवं बच्चों के साथ मिलकर 'काली चाट' को तोड़ता है, पर काली चाट टूटने का नाम नहीं लेती। वह अपने खेत में सिंचाई के लिए ट्यूबवैल लगवाना चाहता है, पैसे के अभाव के कारण युनुस अपनी दो बीघा जमीन को भीमा बा के पास गिरवी रख देता है ताकि खेतों में ट्यूबवैल चला सके और खेत में परिश्रम करके अपनी गिरवी रखी जमीन को वापिस छुड़ा सके, परन्तु खेत में, "मुहं धोने जितो पाणी भी नी हिटियो। अब कई करां। बीस हजार को जूओं खेलियाँ था हार गया। अब रंज करने से कई होणों जानों हैं।" हताश, निराश किसान को एक बार फिर उम्मीद होती है कि वह कर्ज लेकर दूसरा कार्य करेगा ताकि अपनी गिरवी रखी जमीन को छुड़ा सके। कर्ज का चक्कर तो किसान के सिर पर हर समय मंडराता रहता है।

सरकारी योजना के तहत पशु-पालन विभाग द्वारा मुर्गा फॉर्म की योजना शुरू की गई। युनुस को एक बार फिर आशा की किरण दिखाई दी। युनुस के पास पैसे न होने पर भी उसने अपनी पत्नी यास्मिन के चाँदी के झुमके बेचकर विभाग में पाँच सौ रूपये जमा करा दिए। ताकि वो सरकारी योजना का लाभ उठा सके और कर्ज से छुटकारा पा सके। 'दिसम्बर की कड़कड़ाती रात थी। एक गाड़ी युनुस के घर के सामने रूकी और गते का डिब्बा उतार कर चली गई। डिब्बों में छोटे-छोटे सौ चूजे थे। युनुस को समझ नहीं आया कि इन चूजों को कहाँ रखें। पूरा परिवार सोच में पड़ गया। चूजों को रखकर पूरा परिवार रात-भर चूजों के बड़े होने और मुर्गी सू अंडे निकलने का सपना देखता रहा। सुबह पेटी खुली तो सारे सपने मर चुके थे।' युनुस के हाथों एक बार फिर मायूसी लगती है। वह कर्ज उतारने के लिए निरंतर प्रयासरत रहता है पर दुर्भाग्य के कारण हर जगह घाटा ही घाटा हाथ लगता है। इसी कड़ी में तीसरी बार फिर पशु पालन विभाग द्वारा गाय की स्कीम आती है। सरकारी अफसरों द्वारा किसानों को

आकर्षित करने के लिए गाय की गुणवत्ता के बारे में बताया जाता है कि यह गाय 15 लीटर दूध देती है। किसान दूध बेचकर अपने घर का गुजारा चला सकता है और साथ ही कुछ पैसे भी जोड़ सकता है। कर्ज लेकर युनुस गाय को खरीद लेता है पर उसका भाग्य देखिये मौसम गाय के अनुकूल न होकर प्रतिकूल होता है। गाय की ऐसी दशा को देखकर वह छुटकारा पाना चाहता है। 'गाय बेचने के लिए युनुस ने काफी दौड़-धूप की लेकिन गांव में कोई उसे खरीदने को तैयार नहीं हुआ। आखिर में पशु-पालन विभाग वाले सहाब के खूब हाथ-पाँव जोड़े, तब उन्होंने गाय रखकर चार हजार रुपये युनुस को पकड़ाये। दस-बारह हजार का घाटा खाके युनुस गाँव लौट आया।' अतः इन पंक्तियों से स्पष्ट प्रतीत होता है कि किसान कर्ज उतारने के चक्कर में और ज्यादा कर्जवान हो जाता है। और इस संदर्भ में युनुस के हौंसले की तो दाद देनी पड़ेगी।

अत्यंत ही मेहनती व जुझारू स्वभाव के धनी युनुस के प्रयास यहीं तक सिमित न रहे। रोजगार गारंटी योजना के प्रचार-प्रसार को देखकर युनुस को एक बार फिर कुछ कमा लेने की उम्मीद जगी। उसे लगा कि गाय का घाटा मजदूरी से पूरा हो जाएगा। पर पंचायत सचिव उनकी मजदूरी के सब पैसे हड़प लेता है, जिससे भ्रष्ट प्रशासन का असली चेहरा हमारे सम्मुख आता है कि किस तरीके से मजदूर व किसानों का शोषण किया जाता है और कहते हैं कि, "तमारे जहां जानो है जाओ। कलेक्टर पास जाओ, मुखमंतरी पास जाओ और हो सके तो प्रधानमंत्रु पास भी चलिया जाओ। पर एक बात सुन लो, तम सब मिलके म्हारी झांट को एक बाल भी नी उखाड़ सको। मैं एकलो पैसा थोड़ी खाऊं हूं। बैंक से लगाके तो जनपद का बाबू, इंजीनियर, सीओ कलेक्टर सबके पैसे दूँ हूँ। कौन से शिकायत करेगा।" इससे स्पष्ट हो जाता है कि मजदूर किसान का कहीं पर तो साहूकार के द्वारा शोषण होता है और कहीं सरकारी कर्मचारियों के हाथों शोषण का शिकार होता जाता है।

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युनुस अपनी ज़मीन को बचाने के लिए जदोजहद एवं संघर्ष करता है। कुछ दिनों के बाद उसने टी.वी. पर एक समृद्ध किसान की फोटो देखी। युनुस को जिज्ञासा होती है कि वो एक बार इस किसान से मिले। ताकि वह भी परिश्रम करके इस समृद्ध किसान की तरह खुशहाल जीवन व्यतीत कर सके। युनुस किसान से फोन पर संपर्क करता है, वह उससे मिलता है तो उसकी स्थिति एकदम विपरीत दिखाई दी। दीना ने बताया कि किसान को फसल का उचित मूल्य नहीं पाता। उद्यानिकी विभाग के एक अधिकारी ने सफेद मूसली बोनो के लिए सुझाव दिया कि बाजार में सफेद मूसली की खेती से एक एकड़ में पचास हजार का उत्पादन लिया जा सकता है। दीना के शब्दों के माध्यम से देखा जा सकता है, "यह सफेद मूसली की खेती। अरे मैं इन साहब लोग के केहना में आके पछता रह्यों हूँ। सब केहता था के दो हजार रूपये किलों से कम न बिकेगी। व्यापारी तुम्हारे घर के चक्र लगाएंगे। कोई नी आयो भाया। दो हजार छोड़ो, दो सौ रूपये किलों में भी कोई खरीदने के तैयार नी हैं।" बाजारवाद के कारण कम्पनियां अपना बीज उचित दामों पर बेच देती हैं। किसान के लिए फसल का दाम निर्धारित नहीं होता। इसी कारण किसान को अपनी फसल का उचित मूल्य नहीं मिल पाता। इससे दीना की पीड़ा का अंदाजा लगाया जा सकता है कि विज्ञापन में दिखाई देने वाला किसान समृद्ध एवं खुशहाल है या कोई और यह समस्या केवल दीना जैसे किसानों की नहीं है बल्कि संपूर्ण भारत के किसानों की समस्या है, किसानों को अपनी फसल का लागत मूल्य ही नहीं मिल पाता है, यही चिंता का विषय है।

उपन्यास में लेखक ने युनुस के माध्यम से यह दिखाया है कि पटवारी एवं बैंक मैनेजर किस तरह से किसानों का शोषण करते हैं। युनुस पटवारी के पास अपनी जमीन के कागज लेने के लिए जाता है, तो वह बिना पैसे के कार्य नहीं करता। पटवारी के शब्दों में, "घर की खेती थोड़ी है। सरकारी काम है।

साहित्यिकी (वर्ष-10, 2024)
(UGC CARE - Listed Journal)

सरकार काम सिस्टम से होता है। अधिकारी के दस्तखत के बिना एक छोटा-सा कागज भी आगे नहीं बढ़ता और अफसर फोकट में दस्तखत थोड़ी ही करता है। घोड़े पे सवारी करनी हो तो उसके सामने भी पहले हरा-चारा डालना पड़ता है। मेरे हिस्से के पैसे भले बाद में दे देना, पैसे नहीं हो तो प्याज, कपास, ज्वार, सब्जी, भाजी जो भी हो ले आना।” इस प्रकार हम स्पष्ट देख पाते हैं कि भ्रष्टाचार की जड़ें पूरी तरह से फ़ैल चुकी हैं अधिकारी बिना पैसे के कोई भी कार्य नहीं करना चाहते। किसान या मजदूर के हालात पहले से ही खराब है। पहले ही वो सिर से पैर तक कर्ज में दबा हुआ है। उस कर्ज को दूर करने के लिए वह अथक परिश्रम करता है ताकि वह अपनी गिरवी रखी जमीन को दोबारा प्राप्त कर सके। एक शाम अचानक साहिबु के घर बैंक से ज़मीन कुर्की का आदेश आता है। वह जमीन कुर्की के आदेश को सुनकर चिंतित हो जाता है और वह रात-दिन पैसे की चिंता करता रहता है कि यदि समय पर पैसा नहीं दिया गया तो सरकार उसके पशु व घर को निलाम कर देगी। ऐसा सोचते-सोचते रात के समय सदा के लिए घर छोड़कर चला जाता है। ‘रात के सत्राटे में बैसाखी की खट-खट की आवाज थोड़ी देर तक गूँजती रही फिर धीमी होते-होते गुम हो गई।’

दिन-रात खेतों में परिश्रम करने वाला किसान चाहे साहिबु हो या युनुस हो सभी खेती किसानों के साथ-साथ मजदूरी करके अपना जीवन यापन करते हैं। यही सब युनुस के साथ हुआ। युनुस के घर भी बैंक की तरफ से जमीन कुर्की का कागज आया। युनुस भी मन ही मन सोचता है कि उसने बैंक से कोई पैसा नहीं लिया। वह चिंतित हो जाता है और एक साहूकार के पास पैसों का इंतजाम करने के लिए जाता है। साहूकार पैसे देने के लिए तैयार हो जाता है और इकरारनामा लिखवा लेता है। निम्नलिखित पंक्तियों के माध्यम से यह देखा जा सकता है, “लालू साहू के मुंशी ने करार पढ़कर सुनाया। मैं इकरारनामा

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लिख देने वाला फ़लां पिता फ़लां निवासी फ़लां गांव अपने पूरे होशों हवास में, बिना किसी दबाव के अपनी मनमर्जी से यह लिखता हूँ कि मैंने अपनी ज़रूरत के लिए अपनी जमीन खसरा क्रमांक फ़लां, पेटे इतने रूपये लालू साहू से उधार लिए हैं। यह रकम मैं फ़लां दस दिन में मय तीन हजार रूपये ब्याज से चुकता कर दूंगा। यदि मैं यह रकम दस दिन में नहीं चुका पाया तो उधार देने वाले साहू को मेरी जमीन पर काबिज होने का अधिकार होगा।” स्पष्टतः है कि किसान ऋण लेने के लिए कितना बेबस है। उसके पास अपनी जमीन को बचाने के लिए कोई चारा नहीं होता। बैंक से कर्ज न लेने पर भी युनुस अपनी जमीन को बचाने के लिए एक और कर्ज लेता है। ताकि वह उसकी जमीन बच सके।

गांव के एक व्यक्ति एवं मंगल संस्था के सदस्य दिनेश ने इस मामले को मुख्यमंत्री तक पहुंचाया और मुख्यमंत्री ने संज्ञान लेते हुए सभी बैंक मैनेजर को आदेश दिया कि पुराने किसान क्रेडिट के ऊपर अभी किसी प्रकार का कार्य न किया जाए। उनकी जांच होगी। तभी युनुस चिंतित होकर साहूकार के पास जाता है कि आप कुछ समय और दें। साहूकार मना कर देता है। इसी चिंता में मग्न युनुस घर आता है और अचानक उसके सीने में दर्द उठता है। इसी दर्द के कारण युनुस दम तोड़ देता है। गरीब किसान अपनी जमीन को बचाने के लिए आखिरी समय तक लगा रहता है और अंत में अपने प्राणों को त्याग देता है।

कॉरपोरेट कम्पनियाँ आज किसानों को जमीन बेचने के लिए बाध्य कर रही है। ज़मीन बेचने व बचाने की जद्दोजहद के कारण हर परिवार में लड़ाई-झगड़े का माहौल पैदा हो गया है। युवा अपनी ज़मीन को बेचने के लिए तैयार है और बुजुर्ग व्यक्ति अपनी ज़मीन को बचाने के लिए संघर्ष कर रहा है। उपन्यास के पात्र जगन्नाथ बा अपने बेटे को ऊंची आवाज़ में कहते हैं, “तू भी कान खोल कर सुन ले। म्हारे जीते जी न तो ज़मीन का हिस्सा होगा, ना जमीन बिकेगी।” अतः पिता-पुत्र के संवाद के माध्यम

से स्पष्ट दिखाई देता है कि आज युवा वर्ग खेती करना पसंद न करके इसे घाटे का सौदा बताकर बेचने के लिए तैयार है। वहीं दूसरी तरफ महिला किसान रेशमी भी अपनी जमीन को बचाने के लिए रात-दिन दूसरे के खेतों में काम करके अपनी गिरवी रखी जमीन को बचा लेती हैं और अपने बेटे को पढ़ाती हैं। महेश को नौकरी मिल जाती है और शहर में रहने लग जाता है। कुछ दिन बाद वह अपनी मां से जमीन बेचने के लिए कहता है तो मां और पुत्र में विवाद हो जाता है। रेशमी के शब्दों के माध्यम से जमीन के प्रति प्रकट प्रेम को देखा जा सकता है, “जमीन बेचने का बात दुबारा मत कर जे। जमीन बेचना तं पेलां म्हारे ज़हर दे दीजे।” कॉरपोरेट जगत के बोलबाले से हर घर में जमीन बेचने व बचाने के लिए संघर्ष देखा जा सकता है। कम्पनियां युवाओं को आकर्षित करने के लिए तरह-तरह के प्रलोभन देती है ताकि युवा उनके प्रलोभन में आ जाएँ और जमीन बेचने के लिए तैयार हो जाएँ। कॉरपोरेट जगत के प्रतिनिधि अम्बाशंकर के वक्तव्य के माध्यम से स्पष्ट द्रष्टव्य है, “मैंने कम्पनी को अपनी दस एकड़ जमीन बेचकर बीस लाख रूपए की एफडी कर दी है, मजे में महीने के महीने दस हजार रूपए ब्याज आता है और कम्पनी से पच्चीस-तीस हजार रूपए महीना मिल जाता है, तुम भी चाहो तो अपनी जमीन कम्पनी को बेच के पैसा बैंक में रख दो और कम्पनी में नौकरी कर लो।” अतः हम कह सकते हैं कि आज किसान अपनी जमीन को बेचकर भूमिहीन मजदूरों में तबदील हो रहे हैं। डॉ. बनवारी लाल शर्मा का मत है कि, “ये ऐसे विशेष क्षेत्र हैं, जो हजारों एकड़ जमीन पर बनाए जा रहे हैं, जिनसे उद्योगों और प्रौद्योगिकी का विकास किया जाएगा। किसान के लिए जमीन मुनाफा कमाने का धंधा नहीं है, वह उसकी आजीविका का आधार हैं, किसान से उसकी जमीन लेना, उसकी जिंदगी लेने के समान है।”

निष्कर्ष रूप में हम यह कह सकते हैं कि सुनील चतुर्वेदी ने अपने उपन्यास में किसान जीवन की भयावह त्रासदी को चित्रित किया है। ‘काली चाट’ अपने समय का सवाल भी है और जवाब भी है। लेखक ने बहुत ही मार्मिक ढंग से किसानों की आत्महत्या, ऋण की समस्या, साहूकारों द्वारा शोषण, भ्रष्ट प्रशासन व कॉरपोरेट जगत द्वारा शोषणकारी नीतियाँ, फसलों का वाजिब मूल्य न मिल पाना व जमीन को बेचने व बचाने के लिए संघर्ष करते किसानों की व्यथा को उजागर किया है।

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सामाजिक रूपांतरण के प्रश्न और हिंदी उपन्यास

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समकालीन हिन्दी उपन्यासकारों ने बदलते हुए परिवेश से उत्पन्न समस्याओं को अपने उपन्यासों में बहुत गंभीरता के साथ चित्रित किया है। इस स्थिति को एक विशेष प्रक्रिया के रूप में देखा जा सकता है “इस प्रक्रिया में उपन्यास का शिल्प भी बदला, भाषा में भी परिवर्तन लक्षित किया गया और दृष्टि में भी बदलाव के संकेत दिखायी दिये। यह वह दौर है, जब सूचना क्रांति ने सदियों पुराने भारतीय समाज के ताने-बाने को तहस-नहस किया। बाजारवाद का प्रभुत्व कायम होने लगा, मानवीय सम्बन्धों के मान बदलने लगे, जीवन की बुनियादी प्रवृत्तियों में भी तेजी से बदलाव हुआ। राजनीति के परिदृश्य बदले, उसके मान मूल्य बदले। जनता के प्रति उसकी पक्षधरता में कमी आयी। साम्प्रदायिकता उभरी, जातियों के बीच भेद-भाव पैदा हुआ, ऐसे में सब भौचक्के रहे हैं कि उनकी क्या भूमिका हो। उपन्यासकार भी इस असमंजस का शिकार रहे हैं? लेकिन संतोष का विषय है कि उन्होंने अपने उपन्यासों के माध्यम से प्रतिनायक समय का साक्ष्य प्रस्तुत किया और दिखाने की कोशिश की कि कैसे भौतिक विकास के समानान्तर मनुष्य का जीवन बदल रहा है, कैसे वह स्वार्थों का पुंज हो गया है और कैसे वह अपने से बाहर कुछ भी नहीं सोच पाता?”

सामाजिक जीवन में महत्वपूर्ण बदलाव एक अन्तराल के बाद होते रहते हैं, कभी इनका समय

बहुत लम्बा होता है तो कभी अल्प काल तक ही रहता है। सामाजिक रूपांतरण में सामाजिक संबंधों, मूल्यों, प्रतीकों आदि में भी परिवर्तन होता रहा है। इस स्थिति में संस्कृति के भौतिक एवं अभौतिक दोनों रूपों में बड़े स्तर पर बदलाव देखने को मिलता है। संवेदना के स्तर पर देखा जाए तो इस दौर में जितनी संवेदनहीनता और मानवीय मूल्यहीनता का दर्शन होता है, हिन्दी साहित्य के पूर्ववर्ती उपन्यासों में कहीं नहीं दिखता। यही कारण है कि इस समय के चिंतनशील और संवेदनशील रचनाकारों ने इस कमी को अपनी रचनात्मकता द्वारा उभारने और पकड़ने का प्रयास किया है। इस समय के कुछ उपन्यास इस दृष्टि से उल्लेखनीय हैं, जिनमें विनोद कुमार शुक्ल का ‘दीवार में एक खिड़की रहती थी’, सुरेन्द्र वर्मा का ‘मुझे चाँद चाहिए’, चित्रा मुद्गल का ‘आवां’, अलका सरावगी का ‘कलि-कथा : वाया बाइपास’ गीतांजलि श्री का ‘हमारा शहर उस बरस’ तथा अजय नावरिया का ‘उधर के लोग’ उल्लेखनीय हैं।

इस दौर के उपन्यासों के संदर्भ में आलोचक वीरेन्द्र यादव लिखते हैं कि- “मध्यवर्गी उभार, साम्प्रदायिकता, उपभोक्तावादी संस्कृति एवं हाशिए के लोगों की दास्तान समेटे हिन्दी उपन्यास ने जहाँ अपने सरोकारों का विस्तार किया है, वहीं कथ्य व रूप की एकरसता को भी तोड़ा है। कहा जा सकता है कि इस दौर में उपन्यास महज साहित्यिक संरचना

न रहकर एक सामाजिक संरचना के रूप में भी अधिक पुष्ट व समृद्ध हुआ है।”²

साहित्य हमेशा मानवीय मूल्य की बात करता है और यही इसका धर्म भी रहा है। हम हिन्दी साहित्य के इतिहास को इस दृष्टि से देख सकते हैं। प्रत्येक काल में रचनाकारों ने मानवता के प्रति अपनी संवेदनशीलता और सृजनशीलता का परिचय दिया है, वह चाहे कथा साहित्य की बात हो या ‘कविता’ की या किसी अन्य साहित्यिक विधा की सब जगह इसका प्रभाव दिखता है। प्रेमचंद ने स्वाधीनता आंदोलन के दौर में अपने उपन्यास ‘गोदान’ की शहरी और ग्रामीण कथा के माध्यम से सामाजिक रूपांतरण के प्रश्न को बहुत अच्छी तरह चित्रित किया है। ‘मालती’, ‘मेहता’, ‘राय साहब’, ‘गोबर’ तथा ‘होरी’ आदि के संवादों में इसकी झलक दिखती है। इसी तरह जैनेन्द्र, अज्ञेय, यशपाल, राही मासूम रजा, फणीश्वरनाथ ‘रेणु’, मन्नू मण्डारी, मैत्रेयी पुष्पा आदि के उपन्यासों में भी सामाजिक रूपांतरण से उत्पन्न प्रभाव को देखा जा सकता है।

“आज उदारवादी अर्थव्यवस्था की वैश्वीकरण तर्ज पर साहित्य के निष्कर्ष और प्रतिमान का भी वैश्वीकरण व मानवीकरण हो रहा है। उत्तर आधुनिकता और उत्तर-संरचनावादी सांस्कृतिक उपनिवेशवाद के नए उपकरण हैं, जो हमारे साहित्य और संस्कृति को मूर्त सामाजिक और सांस्कृतिक स्थितियों से विच्छिन्न करके विखंडित मूल्यहीनता तक सीमित करते हैं। हिन्दी उपन्यास इस खतरे के प्रति सचेत भी है। यह अच्छा ही है कि हिन्दी उपन्यास अपने समय और समाज की चुनौतियों से कभी विमुख नहीं हुआ।”³

इसी दौर में कुछ और महत्वपूर्ण उपन्यास प्रकाशित हुए जिनमें विनोद कुमार शुक्ल का ‘दीवार में एक खिड़की रहती थी’ और सुरेन्द्र वर्मा का ‘मुझे चाँद चाहिए’ उल्लेखनीय हैं। दोनों उपन्यास अपने-अपने ढंग के विलक्षण उपन्यास हैं। दोनों उपन्यास सामाजिक रूपांतरण के परिणामस्वरूप उत्पन्न प्रश्नों की दृष्टि से भी उल्लेखनीय हैं।

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‘दीवार में एक खिड़की रहती थी’ उपन्यास जहाँ अपने अनोखे शिल्प के कारण चर्चित रहा वहीं सुरेन्द्र वर्मा का उपन्यास ‘मुझे चाँद चाहिए’ स्त्री विमर्श, उत्तर-आधुनिक विमर्श तथा भूमण्डलीकरण के प्रभाव को लेकर विमर्श का केन्द्र बना रहा। विनोद कुमार शुक्ल जिस तरह से एक छोटी कथा वस्तु को लेकर मानवीय मूल्यों का चित्रण करते हैं, वह इस भूमण्डलीय परिवेश में बहुत महत्वपूर्ण हो उठता है आज मनुष्य व्यक्तिगत स्वार्थ के कारण जिस तरह भौतिकतावादी सुख-सुविधाओं की ललक में एक दूसरे से कटता और दूर होता चला जा रहा है, मानवीय संबंधों की उसके जीवन में कोई अहमियत नहीं रह गयी है, पैसा और शोहरत ही उसके जीवन का लक्ष्य हो गया है; इस परिवेश में ‘दीवार में एक खिड़की रहती थी’ उपन्यास अधिक प्रासंगिक मालूम पड़ता है। जिसे इस उपन्यास के पात्र ‘रघुबर प्रसाद’ और ‘सोनसी’ के जीवन को देख कर समझा जा सकता है- “सोनसी बाहर सड़क पर आई। तो रघुबर प्रसाद आगे के खम्बे की तरफ जा रहे थे। वहाँ भी चार लड़के बत्ती के नीचे पढ़ रहे थे। पेड़ पर छिपकर बीड़ी पीने वाले लड़के ने सोनसी को रघुबर प्रसाद के पीछे आते देखा होगा। उसने रघुबर प्रसाद को बताया। रघुबर प्रसाद ने पीछे मुड़कर देखा होगा। रघुबर प्रसाद को खड़ा देख सोनसी सजी-धजी पानी का गिलास लिए बढ़ी। सड़क पर कोई नहीं दिख रहा था। इधर-उधर के दो तीन खम्बों के नीचे विद्यार्थी पढ़ते हुए दिख रहे थे। बीच सड़क पर सोनसी ने रघुबर प्रसाद को गिलास दिया। रघुबर प्रसाद ने पूरा पानी पिया। तब भी गिलास की तली में कुछ बूँद पानी बचा था उस पानी को सोनसी ने ऊपर से मुँह में डाल लिया। रघुबर प्रसाद के बचे पानी को सोनसी इसी तरह पी लिया करती थी। रात के सन्नाटे में सारा बाहर इनके घर की तरह लग रहा था।”⁴

यह है विनोद कुमार शुक्ल की रचनात्मकता। यहाँ बात सिर्फ पानी पीने तक नहीं सीमित है बल्कि सोनसी का ‘रघुबर प्रसाद’ के प्रति जो प्रेम का भाव

है वह महत्वपूर्ण है। यहाँ एक छोटा परिवार है जिसमें तीन सदस्य रहते हैं 'सोनसी', 'रघुवर प्रसाद' और इनकी 'माँ' फिर भी इतना प्यार, शांति और खुशहाल परिवार जिसकी आज के परिवेश में कल्पना नहीं की जा सकती।

दूसरी तरफ सुरेन्द्र वर्मा का उपन्यास 'मुझे चाँद चाहिए' की पात्र 'वर्षा वशिष्ठ' को देखा जा सकता है। 'वर्षा' के पास पैसा, ऐश्वर्य, नाम, शोहरत, नौकर-चाकर, गाड़ी सब कुछ है परन्तु सुख-शांति तथा प्रेम, का अभाव है। वह हमेशा तनाव में रहती है। भोजन करने तक का समय इसके पास नहीं है। वह अच्छी तरह सो नहीं सकती, मानसिक तनाव से 'आत्महत्या' करने के बारे में सोचना आदि प्रश्न उसे घेरे हुए हैं। यह है आज का समय एक छोटे से कस्बे शाहजहाँपुर से लखनऊ, दिल्ली, बॉलीवुड से हॉलीवुड तक की ग्लैमर भरी यात्रा फिर भी हताश-निराश जिन्दगी।

वर्षा के पास बहुत कुछ होते हुए भी कुछ भी नहीं रहा क्योंकि उसके जीवन से उसका प्यार 'हर्ष' हमेशा-हमेशा के लिए चला गया है। (मृत्यु हो चुकी है) वर्षा अपने फ्लैट पर खड़ा होकर सोचती है-

"वर्षा खिड़की के सामने खड़ी हो गयी। नीचे सड़क पर कोलाहल था स्त्रियाँ, पुरुष और बच्चे हँसते, खिलखिलाते तेजी से सड़क पार करते। सिर्फ मैं ही अपने विषाद-कक्ष में बंद हूँ, वर्षा ने सोचा। धूप सुहानी थी, सर्दी भी। आकाश नीला था। हवा के झोंके भी मंद और मृदु।

मैं अभी जिंदा हूँ। वर्षा फुसफुसायी।

अब मेरे जीवन के हर्षविहीन अध्याय की शुरुआत हो रही है, उसने सोचा। कितने वर्षों की अंतरंगता, आसंगों और स्मृतियों के साथ अब मुझे नये सिरे से हर्ष के बिना जीने की आदत डालनी होगी। जिस तरह सामग्री-वाहक होते हैं, उसी तरह अब मैं स्मृति-वाहक हूँ।"⁵

इसी तरह चित्रा मुद्गल का उपन्यास 'आवां' भी समाज में व्याप्त स्वार्थ और आपसी विद्वेष की भावना का चित्रण करता है। एक व्यापारिक सोच वाले इंसान के जीवन में मनुष्यता का कोई मतलब नहीं होता। उसके जीवन का लक्ष्य सिर्फ लाभ कमाना होता है और उसके लिए वह किसी भी हद तक जा सकता है। वह विविध प्रकार का षड्यंत्र करता है, प्रलोभन देता है और अपना स्वार्थ सिद्ध होने के उपरांत अपने को वहाँ से अलग भी कर देता है। 'आवां' उपन्यास में समाज का एक ऐसा ही वर्ग है जिसका प्रतिनिधि पात्र 'मटका किंग', 'पवार', 'संजय कनोई' तथा 'सिद्धांत मेहता' है। सिद्धांत मेहता द्वारा नमिता के नाम लिखे एक पत्र का कुछ अंश इसे चरितार्थ करता है- "तुम्हारे पिता की मृत्यु से मुझे सबसे ज्यादा अफसोस इस बात का हो रहा है कि तुम जीवन में पढ़ना चाहती थी, परिस्थितियों ने निर्ममता से तुम्हें घर-परिवार की जिम्मेदारियों में झोंक दिया।

बहरहाल, मैं तुम्हारे दुःख से दुःखी हूँ और कठिन समय में तुम्हारी हरचंद सहायता के लिए प्रस्तुत। तुम पुनः उखड़ सकती हो मैं सौ-सौ जूते खाकर भी तुम्हारी सहायता के लिए क्यों आगे बढ़ आता हूँ? लड़कियों का बाजार है बम्बई? किसिम-किसिम के रंग रूपों में उपलब्ध हैं यहाँ लड़कियाँ! फिर? सवाल मछलियों के ढेर का नहीं। सवाल है उसका जो मुझे चाहिए। मुझे तलाश है ताजी इलिस माछ का! दूसरा कोई विकल्प मेरे लिए इलिस माछ नहीं हो सकता।"⁶

यह है सिद्धार्थ मेहता का चेहरा एक तरफ वह 'नमित पाण्डेय' के पिता की मृत्यु पर दुःखी है, दूसरी तरफ उसी मृत पिता की पुत्री का भावुकतारूपी शिकार करने का जाल बिछा रहा है। वह एक मशहूर फोटोग्राफर है जो स्त्री के शरीर का विभिन्न कोणों से तस्वीर खिंचकर बाजार में प्रस्तुत करता है। इसी तरह का एक पात्र 'पवार' है जो 'ट्रेड यूनियन' से

जुड़ा है तथा आपस में झगड़ा लगाना, दंगे कराना तथा मारपीट कराना आदि इसका कार्य है- “पवार का कहना था- जिस रोज श्रमिकों की सभा में पथराव न हो, पुलिस अश्रुगैस न छोड़े, डंडे न बरसाए वह ठीक से नहीं सो पाता। उसकी निश्चित नींद के लिए आक्रोश, उत्तेजना बेचैनी, मुठभेड़ आदि लोरी का काम करते हैं।” इसी मजदूर वर्ग से निकला ‘पवार’ अपने स्वार्थ के लिए अपने ही समाज और श्रमिक वर्ग के बीच दाँव-पेंच खेलता है। आज का मनुष्य अपना स्वार्थ सिद्ध करने के लिए कैंसी-कैंसी धिनौनी हरकतें कर सकता है पवार के उपर्युक्त कथन से देखा जा सकता है।

सामाजिक रूपांतरण के प्रश्न को अलका सरावगी के उपन्यास ‘कलि-कथा : वाया बाइपास’ में भी देखा जा सकता है। “भारतीय परिवेश के महानगरों में डेटिंग प्रचलन में आ चुका है। इंटरनेट की दुनिया, मोबाइल और बड़े-बड़े शो-रूमों में संपर्क-सूत्र, फोन नं. आदि द्वारा लड़के-लड़कियाँ एक दूसरे से संपर्क कर डेटिंग पर जा रहे हैं। इस नियति का संकेतात्मक आंकलन अलका सरावगी ने ‘कलि-कथा : वाया बाइपास’ में किया है।

“अब जमाना ही ऐसा है तो बच्चे क्या करे? अभी बड़ी लड़की के लड़के को एक लड़की ने ‘डेटिंग’ के लिए फोन किया और कहा कि उसने फोन नम्बर ‘ओपेल’ गाड़ी के शोरूम से लिया है। किशोर बाबू समझते ही नहीं कि आखिर उनका लड़का कितने दिन मन मारकर रहता है।”⁸

इस उपन्यास की कथा ‘किशोर बाबू’, ‘शांतनु’ और ‘अमोलक’ के बीच घूमती है इन्हीं के संवादों से मारवाड़ी समाज के संघर्ष, अंतर्विरोध और युवा पीढ़ी में आये परिवर्तन को भी दिखाया गया है। अमोलक इसको चरितार्थ करता है। भाषा की दृष्टि से देखा जाए तो इस दौर के उपन्यासों में बहुत विविधता दिखायी पड़ती है। प्रायः सभी उपन्यासकारों ने अपने कथानक तथा विषय के अनुसार भाषा का प्रयोग

किया है। भाषा और अस्मिता के अंतःसंबंध पर बात करते हुए डॉ. नामवर सिंह लिखते हैं- “भाषा पर किसी भी बहस की शुरुआत करने से पहले यह जान लेना जरूरी है कि वह एक सामाजिक वस्तु है। मानसिक संकल्पना के साथ-साथ एक सामाजिक यथार्थ भी है, व्याकरणिक इकाई होने के साथ-साथ वह संस्थागत प्रतीक भी है और सम्प्रेषण का अन्यतम उपकरण होने के साथ-साथ वह हमारी सामाजिक अस्मिता का एक सशक्त माध्यम भी है। इस बात से इंकार नहीं किया जा सकता कि हर भाषा एक निश्चित समुदाय के व्यक्तियों को भावना, चिंतन और जीवन दृष्टि के धरातल पर एक दूसरे के नजदीक लाती है, और आपस में जोड़ती और बाँधती है। भाषा की इस शक्ति के सहारे व्यक्ति का ‘मैं’ समुदाय के ‘हम’ में अपना फैलाव पाता है।”⁹ उपन्यास की भाषा का विश्लेषण अन्य विधाओं की तुलना में तनिक मुश्किल इसलिए है कि ‘उपन्यास साहित्य की विधाओं में सर्वाधिक मिश्रित विधा है। उपन्यास की रचना तो गद्य में होती है, पर शायद ही कोई विधा हो जिसकी प्रविधि का प्रयोग उपन्यास न कर लेता हो। प्रबन्ध काव्य, नाटक, छोटी कविता, गीति-संस्मरण, रेखाचित्र, रिपोर्टाज आदि की प्रविधियाँ उपन्यास में आसानी से अन्तर्भूक्त हो जाती हैं। इन प्रविधियों के अनुरूप उपन्यास की भाषा भी विविध रूप ग्रहण करती चलती है।”¹⁰

निष्कर्ष :

अतः उपर्युक्त उल्लेखित उपन्यासों में चित्रित सामाजिक रूपांतरण के सवालियों के द्वारा कहा जा सकता है कि इस समय कुछ उपन्यासकारों ने समाज में बदल रही इस सोच को दिखाने का सार्थक प्रयास किया है। यह प्रश्न अलग है कि इसका प्रभाव उपन्यासों में अभी कम दिखायी पड़ रहा है परन्तु भविष्य में इस तरह के प्रश्नों को अन्य उपन्यासकारों द्वारा विस्तारपूर्वक चित्रित करने की संभावना दिखाई दे रही है।

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Architectural Excellence of the Gupta Period : A Comparative Study of the Bhitargaon Brick Temple and Dashavatara Temple

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Introduction :

The Bhitargaon and Dashavata temples are exemplary representation of this architectural evolution. The Bhitargaon temple, located in Kanpur district of Uttar Pradesh, is one of the earliest surviving Hindu temples. It exemplifies the Gupta architectural style with its flat roof, square sanctum and high plinth. The temple's simplicity in form is complemented by its elaborately carved doorway and pillars, reflecting early experiments with stone construction techniques. The Deogarh temple, is also in Lalitpur district of Uttar Pradesh, showcases the matured phase of Gupta temple architecture. It is renowned for its intricate sculptural panels that depict scenes from Hindu mythology, particularly those related to God Vishnu. The temple's shikhara is an early precursor to the later, more ornate towers seen in Indian temples. Together, these temples illustrate the Gupta era's contribution to the evolution of Hindu temple architecture, blending functionality with artistic expression. They highlighted the period's innovative use of stone, develop-

ment of iconography and the integration of spiritual and artistic elements that have influenced Indian temple architecture for centuries.

The Glory of Dashavata Temple :

This temple is situated in a place called Deogarh (24° 32' North latitude and 78° 15' East longitude) in Lalitpur district of Uttar Pradesh. It is a Panchayatan temple built on a high square platform with red sandstone in Nagar style under the North Indian temple architecture style. This temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu, one of the three main gods of Hinduism. The temple is built on a 12.34 meter square platform, the height of this platform is about 1.21 meter. There are 3.65 meter long stairs built around the platform. The sanctum sanctorum of the temple is about 9 feet square from inside and 17 feet square from outside. If the shikhara of this temple had not fallen, its total height would have been about 11.27 meter. It is the oldest temple of its kind among the temples built in the shikhara style of North India. While the roofs of other temples of the Gupta period

are flat, this temple has a pyramidal *Shikhara*, which gradually becomes thinner towards the top. Thus, this temple is the first example of a temple with a *Shikhara*. The *Shikhara* of this temple has collapsed and the remaining part of the temple is still safe due to the efforts of the Archaeological Survey of India. It is known that there must have been a chamber above the sanctum (*Garbhagriha*) and the *Shikhara* must have gradually narrowed and risen upwards. Probably, *Amalakas* must have been used at the corners of the peak and perhaps there must have been a large amalaka on top of the peak. This is the last phase of architecture in the east-facing and peak-bearing Gupta temples. The emergence of a *Shikhara* in the Nagar style temples of North India is its important architectural feature. This is why the famous artist Percy Brown has accepted that very few Gupta period monuments can compete with the Deogarh temple in craftsmanship and elegance. Many elements of this temple have been adopted in the architectural plan of later temples¹. The figure of Vishnu seated on Sheshaseen is engraved on the lintel of the temple and the Four-armed Narasimha figure is engraved near sheshaseen Vishnu. On the upper part of the door branch (*Dwarshakha*), the standing figures of Makarvaahini Ganga on the right and Kurmavaahini Yamuna on the left are engraved and the depiction of Dwarpalas on the door pillars and Dwarpalas and Dwarpalikas is also depicted on the door pillars. The carving of the figures of Ganga-Yamuna rivers with their vahanas on temples started in the Gupta period which is a symbol of the inseparability of water and life. The depiction of the ten avatars of Vishnu is not found anywhere

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on this famous Dashavatara Temple, but the depiction of Vishnu on the lalalbimba of the temple and the engraving of figures related to Vishnu in the huge chariots (Rathikas) on three sides is undoubtedly a proof of it being a Vishnu temple. Situated on a high platform, this temple is very fragmented. At present, only the *Garbhagriha* and the entrance of *Garbhagriha* of the temple are safe. The original sculpture of the *Garbhagriha* is missing. This temple has east-facing entrance to the *Garbhagriha* and all three outer walls have been depicted with sculptures on them. The sculptures of Nar-Narayan have depicted in the western wall's rathika, the sculptures of Gajendramoksha depicted in the northern wall's rathika and the sculptures of Sheshashayi Vishnu depicted in the southern wall's Rathika of the *Garbhagriha*.

Famous artist Kumaraswamy has written in praise of the architecture and decoration of this temple-The well-known Gupta Dasavatara temple at Deogarh near lalitpur dating about 600, is of stone with plain walls, except that on three sides there are recessed sculptured panels, representing the Gajendramoksha episode, Visnu anantashayin and a scene between two ascetics and on the fourth a sculptured entrance with river goddess on the door-jamb. The basement was decorated with five panels, representing Ramayana scenes, an almost unique instance of an arrangement quite common in java².

The Most Important Scene of Dashavatara Temple :

The Sheshashayi Vishnu sculpture of Dashavatara temple is a beautiful work of art of Gupta period. Its interpretation is

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required till date. In this sculpture, four-armed Vishnu is lying on Shesh-shayya. Lakshmi sitting in front of Vishnu and she is pressing his feet. Brahma is seated on a lotus flower above Vishnu, but the lotus is not connected to Vishnu's navel. Brahma has a deerskin on his shoulder. On one side of him Kartikeya is seated on his vehicle peacock and Indra on Airavat and on the other side Shiva-Parvati are seated on Nandi. The vahanas of all the gods are depicted flying. Veerbhadra is also present behind the Shiva-Parvati.

On the pedestal of Sheshashayi Vishnu, there are depictions of five men and one woman. Rao has described the female figure as Lakshmi³, but his identification is not correct because Lakshmi is pressing the feet of Vishnu. Hence, again, depicting Lakshmi on the pedestal is not appropriate. In fact, this figure is of Gada Devi, the weapon of Vishnu⁴. On the sides of Gada Devi, from right to left, there are figures of Chakra Purush, Shankh Purush and Khadga Purush respectively. The statues after Ayudha Purush have been called Madhu-Kaitabh by Rao⁵ and Joshi⁶. In this context, it is worth considering that these two statues are not in the form of demons. Ram and Lakshman are wearing similar clothes and ornaments in the statue depicting Surpanakha, found from Deogarh itself.⁷ Therefore, apart from the Ayudha Purushas, these two statues seem to be of Vishnu's gatekeepers Jai and Vijay, who have been depicted as vigilant guards.⁸

Joshi has said that the Khadga Purush is attacking Madhu and Kaitabh with his sword, but this is not correct. The attack or preparation to attack by the Khadga Purush on these figures seems to be mere imagina-

tion, because Madhu and Kaitabh would also be in a counterattack posture when the Khadga Purush attacked. Whereas in these two, the left figure is standing in a happy posture and his left hand is on the waist. This situation cannot be of war or defence. In fact, Jai and Vijay have been depicted with weapons in alert posture along with the sword men, these cannot be Madhu-Kaitabh in any case.⁹

It is also worth mentioning in this context that according to tradition, Madhu and Kaitabh were killed by Vishnu himself. In the Bhitargaon clay tablet also Vishnu has been shown killing Madhu-Kaitabh by laying them on his thighs.¹⁰ Therefore, the idea of the sword man preparing to attack or trying to kill the demons to be killed by Vishnu himself does not seem appropriate. Thus, it is clear that in the Sheshashayi Vishnu idol of the Dashavatara temple in Deogarh, there is no depiction of Madhu-Kaitabh with the weapon men, but there is a depiction of Vishnu's gatekeepers Jai and Vijay. From this point of view, this is probably the first such statue in which Vishnu's gatekeepers Jai and Vijay have been depicted.

The Glory of Bhitargaon Temple :

Bhitargaon brick temple in Uttar Pradesh, which is located 50 km outside of Kanpur. The history of Kanpur is not as old as we think it was established as Kohna village around 1200 circa. In this article, we are going to talk about the Bhitargaon temple. It is the largest temple of that age to survive for 1570 years or more. This brick building has a terracotta panel at the front. It is the largest and oldest terracotta Hindu shrine still standing with a roof and a towering Sikhara, having been

constructed in the 6th century under the Gupta Empire. The temple faces east and has a square construction with double-recessed corners. Over the Garbhagriha, there is a lofty pyramidal spire. Bhitargaon was formerly a part of Phulpur, a historic city. The villagers referred to the temple simply as Dewal, meaning temple. It is one of India's earliest still-standing brick temples. Cunningham dated it to the seventh century, but it has since been determined that it actually dates to the late Gupta era, or the fifth century. We owe a great obligation to Sir Alexander Cunningham because he discovered and saved a significant portion of India's constructed legacy. Cunningham was appointed by Lord Canning in 1861 as the Archaeological Surveyor to the Government of India. He was in charge of the excavations in Sanchi in 1841 and Sarnath in 1837. He was appointed the first Director General of the Indian Archaeological Survey in 1871. Following then, a series of field surveys that are described in reports started. Cunningham mentions that his friend Raja Ravi Prasada provided him information about a brick temple close to Kanpur that featured excellent terracotta work in the Report of the Gangetic Provinces 1875-76 and 1877-78. He made two trips to Bhitargaon between November 1877 and February 1878. When Cunningham first arrived, the porch and the Ardha Mandapa, which eventually fell, were still intact.

When he reached Bhitargaon and saw the temple he was amazed to see the beauty engraved on the bricks. Cunningham claims that the temple is 66 square feet in size, faces east, and has rounded corners. The earliest images of it were captured in 1878

by Cunningham's assistant Beglar, who captured the modest projecting hall in front of the door. The sanctum's entrance is one of the earliest examples of a semi-circular doorway use. However, instead of being built with bricks laid face to face, it is a corbeled or false arch. The 'Hindu arch' is what Cunningham refers to as. The author claims that this is unusual for India. In contrast, a genuine arch has a triangular keystone and a voussoir that are wedge-shaped. A real arch can sustain huge domes, as opposed to the corbeled arch. The inner sanctum (Garbhagriha) of the temple is also topped by a tall pyramidal spire called a Shikhara. The Indian Nagara temple architecture used this Shikhara as a defining characteristic. Additionally, collapsed is the outer semicircular arch over the entrance stairs. There is only one left that leads into the sanctum. The building as it is today was created from the masonry in 1905, however it was rebuilt in unrelieved straight vertical lines, altering its original design. Since there was no sign of the top's prior shape, it was kept intact. A picture must have been in the 15 square foot sanctuary, which has no windows. The bricks of this temple wrap up the glorifying history of India. As per Hindu belief, initially, worship was based on rituals including Havana (Yagya) which took place in the open. With the passage of time, the rituals changed and temples came up which had flat roofs This temple at Bhitargaon is important since it is one of the first few in which we notice a Shikhar. And it is made up of bricks. In 1877, 1878, Cunningham recorded that many piles of bricks were found pointing at the existence of many brick temples. It is interesting to note that every brick is

baked in a different mold separately. Every brick has a different size and design. The thickness of the temple walls rises up to 8 ft. This temple is around 50 ft. high. These bricks have braved and survived the vagaries of time to prove that the brick-making skill had been perfected around then. At that time the temple was dilapidated, so the Cunningham requested the British government for some allowance but the government denied. The Gupta Era lasted from 320 A. D. up to 650 A. D., art that flourished in those times is original independent Indian Art and has traveled beyond India.

Bhitargaon Temple is interesting because Vishnu, Shiv, Parvati, Ganesh, Krishna, Balram, Buddha, Durga and Gajalaxmi coexist in its terracotta panels. Shaiv, Vaishnav and Buddhists found representation in a single temple. Gupta Emperors followed Vaishnav belief tradition but treated all alike. All beliefs finding representation in this temple represent the harmony of those times. In 1905 this temple was reconstructed with the bricks lying nearby and those brought from Jhijhi Nag temple. This temple has 28 pillars. The inner sanctum of the temple (Garbhagriha) is also topped by a tall pyramidal spire called a Shikhara. The Indian Nagara temple architecture used this Shikhara as a defining characteristic. Some are with design and some are plain. Mohammad Zaheer, in his research, has identified 143 terracotta panels. 128 panels are affixed still on this temple. Some are in museums and the rest are lost to us. This temple was not a pilgrim site but a private temple. And that saved it as legends of the supernatural kept people away from it. Cunningham

claimed that the temple was probably a Vishnu temple because of the Varaha incarnation at the back of the building. But when Alexander Cunningham arrived and conducted his survey, residents nearby realized its importance and pilferage began. Still much survived which can be seen today.

Construction period :

There is disagreement among scholars regarding the construction period of the Dashavatara temple of Deogarh. Mr. A. Cunningham accepted the construction period of this temple to be around 600 AD.¹⁹ R.D. Banerjee has considered its date to be 575 AD.²⁰ Madhoswarup Vats has given its time as the beginning of the sixth century.²¹ According to Kumara-swamy, the construction of this temple is accepted to be in the last years of the Gupta period.²² Vasudev Sharan Agarwal²³ and Prithvi Kumar Agarwal²⁴ have determined the construction period of this temple to be the middle of the fifth century. Their opinion is based on an article, which was found inscribed on a pillar in the courtyard of the temple. In reviewing the above opinions, the opinion of one Mr. Cunningham seems more logical. The temple style with a shikhara had not developed till the end of the fifth century. A shikhara is found in the temple of Deogarh and this temple is in the sequence of the temple of Bhitargaon. The date of the temple of Bhitargaon is considered to be the latter half of the seventh century. Therefore, the temple of Deogarh was built around 600 AD.

Conclusion :

The Bhitargaon Brick Temple and Dashavatara Temple, two exemplary

architectural achievements of the Gupta period, demonstrate the era's commitment to excellence in design, craftsmanship and artistic expression. Through a comparative study of these temples, this research has highlighted their unique features, innovations and contributions to the evolution of Indian temple architecture. The Bhitargaon Brick Temple's simplicity, durability, and pioneering use of brick construction set a precedent for future temple design, while the Dashavatara Temple's intricate carvings, ornate sculptures and pyramidal shikhara showcased the era's mastery of stone craftsmanship. This research has underscored the Gupta period's architectural innovations, including the use of new materials, iconographic developments, and advancements in construction techniques. The temples' designs reflect the era's cultural, religious and philosophical values, demonstrating the interconnectedness of art, architecture and spirituality. The preservation and study of these architectural treasures are essential for understanding India's rich cultural heritage and the evolution of temple architecture. This research contributes to the ongoing dialogue on Indian architectural history, emphasizing the significance of the Gupta period's contributions to the country's-built legacy.

Ultimately, the Bhitargaon Brick Temple and Dashavatara Temple stand as testaments to the ingenuity, creativity, and perseverance of ancient Indian architects, artisans, and patrons, inspiring future generations to appreciate and build upon this cultural heritage. These temples are the magnificent example of the region's rich cultural and architectural legacy Gupta era. It stands as the testimony of

the first or we can say one of the earliest Nagara Style temples, that motivate the Temple architecture legacy in Northern India and beyond the region of far East Asia. This temple structure is singing the Golden age of Gupta and India, when civilizations were developing around the world.

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**Dashavatar Temple Deogarh,
Lalitpur**



**Entrance
Dashavatar Temple**



**Inner view of *Garbhagriha*
Dashavatar Temple**



**Sheshashayi Vishnu depicted
in the southern wall's Rathika
Dashavatar Temple**



**Nar-Narayan have depicted
in the western wall's Rathika
Dashavatar Temple**



**Gajendramoksha depicted
in the northern wall's Rathika
Dashavatar Temple**



**Front View of Bhitargaon Temple
Kanpur**



**Side View of Bhitargaon Temple
Kanpur**



Tapping into the Primitive Myth : Integration of Folklore and Narrative Theory in Creative Writing Pedagogy

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Introduction :

Oral form of literature has been the old form literature that is considered as a forefather of all literatures. Oral tradition has been the knowledge transporting tool to pass down the knowledge from one generation to the other. The scriptures we possess today about history, culture and literature are taken from the oral compositions. Epic poetry was a particularly strong example of oral tradition, with bards and storytellers memorizing and reciting extensive passages. The Indian epic “Ramayana” and the classical Greek epics like Homer’s “Odyssey” and “Iliad” are two examples. Usually, these epics narrate tales of heroism, events from mythology, or momentous occasions in history. These tales can be learned by heart and recited with remarkable talent by the bards or storytellers who specialize in this type of oral poetry.

Oral tradition, as a historical source, serves not only to convey emotions but also

to transmit knowledge, document and depict diverse social structures and arts. The majority of oral tradition consists of folktales that can be categorized into narratives about divination and hunters’ encounters. Love, intrigue, treachery and moral lessons are common themes in myths and mythology, which often take the shape of tales. Oral tradition may also serve ideological purposes and be associated with specific social groups, cults, or alliances. It include practices, appellations, expressions of pride, poems (such as Yoruba Oriki), ritual utterances, epics, folklores, and various forms of mythology. (Martin, 2012). By incorporating the narrative therapy technique and folklore prompts the students could elicit the exciting fiction. The basic concept of narrative therapy is that people are “story-tellers” and that the stories they tell about themselves, and that others tell about them, significantly shape their behavior and sense of self (Wolter, J. A., DiLollo, A., & Apel, K. (2006).

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Incorporation of oral form in the creative writing instructions :

The oral tradition of telling stories is fading away day by day. How could this oral tradition help in creative writing? Books, workshops and writing clubs employ creative writing prompts to provide writers with topics for their writing. Karjula says when the page is blank and you are at a loss for words, they exist. Their best effort will be directed towards persuading you that the scene, poem, or story is nearly complete. Just give it shape and write it down; the prompt will assist you with this. Writing can highlight or expound on a craft-related theme, such as story, character or rhythm, in creative writing books. The prompts could be based on explicit or implicit writing or learning ideas (karjula, E (2021)). As per the researcher karjula prompts could assist the creative writers especially the extraction from the oral tradition and folk tales would bring out more ideas and themes for a creative writing. The researcher can give an example from two successful epics Ramayana and Mahabharata that derived from the oral tradition. These epics' continued appeal is mainly due to their capacity to strike a chord with readers from a wide range of backgrounds. These epics have multifaceted characters that exhibit both virtues and shortcomings that capture the complexity of human nature. Because of their relatable challenges and moral quandaries, they are ageless and important to all ages. These epics have been repeated, modified, and reinterpreted in a variety of formats over the ages, making them accessible to a larger audience. Oral storytelling, folklore and dramatic re-enactments are examples of traditional forms. Through the use of these formats, the epics have been able to be transmitted

over generations, maintaining their spiritual and cultural legacy. Contemporary literature has embraced these epics in addition to traditional retellings, providing new insights and interpretations. Famous writers who have contributed to the epics' modern accessibility include R. K. Narayan, C. Rajagopalachari and Devdutt Pattanaik. These retellings distill the core of the epics into a more concise and readable manner, frequently emphasizing certain characters, subplots, or moral precepts.

Religion and spiritual activities in India have been greatly impacted by both epics. Millions upon millions of Hindus revere the characters and lessons conveyed in these scriptures. Encouraging a sense of community and strengthening religious convictions, rituals, prayers, and festivals related to the epics are observed across the nation. A moral and ethical foundation for people and society is offered by the epics. They give counsel on moral behaviour, responsibilities, and the effects of one's deeds. Indian society's ethical framework has been formed by the ideals of justice, fairness and personal responsibility that are derived from the depictions of the laws of karma or cause and effect and dharma, or righteousness, in these epics.

Social and political values in Indian society have also been shaped by the epics. Leadership and governance have been shaped by ideas such as righteousness, obligation, and governance that are explored in these books. Politicians have cited the epics in their discussions of ethics, government and social standards, using them as a source of motivation and a frame of reference. Indian culture and society have been greatly influenced by "The Mahabharata" and "The Ramayana". They have impacted political ideas as well

as artistic, architectural, moral and religious activities and representations. These epics are still studied, honoured and cherished today, and they represent a potent cultural and spiritual legacy that unites various groups throughout the Indian subcontinent.

Oral form, Narrative therapy and writing :

In order to help clients overcome depression, the practice of narrative therapy involves having them tell stories about themselves. Personal narratives are used to anticipate occurrences, prepare actions, and help one's self-orientation in the world since they help provide meaning to experiences. (Wolter, J. A., DiLollo, A., & Apel, K. (2006). The researcher suggests that this effective strategy could be used to bring out creative dimensions in the creative writing classes and workshops. The researcher would ask the participants to write the oral tales and myths which they have heard from their family members. The participants should write as much as they know about it. After that the participants should find prompts and themes of the folklore which they have written. Further they have to structure the story as a rough draft then to the fair draft. Karjula says "The most obviously ethnographic dimension of the prompt is the way analysis builds up on notes and observations. The ethnographic process of data production and analysis, and their material entanglement, is highlighted in the prompt instructions" (karjula, E 2021).

Martin says that "Oral tradition as a source of history does not only express emotions but also pass across knowledge, record and represent the various social institutions and arts" (Martin, 2012). There-

fore the prompts based on myths and folklore have a great deal of potential to inspire wonder and creativity in creative writing exercises. These writing prompts are a veritable gold mine of ideas for authors because they draw from the diverse tapestry of folktales, mythology, and historical beliefs. Writers can access timeless narratives, archetypal characters, and universal themes that connect with readers of all ages by delving into folklore and mythology.

Reimagining a well-known legendary figure in a modern setting could be the idea of a folklore or myth prompt, giving old tales new life. Martin says that The study of myths or a corpus of myths is referred to as mythology. The term "myths" is used in a variety of ways by historians and academics in related subjects. Myth refers, very broadly, to any kind of conventional history. The primary protagonists in myths are typically gods, goddesses or otherworldly heroes whose tales were typically told in a holy context. Myths are frequently supported by authorities and clergy and have a strong connection to religion in the society in which they are recounted. Most people consider a myth to be a real story from the distant and recent past. Myths as cultural traditions are not made up; rather, they are based on actual experiences. It is a component of oral traditions that are passed down orally among many different peoples worldwide and is deeply ingrained in the people's history. (Martin, 2012). One writing exercise would invite participants to imagine Medusa's story unfolding in the present day and what might happen to her. Alternatively, a prompt can ask authors to conjure up their own mythological creature, complete with backstory, traits and place

in a made-up universe. This practice fosters the creation of original narrative elements and world-building abilities in addition to creativity. Prompts based on myths and folklore can also be used to encourage inclusivity in storytelling and examine cultural variety. Through exploring lesser-known folktales from other cultures, authors can provide a voice to marginalized stories and illuminate divergent viewpoints and belief systems. These writing challenges also encourage authors to consider the deeper significance and symbolism found in myth and folklore. They promote introspection and personal development by encouraging contemplation on universal topics like love, bravery, destiny, and the human condition.

Extraction of prompts from the folklore and mythology genres for the creative writing practices provides a good of inspiration. The primitive oral compositions filled with captivating stories, legendary characters and its profound themes can ignite the writer's imagination. The themes that we extract from these genres create unique and compelling narratives. Whether it's the composition of God, animals or a magical myth these genres would provide a wealth of material for creative writing. The prompts that derived from folklore and mythology pays a way for the cultural exploration. By extracting the prompts from the deep rooted cultures and beliefs would create attention among the wider audience and it would take their tradition from the less noticed to the limelight. In addition to broadening their knowledge, authors can develop a greater awareness and understanding of many societies and their narratives by exploring the mythology of various cultures. It offers a chance to use narrative to honor and appreciate

the diversity and richness of human civilizations.

Conclusions :

The blending of narrative theory and folklore in creative writing instruction provides a potent and diverse method for delving into the world of storytelling's investigation of the primaeval myth. The relevance of folklore as a rich source of cultural legacy and inspiration has been examined in this research article, along with how narrative theory offers a framework for comprehending the underlying patterns and purposes of stories. Creative writing teaching can facilitate a more profound comprehension and admiration of the universal themes and archetypes that underlie human narrative by drawing upon the ancient myth. A community's collective experiences and beliefs are the source of folklore, which is a rich source of narrative material for artistic expression. Furthermore, folklore storytelling strategies can be examined and dissected via the lens of narrative theory. Through this research, authors can learn more about the elements of a successful tale, including character development, plot structure, and symbolism. Writers can craft stories that deeply connect with readers by fusing these insights with the authenticity and cultural resonance of folklore. Furthermore, by recognising and embracing the voices and viewpoints of many cultures, the incorporation of folklore and story theory into creative writing teaching fosters cultural diversity and inclusivity. It promotes an awareness of the wide variety of folklore traditions from throughout the globe and inspires writers to investigate and cherish their cultural heritage. A comprehensive and revolutionary method of storytelling is provided by the blending of folklore and

narrative theory in creative writing instruction. It respects the wide variety of cultural traditions while enabling writers to access the most fundamental and universal facets of the human experience. Writers may enrich the realm of literature and storytelling by crafting narratives that engage, resound, and transcend boundaries by embracing the power of the primeval myth.

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आचार्य भरतमुनि और बर्तोल्त ब्रेख्त का रंग-चिंतन

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भारतीय रंगमंच की परम्परा बहुत पुरानी है अर्थात् महाकाव्य की तरह नाट्यकला भी जातीय जीवन के सामाजिक, सांस्कृतिक और राजनीतिक संस्कारों की निर्वाहक है।

आचार्य भरतमुनि के ग्रंथ का नाम है- 'नाट्यशास्त्र'। इस ग्रंथ में इन्होंने नाटक, नृत्य, नृत्त को संकलित करके उनकी व्याख्या की है, जो कला का आधार बनकर उभरी। 'नाट्यशास्त्र' के रूप में उनका 'रंग-चिंतन' हम सभी के सम्मुख आज प्रस्तुत है। दूसरी तरफ देखें- आज जब पूर्व और पश्चिम की सीमाएं टूट चुकी है तथा विश्व मानव को 'शक्ल' देने का प्रयास हो रहा है, तो एक नाम जो निकल कर आता है, वह 'बर्तोल्त ब्रेख्त' का है। ये उन्नीसवीं सदी के नाट्य लेखकों में से एक है।

बर्तोल्त ब्रेख्त ने बर्लिन में अपने पुराने अभिनेता साथियों के साथ 'बर्लिनर एन्सामबल' स्थापित किया, जो नाट्य प्रेमियों के लिए आकर्षण का केंद्र बन गया।

बर्तोल्त ब्रेख्त का रंगकर्म एक आईने की तरह है, जो कलात्मक, नैतिकता और राजनैतिक समस्याएँ आदि रूप में प्रतिध्वनित होता है। पूर्वी नाट्य परम्परा का उन पर गहरा प्रभाव है। उनके गीत, मूक-अभिनय, शैलीबद्ध संवाद, मुखौटे का प्रयोग आदि उनके सिद्धांत 'महानाट्य' को प्रस्तुत करते हैं, जो घोर यथार्थवादी रंगमंच के खिलाफ में है।

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यहाँ पर यह संकेत करना बहुत आवश्यक हो जाता है कि आचार्य भरतमुनि का रंग-चिंतन इतना व्यापक है कि अभी भी उनके श्लोकों को विद्वानों के द्वारा समझने का प्रयास किया जा रहा है, सम्पूर्णता में रंग-चिंतन को यहाँ जानना संभव नहीं है लेकिन हम आचार्य भरतमुनि के रंग-चिंतन को मुख्य तत्वों के माध्यम से समझने का प्रयास करेंगे।

आचार्य भरतमुनि का रंग-चिंतन :

आचार्य भरतमुनि ने नाट्यशास्त्र की चर्चा 'सैतीस अध्यायों' में की है जिसमें भारतीय संस्कृति और इतिहास के रहस्य छिपे हैं और यहीं से आदिम मानव के सभ्यता के साथ आज तक एक विकास यात्रा चलती आयी है। आचार्य भरतमुनि 'नाट्य' के संदर्भ में कहते हैं कि-

'न तत्ज्ञानं न तच्छिल्प न सा विद्या न सा कला।
ना सौ योगो न तत्कर्म नाट्येडस्मिन् यन्नदृश्यते॥'

अर्थात् ज्ञान का कोई शिल्प, कोई विद्या, कोई कला, कोई योग और कोई कर्म ऐसा नहीं है, जो 'नाट्य' में नहीं दिखाई देता है।

आचार्य भरतमुनि के रंग-चिंतन में गायन, नृत्य, अभिनय तथा रंगकर्म के पारिभाषिक शब्द मौजूद हैं। आचार्य भरतमुनि नाट्य में 'नृत्त' और 'नृत्य' को जोड़ने हैं तथा वे कारणों के सयोग से 'अगहार' बनते हैं, जो बाद में 32 अगहार सीखने के काम आया।

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उन्होंने नृत्य के साथ गीत को मिलाकर बताया कि इसका प्रयोग कब और कैसे करना चाहिए। विदूषक को मंच पर कब आना चाहिए और किस प्रकार नाटक के कथानक की भूमिका बांधनी चाहिए।

आचार्य भरतमुनि मानते हैं कि नाट्य का संबंध मानसिक आनंद से हैं इसलिए इन्होंने 'रस' की चर्चा की। वे संख्या में रस- शृंगार, हास्य, रौद्र, वीर, भयानक, बीभत्स तथा अब्दुत नामक 'आठ' माना। आचार्य भरतमुनि अपने ग्रंथ 'नाट्यशास्त्र' में अभिनय शिक्षा की शुरुआत करते हैं। अभिनय को चार शाखाओं में बाँटा है- आँगिक, वाचिक, आहार्य, सात्विक। ये इनके प्रयोग की विधियाँ भी बताते हैं। आप देखेंगे कि आचार्य भरतमुनि की नज़र इतनी बारीक है कि वे पुतलियों तथा पलकों को चलाने के साथ-साथ आँखे के तारे के संचालन की विधियाँ भी विस्तार से रखते हैं। आचार्य भरतमुनि 'अभिनय' के संदर्भ में कहते हैं कि 'अभिनेता को वाक् के विषय में प्रयत्न करना चाहिए, क्योंकि यह वाक् नाट्य का शरीर कही गई है। सारे शास्त्र वाक् से व्याप्त और वाक् से निर्मित है, इसलिए वाक् से परे कुछ भी नहीं है। वाक् सबका कारण है। छंद से रहित शब्द नहीं, और शब्द से रहित छंद नहीं। इस प्रकार दोनों का संयोग नाट्य को चमका देता है। आँगिक, सात्विक और आहार्य । ये वाक्यार्थ (रस) को ही व्यंजित करते हैं।'²

आचार्य भरतमुनि अभिनय सूत्रों का सिलसिला 'स्पीच' से शुरू करते हैं। पाठ्य का पाठ होना ही 'उच्चार' का प्रथम सूत्र है और अपने आप में सब कुछ है।

अभिनेता के सत्व को लेकर भरतमुनि कहते हैं कि 'नाट्य प्रस्तुति में सत्व मन से जन्म लेता है, अभिनेता का अपने चित्त में एकाग्र होता सत्व है। मन की इस समाधि में सत्व की निष्पत्ति होती है। उस सत्व को रोमांच, वैवर्ण्य आदि जो भाव के अनुसार होने वाला स्वभाव है। उसे चित्त की विचलित अवस्था

में नहीं किया जा सकता। नाट्य लोक स्वभाव का अनुकरण है। अतः इसमें भी सत्व अपेक्षित है।'³

आचार्य भरतमुनि मंच पर विशेष प्रकार से संगीत और ताल के साथ चलने की क्रिया का नाम 'चारी' बताते हैं और कहते हैं कि कलाकार मंच पर चाहे एक पांव ही चले किंतु उसके चलने में एक 'कलात्मक सौंदर्य' होना चाहिए।

आचार्य भरतमुनि ने 'इतिवृत्त' शब्द का प्रयोग नाट्यशास्त्र में किया है, जिसका अर्थ है- कथानक। इसी संदर्भ में कहते हैं कि कथा में मूल कथा होती है जिसे आधिकारिक कथा कहा जाता है और दूसरी सहायक जिसे प्रासंगिक कथा कहा जाता है, पांच अवस्थाएं, साथ ही कथा को जोड़ने वाली पांच संधियाँ होती हैं और पांच अर्थ-प्रकृतियाँ होती हैं। आचार्य भरतमुनि वेशभूषा को लेकर कहते हैं कि अभिनेता मंच पर हल्के और नकली आभूषण धारण करें, ताकी पात्र को बोझ का अनुभव न हो और आभूषण खो जाएँ तो हानि भी न हो।

आचार्य भरतमुनि ने स्त्री और पुरुष के संबंध पर भी प्रकाश डाला है, उन्होंने वैशिक पुरुष के बीस गुण बताए। स्त्री यौवन के पांच विभिन्न दशाओं का वर्णन किया है। स्त्रियों की उत्तमा, मध्यमा तथा अधमा तीन प्रकृतियों का मनोविज्ञानिक विश्लेषण किया है। आचार्य भरतमुनि स्पष्ट तौर से कहना चाहते हैं कि नाटक वस्तुतः नाटक नहीं प्रयोग होता है, उन्होंने अपने ग्रंथ 'नाट्यशास्त्र' में अनेक स्थानों पर नाट्य-प्रदर्शन शब्द का प्रयोग किया है। आचार्य भरतमुनि के रंग-चिंतन में लोक को सर्वपरि माना गया है, वे कहते हैं कि -

**'वेदाध्यात्मोपपन्न तु शब्दच्छंदस्समन्वितम्।
लोकसिद्धं भवेत्सिद्धं नाट्य लोकात्मक तथा।'**⁴

नाटक चाहे अध्यात्म से उत्पन्न हो या कितने ही सुन्दर शब्दों और छंदों से रचा गया हो लेकिन वह तभी सफल माना जायेगा, जब लोक स्वीकृति होगा क्योंकि नाटक लोकपरक होता है। 'नाट्यशास्त्र' में

आकार की दृष्टि से रंगशाला को आचार्य भरतमुनि ने तीन भागों में बाँटा है- विकृष्ट (आयताकार), चतुरस्र (वर्गाकार), त्र्यस्र (त्रिभुजाकार)।

आचार्य भरतमुनि ने लोकधर्मी और नाट्यधर्मी की चर्चा की है, लोकधर्मी नाट्यों में लोक का शुद्ध और स्वाभाविक अनुकरण है और नाट्यधर्मी नाट्य परम्परा में सांकेतिक विधियाँ नाट्यधर्मी है। नाट्य की शय्या 'वाद्य' को माना है, दोनों कलाओं के पूर्ण होने से नाट्य का प्रयोग सिद्ध होता है। गीत की योजना प्रायः स्त्री द्वारा करने के पक्ष में आचार्य भरतमुनि रहे हैं, वे कहते हैं कि स्त्री के गीत-गायन में मधुर्यता होती है जबकि पुरुष अत्याधिक प्रत्यन से भी वे उतना माधुर्यता के साथ संभव नहीं कर पाते हैं।

आचार्य भरतमुनि के यहाँ 'रस' का अर्थ है- मन को अच्छा लगनेवाला या यो कहे कि किसी रचना में निहित उसका सौंदर्य और उस सौंदर्य की अभिव्यक्ति की प्रक्रिया। मानसिक भूख को मिटाने वाला माध्यम रस है। वहीं आप देखेंगे कि रस का नाम क्यों न अनेक युग में बदल जाए, पर उसका लोप नहीं हो सकता। आइए, अब हम बर्तोल्ट ब्रेख्त के 'महानाट्य' सिद्धांत को केंद्र में रखकर उनके रंग-चिंतन को समझने का प्रयास करेंगे और यह देखेंगे कि ब्रेख्त के नाटक में ऐसी क्या चीज है, जो उसे प्रभावशाली बनाती है ?

बर्तोल्ट ब्रेख्त का रंग-चिंतन :

बर्तोल्ट ब्रेख्त बाहरी दुनिया को लेकर बहुत सजग है तथा वे अभिनेता की शुरुआत भी वहीं से करते हैं उन्होंने अभिनेताओं के लिए कला में 'पर्यवेक्षण' की बात कही है कि- 'पर्यवेक्षण के लिए/जरूरी है तुलना। तुलना के लिए/जरूरी है पर्यवेक्षण। पर्यवेक्षण के रास्ते/मिलता है ज्ञान, और जरूरी है ज्ञान/पर्यवेक्षण के वास्ते।' ⁵

लेखक और रंगकर्मी दोनों ही भूमिकाओं में बर्तोल्ट ब्रेख्त लगातार प्रयासरत रहे हैं और वे मानते हैं कि बार-बार तथ्यों पर प्रश्नचिन्ह खड़े किए जाए।

जिससे 'पीटर ब्रुक' बहुत प्रभावित थे और 'बर्तोल्ट ब्रेख्त' की सराहना भी करते हैं। 'ब्रेख्त ने जो विचार प्रस्तुत किया था, वह समझदार अभिनेता का विचार था, जो अपने योगदान को महत्त्व का अंकन करने में समर्थ हो। इस प्रकार के अभिनेता पहले भी रहे हैं और आज भी है, जो इस बात का गर्व करते हैं कि वे राजनीति के विषय में कुछ नहीं जानते और जो रंगमंच को हाथी दांत की मीनार समझते हैं। ब्रेख्त की दृष्टि में ऐसा अभिनेता वयस्कों के सान्निध्य के योग्य नहीं है।' ⁶ यह भी सच है कि स्तानिस्लाव्स्की-पद्धति का अभिनेता चरित्र में व्यवहार की व्याख्या करेगा या ढूँढेगा लेकिन ब्रेख्त अभिनेता इसे परिस्थिति में तलाश करेगा।

कार्ल वेबर ब्रेख्त के साथ काम कर चुके हैं तथा वे अभिनेता से इस प्रासंगिकता की बात बार-बार करते हैं कि- 'गेस्ट्स का निश्चय मुख्यता चरित्र की स्थिति और इतिहास से होना था और ब्रेख्त ने अपने अभिनेताओं को हिदायत दी थी कि वे अपनी भूमिका के कार्यों और मौखिक पाठ में खोजे जाने वाले विरोधाभासों को सावधानी पूर्वक ध्यान में रखकर इसका विकास करें... यह अत्यंत मायवी बात लग सकती है, परन्तु पूर्वाभ्यासों के दौरान एकदम व्यावहारिक और यहाँ तक कि खेल-खेल में इसे हासिल कर लिया जाता था।' ⁷ ब्रेख्त कहते हैं कि हम जब प्रस्तुति पर पहुँचते हैं, तब हमारा उद्देश्य होता है कि सम्पूर्णता के साथ स्पष्ट रूप में व्यक्त करना, यहाँ तक की दर्शक न केवल चरित्रों के व्यवहार को बल्कि व्यवहार के मूल कारण को भी पढ़ सके।

सन् 1926, नवंबर के अपने एक लेख में ब्रेख्त कहते हैं कि 'महानाट्य की विशेषता है कि यह दर्शक के भाव को इतना आंदोलित नहीं करता है, जितना उसकी बुद्धि को।' ⁸ आप देखेंगे कि बर्तोल्ट ब्रेख्त के नाट्यरूप में घटनाएं एक दिशा में बढ़ती हैं, दृश्य दूसरी दिशा में उभरता है, एक कार्य से दूसरा कार्य फूटता है। ब्रेख्त के महानाट्य में घटनाएँ

वक की गति से चलती है। ब्रेख्त के 'महानाट्य' में दर्शक की प्रतिक्रियाएं देखने लायक है, जो उसके रोमांच को अन्दर तक भर देता है और दर्शक कह उठता है कि 'अरे मैंने भी बिल्कुल इस पात्र की तरह महसूस किया था। यह तो मेरे ही मन का भाव था। बिल्कुल स्वाभाविक। ये भावनाएं सदा ऐसी ही रहेंगी। इस पात्र का दुःख मुझे झिझोड़ना है, क्योंकि इससे बाहर निकलने का कोई रास्ता नहीं। यह महान कला है, क्योंकि हर चीज़ यहाँ स्वयंसिद्ध है। जो पात्र रो रहे हैं, मैं उनके साथ रोता हूँ और जो हंस रहे हैं, उनके साथ हँसता हूँ।'⁹ ब्रेख्त चाहते हैं कि दर्शक अपने काम में इतने न लीन हो जाएं कि खुद को भूल जाए इसलिए उन्होंने अपने दर्शकों को नाट्यगृह में सिगरेट पीने की छूट दे रखी थी जिससे ऐसा करने से दर्शक का दिमाग चैतन्य की अवस्था में रहता है।

ब्रेख्त निचले तबके और समाज से दुतकारे हुए लोगों को लेकर आगे बढ़ते हैं। वे संगीत और धुन के संदर्भ में कहते हैं कि वह सिर्फ सहायक का कार्य करें, न कि शब्दों के अर्थों को दबा दें। 'संगीत, धुन और शैलीबद्ध अभिनय को चाहिए कि वे शब्दों के अर्थ को उभारकर पेश करें।'¹⁰ ब्रेख्त अपने रंगमंच के लिए ऐसी वस्तुओं का प्रयोग करते थे, जो इस्तेमाल कर-कर के घिस गई हो। 'जो चीज़े टूटी हुई हैं, इस्तेमालशुदा हैं, जो इन्सान के साथ लग-लगकर घिस गई हैं- मुझे बहुत पसंद हैं। प्याले जिनके दस्ते टूट गए हैं, किवाड़ जो चिकने हो गए हैं, पीतल के कटोरे जिनमें डगचे पड़े हुए हैं, जिन्हें सैकड़ों-हजारों हाथों ने छुआ है, जो 'हरजाई' होकर 'ख़ास' हो गई हैं- मुझे ये सब चीज़े प्यारी हैं।'¹¹ फटी हुई आस्तीने और अन्य घाघरे आदि को बनाने के लिए बर्तोल्त ब्रेख्त के यहाँ एक फैक्टरी थी। वे कपड़ों को अच्छा बनाने के बजाय घटिया बनाने पर ज़ोर देते थे।

ब्रेख्त के नाटकों में अभिनेता दोहरा जीवन ही नहीं जीता, बल्कि तीसरे रूप में भी प्रकट होता है।

अभिनेता सालवेनी कहते हैं कि 'अभिनेता अपने पात्र के भावमय जीवन में बसा हुआ केवल हँसता और रोता ही नहीं, बल्कि अपनी हंसी की आवाज भी सुनता है और अपने आंसुओं को बहते हुए भी देखता है।'¹² ब्रेख्त इतिहास की घटनाओं को युग परिवर्तन के साथ, उसका होना स्वभाविक बताते हैं, जो कि उनके नाटकों में अनेक दृश्यों में यह बात बार-बार सामने आकर खड़ी हो जाती है। ड्यूक के खिलाफ 'जन-आन्दोलन' में गायक कह उठता है कि 'ओ महाशक्ति की अंधदृष्टि!

वे घूम रहे हैं

झुकी हुई पीठों पर ऊपर जैसे घूमे देवदूत

भाड़े पर लड़ने वालों पर विश्वास उन्हें

विश्वास उन्हें

इतने लंबे अरसे चलती आने वाली सत्ता पर

लेकिन यह बेहद लम्बा अरसा भी आखिर खत्म हुआ करता है।'¹³

ब्रेख्त ने 'नहीं किन्तु...' के अभ्यास के रूप में सूची तैयार की, जिससे दर्शक, अभिनेता जो कार्य नहीं कर रहा है, उसे भी समझ सकें अर्थात् उसे भी खोजने का प्रयास करें कि '(अभिनेता) जो नहीं करता, वह उसमें शामिल होना चाहिए, सुरक्षित रहना चाहिए, जो वह करता है। इस प्रकार प्रत्येक वाक्य और मुद्रा निर्णय के सूचक बन जाते हैं, चरित्र लगातार दृष्टि में रहता है और उसकी पड़ताल होती रहती है। इस प्रक्रिया के लिए पारिभाषिक शब्दावली है- 'नहीं ..किन्तु' को निश्चित करना।'¹⁴ बर्तोल्त ब्रेख्त मानते हैं कि पात्रों की अभिव्यक्ति के लिए मंच पर रोशनी तेज एवं तीव्र होनी चाहिए इसलिए उनका कहना है कि 'ऊंधती हुई रोशनी में मेरे दर्शक ऊंधने लगेंगे। मिस्त्री जी। चुंधियाने वाली तेज रोशनी दो ताकि दर्शक जागते रहें। अगर उन्हें सपने देखने हैं तो चमकती हुई रोशनी में देखें। रात के अंधेरे को हमारे जगमगाते हुए लैम्प और चाँद और भी गहरा

कर सकते हैं। हम अपने अभिनय के द्वारा डूबते हुए दिन और आती हुई रात को व्यक्त करेंगे।..रोशनी तेज करो ताकि दर्शक हमारे नाटक देखें जो हमने उनके लिए तैयार किया है।'¹⁵

निष्कर्षतः कहा जा सकता है कि आचार्य भरतमुनि से भी पहले नाट्य-परम्परा रही होगी, जिसका आचार्य भरतमुनि ने 'शास्त्रीय रूप' पहचाना। आचार्य भरतमुनि का 'नाट्यशास्त्र' सर्वकालिक है और दिन-ब-दिन लोग उसकी महत्त्वता को समझ रहे हैं। जब तक मनुष्य धरती पर है, 'नाट्यशास्त्र' को नये अर्थ में पारिभाषिक करता रहेगा, जब तक आचार्य भरतमुनि का रंग-चिंतन है, तब तक कला को मनुष्य जानने की चेष्टा करेगा, जहाँ भी आचार्य भरतमुनि का रंग-चिंतन आयेगा वहाँ अभिनय, नृत्य, गायन और नाट्य है, वहीं 'रस' है।

जहाँ उन्नीसवीं सदी में इब्सन, आस्त्रोव्स्की और चेखव के नाट्य में नये-नये प्रयोग हो रहे थे। स्टान्सोल्स्की यथार्थवादी सिद्धांत से यथार्थ रूप में प्रस्तुत करने लगे थे। लेकिन ब्रेख्त दर्शक को सोचने पर मजबूर करते हैं, वह चाहते हैं कि दर्शक नाटक के दौरान भी नाटक पर बार-बार मंथन करें। उनकी दृष्टि नाटक को लेकर बहुत बड़ी है, वे एक बड़े धरातल को प्रस्तुत करते हैं। वे मानवता की तलाश करते हैं, उनके नाटकों के पात्र असाधारण हैं, वे वास्तविक दुनिया से भी बड़े हैं।

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Disability Study of Indian Women : An Analysis of Bollywood Film 'October'

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Introduction :

Since the beginning of Hindi cinema, female characters have often been portrayed in a patriarchal manner, reinforcing stereotypes related to gender, body, sex and race. In romantic Hindi films, women are usually depicted conforming to traditional beauty standards and as objects of male desire. This pressure contributes to sexism and biases against disabled women in Indian society. Traditional Hindi cinema often portrays non-disabled women as caregivers and homemakers, resulting in the formation of stereotypes while at the same time marginalising disabled women as confirmed burdens on their families and unsuitable for marriage. The objectification of non-disabled women, on the one hand, nurtures the societal myth of the asexuality of women with disabilities, highlighting the impact of stereotypes. There is a need for more empathetic portrayals of women with disabilities in Hindi cinema. Since 2000, Bollywood has shifted towards more realistic representations of society, depicting couples with disabilities in love stories. Notable movies include "Fanaa" (2006), "Barfi" (2012) and "October" (2018), while old movies that contributed

to disability theme and inclusion were: "Satyam Shivam Sundaram" (1978), "Koshish" (1972), "Sparsh" (1980) and "Sadma" (1983). These films, including 'October', 'play a crucial role in promoting empathy and understanding, challenging societal norms, and fostering a more inclusive society.

Break from conventional Love Story :

The film 'October,' released in 2018, is a Hindi movie directed by Shoojit Sircar. Inspired by real-life events from newspaper articles, explores the emotional responses of comatose patients. The film 'October' uses its title to symbolize the transition from summer to winter, representing the ephemeral nature of life and the acceptance of universal transition. It was initially accused of plagiarism that was later cleared by the Screenwriters Association due to its inspiration from actual events. The film comes in a slice-of-life drama that deals with the mundane life of two lovers - Shuili and Dan, who are unaware of each other's feelings and their own. Unlike the conventional love story of a boy chasing a girl, the girl hates the boy, then the girl loves and chases back the boy, such kind of traditional plot is not

followed. Rather, the plot is an experiment of mundane social reality where the two characters, Shuili and Dan, are co-interns of the same hotel doing hotel management. Love in this film is presented not as a romantic fantasy with roses and chocolate but as a journey of self-realisation and a test of destiny. The narrative showcases a pure and naive form of love, where emotions are conveyed implicitly through gestures and actions instead of explicit words.

The character Dan expresses his love through simple sentences and Shuili responds by silently conveying her emotions through her eyes. Madhureeta Mukherjee of Times of India states, "It's not a story crafted with heavy doses of dialogues, romantic ballads or bombastic tropes common to the genre. The beauty lies in the simplicity of it all". October's film breaks the stereotypes and conventional myths of considering a comatose female person vegetable and asexual here; it procreates the general interpretation of disabled women in India who are often assumed to be 'vegetable' and asexual. Rosemary Thomson states that "while feminism quite legitimately decries the sexual objectification of women, disabled women often encounter what Harlan Hahn has called "asexual objectification," (1997,p.25) the assumption that sexuality is an unrelated term for disabled people. This unique love story begins in the hospital ICU, where a beloved is on a ventilator. The female character does not possess the body that is idealised by society, nor is it sexually objectified. However, the body is of a paralysed woman who is termed as a liability in society, but her lover knows her individual worth and believes in her unique identity. He is aware

of the fact that her beloved is the possessor of beautiful heart and mind. It breaks away from traditional aesthetics, redefining beauty in a more practical and insightful manner. It calls for a more inclusive and empathetic portrayal of society, aiming to challenge conventional negative norms. In a renowned work, "*The Aesthetic Theory*" (1970), Theodor Adorno states, "Art is the social antithesis of society" (1970, p.8). He emphasises that beauty is not inherent in art itself but lies in the connection between art and its observer. Above analysis brings one to the conclusion that 'October' bridges the gap of cinema with marginalised disabled women of India, creating a connection of beauty between movie and society.

'October' as an appeal to Disability Studies :

Disability studies scholars and disability activists emphasise the importance of the inclusion of individuals with any illness, impairment, infirmity or disability to address their needs and requirements, including their emotional and sexual needs. There is a societal need to change perceptions and discussions around individuals with disabilities who are considered 'unfit' and to provide social support to address their emotional and sexual needs. If in case any individual has a terminal illness, like being in a coma, it is often seen as the end of life. They are excluded from society and social institutions, where they believe their quality of life can only be regulated through medical means. The doctor and patient discourses objectify a body, and their social existence as an identity is terminated. "There is a power play between the doctor and the disabled person or the patient, who is ascribed a clinical label and sought to be normalised

through preventive or curative medical technology. Such clinical definitions of disability also become administrative tags for controlling disabled people's access to financial and other assistance as well as attaching a stigma to the labelled person by suggesting a physical imperfection or deviance from the norm" (Ghosh 2016, p.3). Disability, impairment, and illness in Indian connotations are primarily approached using medical and charity models. The medical model considers a person with a disability in need of a cure for being deficient in some terms. If the person's condition is beyond recovery, then a person could be assisted in dying - which means a complete exclusion from life. The charity model believes if a person with a disability is helped and eased in some manner, the person will be rewarded by divine powers- interpreting precisely the need for having sympathy, which is a negative thrust on a disabled person's individuality and identity. In the words of Rosemary Thomson, "disability cancels out other qualities, reducing the complex person to a single attribute" (1997, p.12).

Disability scholars believe in the social model, which initiates a need to see illness and disability from the perspective of society and how social institutions contribute to exclusion when they need reformation to become accessible to individuals with a disability. It advocates for viewing disabled person individuality beyond the tag of disability, infirmity, and illness that mar their sense of self-identity. According to Tobin Siebers, "Ability is the ideological baseline by which humanness is determined. The lesser the ability, the lesser the human being" (2008, p.10). In the movie 'October', after Shuili becomes comatose, everyone tends to forget her

sense of identity, and it is only her lover, Dan, who recognises her as Shuili and is determined to provide her with the same amount of happiness and self-esteem that other non-disabled women could receive.

The movie, in the character of Shuili, underscores the importance of acceptance and recognition of disabled and ill females who are not only capable of responding to love but are also capable of loving and being loved.

'October' – A call to inclusion :

Shuli, a calm and intelligent young woman, works with Dan, who often gets into arguments with his coworkers. After she falls from a hotel building and is critically injured, Dan becomes deeply committed to caring for her, risking his well-being and career. His unwavering commitment to Shuli, despite the challenges, echoes questions about the importance of people's lives and their sense of individuality with embodied disability in society. The questioning of the exclusion of terminally ill, impaired and disabled persons is clamoured in the voice of Dan. Dan, as a character, emphasises the life value of Shuili, who is under constant pressure from her patriarchal and ableist paternal uncle, who represents the societal pressure and demands to unplug the ventilator, suggesting the futility of her living with the unconscious condition, believing she is "vegetable" and "emotionless," and consider assisted dying as appropriate for her, as if she is not a living being, "*hogaya na final, paralysed for whole life... practical hona tu tumari family na kabhi sikha hi nhi...agr Shuili apnay app sanch bhi na lay payay tou yay koi life hai? aisay hi rakhaygay usko zinda*". It is in the voice of Dan, her lover, who unfolds the desire

and question on behalf of Shuli, 'hnn tou aisay hi rakhyay... may be she wants to live..may be kya.. hundred percent, matlab aur koi kyun decide karay ga uskayliyay... ussay tou koi pohchay uska decision..wo kyun marna chahaygi...mujhe nhi laga wo marna chati hai..' Her lover recognises her sense of individuality, which society has abandoned. Believing her mind is as conscious as her heart; he shows all the necessary behaviour of a hardcore lover for his sweetheart, such as :

Pampering her, grooming her by secretly getting her eyebrows done in the hospital ICU, bringing her favourite flowers, understanding her mood swings amidst her paraplegic condition and speech impairment, talking with her, carrying her in a wheelchair to parks, building a ramp in her house after her hospital discharge and even getting jealous and insecure like a true lover if any hospital staff gazes her beloved Shuli for unwanted reasons.

Conclusion :

Analysing the film 'October' as a piece of art, it becomes evident that it challenges societal negative norms and stereotypical myths, offering fresh insights for inclusion and sensitisation. 'October' creates a beautiful bond between the characters and the audience, elevating the movie as an extraordinary aesthetic contribution to Indian cinema, especially in Bollywood. Such empathetic portrayals should be promoted to improve media literacy, sensitise society toward addressing marginalised sections, including disabled women who are twin-fold marginalised,

and challenge entrenched chauvinistic social perceptions.

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Identification and Individuation in Julia Alvarez's *Afterlife* : A Novel

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“There is nothing more daily, sustained, and socio-politically charged than our identities. The incontrovertible reality is that identities are the markers by which we live. They expose how we are positioned and perceived in society” (Jackson, 2010). Whether it is our external or internal circumstances, every individual is a constituent of this reality. In this context, *Afterlife: A Novel* highlights its significance. The novel depicts the struggle of Antonia Vega, an immigrant to the United States from the Dominican Republic, as she endures the changed circumstances in her life. The untimely death of her husband Sam, the disappearance of her sister Izzy, and her encounter with an undocumented pregnant teenager, Estela, have placed her in a perplexing predicament. Furthermore, people often expect her to elucidate the “Dominican colonial intricacies of her ethnicity” (Alvarez, 13), a task she has ceased to perform. Antonia struggles to find the purpose of her existence as she gets caught in the black hole of loss, society, culture, and ethnicity.

In this age of advanced globalisation, where different cultural and social thoughts on identity are studied, criticised, and theorised, the process of identifica-

tion, as well as the experiences of living, involves constant flux and destabilisation. It is, therefore, quite challenging to reinvent oneself and live rewardingly with others. This is because identity traverses beyond the lens of a theoretical framework, proving it to be a lived experience. It is here that the concept of identification becomes sensible. Considering the psychological framework, the term identity focuses on the individual alone, whereas identification has a tie that establishes shared values with the collective. “Identification can be defined as a relational process rooted in group collectivities and social structures by which one ascribes himself or herself to a social group” (Jackson, 353). It is intriguing to discover instances of these crucial formulations seamlessly integrated into the content of *Afterlife : A Novel*.

Though the notion of individual, self, and self-hood existed in different cultures for ages, it was during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that the concept of identity developed into the form we perceive today. The revolution in technology and radicalization in theoretical discourses gave new dimensions to the conceptualization of identity. Individuation is another unique concept in identity studies.

“Individuation refers to the emergence of a person’s differentiated identity concerning the larger group of individuals with whom he or she is situated” (Jackson, 394). The evolution of Antonia Vega and her journey to achieve some level of individuation can be considered an example for many who struggle with conflicted identities. Antonia’s faith in the collectivity of existence empowers her to overcome the traumatic experiences in her life. After the death of her husband, Antonia Vega asked herself, “How to create an afterlife for him” (Alvarez, 3). The question itself is ironic, given Antonia’s desperate search for means to establish a connection with her existence. She tries to keep to her routines, “walking a narrow path through the loss” (Alvarez, 4), without falling prey to the state of depression.

Countless times she brings herself back from the edge of chaos, assuring herself that if not for her own sake, then for others: her three sisters, a few old aunts, nieces, and nephews. It is here that she becomes part of the relative process of staying rooted in group collectivities. Her notion of collective identity, or the belief that she belongs to a larger structure, helps her to contain the damage and to continue breathing. *The Encyclopaedia of Identity* identifies two types of identification: intrinsic and extrinsic. Antonia’s identification with the larger structure to fight the odds could be considered her source of extrinsic motivation. Ronald Jackson defines extrinsic motivation as “the basis for identification when an individual identifies with a group because it has been integrated as part of one’s value system, an important aspect of an individual’s sense of self” (Jackson, 2010, p. 353).

The process of identification is dependent on autonomous choices and existence. Antonia’s journey to identify with her present life unfolds on multiple levels. Initially, she has to come to terms with the reality of loss. She needs to identify with the reality of her existence in the aftermath and finally, she has to identify with the society or community she either believes in or aspires to belong to.

There are three important components in sociological theories of identity. First, in the process of identification, individual identity and collective identity are equally important and “real.” The second component is the relevance of structures of constraint and possibility. This component again stresses that identification is shaped by external factors. Finally, the third aspect of identification is the process of identification from a very specific way of understanding self, others, social norms, and institutions, and the relationship between all of these. (Jackson, 354)

The relevance of structures of constraints is another crucial factor. It is understandable and sensible to consider that external factors play a role in the identification process. The influence of external factors like society, community, ethnicity, and family, delays Antonia’s process of identification with herself. This is evident when she expresses her concern, “but even the beauties of language, of words, rightly chosen, are riddled with who we are, class and race, and whatever else will keep us” (Alvarez, 118). She finds it difficult to solve this riddle. External factors are apparently what determines everything. These external factors help her develop an ascribed identity, in which who she is and what she does are both determined by extrinsic factors and prevailing circumstances.

The third aspect of identification involves understanding oneself, others, social norms, and institutions to finally identify as a unified whole or as part of the whole. This step in forming a cohesive identity establishes a sense of belonging that validates and vitalizes the individual within the collective framework. The sense of self as a person, unique and separate yet part of the collective, motivates the individual to actively participate within the system. Antonia's relationship with social norms is evident in her thoughts regarding Estela, her accordance with political conditions, her renewed passion for literature, and her integration into the sisterhood.

She reflects on her experiences and posits philosophical questions. This enables her to identify with the larger structure of which she is a part. "Antonia has veered from her narrow path. Looked over the guardrail at the reflection of water below. As in a dream, faces shift into each other: Izzy's, Sam's, the face of the girl she is leaving behind, her own. Who is the most important one?" (Alvarez, 141). The question of who is more important is indeed the most challenging one in her entire teaching career. In the course of her journey, she finds an answer that eventually liberates her.

Individuation refers to the emergence of a person's differentiated identity in relation to the larger group of individuals with whom he or she is situated. From an onlooker's perspective, a person becomes individuated whenever he or she begins to be recognized as a unique person within a larger crowd, not only as a result of physical location or appearance but mostly as a result of the person's habits, character and personality. (Jackson, 2010, p. 394)

For Antonia, the first step of individuation occurs when she realizes the primacy of her existence. She stands out from the rest of the individuals associated with her by valuing herself and embracing her identity. Through her experience, Antonia acquires a sense of empathy rather than sympathy for her plight. She becomes recognized as a radically distinct individual who boldly stands against all odds. She believes and firmly reassures herself that "tomorrow comes." (Alvarez, 217). Her individuated self is acknowledged by her sisters, who love her and Antonia is regarded in her sociocultural sphere as well. "Antonia seems more light-hearted herself, her friend's comment, relieved. Everybody likes her resurrection" (Alvarez, 232).

As explained by Ronald L. Jackson in *the Encyclopedia of Identity*, there are generally three phases that a person will experience as he or she moves towards individuation.

Phase 1 is when a person joins or enters a group and has his or her individuality eclipsed by the larger group or society with which he or she takes part... Phase 2 occurs as a person is socialized into, and situated within, the larger group or society as he or she internalizes the implicit or explicit expectations and converts them to appropriate habits and actions... Phase 3, the achievement of individuation, takes place as the individual is firmly established within the organization. (Jackson, 2010, p. 395)

Antonia's individuality has been eclipsed initially. She was considered a committed wife, a retired professor, and the most American of her sisters. The larger system of family, profession, and culture shadowed the really sensitive Antonia, who found

solace in quoting literature. The new title of widow seeks to uncover the veil, come out into society, and be a part of its ways. She reaches out and becomes a part of the sisterhood that she denied herself for a long time. She grows up to the expectations of Estela and Mario and ensures their union. Antonia Vega feels individuated when she chooses power over the powerless and decides to embrace change. “Maybe the time of meaningful synchronicities is over? What happens after the worst that can happen has happened? After the final no there comes a yes-?” (Alvarez, 228).

Antonia’s transformation enables her to stand out from her community. She recollects “all those moments she was too busy to help Sam dig up potatoes in the garden, to come quick to the window and see an unusual bird that just landed on the feeder. There will be a lot of these little kicks at her heart in the days, months, years to come” (Alvarez, 57). Despite seeking solace in Sam’s memory and yearning for his presence, she embraces silence, enabling her to realise the profundity of silence in her journey towards healing. She adheres to the insights from a Japanese repair technique to heal her broken self. The moment Antonia embraces her broken self, she promises herself a vindicated self, an individuated self that is beautifully contained and repaired. Though the final stage of individuation is getting recognised within the organisation, Antonia can recognise her power within. Beyond the materialistic, Antonia is equipped to fight the struggles of life with her spiritual insights into life. She proves to be distinct as she changes into a better social being who is very much aware of her limitations and potential. The journey

from a depressed self to an individuated self is truly inspiring.

Her acclimatisation to the external realities assists her in developing intrinsic identification. Individuation could be defined as the process by which an individual stands out within society or community and begins to be recognised as a unique person. This uniqueness that can be projected outwardly has to be developed from within. Only then does he/she become part of individuation. Therefore, it is significant to bring into cognizance the role of an evolved intrinsic self in the formation of a differentiated identity as perceived by society. In this novel, Antonia’s journey traces her path towards a less chaotic inner self, which she determinedly developed. She willingly enters into the loop of the community and becomes part of it. She moves forward by internalising the implicit and explicit characteristics of her external world to finally be one among them.

It is a regrettable truth that an individual is incapable of transforming or controlling the larger societal structure, the structure that is powerful enough to ascribe identities to a person. The continuing pressure to revise or reinvent identities is a concerning issue in our contemporary scenario. It is also essential to recognise the transformative power of identities and the politics involved in their transformation in all variform dimensions. Be it interpersonal or intrapersonal, race or ethnicity, culture, or society, one needs to be aware of how the interplay of different social and political constructs demands a change in our identity, eventually embracing uncertainty and an uncertain identity. Julia Alvarez attempts to address these issues by subtly making us aware of the complexity that belies the

notion of identity and offering a solution to withstand it by changing our response rather than being victims. Through critical scrutiny of *Afterlife: A Novel*, it is conspicuous that Antonia had to conceive the knowledge of identification and traverse the path of individuation to vindicate her real self.

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More Than Just Background Noise : Music's Narrative Power in *Celebrity*

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Music is undeniably the essence of life, a universal language that resonates with the soul. It enriches our existence, infusing moments with emotion, rhythm, and meaning. However, music's influence extends beyond our personal experiences; it is also the lifeblood of the visuals we encounter daily. Just as life without music would be a wasteland, so too would the screens we watch become dull and lifeless without the dynamic interplay of music and sound. Music has the power to transform ordinary scenes into powerful storytelling moments, elevating visuals from mere images to immersive experiences. Whether it is a film's swelling score, the TV show's catchy theme, or the subtle background music in an advertisement, music breathes life into visuals, making them memorable and impactful. In this way, music is not just a companion to life but also a crucial component of the visual narratives that shape our understanding of the world.

Regarding our distant neighbour, South Korea, one does not have to talk about the popularity of Korean pop music these days. Starting from Seo Taiji and Boys in the 1990s to the current popularity and global success of BTS, the Korean

music industry has been growing at an unprecedented rate. However, this growth is more than just driven by the K-pop industry. The significant role that Korean TV dramas play in this development is often overlooked.

Korean TV dramas have become a powerful tool for popularizing music bands. A notable example is the group Monsta X, formed in 2015. Their rise to international recognition was significantly boosted by the drama *Shopping King Louie*, which featured their track 'The Tiger Moth.' This song, strategically played at pivotal moments in the series, piqued the curiosity of Western audiences and drew them in for future episodes. Another prime example is the 2010 drama *Secret Garden*, which captivated Western audiences with its soundtrack. The song 'That Woman' by Baek Ji Young and 'That Man,' later performed by Hyun Bin, became incredibly popular, contributing to the drama's success and further solidifying the connection between Korean dramas and the music industry. These instances highlight how the integration of compelling music into TV dramas can significantly amplify a band's reach and appeal, both within Korea and inter-

nationally (Ektha, 2011¹; “Hyun Bin’s ‘That Man’ Reaches Number 1,” 2011)².

This paper, in this context looks at the South Korean TV drama *Celebrity*, to emphasize on the importance of not just the title tracks but also background music used in the 12 episodic narratives. This particular drama which is used for this study is deliberate, as it offers a unique auditory experience that stands out even to seasoned viewers who have watched hundreds of Korean dramas. The music in *Celebrity* is not just a supplementary element; it actively shapes the viewer’s emotional response, enhances the storytelling, and creates a distinct atmosphere that sets the drama apart. This study aims to illustrate how the careful selection and placement of music in *Celebrity* contribute significantly to its impact, making it an intriguing case for analysing the broader role of music in television dramas.

The first episode kicks off with a catchy hip beat, interspersed with electronic rhythms that give it a fresh and energetic tone. The soundtrack features a mix of whooshing, whirring, chiming, and, most notably, the sound of coins jingling, which immediately grabs the audience’s attention. It is well known that the sound of coins jingling is a universally recognizable trigger that draws attention, even in a crowded space. Following this, a husky female voice sings, “come watch me,” immediately signalling to the audience that this is likely to be a story of rags to riches. This is followed by the sound of jingles and the chiming of a doorbell, reminiscent of a shop’s entrance, further enhancing the scene’s atmosphere. Further, the episode delves into the world of blogging and internet activities, highlighting how photos posted on Instagram

can turn individuals into powerful influencers. The narrative is accompanied by a curious and fitting soundtrack that aligns perfectly with Seo A-ri’s words, enhancing the impact of her message and drawing the audience deeper into the story.

Suddenly, the background music shifts with a dramatic sting, signalling a change in tone and giving the audience a sense of foreboding, as if they are about to be drawn into something darker. This subtle yet powerful musical cue hints at the sinister underbelly of the celebrity world, preparing viewers for an exploration of the hidden challenges and shadows that often accompany fame and success. The music sets the stage for a deeper dive into the complexities and potential pitfalls of life in the spotlight.

Throughout the series, *Celebrity* employs a variety of background scores to enhance the narrative. Energetic beats, often featuring electronic rhythms and hip elements, are used during scenes of high intensity or excitement, giving the drama a modern and edgy vibe. During moments of curiosity and playfulness, pensive, light and whimsical music adds a playful touch, creating a fun and engaging atmosphere. To introduce suspenseful or dark elements in the storyline, quick and intense bursts of music signal sudden shifts in tone, heightening the tension. For scenes that reflect sadness or introspection, melancholic tunes are used to convey the emotional depth of the characters’ experiences, allowing the audience to connect with their inner struggles. The music in *Celebrity* serves as an emotional amplifier. At 38:16 into episode one, the music reveals that Seo A-ri, who was initially indecisive, has decided to attend the party. Without the character verbally expressing her decision,

the music communicates it to the audience, effectively conveying her resolve through sound alone.

Then comes the title track of the drama, “Blindness,” sung by Sole. This song serves as a fitting conclusion to the episode, perfectly mirroring the tone and atmosphere that has been built up. The haunting melody and introspective lyrics not only resonate with the emotions of the characters but also leave the audience with a sense of curiosity and anticipation. The song subtly hints at the complexities and mysteries yet to unfold, making viewers eager to find out what will happen next. It acts as a bridge between the current episode and the next, keeping the audience engaged and invested in the storyline. The choice of “Blindness” as the title track underscores the show’s themes, drawing the audience deeper into its narrative web.

In episode two, the *Celebrity* background music (BGM) plays a pivotal role at 7:02. Up until this point, Seo A-ri has been belittled and placed at a disadvantage, making her appear vulnerable and subdued. However, as the BGM kicks in, there is a noticeable shift in the atmosphere. The powerful and assertive tones of the music underscore A-ri’s determination as she begins to fight back. The music does not just accompany her actions; it amplifies her resolve, giving her stand a sense of strength and empowerment. This moment marks a turning point in the episode, where A-ri reclaims her agency, and the music plays a crucial role in highlighting her transformation from a passive victim to an active force. The powerful BGM not only enhances the scene but also inspires the audience to root for A-ri as she takes control of her situation. This thought is further reflected in the

audience comments on the various platforms. Since its release a year ago, the title track “Blindness” has garnered approximately 632,000 views on a single YouTube post³, while the *Celebrity* BGM has attracted around 485,000 viewers⁴. These numbers reflect the strong impact and popularity of the music associated with the drama, resonating with a wide audience and enhancing the overall experience of the series. These musical tracks have a powerful ability to stimulate the audience, evoking a range of emotions that either lead them to sympathize with the characters on screen or become emotionally invested in their journeys. The music serves as an emotional guide, subtly directing the viewers’ feelings and deepening their connection to the narrative. Whether it is through evoking pity, empathy, or a strong attachment to the characters, the music plays a crucial role in shaping the audience’s experience and engagement with the drama.

A commenter by the name of zahedalily 4677 notes, “the background music kept us glued to it.” Bxyc1 adds, “This song gives me goosebumps.” Another viewer, jimash1672, shares, “The vocals had such a strong impression on me that each time I listen to ‘Blindness,’ I fall deeper, as if in a blissful trance. The song fits perfectly with the storyline and what Seo A-ri felt at every step. I’ve been hooked since day one.” Hopeful_soul1111 mentions that, although they did not initially understand the lyrics, the song resonated deeply with them. After checking the translated lyrics, they said it gave them goosebumps, adding, “Maybe that’s the beauty of music-it has no language but goes straight to our soul.” Regarding the BGM, alveerahafeez3853 says that it

increased their heart rate in anticipation of what would happen next. Btsarmy-channe14136 comments that the song carries powerful vibes, while Gabriel Yankey-ku2kg admits that he eagerly waits for the track to play in every episode. For viewers of these dramas, it is not just the narrative and visuals that captivate them-it is the background music and OSTs that truly keep them hooked to each episode.

The drama uses a mix of different music genres to enhance the viewer's experience. Melancholic piano melodies underscore scenes of heartbreak and longing, while pop tracks with catchy hooks highlight the more glamorous and fast-paced moments in the world of celebrities. This careful blend of music not only enriches the narrative but also deepens the emotional connection between the audience and the characters, making each scene more impactful and memorable. Even during the initial meeting between Seo A-ri and Han Joon-kyung, the intense beats draw the audience further into their story, heightening the tension and intrigue surrounding their relationship. Without the music, their meeting would feel banal and lack the spark needed to capture the audience's interest in their budding romance. The music adds a layer of excitement and emotion, making their encounter more engaging and memorable, ultimately drawing viewers into the unfolding relationship.

Ultimately, music in K-dramas like *Celebrity* serves as a powerful tool that transcends language barriers and fosters cultural connections. While it may seem like a mere background element, its influence on the audience's emotional experience is undeniable. The carefully crafted soundtracks leave a lasting impression, making K-dramas a truly immersive and unforgettable experience for viewers worldwide.

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आज़ादी की लड़ाई की प्रतिबंधित कृतियों का साहित्यिक अवलोकन और आज का संदर्भ

विजय श्रीवास्तव

संकाय सदस्य

महर्षि यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ़ इनफार्मेशन टेक्नोलॉजी, लखनऊ

डा. मनोज कुमार सिंह

संकाय सदस्य

महर्षि यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ़ इनफार्मेशन टेक्नोलॉजी, लखनऊ

राम कुमार

शोध छात्र

महर्षि यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ़ इनफार्मेशन टेक्नोलॉजी, लखनऊ

सत्ता के विरोध में स्वर को कमजोर करने के लिए साहित्य को प्रतिबंधित किया जाता है। ऐसा बहुत बार हुआ है, विशेषकर भारत में आजादी की पृष्ठभूमि में निकलने वाली पत्र-पत्रिकाओं को ज़ब्त किया गया, संपादकों को गिरफ्तार किया गया, रिपोर्टों को ज़ब्त किया गया, प्रेस पर छापे पड़े, प्रेस के मालिकों को भी जेल जाना पड़ा, उनपर आर्थिक दंड लगाए गए। सत्ताएँ जनान्दोलनों से डरती हैं। कहा जाता है तानाशाह और हत्यारे दोनों कायर होते हैं और कोई भी सत्ता जनता को कानून अथवा किसी प्रकार के दूसरे भय को सृजित करा कर बराबर उसे वशीभूत करना चाहती है, क्योंकि कोई भी सत्ता हो, पूर्ण न्याय की प्रतिष्ठा नहीं कर सकती है। उसकी कार्यप्रणाली में कहीं न कहीं व्यक्ति, समाज की स्वाधीनता आदि पर अंकुश रखने की आवश्यकता पड़ती है। रचनाकार को इसका प्रतिरोध करना पड़ता है और साहित्य का जन्म ही प्रतिरोध से हुआ है। दुनिया भर के साहित्य के प्रादुर्भाव के समय को देखा जाए तो उनका जन्म सत्ता एवं व्यवस्था के प्रतिकार से हुआ है इसलिए सत्ताएँ समय-समय पर साहित्य को प्रतिबंधित करती रही हैं। (मिश्र, 2022)

रक्षाबंधन :

प्राण वीरों भले ही ही गंवाना, पर न राखी की
इज्जत घटाना,

यह जो राखी तिरंगी हमारी, करती इज्जत इस
हिन्द सारी,

भाई इसको न हरगिज लजाना, चाहे जाना
पड़े जलखना

ये उस गीत की पहली पंक्ति है जिसे आजादी की लड़ाई के दौरान विश्वमित्र ने रचा था। इसमें एक बहन अपने भाई से देश की आजादी की लड़ाई की लाज रखने को कह रही थी। इस गीत में अहिंसक आंदोलन की भावना के साथ, जलियांवाला बाग़ की क्रूरतम हिंसा का भी जिक्र है। गीत में स्वराज की प्राप्ति के लिए सभी देशवासियों से आजादी के लिए रक्षाबंधन का पर्व राष्ट्र प्रेम की भावना के साथ मनाने का आवाहन किया गया है! इस गीत को भी ब्रितानिया हुकूमत ने जब्त कर लिया था। ये गीत राष्ट्र प्रेम और सांस्कृतिक मूल्यों के समन्वय का एक उदाहरण भी है। गीत की कुछ अगली पंक्तियाँ कुछ इस प्रकार हैं

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हम न भूले हैं जलियान वाला, जहां पे डायर
से आया पाला,
पेट के बल था उसने रेंगाया, देश की लाज में
बहा आया,
अब की ऐसा न आये जमाना, चाहे जाने पड़े
जेलखाना।

गीत स्वराज को मंदिर मानता है और लोगों से
अपील करता है कि सारे भाई बहन, चाहे उन्हें कारागार
में जाना पड़े अपने प्राणों की आहुति स्वराज के लिए
दे दे।

है स्वराज मंदिर हमारा, जहां पे बैठा है गांधी सितारा,
वहां पर पहुंचे हैं, हजारों भाई, और बहनो की
भी मांग आई,

अब तो वही है सबका ठिकाना, आओ, चलें
सारे जेलखाना

आजादी के रणबाकुरों के लिए, राखी की लाज
उस देश की अस्मिता की रक्षा है। पर इस अस्मिता की
रक्षा के लिए आत्मसम्मान और समर्पण दोनों आवश्यक
हैं। गीत अंग्रेजी हुकूमत अत्याचारों को याद करते
हुए, देश की रक्षा करने का सन्देश देता है।

याद रखना पेशावर की गोली, खेलना हिन्द
में वही होली,

जिसजे माथा ऊँचा हो हमारा, और आजाद हो
हिन्द हमारा,

बात न अपनी नीची करना, चाहे जाने पड़े जेलखाना,
दक्षिणा बस यही है तुम्हारी, लाज राखी की
रखना हमारी,

चाहे डंडे पड़े तुमको खाना, पैर हरगिज न पीछे हटाना,
या तो गोली सीने पे खाना, या कि सीधे
चलो जेलखाना।

स्वदेशी आंदोलन :

वीरों की कर्म भूमि भारत में आजादी की लड़ाई
ने न केवल सापेक्ष तौर पर अपितु निरपेक्ष रूप से भी

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लोगों की चेतना को जागृत करने का महान कार्य
किया था। भारत का स्वतंत्रता आंदोलन वैचारिक
आधार पर बहुत ही समृद्ध था। आजादी की लड़ाई
के दौरान सृजित साहित्य भी गहन विचार और दार्शनिक
चिंतन से परिपूर्ण है। आजादी की लड़ाई के दौरान
ऐसी कई साहित्यिक कृतियां थीं जिनको अंग्रेजी
हुकूमत ने ज़ब्त कर लिया था। इन ज़ब्त शुदा तरानों
में भविष्य के भारत का सपना था। आज जब हम
आजादी का अमृत महोत्सव मना रहे हैं, तो हमें इन
गूढ़ अर्थ लिए हुए गीतों को फिर से याद करने की
आवश्यकता है। ये ज़ब्तशुदा तराने, भटकी हुई नई
पीढ़ी को दिशा भी दिखा सकते हैं। आज जिस
ज़ब्तशुदा तराने की बात कर रहे हैं, उस गीत के
रचयिता का नाम ज्ञात नहीं है, किन्तु ये गीत स्वदेशी
आंदोलन के समय अंग्रेजी हुकूमत ने ज़ब्त कर लिया
था। ये गीत स्वदेशी आंदोलन के दौरान एक स्त्री की
अभिलाषा को देश प्रेम की भावना के साथ व्यक्त
करता है और आजादी की लड़ाई में महिलाओं की
महती भूमिका को भी स्वीकार करता है। इस गीत को
वर्ष 1923 में तत्कालीन ब्रिटिश सरकार ने ज़ब्त
किया था। ये गीत महिलाओं की स्वदेशी आंदोलन
में भूमिका साथ विदेशी आर्थिक शोषण की भी
तस्वीर दिखाता है। ये गीत ये भी दर्शाता है, आजादी
की लड़ाई की पावन भावना लोक गीतों के माध्यम
से जनमानस तक पहुंच रही थी।

मुझे गाढ़ा स्वदेशी मंगा दो सजन, है फैली
काहिली दुनिया जहां में सारे,
इसी ख्याल से मेरे ख्याल हैं नारे, तमाम दिन
मेरा बेकार गुजरे है प्यारे,
मैं तो कातूंगी चरखा करूंगी भजन, मुझे
गाढ़ा स्वदेशी मंगा दो सजन।

इसी की साड़ियां-चादर कमीज बनवाना,
इसी का कोट-ओ-कुरता बनाओ मनमाना
इसी की टोपियां, अचकन, रजाई बनवाना
जो सुधारो चाहो तुम अपना वतन, मुझे गाढ़ा

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स्वदेशी मंगा दो सजन

रुई की कद्र विलायत में लोग करते हैं, इसी
के जोर से दुनिया से कब वो डरते हैं,
हमारे मुल्क से लेकर जहाज भरते हैं
है यह नजरों में हल्की, पै भारी वजन
मुझे गाढ़ा स्वदेशी मंगा दो सजन

पूर्ण स्वराज और समाजवादी वतन :

आजादी के गूढ़ अर्थ को समझने के लिए क्रांतिकारी रचनाकारों के सृजन का गूढ़ अर्थ भी समझना आवश्यक है। इन रचनाओं से आज की युवा पीढ़ी को स्वंत्रतासंग्राम सेनानियों की अटूट देशभक्ति, भारत के प्रति उनके सपनों को साकार करने में प्रेरणा और मार्गदर्शन मिलेगा। आजादी की लड़ाई में जन चेतना जगाने के लिए बहुत से कवियों ने अपनी रचनाओं से अंग्रेजी सरकार की चूल्हे हिला दी थी। कुछ रचनाएँ ऐसी भी हैं जिनके सृजनकर्ता का नाम भी नहीं पता किन्तु ये रचनाएँ स्वतंत्रतासंग्राम में अति लोकप्रिय थी। इनमें से अधिकतर गीतों और तरानों को अंग्रेजी हुकूमत ने प्रतिबंधित कर दिया था। ये कालजयी रचनाएँ तत्कालीन भारत की कौमी एकता एक मनोरमा दृश्य भी दिखाती हैं। ये रचनाएँ विभिन्न विचारधाराओं के आंदोलनों का एक वैचारिक दृष्टिकोण भी प्रस्तुत करती हैं। ऐसी ही एक जब्तशुदा तराना जो अंग्रेजी हुकूमत के जुल्म और शोषण के खिलाफ पूर्ण स्वराज की मांग करता है, इसके रचनाकार महान क्रांतिकारी फीरोजुद्दीन मंसूर हैं, वे आजादी का हक मांगते हैं, किन्तु वे इसे भीख में नहीं चाहते हैं। भगत सिंह के समाजवादी विचारों से प्रभावित ये गीत वास्तव में आजादी की लड़ाई में एक महत्ती भूमिका निभाता है। ये गीत तब लिखा गया जब भगत सिंह और उनके सहयोगी जुझारू जनसंघर्षों की राह पर आगे बढ़ रहे थे, तब राष्ट्रवादी राजनीति का शांत पानी बहने लगा। तत्काल उत्तेजना नवंबर 1927 में एक सरकारी घोषणा से आई कि एक सर्व-श्वेत आयोग भारत भेजा जाएगा जो यह सिफारिश करेगा

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कि क्या देश आगे की संवैधानिक प्रगति के लिए तैयार है और यदि हां, तो किस दिशा में। श्री साइमन की अध्यक्षता वाले इस आयोग में किसी भी भारतीय को शामिल न किए जाने को व्यापक रूप से राष्ट्रीय अपमान माना गया और कांग्रेस, जिन्ना के नेतृत्व वाली मुस्लिम लीग, हिंदू महासभा और कई अन्य लोगों ने इसका बहिष्कार किया। जब 3 फरवरी 1928 को साइमन कमीशन बंबई पहुंचा, तो भारत में हर जगह बड़े पैमाने पर काले झंडे वाले प्रदर्शन, विशाल रैलियाँ और कई अन्य प्रकार के विरोध प्रदर्शन आयोजित किए गए और सभी प्रमुख शहरों और कस्बों में पूरी तरह से मनाया गया। गीत के बोल कुछ इस प्रकार से हैं।

माँगा पहले, अब न मांगेंगे, मगर लेगें जरूर,
हक्के-आजादी के हम हकदार हैं, साइल (भिखारी)
नहीं।

जिंदगी आजादगी, आजादगी है जिंदगी, मौत
बेहतर है अगर आजादी-ए-कामिल नहीं।

कर गया चट से तेरी मेहनत का समर
(फल) सरमायादार, तुझको फाके के सिव
मजदूर कुछ हासिल नहीं।

सोवियत से है अयाँ आजादी-ए-कामिल यहां,
माल माले कौम है मिलिक्यत-काहिल नहीं
कान खोदें और जमीं जोतें किसान और पेशावर,
आह हंगामें -तमतो कुछ उन्हें हासिल नहीं
जाग ए मंसूर, देखो वो निदा आने लगी, कौम
की दौलत है दौलत, दौलते-काहिल नहीं।

ये गीत भगत सिंह की पूर्ण स्वराज की मांग (आजादी-ए- कामिल) और समाजवादी वतन बनाने के उनके सपने को जनमानस तक पहुंचाने का एक महत्वपूर्ण कार्य करता है, शायद इसीलिये ब्रितानिया हुकूमत ने इस गीत पर प्रतिबंध लगा दिया था। आज की युवा पीढ़ी को मगर ऐसे क्रांतिधर्मी विचार अवश्य पढ़ने चाहिए, ये अतीत में रचे हुए कालजयी शब्द, भविष्य में हमारे देश के लिए स्वर्णिम धरोहर हैं।

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सत्याग्रह :

अंग्रेजों के भारत में पैर जमाने के साथ ही भारतीय संस्कृति, प्राचीन ज्ञान और मूल्यों पर पाश्चात्य प्रभाव साफ़ दिखाई देने लगा। इस सांस्कृतिक खाई को पाटने के लिए जागरूक लोग भारतीय जनता को चेतना से जागरूक करने का प्रयास कर रहे थे। परंपरागत चिंतन और पश्चिमी प्रभाव के समन्वय से राष्ट्रीय चेतना का ढांचा तैयार हुआ, जिसे साहित्य, कला, राजनीतिक और सामाजिक सुधार आंदोलनों, और बौद्धिक संगठनों के माध्यम से अभिव्यक्ति मिली।

बीसवीं सदी में गांधीजी के सत्याग्रह और असहयोग आंदोलन, अंग्रेजों की बर्बरता का प्रतीक जलियांवाला बाग हत्याकांड, भगत सिंह, राजगुरु, और सुखदेव की फांसी जैसी घटनाओं ने पूरे देश को हिला दिया। इन घटनाओं के जवाब में, भारतीय साहित्यकारों ने कविता, नज़्म, गजल, लेख और नाटकों के माध्यम से भारतीय दृष्टिकोण को व्यक्त किया। इनमें से कई रचनाएं प्रतिबंधित हो गईं, जिसके कारण ये ज्यादा पढ़ी नहीं गईं, लेकिन लोक परंपरा के माध्यम से गाई जाती रहीं।

श्रुति और वाचिक परंपरा द्वारा ये रचनाएं लोक चेतना को जगाने में सफल रहीं। सरकार विरोधी रचनाओं के सृजन के जोखिमों को जानते हुए भी लेखकों और प्रकाशकों ने अपने नाम और पते के साथ रचनाएँ प्रकाशित कीं, जिसके बाद वे गिरफ्तारी, पुलिस अत्याचार, जुर्माना और जब्ती का सामना करते रहे। इन रचनाओं ने ब्रिटिश हुकूमत के लिए भय और असहनीय स्थिति पैदा कर दी। कड़े प्रेस कानूनों के तहत इन रचनाओं को जब्त कर लिया जाता था, लेकिन कुछ प्रतियां गुप्त रूप से बची रह गईं, जो बाद में भारत के विभिन्न अभिलेखागारों में पहुंची।

1905 से 1931-32 तक के राजनीतिक उथल-पुथल पर सबसे अधिक साहित्य रचा गया, जिसने स्वतंत्रता संग्राम में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई। 1922 में किशनचंद जेबा द्वारा रचित नाटक 'जख्मी पंजाब',

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जो जलियांवाला बाग हत्याकांड और उसके परिणामों पर आधारित था, लाहौर से प्रकाशित हुआ। उस समय भारत सत्याग्रह के मार्ग पर आगे बढ़ रहा था। नाटक का कुछ अंश पढ़कर इसकी भावना को समझा जा सकता है। प्रस्तुत गीत सत्याग्रह की भावना से ओत प्रोत है।

**अगर चलती रही गोली यूं ही निर्दोष जानों पर,
तो कौवा और कबूतर ही रहेंगे इन मकानों पर
मिटा डालेंगे इस तरह हाकिम अपनी प्रजा को, हुकूमत
क्या करेगी फिर वह मरघट और मसानों पर।**

निष्कर्ष :

भारतीय स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के दौरान ब्रिटिश शासन द्वारा प्रतिबंधित कविताओं और साहित्यिक रचनाओं ने स्वतंत्रता के अर्थ को गहराई से व्यक्त किया। ये रचनाएं केवल साहित्य नहीं थीं, बल्कि एक क्रांतिकारी विचारधारा और स्वतंत्रता के लिए समर्पण का प्रतीक थीं। इन कविताओं ने समाज के विभिन्न तबकों को प्रेरित किया, राष्ट्र प्रेम को प्रज्वलित किया और समाजवादी, अहिंसक, और अन्य वैचारिक आंदोलनों के विचारों को स्पष्ट किया। ब्रिटिश हुकूमत द्वारा इन रचनाओं पर प्रतिबंध लगाना स्पष्ट रूप से इंगित करता है कि ये कविताएं और साहित्यिक कृतियां तत्कालीन भारत की सांस्कृतिक और राजनीतिक चेतना को आकार देने में कितनी प्रभावी थीं।

इन रचनाओं का गहन विश्लेषण हमें स्वतंत्रता के विभिन्न आयामों की समझ प्रदान करता है और यह दिखाता है कि कैसे साहित्य जन चेतना को जागरूक करने और राजनीतिक एवं सांस्कृतिक आंदोलनों का समर्थन करने का माध्यम बना। स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के दौरान प्रतिबंधित साहित्य न केवल ऐतिहासिक दस्तावेज़ के रूप में महत्वपूर्ण है, बल्कि यह आज की पीढ़ी के लिए भी प्रासंगिक है। यह साहित्य आज भी हमें उस जज़्बे और साहस की याद दिलाता है, जिसने भारत को स्वतंत्रता दिलाई। इसलिए, इन रचनाओं का अध्ययन न केवल इतिहास को समझने

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का एक प्रयास है, बल्कि वर्तमान में उनके विचारों और दृष्टिकोणों को पुनः स्थापित करने का एक महत्वपूर्ण कदम भी है

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The Flaming Forests of Darkness: A Critical Study of the Enigmatic Presence of Nature in *Dudiya*

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Dudiya, written by Vishwas Patil in Marathi and translated by Nadeem Khan is an insightful and realistic account of an IAS officer's experience in a Naxal-affected rural area in Chhattisgarh. Patil relates the harrowing experience through the character, Dilip Pawar who spends 76 days in the Naxal-infested forests of Abujmarh. Patil writes: "Fact and fiction often turn out to be two sides of the same coin. Real-life people and real episodes sometimes appear as horrifying as fiction." The titular character and her life story are vindicating evidence of this statement and serve as a reminder that *Dudiya* represents the many who were caught in the crossfires of the 'power strife.'

Dudiya joins the Naxal forces in the hope of a righteously just life that the democracy failed to provide her. However, life in the Naxal camp soon turns out to be a nightmarish affair that leaves her disillusioned and hopeless. She goes on to become a traitor and an enemy of the Naxals by surrendering herself to the police and is left to live a life shadowed by the fear of Naxal bullets. The novel reveals its fictitious nature through thrilling

encounters, ambushes and the various heroic stories of the many martyrs who bravely embraced death at the hands of the Naxals. An aspect that makes this novel depart from being factual documentation is the language that Patil has employed to recount the events. He has extensively used nature imagery to portray the tragedy and tribulations that are meted out to the characters in the novel.

Apart from the imagery, nature's invigorating presence transforms it into an integral character in the novel. This paper is an attempt to chronicle the various roles that nature has portrayed that are crucial to the plot of the book.

"This then was the green land of Chhattisgarh that had been painted red with blood in recent times." (Patil 9)

Dudiya is a well-balanced autofiction set in the deep, almost untraversable forests of Chhattisgarh guarded by the inaccessible Abujmarh mountains. Set against the turbulent backdrop of the elections, the novel throws light on the political paraphernalia that has engulfed the lives of the common folk. The terrifying presence of the Naxals

casts an eerie shadow that darkens the cloudy skies of Chhattisgarh. Dilip Kumar, the protagonist, a dutiful civil servant arrives at the foothills of Abujmarh as the electoral commissioner with high hopes of carrying out his duties heroically. He also garnered the hopes of retreating into the lap of nature only to discover the dark secrets that the forests and the mountains hid within them.

A very striking aspect of the novel is how the author portrays nature and how he personifies, symbolises and romanticises nature. The novel presents 'nature, to us in various forms portraying various roles: as a protector, a leveller, an accomplice, a victim, a perpetrator, etc. The author detailedly depicts how the dark foliage shields the outer world from the violence that inhabits its deep jungle. The writer uses the grittiness of nature to amplify the goriness of human violence.

"I however had been sufficiently primed up for this adventure by my years of jungle safaris and my life-long romance with the Sahyadri range of mountains..... I cannot deny, therefore, that I was quite excited at the thought of what lay ahead." (Patil 15)

This quote emphasises the misplaced illusion that the narrator harboured as part of his valiant ambition of taking on the world and its problems. However, as soon as he sets foot in the "Naxal-afflicted," "fear-stricken region in a faraway jungle," the gravity of the situation dawns on him.

Nature : The Stealthy Accomplice/A Silent Witness :

Naxalism proliferated in the jungles of Chhattisgarh like unkempt weed in the monsoon season. The jungle hid them

within its tenebrous hearth and abetted in their violence by shielding them from the political eyes of rigid surveillance. The "serpentine jungle track" carried bloody trails of the violence reaped in the name of justice. The obscure leaf-laden tracks were often strewn with the remnants of the victims of brutal injustice unleashed in the name of justice.

"These Naxalites began circulating through our green jungles like a storm." (Patil 81)

In the "Goebblesque propaganda" that the Naxals fervently dispensed; the salvation and sheltering of the forests and the lakes, was the ammunition that made them to be "venerated as the messiahs." Thus, Nature' even aided them in formulating their boorish political agendas. "The knobbly, soot-covered branches" enveloped the Naxals from the prowling eyes amidst the diabolical combat outlined in the name of justice and freedom which are farcical synonyms for 'power.'

"God is there any release for us hill people from the twin assault of the Naxals on the one side and the police on the other." (Patil 128)

The forest presented itself as an eerie backdrop that silently facilitated the gory atrocities that left a trail of bloody debris that remained as a sordid reminder of the political turmoil that has plagued our democracy. The shadow of the jungles that once cast the veil of protection now veiled the brutalities of injustice.

"There were dense forests of *kinjal* and *umbar* trees on this bank with plenty of bamboo groves too, making it the perfect place for staying in hiding for the entire day." (Patil 145)

Nature : A Silent Witness :

“It’s thick, impenetrable forests, the unending rows of dense-green mountains one behind the other.”
(Patil 47)

Nature like the people is forced to silently witness the changes happening around them just as they are helplessly devoured by ruthless exploitation. The passivity of the people is reflected in the silence of the forests, a silence that is as dark as the moonless night. Nature in its susceptibility endeavours to shield its children from corruptive atrocities and the dense foliage shields the outer world from the violence that inhabits its deep jungles. Nature provides consolation to the fear-stricken minds and harbours the cathartic power to reunite the human minds with the rustic reality of the human conditions. The author uses pathetic fallacy to illustrate how nature mirrors the woe and desperation that has enveloped the lives of the hapless victims of disorder and disservice.

“The sky was overcast and the atmosphere was hazy. The fear that permeated the region was so strong that even the sun took care to peep out cautiously.” (Patil 45)

“He held not merely the Adivasis, but the trees of the jungle in terror too.”
(Patil 52)

Nature : A Symbolic Entity :

“From the earliest times, everybody has sung odes to the Adivasis being the children of the forests.”(Patil 26)

Patil employs nature as a symbol to accurately capture the pathos in the lives of the people deprived of the essentialities of existence. The ubiquitous presence of

nature is purposefully presented to portray the gravity of the disturbing disaster that they encounter. The misery that the Adivasis underwent was a direct consequence of the greedy plundering of nature and its resources. The tribals though considered to be the children of the forests, were forbidden and banished from their hearths. The bounty of nature that was to nourish its children was being mercilessly swindled by government officials to fill their own pockets.

“The Adivasis were forbidden from even gathering firewood from the jungles for their hearths....With these new rules having bound them hand and foot, with entry into their own farms and jungles prohibited, many began to starve.” (Patil 27)

The National Parks and the dams threatened their meagre existence and drove them away from their homes. They were uprooted from their dwelling as if they were piddling weeds that hindered the squandering that took place in the name of progress. The savagery wrought by government officials in the name of development came at the cost of their lives.

“On the other side were these foresters who considered the very presence of these tribals as encroachment upon the forest and often burnt down their hutments.” (Patil 29)

Thus, the excessive abuse of nature is an allegory for the pitiable powerlessness of the tribal lives and their vulnerable existence under the tyrannical rule of the government as well as the Naxals. The tribal women are hunted down and preyed upon by the equally lewd government officials and Naxal dasas. Their innocence

is pilfered by the outsiders just like how they cleaved into nature's heart to extract the riches. The symbolism of nature continues to present itself in the portrayal of the innocence of the native people. The innocence and the beauty of the people were illustrated using images from nature - the women with faces "glowing like a fresh jungle fruit." (Patil 37) The deep, dark forests and the impenetrable mountain ranges symbolises the isolation and the separation that the tribal people encounter daily. They are cut off from the outer worlds of modernism and progress and the outside world is ignorant of the dark mysteries that lie rooted in the jungles. The dense and vast jungles also serve as a shield, a symbol of protection and a guarding entity that shelters its children.

"Our happy village of Kauvapani had grown in the lap of nature. It was in those hills and mountains that I came of age. The mountain behind our hamlet was our father." (Patil 75)

The Language of Nature :

"When the sun is overhead, its rays pierce the canopies of the trees and chase each other under the shadow like rabbit kittens. The butterflies flutter hither and thither, going mad to grasp them in their fists." (Patil 77)

As mentioned earlier, Patil has extensively used nature imagery to illustrate the lives of the Adivasis, the politics of the government, and the tactics of the Naxals. From a critical perspective, this poetic language to an extent downplays the severity of the central issue of the plot. The romantic picturisation of nature overflows into the sombre tone that is demanding for the plot. But on the other hand, the allegorical portrayal of nature

vindicates the essential bond that the tribal people have with nature.

"As the birds of the jungle fly free in the blue sky, so are we tribals the children of the soil here. Our ancestors were the lords of these forests, their caretakers, and their all-in-all." (Patil 113)

The acute remoteness of the geographical setting is a suggestive reminder of the segregation and oppression that has stamped their lives. The grievous issues of casteism, systemic oppression, misogyny and the endless saga of abuse and violence found voice in the images of nature.

"We tribals were like cattle with muzzles placed on their snouts." (Patil 80)

The language of nature in this narrative is not just an aesthetic addition but a poignant presence that reflects the turmoil and resilience of the people whose lives are intertwined with the land they inhabit. Patil's prose weaves a vivid tapestry of the natural world, mirroring the inner lives of his characters, particularly the protagonist, Dudiya, a young Adivasi girl. Through the language of nature, Patil communicates the essence of Dudiya's world, where the scent of gunpowder is as pervasive as the smell of the earth after rain, and the dense forests of Abujmarh serve as silent spectators to the unfolding drama. The novel, through these moments, offers a compelling look at the human cost of insurgency and the enduring power of the human spirit.

Conclusion :

The novel, *Dudiya* by Vishwas Patil, presents a vivid portrayal of nature not just as a backdrop but as a pivotal element in

the narrative. Set against the tumultuous landscape of Chhattisgarh during the insurgency period of the Naxalites, the novel weaves the natural environment into the lives of its characters, reflecting the deep connection between the Adivasi community and their land. The forests of Chhattisgarh, with their dense foliage and untamed wildlife, become a silent witness to the unfolding drama of Dudiya's life—a young Adivasi girl striving for dignity and independence amidst the chaos of social and political upheaval. Her journey is emblematic of the struggle between the oppressive forces of the state and the Naxalites, with nature bearing witness to her trials and tribulations.

The author's description of the terrain, with its daunting mountains and elusive pathways, mirrors the complex journey of the protagonist and the Adivasi people, who are caught in the crossfire of Naxalism and state policies. Through Patil's narrative, nature emerges as a character in its own right, shaping the destiny of the people who inhabit it and the conflicts that rage within it. The novel, therefore, not only tells a story of human strife but also underscores the importance of preserving the natural heritage that forms an integral part of the Adivasi identity and culture

The 'nature' in this work thus serves as "an environmental space that is interwoven with a politics of survival and struggle, a way of living with and understanding natural resources, a dialogue with nature where notions of existence and difference are played out." (Sharma 6)

This interplay between the natural setting and the human narrative is a testament to Patil's skill as a storyteller and his deep

understanding of the land and its people. The novel has been recognized for its urgent voice and its depiction of the heartbreaking reality of the Naxal menace, as well as for its portrayal of the Adivasi struggle to maintain dignity and independence in the face of overwhelming adversity. *Dudiya* stands as a significant work of literature, offering insights into a complex issue through the lens of a compelling story, told with a profound sense of place and the power of the natural world. . Through *Dudiya*, Patil explores the exploitation of the Adivasis and the rise of Naxalism, offering a window into the dark reality of India's Maoist insurgency. Her story is not just one of survival but also of the search for identity and purpose in a world where she is trapped between the administration and the insurgents.

Dudiya also electively raises the conundrum of authenticity in Dalit Literature, that is the question of what constitutes Dalit Literature. According to Dalit writers like Sharankumar Limbale, Dalit writing is a body of work written by a Dalit writer with a 'Dalit consciousness.' From the said perspective, *Dudiya* falls short of capturing the rawness of the 'Dalit consciousness,' but through the character of Dudiya, Patil has portrayed the existential struggle that stems from a continued experience of deprivation that has the magnitude to rip away one's dignity. The novel also efficiently presented the tribal peoples' strife to discover themselves as well as their efforts to find a footing in society.

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Fostering Positive Change : A Study of Personal Growth in Anita Nair's *Eating Wasps*

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Anita Nair was a mastery in story writing and profound understanding of human mind and experiences. Through her writing, she had consistently explored themes of personal growth, transformation and provided a mental stability to the readers through her characters. This study aims to delve into Anita Nair's "*Eating Wasps*", examining the ways in which her characters navigate the complexities of life, confront their inner struggles, and emerge stronger and more independent in thoughts and actions. Positive change and personal growth was a very important aspect for each and every human being to analyse and scrutinise themselves for better growth in their life. This research paper explores how the journey of her characters serve as a reflection of the people's own struggles and triumphs, and how Anita Nair's writing offers a powerful tool for self-reflection and transformation. The main focus of this research paper was to discover the inner strength and ability to transform the powers in a positive way. Also this paper takes Anita Nair's work for strengthening the concept of personal growth through positive change.

"*Eating Wasps*" was a novel which comprises many challenges and traumas. These traumas were portrayed to enhance the personal growth and development of the character at the end of the novels. Anita Nair was an prolific writer who exposed all the hidden traumas and provided a mental stability to the characters. She not only provided stability to the characters but also mental stability to the readers. In the present situation, the minds of the people get shattered due to several reasons and technological development. So these issues were also concentrated by Anita Nair in her work *Eating Wasps* to provide awareness to the people and to safeguard their mind in a positive way. According to Psychology the mind of the person was prioritised because if the mind was stable then there would be stability in all the works.

Objectives :

- To Enhance the mind and mental health
- To Analyse the theme of personal growth

- To Explore the role of social and cultural context
- To Identify key factors driving change
- To Investigate the portrayal of gender roles and identity
- To Examine the impact of personal growth on relationships
- To Evaluate the effectiveness of Nair's narrative techniques

Discussion :

Positive change and growth was very crucial nowadays because in society there were many negative happenings around people. It was important to find the ability and strength of human potential to overcome those adversities. So writers like Anita Nair, Manju Kapur, Preeti Shenoy, Bharati Mukerjee, Anita Desai etc... were laid focus on approaching life in a positive way. This research paper throws light on the work "*Eating Wasps*" by Anita Nair which has many trauma hidden inside the novel and those were explicitly evident in this research paper. Positive growth was more important in present society no one was going to push anyone for positive growth. It could only be done by self motivation. The motivation should be positive so that the people following should also get the exact motivation. This notion of expanding consciousness and the willingness to confront and reconcile one's past and present selves was a good remark of the transformative experience. In *Eating Wasps*, the protagonist's journeys were marked by profound moments of epiphany and self-revelation, which serve as catalysts for their personal growth. (Wade, 1998, p. 15)

Sreelakshmi was the protagonist of this novel but she was the silent narrator

and passive of this story. She was a ghost narrator in this novel. This was the beauty of the writer Anita Nair to give a ghost writer as a key element and this elevated the plot. Markos was the boyfriend of Sreelakshmi and he was the one who found out the right hand index finger of Sreelakshmi. So this index finger pointed out many incidents which were hidden in society. People would use their index finger to point out others for happiness as well as to indicate fault. In that Irony, Anita Nair expressed her views about the society through the finger of Sreelakshmi.

"He pressed her against his lips. He asked her to give many kisses the next day. Now Megha understood his intention. Megha bite his hand the next day until she tasted blood in her mouth and escaped from him. Suraj complained that Megha bit the man in the truck as he tried to stop the fight of Megha with a girl. Her father asked Megha to apologise to the girl she fought with and with the truck keeper. They asked her to travel in the truck the day after; her mom would take her to school from the next day. Megha asked Sorry to Prem, Anita Nair completed Megha's episode" (Sumathi & Poonkodi Shrii, 2020, p. 37)

Megha was a six years old small girl travelling to school in the truck with all the other children. She was fond of care and love towards others in her family. Likewise she started to long for care outside the world also and she was not aware of the problem behind these attachments. While travelling in the truck she got a chance to talk with the truck assistant and he was not good in character. Though she was psychologically imbalanced towards the lack of attention and care, she was also aware of the improper way of looking. Finally she understood the

good and bad care in the society. She finally got psychological stability in her mind. This type of instability was caused due to the psychological imbalance.

Najma was another powerful character in the novel *Eating Wasps*. She was very bold in her actions and behaviour. She was approached by Imtiaz for a marriage proposal and she rejected him with her mother's words that she deserved more than him. This brought anguish towards Najma and he attacked her with acid so that she could not live with that face in the world. But she was very strong in her mind and she overcame all the traumas. She also lived a happy life ahead. This research paper also focuses on the positive aspects of the mind and its personal growth. Like the character Najma, every person should be brave and strong to face the traumas in their life. This was the main motto of Positive Psychology to nurture the mind in a positive way.

Najma, doesn't need to hide her face inside the burkha even though it looks ugly with the acid attack. Her courage to face the world with her new face is remarkable. Najma's character shows her psychological sickness how she became the reason for the boy to treat him. (Sumathi & Poonkodi Shri, 2020, p. 40)

Personal growth and transformation both were powerful elements in life because for each and every transformation people need personal growth in a positive way. Approaching life in a good way and overcoming adversities was also a major role in transformation. In the novel *Eating Wasps*, Anita Nair had brought forth many characters who were traumatised by the male victim and also the mental breakage

due to lack of stability. Sreelakshmi was the protagonist and ghost narrator and she explored all the traumas through her right index finger after her death. This showed the uniqueness of Anita Nair that she brought a paradox that usually the index finger was represented to point out someone or something and she infused this with her writing to bring out the societal issues through the character Sreelakshmi. Trauma and healing were also considered as major aspects that included Psychology. In *Eating Wasps*, Characters like Megha and Najma were traumatised by the mind but they both overcame positive aspects of healing themselves and bang with a new positive spirit.

Research Outcomes :

One of the most impactful developments in a difficult life was the process of transformation that occurs as a result of facing and overcoming hardship. Thus, this change provided a pathway to the field of positive psychology. The fragmented mental state was challenged with the task of understanding the positive aspects in the face of hardship. Positive Psychology focuses on the growth of the mind and the beneficial impacts of positive thinking. This positivism facilitated the process of self-discovery for individuals, enabling them to recognize and use their inherent potential and capabilities. Positive Psychology also had a significant influence by challenging society conventions and emphasising the quest of a life of goodness. The impact of trauma and healing acted as a medicine for the affected psyche. The development of personal growth was necessary because when the psyche was shattered then transformation would only be the major path of success and growth.

Conclusion :

“Though her initial reaction was to flee the situation, she eventually confronts her problems, and her final decision to resist her enterprises and leave the unhealthy relationship is a strong confession of her female suffering. As a result, both of these womanish narrators draw attention to the societal pressures put on women by marriage, family, and society and they successfully negotiate with patriarchy by making their suffering, desire and immorality public.” (Nagarajan & Ezhil Mary, 2022, p. 25)

Anita Nair’s novel “*Eating Wasps*” was a captivating examination of the human experience that delved into the complex journeys of its diverse ensemble of characters as they navigate the complexities of personal development and transformation. The core of this story revolved around the timeless theme of personal growth, as each person faces the obstacles and victories that mould their changing identity. The pressure felt in the mind due to the change of women’s sufferings in terms of societal issues, marriage issues and familial bond. These affect the

characters and make them lose their mind and strength. To bring up the positive feelings in the mind of characters Anita Nair has brought in the concepts like trauma and healing inside her works. This research paper aimed to elucidate how Anita Nair’s work illustrated the transformative power of self-discovery, the role of interpersonal relationships in fostering personal change and the broader socio-cultural implications of the characters’ journeys through a multifaceted analysis of the novel’s central narratives.

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Storytelling and Singing : the *Prana* of Bhaarat and Education in Schools

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Introduction :

Bhaarat initiated educational reforms in 2020 with the declaration of National Education Policy. There were reforms introduced like recommendation of new pedagogical approaches, structural streamlining, and more. It is the recommendation of storytelling as a method to be used in the teaching in school education is of importance here. This recommendation resonates with an ageless tradition that has its roots in vedic era and in the modern discourse of experiential learning and moral, ethical and value education. Here discussed, is the tradition of storytelling and performing arts with its importance and impact across various global cultures and across the length and breadth of Bhaarat.

The Emphasis :

National Education Policy 2020 has introduced some changes in school education after which the National Curriculum Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCFECCE) was developed by the NCERT and released nationwide on 20th October 2022. In this curriculum framework, it is mentioned approximately 135 times how stories in different forms and stages in a child's developmental

journey, play important roles along with other components like music, sports, dance, theater, etc. the quotes speak for themselves; Children enjoy learning through conversations, stories, and poems. This helps them build on their natural sense of curiosity and develop deeper thinking skills and values especially when they are encouraged to reflect, predict, question, and hypothesize (NCFECCE, pg.43, point 1.4.3). Local stories, songs, food, clothes, art, music, and dances should be an integral part of the learning experiences of children in school (NCFECCE, pg.45, 1.5.2).

Global Roots of Storytelling :

Storytelling, like in Bhaarat, also finds its uses and importance in the diverse cultures such as West Africa where griots who are troubadour- historians traveling to places preserving the culture and oral histories. The Jews, practice the tradition of seder (Passover), where the elders narrate the story of the Exodus after which four of the youngest children can ask a question. This serves as a recalling and celebration of the freeing of the Jewish people from Egyptian slavery. Ireland has Seanchai- the story-keepers, going places, reciting ancient lores and tales of Irish

wisdom. Native American Choctaw tribe finds use of storytelling for educating their young and preserving native history, interestingly, they also used animal characters in stories. There is also a 'Chahta hihla' dance which is a social dance to bring tribe members together for bonding.

Storytelling of Bhaarat :

Gujarati and Rajasthani Bardic Traditions :

Milton Singer in his anthropological study published as a book entitled, *Traditional India: Structure and Change*, presents the account of the tribe named Chaarans, Vahivanchaa Baarots, and the Bhaats of Gujarat who provided with the first hand information about the bardic *Sampradayas* would transmit stories, perform ballads, compose poetry and through these, transmit and preserve knowledge of history, lineage and genealogy. A more detailed form of the art and longer poem form termed as *raso* (famous example is Prithviraj Raso by Chand Bardai) uses modulations and gestures. Braj Bhaasha, a dialect of Hindi, was used by the Bhaats in composition of their poetry. Chaarans tribe specifically crafted a dialect in western rajasthani influence known as Dingal for composing poetry and other storytelling.

Andhra Pradesh and Telangana :

Here, Telaka or Mutharasi tribe people, also called Shaarada Kandru, usually perform burra-katha, an oral storytelling using a group of performers who present narrative style stories with a hollow stringed instrument for making it a complete performance. This storytelling was so powerful-in educating the masses and spreading moral, ethics, ideas, activism-it had to be banned during British, French and Nizam rule here so that the awareness

in masses and activism does not create problems for the oppressors.

Dance-Dramas :

Pandavani (Stories and Songs of the Pāndavas) is famous in *Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa*. Yakshagaana is an oral style of dance-drama that has evolved into a semi-classical performance art is famous in *Karnataka* and, Kūdiyattam and Nangiar koothu are dance-drama traditions found in *Kerala*, Kathakali is also found here and interestingly, it has a glove puppet counterpart named as Pavakathakali. Therukoothu (or Koothu) is a tradition in *Tamil Nadu*. This form is believed to have evolved from early Bhaaratiya performance styles that were the predecessors of other performing arts such as Mudiyyettu, Kathakali, Theyyam, Yakshagaana, Bhuta. The *Andhra* version of storytelling by shadow puppetry contains leather puppets and this art is called Tolu Bommalata. This artform even traveled to the afar shores of Java islands and became an art form known as Wayang. On the other hand, the storytelling puppetry in the state of *Karnataka* is termed as Togalu Gombeyaata. The roots of the Killekyata (tribe who are the traditional performers of this art) are traced back to present-day region of southern *Maharashtra*, from where these groups of artists are said to have migrated to *Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu*. These are just a few examples and we are not even talking about the Kathaa, Harikathaa, Daayro, Pravachan, Vyakhyan and Aakhyaan traditions.

These Performing arts often draw from Bhaaratiya Classical Literature, here

are some such works starting from Mahabharata, Ramayan, Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, to Vikramorvasiyam, Abhijnana-sakuntalam, Malavikagnimitra by Kalidasa; Svapnavasavadatta, Urubhanga by Bhaasa to episodes from Kathasaritsagara by Somadeva. This is what is meant by NEP 2020 on recommending “engaging teaching mechanisms” in school education.

What does Research say?

Isik, M (2016) finds that storytelling helps children to develop a better psychological and physical well being and facilitates imitation learning, increasing vocabulary and other learning related skills. Tapio *et. al.* (2011) finds that using drama as a training resource for teacher trainees increases the creativity among teaching skills of the teachers and improves student interest towards topics of discussion in the classroom. Kröger & Nupponen, (2019) find after reviewing over 40 sources like journals, books etc. that puppetry can be used in the classroom for generating communication, supporting positive classroom climate and changing attitudes. Keogh et al. (2012) found that teachers observed puppets provide a means to introduce real-world problems that children encounter in their daily lives, making it easier for them to relate to both the issue and the puppet. They highlighted the importance of the teacher adopting a non-judgemental stance, allowing children to take primary responsibility for resolving the problem. Candela et al., (2013) found that dancing can lead children to better awareness about their body about the strength and energy that they possess and an improved sense of body language communication with peers and various other kinesthetic concepts.

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Conclusion :

In conclusion, Storytelling, a method that dates back to the Vedic era, plays a crucial role in fostering curiosity, deep thinking, and value education in young learners. The emphasis of NEP 2020 on these methods has revitalized interest in using cultural and engaging methods like performing arts to impart knowledge, with stories being a central component and with a backing of research based works. This not only helps preserve and transmit the rich cultural narratives of India but also connects young learners to their heritage. The revival of storytelling traditions across India, supported by governmental and non-governmental efforts, underscores its significance in shaping well-rounded individuals.

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Amritsar as an Artistic Hub : The Development of Art Schools and Workshops in Colonial Punjab

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Amritsar, one of the most significant cities in Punjab, India, has a rich history that extends beyond its religious and cultural importance. Founded in 1577 by Guru Ram Das, the fourth Sikh Guru, Amritsar quickly became a spiritual center with the construction of the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple), which continues to be the holiest site in Sikhism. However, the city's influence was not limited to religion; it also evolved into a vibrant cultural and artistic hub. Amritsar's strategic location near the Grand Trunk Road facilitated trade and cultural exchanges, which played a vital role in nurturing various forms of art, including painting, music and crafts. Over the centuries, Amritsar emerged as a cradle of artistic expression, preserving traditional Punjabi arts while also embracing new ideas and techniques.

Colonial Influence :

The advent of British colonial rule in the 19th century brought significant changes to the cultural and artistic landscape of Punjab. The British, recognizing the importance of art and craft in Indian society, sought to regulate and influence these

practices to suit their economic and cultural agenda. In Amritsar, as in other parts of India, the British established art schools and workshops as part of their colonial policy. These institutions were aimed at both preserving traditional Indian crafts and introducing Western artistic techniques. The colonial period thus marked a complex phase in Punjab's artistic history, where traditional forms of art were simultaneously preserved, modified and challenged by new colonial influences. The impact of this period is evident in the blending of indigenous and Western styles in the art produced in Amritsar during this time.

Research Objective :

This paper aims to explore the development of art schools and workshops in Amritsar during the colonial period, focusing on how these institutions contributed to the city's emergence as an artistic hub. By examining the historical context, the curriculum of these art schools, and the socio-cultural impact of the workshops, the study seeks to understand the role of colonial influence in shaping the artistic practices in Amritsar. The paper will also

highlight the contributions of key figures and institutions in the preservation and evolution of art in the region, providing insights into the lasting legacy of these developments in contemporary times.

Literature Review :

Historical Context :

The region of Punjab has a rich artistic heritage that dates back to pre-colonial times. The art forms in Punjab were deeply rooted in its cultural and religious practices, often reflecting the agrarian lifestyle, spiritual beliefs and social customs of the people. Traditional Punjabi art included folk music, dance and visual arts like Phulkari (a form of embroidery), which were expressions of the region's vibrant cultural identity (Grewal, 1990). The city of Amritsar, known primarily for its religious significance due to the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple), also served as a nurturing ground for these artistic traditions. The establishment of the city by Guru Ram Das in the 16th century marked the beginning of Amritsar's association with the arts, as the Sikh Gurus promoted music and painting as a means of spiritual expression (Singh, 2008).

Colonial Impact on Arts :

The advent of British colonialism in the 19th century brought significant changes to the art and cultural landscape of Punjab. British policies aimed at restructuring local education systems had a profound impact on art education and practices in the region. The colonial administration introduced Western-style art education, which emphasized realism and academic techniques over traditional methods. This shift is extensively discussed in the literature, highlighting how these policies led to the marginalization of indi-

genous art forms and practices (Mehrotra, 2002). Moreover, the establishment of art schools in Punjab, modeled after European institutions, further entrenched Western artistic ideals, leading to a decline in the local artistic heritage (Mitter, 1994).

Amritsar as an Artistic Hub :

Despite the colonial disruption, Amritsar gradually emerged as a significant center for the arts in Punjab. Several studies have documented this transformation, emphasizing the role of local patronage and the resilience of traditional artists in adapting to new artistic influences. The city's status as a religious and cultural hub attracted artists from various disciplines, contributing to a vibrant artistic community (Narang, 2010). Historical accounts also underscore the influence of the Sikh Gurus in fostering an environment where the arts could thrive, particularly in the realms of music and painting (Mann, 2001). This period saw the blending of traditional and colonial artistic elements, resulting in a unique cultural synthesis that continues to define Amritsar's artistic identity.

Development of Art Schools in Amritsar:

Early Art Institutions :

The establishment of art schools in Amritsar began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, during the British colonial period. These institutions were part of the broader colonial educational reforms that sought to introduce Western art forms and techniques into the Indian subcontinent. One of the first notable art institutions was the Mayo School of Arts in Lahore, which served as a model for subsequent art schools in Amritsar. The Amritsar School of Arts, founded in the early 20th century, was among the first art schools established in the city. Its mission was to provide

formal art education that combined traditional Indian art forms with the Western academic style, reflecting the dual influences of local culture and colonial pedagogy (Mitter, 1994; Mehrotra, 2002).

Curriculum and Training :

The curriculum at these early art institutions was designed to balance the preservation of traditional Indian arts, such as miniature painting and folk art, with the introduction of Western techniques that were being promoted by the British colonial administration. Courses often included studies in drawing, painting, sculpture, and decorative arts, with an emphasis on realism and perspective, which were central to Western art training. However, these schools also offered instruction in indigenous art forms, although often relegated to a secondary status within the curriculum. The integration of these two distinct artistic traditions created a unique educational environment where students were exposed to a wide range of artistic styles and techniques (Mitter, 1994; Singh, 2014).

Notable Figures :

Several prominent artists and educators emerged from the early art institutions in Amritsar, contributing significantly to the development of art in the region. Notable figures include Bhai Ram Singh, a distinguished artist and educator who was instrumental in blending traditional Sikh art with Western techniques. His work and teaching methods greatly influenced the next generation of artists in Punjab (Mitter, 1994). Another key figure was Sobha Singh, an artist renowned for his portraits of Sikh Gurus and historical figures, who also played a significant role as a teacher, inspiring many students with his mastery of both traditional and Western styles

(Singh, 2014). The contributions of these individuals and others like them helped establish Amritsar as a vital center for art education in Punjab.

Workshops and Guilds :

Traditional Workshops :

In pre-colonial Punjab, particularly in Amritsar, traditional artisan workshops known as *karkhanas* played a crucial role in the production and preservation of indigenous arts and crafts. These workshops were often family-run enterprises, where skills were passed down through generations, maintaining the continuity of traditional art forms such as Phulkari embroidery, woodwork, and miniature painting (Singh, 2014). The *karkhanas* served not only as production centers but also as informal training grounds for artisans, who honed their craft under the mentorship of master artisans. With the establishment of formal art schools in the colonial period, there was a significant interaction between these traditional workshops and the new educational institutions. While art schools introduced Western artistic techniques and academic rigor, the *karkhanas* provided students and teachers with practical insights into traditional methods. This interaction led to a fusion of styles and techniques, although the traditional workshops often found themselves marginalized in the broader educational framework (Mitter, 1994).

Colonial Workshops :

During the colonial period, the British administration established new workshops under their patronage to promote the production of arts and crafts that catered to both local and international markets. These colonial workshops were often affiliated with art schools and were part

of the broader agenda of promoting Western aesthetics while exploiting local craftsmanship. The influence of these workshops on local arts was significant; they introduced new materials, tools, and techniques that altered traditional practices. Moreover, the products of these workshops were often tailored to meet the tastes of British patrons and international consumers, leading to a shift in the focus of local artisans from traditional, community-based production to market-oriented goods (Mitter, 1994). This shift not only impacted the nature of the arts produced but also had a profound effect on the identity and cultural significance of the works (Mehrotra, 2002).

Artisan Community :

The socio-economic status of artisans in Amritsar was deeply intertwined with the dynamics of both traditional *karkhanas* and colonial workshops. Traditionally, artisans held a respected position within the community, their livelihoods sustained by local patronage and the production of culturally significant items. However, the introduction of colonial workshops and the shift towards market-driven production significantly altered their economic conditions. Many artisans were compelled to adapt to the demands of the colonial economy, often at the cost of traditional practices and social standing (Singh, 2014). The new workshops provided employment but often under less favorable conditions, with artisans losing control over the creative aspects of their work. This led to a decline in the socio-economic status of artisans as they became more dependent on the colonial administration and market forces, rather than on their traditional roles within the community (Mehrotra, 2002).

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Socio-Cultural Impact :

Cultural Preservation :

The art schools and workshops established in Amritsar during the colonial and post-colonial periods played a significant role in preserving Punjab's cultural heritage. These institutions served as custodians of traditional art forms, such as Phulkari embroidery, Sikh miniature painting, and woodcraft, which were integral to the region's cultural identity. By incorporating traditional techniques and motifs into their curricula, these schools ensured that the knowledge and skills of local crafts were passed on to new generations (Mitter, 1994; Singh, 2014). Additionally, the workshops associated with these schools provided a platform for artisans to continue their work, albeit often within a framework influenced by colonial aesthetics (Mehrotra, 2002). Despite the pressures of modernization, these institutions contributed to a cultural revival, enabling traditional arts to survive in an increasingly globalized world (Kumar & Gill, 2017).

Modernization vs. Tradition :

The introduction of Western art styles and techniques in Amritsar's art schools created a significant tension between modernization and tradition. While the colonial art education system emphasized realism, perspective, and other Western artistic principles, it often relegated traditional Punjabi art forms to a secondary status. This created a dichotomy where students were torn between mastering Western techniques, which were associated with progress and modernity and preserving their indigenous artistic heritage (Narang, 2015; Mehta, 2013). The imposition of Western styles sometimes led to the erosion of traditional practices,

as artisans and students alike were encouraged to adopt new methods that were not always congruent with their cultural identity (Mehrotra, 2002). However, this tension also sparked a creative dialogue, leading to innovative fusions of styles that have come to characterize contemporary Punjabi art (Gill, 2018; Kaur, 2016).

Legacy :

The long-term impact of these art schools and workshops on Amritsar's artistic community is profound. These institutions laid the groundwork for a vibrant artistic tradition that continues to thrive today. They not only preserved key elements of Punjab's cultural heritage but also provided a foundation for contemporary artists to explore and innovate within their cultural context (Gill, 2018; Sharma & Kumar, 2019). The legacy of these institutions can be seen in the ongoing practice of traditional arts in Amritsar, as well as in the city's growing reputation as a center for contemporary art that bridges the gap between the past and the present (Kaur & Singh, 2020). The blending of traditional and modern techniques has led to a distinctive artistic identity that is both rooted in history and open to global influences, making Amritsar a key player in the broader narrative of Indian art (Narang, 2015; Singh & Mehta, 2021).

Conclusion :

This paper has explored the historical development of art schools and workshops in Amritsar, highlighting their pivotal role in preserving Punjab's rich cultural heritage. The early art institutions, rooted in traditional practices, interacted closely with artisan workshops (*karkhanas*), which helped maintain indigenous art

forms even as Western techniques were introduced during the colonial period. The tension between tradition and modernization was a recurring theme, with Western artistic practices often challenging but also enriching the local art scene. Notable figures such as Bhai Ram Singh and Sobha Singh emerged from this milieu, contributing to the unique artistic identity that continues to define Amritsar today.

Understanding the historical development of art schools and workshops in Amritsar is crucial for appreciating the city's role as a cultural and artistic hub in Punjab. These institutions not only preserved traditional art forms but also facilitated a fusion of Eastern and Western styles, creating a distinctive artistic legacy that resonates in contemporary art practices. The study of these developments sheds light on the broader cultural and socio-economic transformations that have shaped Punjab's artistic identity, making it a key area of interest for scholars of art history and cultural studies.

Future research could delve deeper into comparative studies between Amritsar and other artistic hubs in India, such as Jaipur or Kolkata, to understand the regional variations in the impact of colonial art education. Additionally, there is scope for a more focused exploration of specific art forms that thrived during this period, such as Sikh miniature painting or Phulkari embroidery, to further unravel the nuanced interactions between traditional and modern influences. Such studies could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the legacy and evolution of art in Punjab and contribute to broader discourses on cultural preservation and innovation in post-colonial contexts.

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Vessels of Memory, Hope, and Resistance : Songs in Gautam Bhatia's *The Wall*

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Introduction :

Gautam Bhatia's novel constructs its dystopia by conceiving the city of Sumer enclosed by an ostensibly unassailable Wall, brought into the world as a consequence of a fabled disobedience of the commands of its founding Builders. Sumer is constituted by fifteen circles called Mandalas between the tributaries of the river Rasa. These Mandalas function as organizing principles of labor and power wherein residents of each Mandala are designated to a certain position in the workforce. The first five Mandalas, closest to the geographic and administrative center called the Forum, are home to the Elders who make up the central governing Council of the city. A notable group within the city's polity is the Shoortan Priesthood, endowed by the Builders with the responsibility to guard the Wall.

The principal conflict arises from the ideological struggle wherein the Shoortans and a few Councilors are at odds with a dissident group of youngsters called the Young Tarafians led by protagonist Mithila, who seek to surmount the Wall because they believe that life in Sumer is

reigned by the Wall which dictates fundamental human experiences, freedoms and curtails something as primeval as human imagination. The detracting Councilors and the Shoortans admonish any transgressive overtures against the Wall. The Councilors appropriate legal apparatus under the guise of maintaining order and peace in the city to dissuade any threat to the status quo and the slightest sign of a brewing public unrest is met with thinly veiled reminders of the ruinous fate of past mutineers. The Shoortans on the other hand resort to cruder measures under the aegis of guarding the Wall, appropriating the authority endowed to them by the scriptures of the founders that explain Sumer's origins and dictate the code of conduct in the city.

I argue that the songs in the novel function as sites of negotiating and resisting the authoritarian leanings reflected in the mechanisms and logic deployed by the Councilors and the Shoortans against any disconformity within the city to protect their unmitigated stakes in power and authority. The following sections illustrate how various songs in the novel strategically subvert these authoritarian leanings

by accessing forbidden histories and knowledge and thereby establish that “[i]ndividual memory and collective history are not just ways of looking backwards but also tools for creating an imagined future” (Khilnani & Bhatta-charjee, 2022, p. 183).

The Song of the Pit :

The first song appears in the prologue at the precipice of what seemed to the Tarafians, the moment of fruition of half a year’s hard work to breach the Wall by digging underneath it. In the jubilant anticipation of their rebellious breach, they urge Mithila-training as a singer-to sing on the occasion, which she obliges:

Beyond the Wall, sunrise swift
Dispels the iron dawn, to lift
The shards of mist, and sunbeams fall
Upon a World without the Wall
Beyond the Wall, the moonset late
Forgets -
Clang! (Bhatia, 2020, p. xxii)

The song highlights the enclosed world where something elementally ubiquitous and life-affirming as sunrise has mutated into a life-constricting phenomenon of ‘wallrise.’ The song’s defiance lies in its attempt to imagine a world without the Wall where sunrise and moonset reach the world uninterrupted. Throughout the novel, there are several references to a primordial tension experienced by Sumerians stemming from the existential state of being encased in a bounded city and the transcendental longing to imagine a world without the Wall, a yearning called *smara*. Each citizen experiences *smara* in childhood, but the longing slowly fades into an ineffable memory as they grow up.

This *smara*, the primordial vestige of the time before the Wall came into being, a time before the version of history imposed by the city’s stakeholders, has driven generations of rebels in the city from Taraf to Savarian and now the Young Tarafians to seek the world beyond. To these rebels, the enclosing Wall is not just a mere sheath of stone but an embankment of human imagination itself that allows only so much perception and freedom that it sustains the dependency on the prevalent relations of power produced by the hierarchal organization of labor and differential access to knowledge within the walled city.

Hence, imagination becomes these rebels’ first axis of resistance. They refuse to let *smara* fade from their consciousness, rather they hold on to it, shape it and articulate it in their songs passed across generations which is otherwise dissipating into a docile, pliant unnamable loss of imaginative freedom. In recent dystopian fiction, the trope of ‘closure’ i.e. imagining an end to the prevailing crisis is employed to highlight the systemic nature of the crisis necessitating a collective community response which often takes the form of “cultural memory to formulate potential, imaginary routes toward an end of crises” (Serrano-Muñoz, 2021, p. 1348). Similarly, Mithila’s song here is a vessel of cultural memory preserving the idea of *smara* passed across generations of rebels to imagine a world without the Wall and thereby resist collective amnesia.

Mithila’s subversive song in the moment of jubilant anticipation of the breach is first interrupted by her failure to recollect the lyrics and then it is abruptly cut short by a resounding clang of the shovel striking the black stone of the Wall which the

Tarafians did not expect to find so far under the ground. This is followed by the Shoortans closing the only way out of the pit by placing a boulder on the shaft. The rupture of the song by the inharmonious sound of the shovel's vain strike is symbolic as it casts a carpet of despair among the Tarafians. They begin to give in and resign to their fates in the pit, bemoaning the unfulfilled parts of their lives in the city and the dreams they would have pursued in a world without the Wall. After a momentary indulgence, Mithila's elder brother and the Tarafians' first leader, Garuda breaks through this entombing despair and picks the shovel to dig further for a new destination, to look for the mythic subterranean Sumer of the Builders. As other Tarafians look on in confusion and disbelief, Garuda hums a tune as he moves to dig. It is the 'dream song' of Taraf, the first rebel against the Wall:

Who see above an endless ground
The sun upon a farther shore
Who sees the sky unwalled, unbound
Will live in dreams forevermore...
(Bhatia, 2020, p. xxvii)

Even in the face of impending death, Garuda seeks to instill a sense of hope and refuge among Tarafians to underscore the grandeur and nobility of their rebellion. By accessing a repressed song that survives within hushed legends, Garuda affirms that their deaths are not inconsequently futile instead they attain immortality like many rebels who have died for the cause and thereby join the legacy of their founding leader, Taraf.

The Songs of Transgressive Memory :

Throughout the novel, the city's establishment seeks to maintain a totalizing

harmony. Consequently, it demands various acts of allegiance such as the informal 'pact of forgetting' past rebellions like the Savarian mutiny. Any transgressive move that attempts to access or disseminate these prohibited pasts like writing an alternate chronicle of Sumer as Arimun dared to do, becomes an instructive edifice as she was burnt to death by the Shoortans.

In this strictly policed circuit of knowledge and history, the rebels subvert an old Sumerian love song often referred to by the refrain 'Blue, I dream of you.' In Sumer, the color blue is worn exclusively by the Elders because the source of the pigment is so expensive that only the Elders can afford it. The rebels reconfigure this love song wherein they imagine a world where everyone can access the color blue, thus symbolically calling for a systemic dismantling of structures that perpetuate differential access to socioeconomic freedom which is invariably hinged on the existence of the Wall.

On another occasion, Mithila visits the Maliot House with her lover and Councilor Amrit's daughter Rama. The Maliot house is primarily a place inhabited by the wealthy upper-circle Elders wherein they accrue social capital along with their family by way of dining and drinking together. When Mithila is urged to sing at the place, she is disconcerted to be in a place filled with Elders, the most gainful recipients of the Wall and momentarily finds herself at a loss for words as the violent flashes of their struggles cast her mind. In this stilled moment of crisis, Mithila gravitates to the song that resonates with her most meaningfully, the song of Taraf :

A world unbound and infinite
Beyond this map, beyond the sight
of Wall-bound gaze... (Bhatia, 2020,
p. 245)

In this moment of anxious emptiness, Mithila is driven by Taraf's song to communicate the philosophical cornerstone of their rebellion, the horizon, to a room full of people who refuse to comprehend the world beyond the wall.

Such accounts of resistance to authoritarian repression of history by reconfiguring songs to tap into collective cultural memory reverberates Milan Kundera's famous dictum "[t]he struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting" (Kundera, 1996, p. 4).

Conclusion :

In this paper, I sought to illustrate how various songs in the novel engender generational accounts of repressed histories to instill and inspire resistance to the authoritarian tendencies of the city's ruling

establishment. In the process, I explore how major stakeholders of the ruling class weaponize law and resort to coercive measures to maintain the status quo enabled by differential access to freedoms and knowledge. Confronted with such systemic repression of memory and knowledge, the songs emerge as counternarratives to imposed histories by harboring ideas and images of generations of rebellions.

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From Page to Heart : Emotion and Empathy in Reader Response to *Crime and Punishment* and *The Kite Runner*

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Introduction :

Reader Response Theory emphasises the active role of readers in interpreting texts, suggesting that meaning is co-created through the dynamic interaction between the reader and the text. This theoretical framework shifts the focus from the author's intent and the inherent meaning within the text to the diverse experiences and interpretations brought forth by readers. As readers engage with a literary work, they draw upon their backgrounds, emotions and expectations, resulting in a unique and evolving interpretation. Scholars like Louise Rosenblatt and Wolfgang Iser have been instrumental in developing this theory. Iser articulated that "the act of reading is a dynamic interaction between the text and the reader's mind, which constantly oscillates between the given and the new" (17). This oscillation highlights the fluid nature of interpretation, where the text catalyses a reader's imaginative and emotional engagement, transforming static words into a vibrant and personalised experience.

The emotional and empathetic engagement that literature fosters plays a crucial

role in how readers connect with characters, plotlines and themes. As complex psychological states, emotions involve physiological arousal, cognitive appraisal and subjective experiences. Empathy, a multifaceted construct, encompasses cognitive empathy (understanding others' perspectives) and affective empathy (sharing others' emotional experiences). Psychological theories such as the Affective Disposition Theory and the altruism hypothesis provide valuable insights into how literature can evoke these emotional responses. Oatley observes that "fiction simulates social experiences, allowing readers to practice empathy in a safe environment" (23). Through literature, readers can explore and experience emotions in a controlled and reflective manner, enhancing their empathetic capacities. This engagement deepens readers' connection to the narrative and fosters a broader understanding of human experiences, highlighting literature's profound impact on personal growth and societal development. By immersing themselves in diverse stories and characters, readers can develop a greater sense of empathy and emotional intelligence, making literature essential for

promoting understanding and compassion in a complex world.

Emotional Arousal and Identification :

Readers often experience emotional arousal when engaging with literature. This arousal is linked to character identification, where readers vicariously experience the characters' emotions and struggles. Mar, Oatley and Peterson argue that "identification with characters enhances emotional engagement and fosters empathy" (412).

In *Crime and Punishment*, readers are introduced to Raskolnikov, a young, impoverished student in St. Petersburg who commits a murder and struggles with intense guilt and paranoia. Dostoevsky's deep psychological insight allows readers to identify with Raskolnikov's internal conflicts and moral dilemmas. The vivid depiction of his guilt and torment evokes strong emotional responses, making readers feel the weight of his existential crises. Dostoevsky writes, "He lay on the sofa, facing the wall and thinking... He thought of nothing, and yet was tortured by the thought of the unsolved problem that lay ahead of him" (73). Zunshine comments that "Dostoevsky's ability to portray inner turmoil makes the reader a participant in the character's psychological struggle" (45). Similarly, in *The Kite Runner*, readers follow Amir's journey from childhood in Afghanistan to adult life in the United States. His betrayal of his friend Hassan and subsequent quest for redemption evoke many emotions. Readers identify with Amir's guilt, regret, and longing for atonement. Hosseini's narrative technique of presenting Amir's inner thoughts and memories enhances the emotional engagement, making readers

empathise deeply with his struggles and transformations. Hosseini writes, "For you, a thousand times over" (68), a line encapsulating Amir's guilt and eventual path to redemption.

Narrative Transportation :

Narrative transportation refers to the immersive experience of being "transported" into the world of the story. This immersion enhances emotional engagement, as readers become absorbed in the narrative and feel the characters' emotions as if they were their own. Green and Brock explain that "narrative transportation is a critical mechanism for emotional and empathetic responses to literature" (701).

Dostoevsky's intricate narrative structure and detailed psychological portrayal transport readers into Raskolnikov's chaotic world. The intense atmosphere of St. Petersburg, coupled with Raskolnikov's mental turmoil, creates a compelling narrative that absorbs readers completely. This immersion allows readers to experience Raskolnikov's fear, guilt and moments of clarity as if they were their own, enhancing their emotional engagement and empathy. Dostoevsky writes, "He could not understand how he had crossed the street without being run over; and he laughed without reason, because he saw the pedestrians and carriages and lighted shops" (156). Miall and Kuiken highlight that "Dostoevsky's vivid descriptions and narrative complexity facilitate a deep immersive experience for readers" (366). Likewise, Hosseini's evocative descriptions of pre-war Kabul and the subsequent political turmoil immerse readers in the cultural and historical context of the story. The rich sensory details and emotional depth of the narrative transport readers into Amir's world, making them

feel the pain, joy and hope experienced by the characters. This narrative transportation raises a deep emotional connection and empathy for Amir, Hassan and other characters, enriching the reading experience. Hosseini writes, "There is a way to be good again" (176), a line that reverberates with the promise of redemption and the emotional journey ahead. Hogan observes that "Hosseini's narrative style effectively draws readers into the emotional landscape of the characters" (72).

Cognitive Empathy :

Cognitive empathy involves understanding the thoughts, motivations and perspectives of characters. Literature provides a unique opportunity for readers to practice cognitive empathy by exploring the inner lives of diverse characters. Zunshine asserts that "reading fiction enhances theory of mind by allowing readers to engage with complex characters" (91).

Dostoevsky's exploration of Raskolnikov's philosophical justifications for his crime challenges readers to understand his complex motivations. As readers delve into his rationalisations and the moral implications of his actions, they develop cognitive empathy. Understanding Raskolnikov's inner turmoil and the factors influencing his decisions enhances readers' ability to empathise with his psychological journey. Dostoevsky writes, "It wasn't a human being I killed, it was a principle! Yes, a principle!" (193). In the same way, Hosseini's portrayal of Amir's internal conflicts and his struggle for redemption encourages readers to understand his perspective. Readers gain insight into Amir's motivations, fears and regrets, fostering cognitive empathy. This understanding is further deepened by the

contrasting perspectives of other characters, such as Hassan and Baba, highlighting the complexities of human relationships and moral choices. Hosseini writes, "I opened my mouth, almost said something. Almost. The rest of my life might have turned out differently if I had" (93). Keen remarks that "Hosseini's nuanced characters offer a rich ground for cognitive empathy, allowing readers to explore moral ambiguity" (55).

Affective Empathy :

Affective empathy involves sharing and resonating with the emotions of characters. Literary devices such as detailed descriptions, inner monologues, and emotional dialogues facilitate affective empathy by allowing readers to feel what the characters feel. Nussbaum contends that "literature's capacity to evoke affective empathy is fundamental to its ethical impact" (30).

The intense emotional portrayal of Raskolnikov's guilt and despair evokes affective empathy in readers. Dostoevsky's use of inner monologues and vivid descriptions of Raskolnikov's psychological state allows readers to share in his suffering and emotional turmoil. This emotional resonance creates a deep, empathetic connection, making readers feel the weight of his existential crisis and his yearning for redemption. Dostoevsky writes, "I did not bow down to you, I bowed down to all the suffering of humanity" (329). Booth comments that "Dostoevsky's emotional depth compels readers to confront the human condition" (88). Likewise, Hosseini's narrative technique of weaving past and present events creates a powerful emotional impact. The poignant scenes of betrayal, loss and forgiveness elicit strong affective

empathy in readers. By sharing Amir's emotional journey, readers experience the profound pain of his mistakes and the cathartic relief of his eventual redemption. Hosseini writes, "I wondered if that was how forgiveness budded, not with the fanfare of epiphany, but with pain gathering its things, packing up, and slipping away unannounced in the middle of the night".

Empathy and Social Cognition :

Empathy in literature also extends to social cognition, where readers learn to understand and navigate social relationships and moral complexities. Literature often presents diverse perspectives and ethical dilemmas, challenging readers to consider multiple viewpoints and develop a nuanced understanding of human behaviour. Kidd and Castano argue that "engaging with literary fiction improves social cognition by fostering empathy and understanding of others" (377).

Dostoevsky's exploration of societal and psychological themes in *Crime and Punishment* offers readers a profound understanding of the human condition. Raskolnikov and other characters' moral and ethical dilemmas encourage readers to reflect on their values and social norms. Engaging with complex social issues enhances readers' social cognition and empathy, promoting a deeper understanding of the interplay between individual actions and societal consequences. Dostoevsky writes, "Pain and suffering are always inevitable for a large intelligence and a deep heart" (205). Kaufman observes that "Dostoevsky's exploration of ethical dilemmas challenges readers to expand their moral reasoning" (74). Similarly, Hosseini's depiction of cultural, social,

and political contexts in *The Kite Runner* provides readers with insights into the complexities of Afghan society and the immigrant experience. The narrative addresses themes of social class, ethnic tensions and the impact of historical events, prompting readers to consider broader social issues. This engagement encourages empathy and social cognition as readers navigate the intricacies of human relationships and moral choices within the story's context. Hosseini writes, "There is only one sin, only one. And that is theft... when you tell a lie, you steal someone's right to the truth" (18).

Conclusion :

The analysis of *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky and *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini demonstrates the alchemy through which literature transforms abstract words into vivid emotional experiences. Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* delves into guilt and redemption, inviting readers into Raskolnikov's tortured psyche. The narrative weaves moral quandaries and psychological turmoil, compelling readers to navigate the intricate corridors of human frailty and ethical dilemmas. The novel's rich psychological portrayal and moral complexity mirror readers' fears, hopes and uncertainties. As Iser posits, reading oscillates between the given narrative and the reader's reflections, creating a symphony of emotional resonance and intellectual engagement. Similarly, Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* immerses readers in the heart-wrenching journey of Amir, a man haunted by guilt and driven by a quest for redemption. Through evocative storytelling, Hosseini brings Amir's struggles to life, painting a

poignant picture of human vulnerability and the redemptive power of forgiveness. The narrative's cultural and historical richness allows readers to immerse themselves in a foreign and familiar world. Oatley's insight into fiction as a simulation of social experiences is embodied in *The Kite Runner*, providing a safe space for readers to explore and empathise with profound emotional experiences.

The intricate dance of narrative techniques, from inner monologues to detailed characterisations and immersive settings, orchestrates readers' emotional and empathetic journeys. These elements are not mere embellishments but the lifeblood of the narrative, drawing readers into the characters' intimate lives and allowing them to experience their joys, sorrows, and moral struggles. This immersive engagement enriches the reader's experience and cultivates a more profound capacity for empathy and emotional understanding. By walking in the shoes of diverse characters, readers gain a panoramic view of the human condition, nurturing compassion and social awareness.

Ultimately, this research underscores literature's boundless potential as a beacon of personal and societal growth. Literature's magical ability to foster emotional and empathetic engagement acts as a bridge connecting diverse human experiences, nurturing a sense of shared humanity. By delving into the characters' lives, readers embark on a journey of self-discovery and empathetic understanding, where each story becomes a reflection of their inner world and a window into the lives of others. This transformative power of literature transcends the written word, making it an indispensable tool for nurturing emotional

intelligence and fostering a more empathetic and understanding society.

In this symphony of words and emotions, literature emerges as a vital force, shaping hearts and minds and weaving a tapestry of empathy and understanding that binds us all. As readers, we do not merely consume stories; we partake in a grand narrative of human experience, where each book becomes a stepping stone on the path to greater emotional and empathetic enlightenment. This is the transformative magic of literature—a journey that begins with turning a page and extends into the very fabric of our shared humanity. Through this exploration, readers and society greatly benefit from enhanced emotional intelligence, more profound empathy, and a broader perspective on the human condition, contributing to personal growth and social cohesion.

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श्री अरविन्द और अध्यात्म-दर्शन

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पृथ्वी पर मानव के अस्तित्व की शुरुआत से लेकर वर्तमान समय तक की भौतिक-वैज्ञानिक प्रगति के दौर में भी मनुष्य-जीवन की अनसुलझी विसंगतियों को सुलझाना एक बड़ी चुनौती रहा है। विकास की प्रक्रिया के अपने प्रारम्भिक समय में तो मनुष्य को अपनी प्राकृतिक आवश्यकताओं की पूर्ति में ही ऊर्जा व्यय करनी पड़ी लेकिन धीरे-धीरे जब भौतिक समृद्धि और संपन्नता की अनियंत्रित और अनिश्चित राह कहीं जाकर नहीं रुकती है तब मनुष्य का बौद्धिक मन जीवन के वास्तविक उद्देश्य की पुकार करता है। जीवन की ऊहापोह और उद्देश्यहीनता ने मानव समाज को अपने भीतर उतरकर उन सिद्धांतों के अन्वेषण के लिए प्रेरित किया जो इसी मानव जीवन को एक सार्थक उद्देश्य प्रदान कर सके तथा अनसुलझे द्वंदों को सुलझाकर दिव्य जीवन की ओर अग्रसर कर सके। इस दृष्टि से भारतीय परंपरा में विभिन्न ऋषि-मुनियों और महापुरुषों ने तत्त्वज्ञान के इन गहरे मूल्यों को आम-जनमानस के हृदय में स्थापित करने का बीड़ा उठाया, जिनमें आधुनिक भारत में महर्षि अरविन्द सशक्त हस्ताक्षर के रूप में आदरणीय हैं।

महर्षि अरविन्द ने भारत के स्वाधीनता आंदोलन में प्रतिभाग करने के दौरान कारावास के भीतर जिन अनुभूतियों का अनुभव किया उसके आधार पर राष्ट्रीय राजनीति से संन्यास लेकर स्वयं को दिव्य साधना के लिए समर्पित कर दिया। प्रकृति, ईश्वर, दिव्य जीवन, जीवन-मृत्यु, मानव-जीवन का वास्तविक उद्देश्य जैसे

प्रश्नों ने महर्षि अरविन्द के अंतर्मन में दिव्य-सत्ता के साक्षात्कार की अग्नि प्रज्वलित कर दी। उन्होंने अपने इन प्रश्नों के समाधान अपने भीतर प्रवेश कर प्राप्त किए तथा सम्पूर्ण मानव समाज को इसकी उचित शिक्षा देने का भी प्रयास किया। महर्षि अरविन्द का स्पष्ट मानना था कि- “मानव जाति प्रकृति के बाह्य रूप के विजयी विश्लेषण से असन्तुष्ट होकर अपने अंतिम सूत्र की ओर ही लौट रही है जो है- भगवान, प्रकाश, स्वाधीनता और अमरता।”¹ जीवन की अनिश्चित प्रवृत्ति के दबंध के मध्य श्री अरविन्द का यह दृष्टिकोण मानव समाज को एक निश्चित लक्ष्य प्रदान करता है।

जीवन में अध्यात्म की अनुपस्थिति ने मानव-मन के पाशविक भाग को भौतिकता की अनसुलझी विसंगतियों के साथ संतुष्ट रहना सिखा दिया था। विश्व फलक पर यूरोप के समाज का जीवन ऐसा ही दृष्टिगोचर होता है। वहीं दूसरी ओर भारत ने भौतिक समृद्धि की कीमत पर आध्यात्मिक मूल्यों के साक्षात्कार में अपना सर्वस्व समर्पित कर दिया जिससे कई वर्षों की भौतिक गुलामी का सामना करना पड़ा। महर्षि अरविन्द यूरोप और भारत दोनों के दृष्टिकोण के मध्य एक संतुलन की पुरजोर वकालत करते हुए कहते हैं कि-

“यह निश्चित है कि हम अपने भौतिक जगत के ज्ञान को जितना अधिक विस्तृत और जितना अधिक निश्चित बनाएंगे, उच्चतर और ब्रह्म विद्या के लिए भी हमारा आधार उतना ही विस्तृत और निश्चित

होगा।”² यह दृष्टिकोण विकसित भारत के लक्ष्य में भौतिक समृद्धि और आध्यात्मिक सत्ता के मध्य एक निश्चित संतुलन की स्थापना में युक्तिसंगत प्रतीत होता है।

महर्षि अरविन्द के अध्यात्म-दर्शन की ये विशिष्टता रही है कि उन्होंने भौतिकता और आध्यात्मिकता के मध्य के विरोध को सामंजस्य और समन्वय में परिवर्तित कर दिया। मानव जीवन के अस्तित्व की संपूर्णता के लिए शुद्ध आत्मा और जड़वाद का तालमेल अत्यंत आवश्यक है। दोनों पक्ष एक-दूसरे के पूरक होकर व्यक्ति की वास्तविक दिव्यता का शुद्ध प्रकटीकरण कर सकते हैं। वे ‘दिव्य जीवन’ पुस्तक में स्वयं कहते हैं- “हम शुद्ध आत्मा की पूर्ण स्वाधीनता और वैश्व जड़त्व के बंधन दोनों के दावे को स्वीकार करते हैं। हमें एक ऐसे सत्य की खोज करनी होगी जो इन दो विरोधियों में पूरी तरह मेल बिठा सकें तथा यह सुनिश्चित करना है कि हम दोनों में से किसी के परम सत्य को अस्वीकार न करें।”³ संसार से वैराग्य और सांसारिक भोगवाद के मध्य की दूरियों को पाटने में यह विचार मौलिक और नवीन है जिसकी आज के समय में पूर्णतः प्रासंगिकता बनी हुई है।

समाज में वैराग्य या संन्यास तथा सांसारिक सुखों में से किसी एक को चुनने का अपना इतिहास है लेकिन मानव जीवन में प्रत्येक व्यक्ति को अपनी बुद्धि और तर्कों के माध्यम से संसार और वैराग्य के समुचित संतुलन की जरूरत समझनी होती है। अध्यात्म के सिद्धांतों के अनुसार जीवन के सभी पक्ष उसी परम सत्ता, दिव्य सत्ता की ओर गति कर रहे हैं क्योंकि जगत की प्रत्येक वस्तु में वही व्याप्त है अतः हर एक वस्तु उसी में मिल जाना चाहती है। इसी प्रकार भौतिक जीवन जी रहा कोई भी व्यक्ति सुख-दुख से गुजरकर भी अपनी बुद्धिमत्ता के कुशल प्रयोग से आनंदमय दिव्य जीवन की ओर बढ़ सकता है। सांसारिक संस्कारों के सतत और दीर्घ अभ्यास के फलस्वरूप मनुष्य की इंद्रियाँ तब तक पाशविक मन के धरातल पर जीने के लिए अभिशप्त होती है

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जब तक कि उनको दिव्य जीवन जीने के लिए उनमें छिपी श्रद्धा की भावना को जागृत न किया जाए। अतः इंद्रियों और सांसारिक विषयों के दबाव तले निरंतर परिश्रम करते हुए उस सत्य का साक्षात्कार करने की प्रक्रिया में सदा श्रद्धा का सहारा लिया जाता है, जिससे यह आत्मश्रद्धा, आत्मज्ञान एवं पूर्णता में परिवर्तित न हो जाए। “संपूर्ण आत्मान्वेषण की प्रक्रिया के क्रम में जीवन के भीतर उस दिव्य सत्ता, उस परम ब्रह्म की तलाश शुरू करने के लिए मनुष्य पाशविक प्राण और उसकी क्रियाओं से शुरू करते हुए दिव्य सत्ता के साक्षात्कार तक की यात्रा करता है।”⁴

सम्पूर्ण चराचर जगत में उसी ब्रह्म का साक्षात्कार करने के लिए हमें इस सम्पूर्ण प्रकृति को ब्रह्म की शक्ति के रूप में देखना होता है क्योंकि दोनों मूलतः एक ही है। प्राचीन भारतीय मनीषा ने भी इस बात को स्वीकार किया है कि ब्रह्म और शक्ति दो नहीं होकर एक ही है, अविभाज्य है; चाहे शक्ति यति में हो या गति में वह हर परिस्थिति में उपस्थित होकर मानव को सत् की ओर ही अग्रसारित कर रही है। हमारा मन इस पर निरंतर संदेह और तर्क करता रहता है तथा इस स्थिति में तो संदेहशील मन उस दिव्य-आनंद का स्पर्श भी नहीं कर सकता है। महर्षि अरविन्द का मानना है कि “जब हम तर्क करना छोड़कर अपने भीतर की गहराइयों में प्रवेश कर गूढ़ एकांत में चले जाते हैं तब मन निश्चल हो जाता है और हमें ज्ञात हो जाता है कि जिसकी हमारी तर्कबुद्धि ने धुंधले एवं टिमटिमाते प्रकाश में अनिश्चित कल्पना की थी, वही दिव्य ज्ञान आत्मदर्शन के जाज्वल्यमान वितान में हमारे मन एवं बौद्धिक तर्क के पीछे के अमृतमय सिंहासन पर बैठा प्रतीक्षा करता है।”⁵ हमारी तार्किकता और जड़वादी मानसिकता को अंततः दिव्यता के प्रकाशपूर्ण साक्षात्कार में विलीन हो जाना पड़ता है।

अपने जीवन में आनंद और शक्ति के प्रकाशित केंद्र को स्थापित कर जगत में मिलने वाले विरोधी संस्कारों, चुनौतीपूर्ण आकर्षणों एवं सम्मोहनों से मुक्ति प्राप्त की जा सकती है। यह मनुष्य को उसकी अभय

साहित्यिकी (वर्ष-10, 2024)

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स्वच्छंदता और परम स्वतंत्रता की सार्थक अभिव्यक्ति का अवसर उपलब्ध करा सकती है एवं अध्यात्म-जीवन के मूल्यों के प्रतिनिधि के रूप में स्थापित कर सकती है। हमारे भीतर स्थित वह प्रभुद्ध अध्यात्म-पुरुष ही है जो हमें इस जगत से परे ले जाकर एक साक्षी भाव में स्थापित कर सकता है और भगवान के ज्ञान संबंधी दिव्य शिखरों की ओर मोड़ता है। महर्षि अरविन्द जगत के स्वभाव के बारे में लिखते हैं- “जगत् का रोग यह है कि व्यक्ति जिस जगत में रहता है उस जगत की यथार्थ अंतरात्मा सत्ता के सार को, शक्ति के सार को, आनंद के सार को पाने का प्रयत्न तो करता है परंतु इनके स्थान पर उसे विरोधी स्पर्शों और संस्कारों की भीड़ मिलती है।”⁶ जगत के इस स्वभाव को समझने और उससे परे जाने के लिए हमें उस दिव्य सत्ता के सम्मुख आत्मसमर्पण करना पड़ता है जो जगत के कण-कण में अभिव्यक्त है। सम्पूर्ण जगत में व्याप्त ब्रह्म सर्वशक्तिमान सत्ता का वह गुप्त आनंद है जो हमारी सत्ता का चैतन्य आकाश है जिसके बिना कोई भी जी नहीं सकता, न ही सांस ले सकता है। सम्पूर्ण चराचर जगत के उस स्वामी का साक्षात्कार इस दिव्य मानव जीवन का एकमात्र लक्ष्य है जिसे सभी प्राणियों तथा सभी वस्तुओं में भी महसूस किया जा सकता है। एक साधक को तो उस दिव्यमिलन की कल्पना का रसपान करना होता है और अंततः उसी का साक्षात्कार करना होता है। महर्षि अरविन्द कहते हैं- “अपने तत्त्व रूप में कठिनाइयों पर विजय होती है, ज्ञान में विजय, शक्ति में विजय, सृष्टि की असंभाव्यताओं पर विजय जो कि एक कष्टमय श्रम और दुःख की कठिन अग्निपरीक्षा में विजय प्राप्ति का आनंद होता है। वियोग के अंत में आता है मिलन का प्रगाढ़ सुख, एक ऐसी आत्मा से मिलने का सुख जिससे हम विभक्त हो गये थे।”⁷

आत्मा के रूप में ईश्वर से मिलन का दिव्य सुख प्रत्येक साधक की मनोकामना होती है तथा आध्यात्मिक जीवन की आधारशिला इसी साक्षात्कार की भावना के बीजवपन से होती है।

इस प्रकार श्री अरविन्द का अध्यात्म-दर्शन भारतीय तत्त्वज्ञान की परंपरा में अमूल्य है क्योंकि भौतिक जड़वादी दृष्टिकोण के सम्पूर्ण निषेध को अस्वीकृत करता उनका अध्यात्म-दर्शन दिव्य जीवन की अद्भुत उपलब्धि के लिए साधक के भीतर एक जठराग्नि प्रज्वलित कर देता है। उनके अध्यात्म संबंधित दृष्टिकोण की मौलिकता ही है कि दो विरोधी सत्ताओं भौतिक और आध्यात्मिक जगत के मध्य सेतु का निर्माण करते हुए उन्होंने सामंजस्य का अनोखा वितान तैयार किया है। भारतीय सभ्यता और संस्कृति के शाश्वत मूल्यों की संरचना के भीतर वर्तमान भारत को विकसित भारत बनाने में श्री अरविन्द का अध्यात्म-दर्शन महती भूमिका का निर्वहन कर सकता है। अतः मानव जीवन के लौकिक और पारलौकिक जगत को दिव्यता की अक्षत सुगंध से भरकर श्री अरविन्द का अध्यात्म-दर्शन भारत और वैश्विक समुदाय को भी लाभान्वित कर सम्पूर्ण मानवता को उच्चतर लक्ष्यों की प्राप्ति हेतु प्रोत्साहित कर सकती है।

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2. वही, पृष्ठ संख्या-13
3. वही, पृष्ठ संख्या-27
4. वही, पृष्ठ संख्या-38
5. वही, पृष्ठ संख्या-121
6. वही, पृष्ठ संख्या-224
7. वही, पृष्ठ संख्या-408



Colonial Shadows and Environmental Struggles: An Ecocritical Approach in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Weep Not, Child*

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The intersection of environmental exploitation and colonialism forms an important area of study in literature, especially within the framework of ecocriticism. Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Weep Not, Child* (1964) provides a poignant narrative that not only explores the socio-political issues of British colonial rule in Kenya but also insights into the ecological consequences of this domination. The novel captures the deep connection between land, culture and identity while illustrating how colonial power disrupts these relationships through its exploitative environmental practices. The title of this research, "Colonial Shadows and Environmental Struggles: An Ecocritical Approach in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Weep Not, Child*," reflects the focus on how colonialism reshaped the Kenyan landscape and its people, leading to profound ecological and social consequences. Through an ecocritical approach, this research aims to explore the environmental challenges as depicted in *Weep Not, Child*. It focuses on the way of colonial land appropriation and agricultural exploitation and how it affected indigenous relationships with the land. Ngugi portrays the

land is not only considered as a physical space but also a repository of cultural identity, spirituality and sustenance for the native community. The novel emphasizes that colonial exploitation of land and resources led to environmental degradation, alienation and complicating the struggle for independence. In this context, the Mau rebellion emerges not only as a political revolt but also as a movement to reclaim both land and ecological balance. This research aims to reveal the environmental dimensions of colonialism as depicted in Ngugi's novel which analyzes the themes of cultural identity, land ownership and ecological destruction. By adopting a colonial ecocritical approach, the study will explore how the colonial legacy of environmental degradation continues to influence Kenya and how the fight for independence is intrinsically tied to the reclamation of land, culture and ecological harmony.

Colonial Environmental Degradation :

Environmental degradation of the land during the colonial period was the systematic extraction and depletion of the

natural resources by colonial powers for economic gain. During this time of colonization, European powers imposed various foreign agricultural practices, appropriated fertile lands and implemented policies that affected the natural environment and cultural significance of the land of indigenous communities. This exploitation led to widespread environmental degradation and disrupted traditional land management systems. The white people implemented a new way of farming and replaced the traditional farming practices which led to the depletion of the soil, deforestation and a loss of biodiversity. For their economic growth, the Britishers implemented the forced labour system and exploitative farming techniques with little regard for the environmental consequences. In *Weep Not, Child* novel, Ngugi wa Thiong'o used the colonial exploitation of the land to highlight the socio-economic inequalities which were imposed on the Kenyan people under British colonial rule. It was considered a vital role in this novel. The author portrayed the fertile land were seized by the White people. So native people had small plots of fertile land to cultivate their crops. This land alienation symbolized the colonial oppression and exploitation faced by the Kenyan people in their fertile land. For instance, in this novel, the character Jacobo, a wealthy African landowner, collaborates with the colonizers, benefiting from this unequal distribution of land, while most Kikuyu are forced to work as laborers on land that once belonged to them.

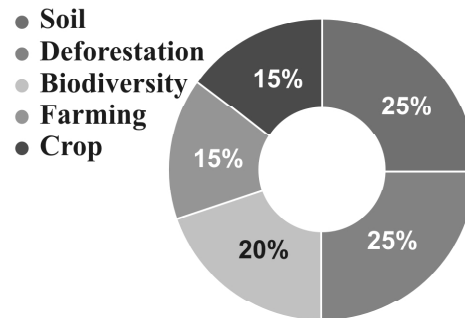
The novel explored how colonists used the land for cash crop production such as mainly coffee and tea for export, especially benefiting the colonial economy while leaving the local population impoverished. Farming laborers who work on these farms

are paid meager wages, falling them in a cycle of poverty. The character, Ngotho's life was opted for this situation. He was longing for the return of their ancestral lands and who were exploited as cheap labor by the colonial system. The author also touched on the environmental consequences of colonial exploitation. The large-scale agricultural practices introduced by the Britishers. It disrupted the traditional farming techniques of the Gikuyu. It had been more in harmony with the land. The novel reflected a loss of connection to the land and the damaging effects of colonial monoculture farming, contributing to a deeper sense of displacement and alienation. The author shows it through the line this novel,

“The land had always been good to them. The land had fed them, clothed them, given them everything they had. And now the land was becoming foreign. They were strangers to the land and the land was a stranger to them (Thiong'O, 1964 P.15)”

The following pie chart can help to understand the environmental degradation during the colonial period by breaking down the contributing factors into distinct sections, each representing a percentage of the whole.

Colonial Environmental Degradation



The above piechart provides colonial environmental degradation which represents different factors contributing to environmental degradation during the colonial period. Soil depletion (25%) refers to the decline in soil quality due to overuse, erosion, and nutrient loss, which often occurred in colonial times due to exploitative practices like intensive agriculture without adequate sustainable practices. Deforestation (25%) during the colonial period largely resulted from the clearing of land for agriculture, timber and other resources. This not only reduced forest cover but also resulted in a loss of habitat for millions of species, contributing to biodiversity loss. Loss of biodiversity (15%) can be a direct cause of deforestation and also due to invasive species introduced during the colonial period which disrupted local ecosystems and led to the extinction or endangerment of indigenous species. Disruption of traditional farming practices (15%) refers to replacing the traditional farming practices with those beneficial to their own economic interests, such as the introduction of cash crops, which disrupted local food systems and ecological balance. Environmental consequences of cash crop production (20%) focuses on cash crops often leading to monoculture plantations, requiring extensive use of fertilizers and pesticides and leading to further soil degradation, reduced agricultural diversity and increased vulnerability to pests and diseases.

For the degradation of the environment during the colonial period, “Decolonial Theory” offers a framework for understanding and exploring the environmental degradation that gives results from the practices of the colonial period. This

approach aims to cover the need to deconstruct and challenge the legacy of colonialism, which includes not only socio-cultural imposition but also explores the impacts of the natural environment. This theory is particularly relevant to the context of Ngugi wa Thiong’o’s *Weep Not, Child*. It analyzes how colonialism led to environmental degradation and disruption of traditional ways of life. It shows how colonial rulers imposed new governance, agricultural methods and economic systems that harmed the environment and disregarded local knowledge and practices. In this way, “Decolonial Theory” argues that to address environmental degradation to recognize and dismantle the colonial structures, mindsets that continue to exploit natural resources and marginalized indigenous knowledge. It also advocates for the restoration of traditional customs, practices and values that promote the sustainability of the natural environment, which were suppressed or replaced by the colonial forces. In this novel also, Ngugi wa Thiong’o explores how the imposition of European methods and the seizure of land led to ecological harm and a loss of connection with culture to the land. It reflects the decolonial perspective that emphasizes the need to protect and respect the native knowledge and practices in the natural environment. By applying decolonial theory to the issues of the natural environment, the research entitled “Colonial Shadows and Environmental Struggles: An Ecocritical Approach in Ngugi wa Thiong’o’s *Weep Not, Child* highlights the interplay between exploitation and ecological damage during the colonial period. It aims to suggest that understanding and addressing these struggles of the natural environment continue to impact

both the natural environment and the cultures of the indigenous people.

An Argentine semiotician and scholar, Walter Mignolo, who had written extensively on decoloniality and the notion of “decolonial aesthetics of decolonial theory in his work *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality and Colonization* which was published in 1995. In this work, he examined the processes of colonialism and its impact on the native knowledge and epistemology. He showed the decolonial aesthetics in his work *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality and Colonization* through the lines,

“However, when pushed to the limit, the notion of colonial discourse, desirable and welcome as it is, is not the most comprehensive one we connect to comprehend the diversity of semiotic interactions in colonial situations and this to shed more light on the darker side of the renaissance. The notion of discourse, although it embodies both oral and written interactions may not account for semiotics interactions between different writing systems, such as the Latin alphabet introduced by the Spaniards, the picto-ideographic writing system of Mesoamerican cultures and the quipus in colonial Peru. (Mignolo, 1195, P. 8)”

From the above lines, Walter Mignolo emphasized the colonial discourse which was considered as a valuable tool to understand the impact of colonialism, it addressed the semiotics interactions between different writing systems and cultures during the colonial period. It highlighted broader issues about the disruptions and transformation experienced by the native cultures under colonial rule. It explored the cultural displacement that

not only affected the communication and knowledge systems but also led to disrupt the cultural practices and identities.

Cultural Displacement :

Cultural displacement refers to the process by which a community’s traditional ways of life including its customs, practices and social structures. It was disrupted or replaced by outside influences. In Kenya, this phenomenon occurred extensively during the colonial period when European powers imposed their own belief systems and values on indigenous native people. The arrival of colonial rulers marked a significant one in Kenyan society. Their imposition like foreign governance, economic systems and cultural practices led to various changes in the everyday lives of the Kenyan people. This period saw the erosion of traditional practices, the reorganization of social structures and a profound sense of disconnection from their cultural heritage. By understanding this concept of cultural displacement in Kenya, it explored how colonial policies affected various aspects of life from land ownership and agriculture to education and religion. This displacement did not only impact material aspects of life but also deeply affected the sense of identity and continuity among Kenyan communities. Ngugi wa Thiong’o explored the cultural displacement through the experiences of his characters in *Weep Not, Child*. Through this novel, he illustrated how colonial rule disrupted traditional Kenyan life. He explored it through the character Ngotho and Jacobo.

In *Weep Not, Child*, Ngugi wa Thiong’o used Ngotho’s struggles to vividly illustrate the theme of cultural displacement caused by colonial rule. Ngotho’s experiences reflect how coloni-

alism disrupted and diminished traditional Kenyan culture. His main struggle was the loss of his ancestral land, which was taken by the British colonizers. This land was central to Ngotho's cultural identity and heritage, symbolizing his connection to history and tradition. Losing it represents a deep cultural loss for him and his community. After losing his land, he struggled with severe economic hardship, forced to work as a laborer on land once owned by his people. This situation was driven by colonial policies that prioritized colonizers' interests, highlighting how colonialism disrupted traditional livelihoods and caused widespread poverty. The imposition of European values and practices caused him to feel increasingly disconnected from his own traditions and community. This alienation was compounded by the replacement of local cultural practices with foreign ones. Despite these challenges, Ngotho yearned for the return of his ancestral land and strived to preserve his cultural identity. His desperation and resistance reflected a deep attachment to his cultural roots and a refusal to fully succumb to colonial oppression. The author showed it through the line

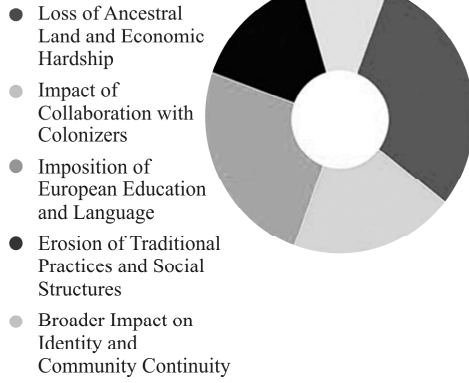
“The white man's presence had altered everything. Traditional ceremonies were forgotten, and the old ways of life were replaced by new, alien customs (Thiong'O, 1964 P.35)”

Similarly, Ngugi wa Thiong'o showed the different aspects of cultural displacement through the character Jacobo in the same novel. He was a wealthy Gikuyu landowner and collaborated with the British colonizers. By working with the colonizers, he helped to maintain the system that seized land from his fellow people. His actions contributed to the

displacement of many Gikuyu families who were forced off their land and lost their traditional ways of life. While Jacobo gained materially, his collaboration also led to internal conflict and alienation from his own cultural roots. His role highlighted the complex dynamics of cultural displacement, where some individuals were caught between benefiting and betraying their cultural heritage.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o showed the cultural displacement through the imposition of European education and language. Characters are forced to learn in foreign languages and adopt European ways of thinking, which undermines their traditional knowledge and cultural practices. For instance, the character Njoroge excited to go to school and learn English because he believed it would help him succeed. As he got more involved in the colonial education system, he started to feel disconnected from his Gikuyu culture and traditions. His education focused on European history and values, making it harder for him to connect with his own heritage. The novel also showed how this education affected families and communities. Njoroge's father, who initially supported his son's schooling, became worried as he saw how much the European ways were changing their lives and weakening their cultural ties. Through these experiences, Ngugi illustrated the broader impact of colonial education: it not only changed individual lives but also disrupted entire communities by pushing aside their traditional ways in favor of foreign customs and languages. The following pie chart provides a visual representation of these various aspects, illustrating how colonial influence disrupted traditional Kenyan life and affected the sense of cultural identity and continuity among its people.

Cultural Displacement



The above chart is broken down into five categories with corresponding percentages, showing the relative impact or contribution which leads to the cultural displacement. In this chart, loss of ancestral land and economic hardship (30%) is the largest segment and indicates that losing ancestral lands and experiencing economic difficulties are considered the most significant factors contributing to cultural displacement. This usually happens through colonization or modern development that forces indigenous or native populations to relocate, disrupting their traditional lifestyle and means of subsistence. Imposition of European education and language (25%) represents a significant issue where the education systems and languages of European origins are introduced, often replacing local languages and traditional forms of knowledge. This can lead to a loss of cultural identity and heritage. Broader Impact on identity and community continuity (20%) indicates the effect on the cultural identity of individuals and the continuity of community practices and relationships. Changes in cultural practices, reduction in the use of native languages and alterations in social structures due to external influences

contribute heavily to this. Erosion of traditional practices and social structures (15%) refers closely to the broader impacts on identity, this factor refers to how traditional customs, rituals, governance and social norms are degraded or replaced, often due to external pressures or as a consequence of the aforementioned factors. Impact of collaboration with colonizers (10%) is the smallest segment and refers to the changes that occur when indigenous or local groups collaborate with colonizers or external powers, which can lead to assimilation and alteration of original cultural practices and ideals. Each of these factors plays a role in how cultural displacement unfolds and can have profound effects on the affected communities. Each percentage reflects the perceived impact or frequency of each factor contributing to cultural displacement in the context represented by the chart. By reference of these piechart and above content, Ngugi's portrayal of these themes reveals how colonialism not only changed the material aspects of life but also deeply affected cultural identity and community cohesion. The novel underscores the broader consequences of colonial rule, illustrating its lasting impact on individuals and their sense of cultural continuity.

Conclusion :

In *Weep Not, Child*, Ngugi wa Thiong'o vividly illustrated the consequences of colonial period on both the environment and indigenous cultures through its ecological approach. The novel demonstrates not only traditional ways of life as demonstrated by colonial rule but also the natural world that indigenous people based on. Environmental exploitation during the colonial period led to significant ecological damage, as traditional

agricultural practices and environmental stewardship are replaced by foreign methods. It is not only considered as a physical change but also a loss of culture and environment. The novel underscores how colonial policies not only deprived people of their land but also undermined their sustainable practices and knowledge, which had been crucial for maintaining the balance between human activity and the environment. This novel provides significant insights into the ongoing effects of colonialism on both people and the planet. It prompts us to address these historical legacies and seek solutions that honor and restore both cultural traditions and environmental health. By recognizing the past consequences of colonialism can guide more effective and equitable approaches to both environmental sustainability and cultural preservation.

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Interwoven Histories : Amitav Ghosh's Exploration of Diaspora, Identity and Historical Narratives

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Amitav Ghosh : A Modern Literary Icon :

Amitav Ghosh, an anthropologist with an education from India, Alexandria, and Oxford, has emerged as a prominent figure in modern Indian literature. His work intricately examines the complexities of humanity and civilization, often exploring themes of diaspora, emigration, exile, cultural displacement and transnational cultural flow. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Ghosh offers nuanced interpretations of the concept of nationhood, frequently contrasting his perspectives with those of other prominent writers, such as Salman Rushdie, while delving into broader aspects of human life.

Central to Ghosh's work is the concept of family, whether joint or nuclear, which he treats as a primary imaginative unit. His storytelling is marked by a blend of narrative techniques, genres, and styles that create a 'never land' rooted in reality, blurring the lines between narrative aesthetics and

the political ideologies of the contemporary world. His protagonists often embody a 'migrant sensibility,' navigating diasporic experiences that reflect the complex social dynamics of the modern era.

Regarded as one of the finest writers to emerge from the post-Midnight's Children boom in Indian English fiction during the 1980s, Ghosh has consistently produced novels and non-fiction that have garnered critical acclaim both in India and abroad. His work has become a subject of significant academic interest, with critics recognizing his skill as a chronicler of contemporary history, enhancing our understanding of overlooked or buried histories, and bearing witness to pivotal events of our time.

Weaving Global Histories and Marginal Voices into Timeless Narratives :

Ghosh's literary focus extends beyond India, viewing the country as part of a global network of nations and historical activities. He engages with India's ancient

civilization, offering stories that highlight its enduring relevance. His fiction often carries a sense of ghostliness or 'epiphanic' moments, where the past haunts the present, particularly in the context of suppressed or repressed histories. This ghostliness reflects the persistence of cultural memories and the lingering impact of colonialism, aligning Ghosh with the broader field of post-colonial studies.

Despite these thematic concerns, Ghosh remains primarily a storyteller, known for his aversion to theoretical frameworks. His work resonates with the voices of the marginalized and the subaltern, drawing comparisons to thinkers like Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, though his focus remains firmly on narrative rather than criticism. Ghosh's fiction, with its deep engagement with history and the present, continues to captivate a global audience, making him a prominent figure in contemporary literature.

Ghosh's writing delves into psychological and sociological 'truths,' exploring how these are reflected through the actions and development of his protagonists over time. His novels often revolve around characters whose consciousness of time as a universal factor allows them to engage deeply with history. Ghosh is particularly attuned to how colonizers have written history, whether it's about the Indian subcontinent, Egypt, or the Arabian territories—often as part of a ruling discourse that suppresses or overlooks unsettling truths. Ghosh taps into this colonizer's history to unearth and reclaim the obscured roots of identity for his characters, who embark on journeys across the world in search of a shared truth or commonality hidden beneath the surface of foreign cultures.

Ghosh's stories, noted for their humanistic appeal, often draw on figures and sources from his ethnic culture, weaving lost stories with ethical concerns. Rabindranath Tagore and Satyajit Ray serve as Ghosh's moral mentors, both known for upholding a strict ethical code in their works. Like Ghosh, they embraced the best of Western culture while maintaining a global, cosmopolitan vision of human history.

In June 1997, *The New Yorker* published a special issue on English-language Indian fiction to mark the fiftieth anniversary of India and Pakistan's independence. The issue featured a photograph of celebrated Indian English novelists, including Salman Rushdie, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Rohinton Mistry, Amit Chaudhuri, and Vikram Seth. In the background, slightly out of focus, stands Amitav Ghosh—his marginal position in the photograph symbolically reflecting his literary focus on marginal people, histories, and knowledge systems. Notably, the text next to the photograph is an article by Ghosh on the 'forgotten army' led by Indian nationalist leader Subhash Chandra Bose, emphasizing his concern with overlooked narratives.

Ghosh's explorations of nationhood, diaspora, and the relationships between individuals and communities that cross political borders are further developed in his novels. These stories depict communities bound by circumstance, effort, and kinship, which transcend traditional social boundaries of race, ethnicity, class, religion, and nationality. In 'The Shadow Lines', for instance, Ghosh uses the trope of the family to move away from the notion of a 'national allegory' often associated

with 'Third World' fiction. He has expressed frustration with such interpretations, emphasizing that his work aims to explore more complex, human-centered narratives.

'the family is the central unit because it is not about the nation, you know? Families can actually span nations'.
(Mondal, p.15)

The Shaping of Amitav Ghosh's Narrative Voice: Trauma, Displacement and the Evolution of Historical Fiction:

'In *An Antique Land*', Amitav Ghosh presents a polyglot diaspora—a network of hybrid identities reminiscent of a medieval world. However, this community is fragile and by the novel's end, it is violently uprooted as war displaces these groups, forcing them to embark on a perilous overland march from Burma and Southeast Asia to seek refuge in India. Ghosh's recovery of this forgotten episode from one of the most documented conflicts in history highlights his enduring interest in 'subaltern pasts,' the overlooked and marginalized histories.

The year 1984 was a tumultuous one for India, marked by significant and tragic events: separatist violence in Punjab, the military assault on the Sikh temple in Amritsar, the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the subsequent riots, and the catastrophic gas disaster in Bhopal. These events irrevocably altered the lives of many, including Ghosh himself. Reflecting on this period, Ghosh acknowledges how these events profoundly impacted his worldview and possibly his literary trajectory.

I see that the experiences of that period were profoundly important to my development as a writer. (Hawley, p.2)

At this point in his life, Amitav Ghosh was already recognizing writing as his 'real' vocation, something distinct from his roles in teaching and research. However, the subjects he would explore and the style he would adopt were still evolving. The traumatic events of 1984 seemed to crystallize his thoughts on both fronts. The anti-Sikh riots that followed Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's assassination were particularly harrowing, with over 2,500 deaths in Delhi alone. Ghosh reflects on this period, noting that the violence targeted primarily Sikh men. He writes, 'it was not just grief I felt. Rather it was a sense of something slipping loose, of a mooring coming untied somewhere within.' This sense of dislocation and loss was profound and Ghosh acknowledges that, like many of his generation, these events deeply affected his perspective and, consequently, his writing.

I grew up believing, that mass - slaughter of the kind that accompanied the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, could never happen again. But that morning, in the city of Delhi, the violence had reached the same level of intensity- How do you explain to someone who has spent a life time cocooned in privilege that a potentially terminal rent has appeared in the wrapping? (Hawley, p.3)

Amitav Ghosh was working on 'The Circle of Reason' in a small, rooftop space, employing a style reminiscent of Salman Rushdie's imaginative, serio-comic storytelling—a narrative approach more concerned with flights of fancy than with historical accuracy. However, the events of 1984 marked a significant shift in Ghosh's writing. His next novel, 'The Shadow Lines', diverged sharply in tone and style.

While the new work maintained a sophisticated narrative, it moved away from the fantastical and instead engaged directly with the very real and traumatic history of Partition. In this novel, the broader historical context serves as a backdrop for the intimate, personal struggles of the young protagonist and his family, highlighting Ghosh's deepened focus on the intersection of personal and historical narratives.

Amitav Ghosh's Narrative Techniques and Historical Insights :

Ghosh's body of work, both fiction and non-fiction, explores the histories of nations through the lens of connection rather than isolation, challenging essentialist ideas of self, community and nation. His writing examines the movements of ordinary people, whether voluntary or forced, driven by indenturement, trade, or ethnic violence, particularly before and after the Partition of the Indian subcontinent. While post-colonial studies have often focused on displacement in the context of colonial encounters, constructing an aesthetic of migrancy and hybridity, Ghosh's work suggests a broader perspective. He interrogates dislocation not only as a result of imperial occupation but also in relation to intra-national movements and the formation of nations.

Post-colonial theory has often emphasized the dislocation caused by colonization, focusing on the displacement of a select group of individuals and the metaphorical displacement of colonized elites from indigenous knowledge systems. However, Ghosh's work draws attention to the need for a shift in focus from the dislocations caused by colonization to those arising from nationalist

histories and geographies. His fiction and non-fiction illuminate both pre-colonial and colonial movements but place particular emphasis on the dislocation resulting from the drawing of borders, what he has termed 'the shadow lines' that divide nations. In 'The Shadow Lines' (1988), Ghosh explores the contrast between pre-national boundaries and modern national borders. Scholars Akil Gupta and James Ferguson have discussed the discontinuity in the organization of space

'The Glass Palace' by Amitav Ghosh is a grand historical saga that chronicles the life of Rajkumar, a character of mixed heritage, as he navigates through the complex histories of Burma (Myanmar) and India. The novel traces Rajkumar's rise to prominence and eventual freedom, only to have his world shattered by the loss of his son during a Japanese bombing in World War II. This event highlights the devastating effects of conflict and the instability of national boundaries.

Ghosh's narrative technique in 'The Glass Palace' is notably cyclical, where each ending paves the way for a new beginning. This approach reflects Buddhist metaphysical ideas, which view life, death, success and failure as part of ongoing cycles. The use of binoculars early in the novel serves as a symbol for this perspective, urging readers to perceive the story through a lens that underscores the cyclical nature of events.

Covering a century, from the fall of the Konbaung Dynasty in Mandalay through the upheavals of World War II to modern times, Ghosh explores Burma's and India's shifting landscapes and national identities. This exploration is framed within a broader context of modernity. Homi

Bhabha has observed that postcolonial subjects often encounter both repression and repudiation, a theme reflected in Ghosh's work. Carool Kersten notes, 'Apart from its absorbing story, what makes *The Glass Palace* into special book is the fact that in this history of the British Empire, there is hardly an Englishman in sight. The epoch is seen entirely through the eyes of locals-the so-called colonized people-or 'subaltern' as many post-modern scholars from the Indian subcontinent like to call them. So in answer to the question raised by one of them in a debate on historiography-Can the subaltern speak?-we may apply with a wholehearted 'Yes, most elegantly'' (Kersten, p.33).

Exploration of Identity, Displacement, and Historical Narratives :

In a 2000 interview with 'Outlook', Amitav Ghosh revealed that 'The Glass Palace' was inspired by his father's family history in Burma. The novel serves as a creative retelling of this personal history, though the extent of factual accuracy is unclear. Ghosh expressed a deep connection to Burma and a desire to document aspects of history that might otherwise be forgotten. He highlighted the under-reported exodus during the Long March, when many Indians fled Burma due to fears of Japanese invasion. Ghosh remarked,

It is not been written about at all... It is strange—there were over half a million people on the Long March, over 400,000 of them Indian, and there is such a silence about it... It makes you realize to what degree Indians felt themselves to be the sheep of the British: the delusions that governed their lives. (Hawley, p.113-4).

Ghosh's novels often feature characters engaged in the quest for familial connection, even in transnational contexts. This pursuit enables them to resist rigid nationalistic impositions and navigate diaspora challenges.

His work challenges fixed notions of familial space, emphasizing its fluid and evolving nature. This thematic exploration is enriched by his detailed descriptions of lifestyle, cultural impacts, and daily life. (Sinha , p.59).

'The Hungry Tide', another significant work by Ghosh, delves into the Sunderbans, a deltaic region with mangrove forests where two-thirds of the land is in Bangladesh and one-third in India. This setting symbolizes the fluidity between nations and the interplay of freshwater and saltwater. Central to the narrative is the 1979 eviction of refugee settlers from the island of Morichjhapi by the Left Front government of West Bengal. These settlers, fleeing persecution from 1947 and 1971, faced harsh conditions in the Sunderbans, reflecting the broader theme of displacement. John C. Hawley comments,

Such a setting makes an apt symbol for the ebb and flow of history and the uprooting of populations, both of which have come to be seen as 'Ghoshian' themes. Furthermore, just as the natural tides of the area tend to obliterate the sense of permanent division between land and sea, Ghosh's characters gradually learn to recognize the transient nature of the divisions between individuals-of whatever social class. (Hawley, p.132)

Ghosh's portrayal of the Sunderbans in 'The Hungry Tide' brings the region's history, language and myth to life while exploring deeper aspects of the human experience. The novel's depiction of the

tragic eviction of settlers from Morichjhapi serves as a poignant allegory for the impacts of Western intrusion and modernization. Ghosh's narrative examines the environmental and cultural disruptions caused by these forces, shedding light on the consequences for displaced communities.

Building on his earlier successes, Ghosh's 'Sea of Poppies' begins his Ibis Trilogy, which re-examines the origins and spread of the Indian diaspora and the British Empire's role in this process. The novel portrays the opium factory, a symbol of colonial exploitation, through vivid and disturbing imagery of its workers' suffering. This depiction underscores the inhumane conditions imposed by colonialism.

In 'Sea of Poppies', Ghosh's characters embark on a journey of transformation, reflecting the broader impacts of colonialism and nationalism. The British characters are portrayed as exaggerated caricatures, emphasizing the novel's focus on marginalized voices and experiences. Through its diverse cast, the novel challenges established concepts of colonialism and nationalism, providing a multifaceted portrayal of loyalty and identity within a transnational context.

Ghosh's work frequently addresses themes of war, colonialism and displacement. In 'The Glass Palace', he explores the effects of Japanese invasion on Burma, while 'The Hungry Tide' addresses environmental and cultural issues stemming from Western intrusion. His novels highlight the experiences of marginalized groups, such as Dalit refugees and displaced communities, capturing their struggles and resilience.

Ghosh's reflections on identity in a conversation with Lila Azam Zanganesh reveal his view on the fluidity and diversity

of Indian identity. He remarks,

People often talk about identity. It's not one of the things which really is washing about in my head at all... India is incredibly, incredibly diverse. It would be almost impossible to define what it means to be, moreover to say that everyone who identifies themselves as Indians is what they are. (Jha, p.275).

Amitav Ghosh is widely recognized as a prominent Indian writer in English. His debut novel, 'The Circle of Reason', won France's Prix Médicis Étranger in 1990, and he received several other awards for his works, including the Sahitya Akademi Award for 'The Shadow Lines' and the Arthur C. Clarke Award for 'The Calcutta Chromosome'. His novels, such as 'The Glass Palace' and 'The Hungry Tide', have achieved critical acclaim and commercial success, reflecting his ability to blend historical and cultural narratives.

Ghosh's writing provides a voice to marginalized communities and highlights forgotten stories. His novels offer profound insights into displacement, identity and the human condition, making a significant contribution to postcolonial and historical literature. His ambitious Ibis Trilogy continues to explore these themes, underscoring his role as a key figure in contemporary literature.

Conclusion :

Amitav Ghosh's literary journey offers a profound exploration of complex themes, such as diaspora, displacement, and the fluidity of identity, all intricately woven into the broader tapestry of global history. Through his narratives, Ghosh challenges conventional notions of nationhood and community, presenting a nuanced view

that transcends geographical and political boundaries. His work reflects a deep engagement with the overlooked and marginalized aspects of history, particularly those shaped by the forces of colonialism and its lingering impacts. Ghosh's ability to intertwine personal and collective histories in his storytelling provides a rich, humanistic perspective on the broader socio-political dynamics that have shaped the modern world.

Ghosh's emphasis on the family as a central unit in his narratives allows him to delve into the intimate, yet universal, experiences of individuals navigating the complexities of a rapidly changing world. His characters, often marked by a 'migrant sensibility,' grapple with the challenges of belonging and identity in a transnational context, reflecting the broader movements of people and cultures across borders. By focusing on these personal journeys, Ghosh effectively critiques the rigid frameworks of nationalism and colonialism, highlighting the enduring relevance of cultural memory and the persistent effects of historical trauma.

Ultimately, Amitav Ghosh stands as a towering figure in contemporary literature, known for his meticulous historical research and his ability to give voice to the subaltern and the marginalized. His works resonate with a global audience, offering a powerful commentary on the interconnectedness of human experiences across time and space. Through his evocative storytelling, Ghosh not only chronicles the past but also illuminates the

present, making significant contributions to the fields of postcolonial and historical literature.

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Rajanikanta Bordoloi's 'Rahadai Ligiri': A Perspective on Religious Influence

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Rajanikanta Bordoloi known as the Scott of Assam is one of the writers whose contribution to the establishment and growth of Assamese novel literature is especially memorable. In the last decade of the 19th century, the foundation of Assamese novels founded by Padmanath Gohainbaruah and Lakshminath Bezbarua was strengthened by the novel Emperor Rajanikanta Bordoloi. Historical novels were the first attempt at Assamese novel literature. At a time when the journey of Assamese novels began with historical novels, Rajanikanta Bordoloi made his debut in Assamese novel literature with a novel titled 'Miri Jiyori' (1893) based on the Mising tribe. Rajanikanta Bordoloi, who has written nine novels one by one, has established Assamese novel literature. His novels are: *Miri Jiyori* (1893), *Manomati* (1900), *Dandquadroh* (1909), *Rangili* (1925), *Radha-Rukminir Ran* (1925), *Nirmal Bhakat* (1926), *Tamreswari Mandir* (1926), *Rahadai Ligiri* (1930), *Thamba-Thoibir Sadhu* (1932). Rajanikanta Bordoloi's last gift in Assamese historical novel literature is 'Rahadai Ligiri'. This is the largest of his novels. This novel is divided into three parts.

The Novel is set against the background of Burmese's first invasion of Assam; the main story of this novel is based on the romance of Rahadai and Dayaram. The first part of the novel is divided into 51 chapters. In which Rahadai-Dayaram's romance, Rahadai-Dayaram grazing buffaloes, Festival of Durga Puja in the king's house, King Chandrakanta Singha was fascinated by the beauty of Rahadai, the time of Rahadai in the form of a ligiri in the king's house, Chandrakanta Singha's addiction to Rahadai, Burmese's first unequal invasion, the mother of a King conspired and killed Badan Borphukan by the Rupsing Bongal, Rahadai's surrender to Rupsing Bongal, Rahadai's escape from palace, eventually attempted suicide by jumping into the Brahmaputra to escape from the hands of Rupsing Bongal is beautifully explained.

The second part is divided into 16 chapters. This volume consists of Brajanath Singha after the murder of Borphukan and then his son Purandar Singha being made king, the rescue of Rahadai from the Brahmaputra by Agamananda Swami, the Vamachari

Tantrik system, yoga a spiritual contemplation, the transformation of Rahadai to a sixty-year-old woman by Yoga a spiritual contemplation, There are descriptions of the spiritual pursuits of Rahadai under the Tantrik.

The third part is divided into 30 chapters, the description of various monasteries, satras, fane or temples etc. in Assam, Rahadai, in the guise of Krishnadasi Vaishnavi, signals the upcoming attack of Burmese from one end of Assam to the other. She is being guided by the moral strength of the people and advising them to face danger unitedly. He has taken care of the sufferer and finally has also moved to Vrindavan by initiating Dayaram with the mantra of 'Human Service is Service to God'.

The Influence of Religion in the Novel Rahadai Ligiri :

Shakta, Vaishnava, Tantric etc. are found in various religions in Assamese society. Rajanikanta Bordoloi has also discussed religious views more or less between past stories and social events. Especially in the description of the Nava-Vaishnava religion, Satra, Naamghar, Drama etc. propagated by Mahapurush Srimanta Sankardeva can be seen in most of his novels.

The influence of religion in Bordoloi's Rahadai Ligiri novel is very high. In the second and third volumes of the Rahadai Ligiri novel, the storm that brought Rahadai's life seems to be god-oriented, swami Agamananda rescued Rahadai from the water starts with the discussion of the Vamachari Tantrik system, yoga a spiritual contemplation, miracles with the help of yoga a spiritual contemplation and Vaishnava theology. The novelist portrayed

beautifully of Rahadai as Krishnadasi spreading religion by roaming around in various Monasteries, Temples, Satras, etc. In the novel, the Ghosha, Verses also points to the influence of religion. The novelist is seen taking the help of various means to break the influence of supernatural elements and religion. They are mentioned below:

Vamachari Tantrik System :

Vamachar is a festival or religious ritual performed with forbidden objects such as alcohol etc. and the tantrik who runs according to that Vamachar is called Vamachari Tantrik. Today there was an ashram of a monk like a beautiful ashram of a sage on a high island without people on the west of Kokilamukh Ghat in Jorhat. The monk's name was Agamananda. He was a monk of the Vamachari Tantrik system and had an assistant named Shraavananda. Since Swami Agamananda was an enthusiastic Vamachari, he used to drink alcohol. Ducks, parrots, goats etc. were sacrificed before Gossani (God) and cooked and ate it. He ate the fish as 'The fruits of the Ganga'. He could not eat for ten or twelve days when he said no, and he could eat a lot of fish, meat, chapatti (Roti), split pulse (Dal), curry and rice alone when he was told to eat. The Miri Tribes, seeing his red eyes, gave him a lot of things like alcohol, duck, parrot, goat, rice, etc. by saying that he was a Godman. There is a proverb that he was also served by the tiger by leaving the way.

The novel tells us that Agamananda was a severe Vamachari Tantrik, so he travelled around the world and reached his final stage and performed various adorations on the beautiful Rahadai to attain liberation.

Yoga A Spiritual Contemplation :

In the Indian practice of yoga, a spiritual contemplation, there is a description of the power that can increase the intensity of his body, mind and energy through austerity. In Bordoloi's novel, there is frequent use of yoga a spiritual contemplation supernatural etc. According to the story of the novel 'Rahadai Ligiri', Rahadai made a huge change in life through yoga a spiritual contemplation. Rahadai was very beautiful as a result King Chandrakanta Singha was impressed with his beauty and took away from his parents and lover Dayaram. She keeps her ligiri and wants to become a little queen by marrying later. But because of being the daughter of Paik (lower caste) and Rahadai loved Dayaram wholeheartedly, it was not possible, but in the end Sardar Rupsing was also impressed with her and expressed his desire to get him and later Rahadai jumped into the river to escape the hands of Rupsing and tried to commit suicide. In that river, Swami Agamananda went to bathe and took the body to the ashram and made him healthy by serving and caring. Later Swami Agamananda promised to give whatever he needed to get rid of him in his last state and performed the rituals by performing various adorations on him.

When the rituals of Agamananda were accomplished, Rahadai said that if he wants to make the most beloved queen of the Chandrakanta king, he will bring the lakh of rupees, a manor in some country; he will give him whatever he wants. Rahadai wanted to see Dayaram from that place and at that time Swami Agamananda, with the help of Yoga a spiritual contemplation, told Rahadai to Dayaram. In his state of drowsiness, Rahadai tells Dayaram as follows:

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"Moi Rahadai!

Tumak saboloi aru hudiboloi ki karonotnu tumi honghar tyag kori udashin hoisa.

Rahadai-Hai! Hai! Apuni okol ei dukhunir nimittei enekoi udash dharma dhorile.....nath! nath! Moitu atia mora nai jiyai asu. Pisot jodi apuni mok hohorire pai tente apuni udash dharma tyag koribo paribane?"
(Bordoloi, Rajanikanta, pp. 97-98)

(I'm Rahadai!

Why do you leave the world and become indifferent to seeing and asking you?

Oh! Oh! You have adopted such a depressed religion just for the sake of this poor person. Why don't you marry another one and bring satisfaction to your father's mind and not become a householder?

Swami! Swami! I am not dead now, I am alive. Later, if you find me, can you leave the religion of destitution?)

Rahadai understood that this condition of her, his family and lover Dayaram, the main cause of her various dangers is her beauty. So she requested Agamananda to change that body and get a youthless state as follows:

"....Mor ei bhubonmohini ruptu – ji mok hokolore lubhor bostu kori mor jibontu dukhiya korile- apuni gusai..... tinikuri bosoriya burhi menuh ejonir rup diyok....."
(Bordoloi, Rajanikanta, p. 98)

(This beauty of mine- which made my life miserable by making me the object of everyone's greed-give me the beauty of a sixty-year-old woman with the strength your yoga a spiritual contemplation and the power to move around- so that I can peacefully walk around with the name of Krishna in peace without creating affection for my body in anyone's mind. I can also recite the name of Krishna to ten.)

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At first, Agamananda did not agree, but at her request, Rahadai was kept in the cave where the wind and water could not enter, and after ten months and ten days of yoga a spiritual contemplation, he turned into a sixty years ugly old woman and gave her name Krishnadasi. Swami Agamananda also became like an eighteen-year-old boy with the help of yoga a spiritual contemplation and named him Premananda Swami. Rahadai, who changed her beauty to Krishnadasi, has shown the earlier beauty form to a unique person. Borboruah, lover Dayaram has also been shown the beauty of Rahadai Ligiri.

Description of Satra, Temple etc. :

The two main elements of The Sankari culture are the Satra and the Namghar. Among them, the Satra is a ceremony established by Sankardeva and Madhavdeva to promote and propagate the Nava-vaishnava religion in Assam. The satras regularly hold prayer, drama, religious discussion etc. The literal meaning of the word 'Satra' is- 'Sat' means a religious person and 'Tra' means to savage i.e. to save the honest people. Baikunthanath Bhattadeva has defined satra in his Sarana Malika as- "*Ji sthan devata aru boishnnobor dwara bondito, ji sthanot ekanto bhaktohokole iswaror priyo karjya hadhan kore.....hei srestha sthanoke satra buli kuwa hoi.*" (The place where gods and Vaishnavas worship, where devotees perform God's favorite deeds, and where daily new devotion is practiced is called a satra.)

In most of the novels of Rajanikanta Bordoloi, the influence of religion can be seen. In particular, the influence of the Nava-Vaishnava religion, satra, naamghar,

drama etc. propagated by Mahapurush Srimanta Sankardeva was observed. Troilokyanath Goswami has said that: "Bordoloi upanyashar oport bhartiya darshanor dhara aru bixekhko boishnob guruhokolor rasmoi bhaktir pravab spasta." (Bordoloi's novels are clearly influenced by Indian philosophy and especially by the devotion of the Vaishnava gurus.)

In the novel Rahadai Ligiri, the description of the Satras is beautifully depicted. The role of satriya culture, which has traditionally been going through rituals, is important in the promotion and spread of Vaishnavism in Assam. It has already been continued that women people are not allowed to enter the Satra of Assam. In the novel, Swami Agamananda, with the help of yoga a spiritual contemplation, refers to the Satra of the Assamese society. It reveals the rituals and traditions of the Satra of Assamese society. When Dayaram was singing with other devotees in the Namghar, he could not get inside with the help of yoga a spiritual contemplation and could not get inside and said: "*Baba! Moi humabo nuwaru. Mor sadhya nai. Purbapor riti ase maiki manuh asomor sataror naamgharar vitoroloi humabo napai.*" (Bordoloi, Rajanikanta, 'Rahadai Ligiri', 97) (Baba! I can't enter. I can't afford to. There is a tradition of the past that the woman people will not be able to enter the Satra, Namghar of Assam.)

At that time i.e., before the days of the British, there were no pucca houses in Assam. Only monasteries and temples were ripe bricks. Many places in the present-day populated city of Guwahati city were deserted at that time. The novelist describes the monasteries and temples of Guwahati city, which were not popular at that time.

“Nogorkhonir pube horu tila etar oport chatrakar devalayor moth-mandir. Uzan bozaror jor pukhurire hoite Ugratara matrir mandir Brahmaputraor majot umananda. Uttar guwatit noir parot poshime ashwaktanta, pube monikorneswar.” (Bordoloi, Rajanikanta, ‘Rahadai Ligiri’, pp. 149-150)

(The Chatrakar Devalaya temple is located on a mound east of the town. The Ugratara Mother Temple, with a pair of ponds, is situated in Uzan Bazar. To the west, on a mound by the riverbank, lies the temple of Sukleswar Mahadeva. Nearby is the temple of Janardan Deva. A little outside the city, to the east, is the Navagraha temple. In the west are the temples of Bhuvaneshwari and Kamakhya. In the south, at a distance of Six miles, Sandhya, Lalita, and Kanta are the temple of Vasishtha with three streams. Umananda is situated in the middle of the Brahmaputra. To the west, on the banks of the river in North Guwahati, is Ashwaktanta, and to the east is Manikarneshwar.)

The novel mentions the satra of the pattern of villagers of Upper Assam with straw bamboo. The Gossains, who had fled in the nuisance of the Burmese, lived on both sides of the Brahmaputra on the pattern of the Satra of Upper Assam. In the morning, afternoon and evening, in these satras, the prayer by the cymbal, the name of Krishna and the devalayas also made the city of Guwahati buzz with the sound of drums, conch, bell, cymbal etc. and many devotees have mentioned by the novelist that they are visiting the monasteries of Guwahati city, Kamakhya, Navagraha and Vashishtha etc. The name of the special satra mentioned in the novel is ‘Kamalabari Satra’.

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Conclusion :

Rajanikanta Bordoloi’s ‘Rahadai Ligiri’, written in the background of the Burmese Invasion of Assam, is a novel of prominent quality in all aspects of Assam’s political, economic, cultural, social, religious etc. The presentation of historical events such as the atrocities of the Burmese Invasion of Assam during the Ahom rule, the plight of the people of Assam, the running away from their homes, etc. have increased the dignity of the novel. Among the other novels of the novelist, ‘Rahadai Ligiri’ has the greatest religious influence. In the novel, the beautiful description of incantations, yoga a spiritual contemplation, the young girl being old, the old man becoming young with the help of yoga as a spiritual contemplation, etc. makes the novel interesting. Krishna devotion is an essential religious aspect of Assamese society. This aspect is also beautifully portrayed in the novel. Rahadai changed his earlier beauty into a sixty-year-old woman by the name of Krishna-dasi and later she started living by singing the name of Krishna completely initiated into Krishna religion. Apart from this, the realism of Assamese society has also been beautifully portrayed by the novelist. Since ancient times, the position of women in the male-dominated society has been considered to be low. The character of Rahadai is particularly notable in this regard. She has been the victim of the rule for her beauty crushing the hearts of her mother and father and lover Dayaram and bringing it to the palace by force. She has to be humiliated, deprived, and exploited at the hands of a male society. This social system almost ruined her life.

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Exploring *A Plague Tale : Innocence* : Analysing the Shadow Archetype in Amecia de Rune

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A Plague Tale: Innocence is a video game about a young girl named Amecia de Rune. It is set in France during the Black Death and the Hundred Years' War. The game tells the story of Amecia escaping the plague-ridden environment and the Inquisition troop to an innocuous place with her brother Hugo. Hugo is cursed with Macula, which lets him control the plagued rats. Throughout their journey, they met with many challenges. However, Amecia's determination to save her brother has directed them to an innocuous location. Their journey was not entirely satisfactory. They encounter many challenges and exhibit emotional turmoil through their loved one's exodus. *A Plague Tale : Innocence* delivers a rich narrative exploration that immerses the player within the game environment. The game environment proposes a bountiful condition of the then-contemporary society. As we explore this game, the environment suffuses a distinct story. It has a severe impact on Amecia's character development. Analysing from the beginning to the end, we can reconnoitre the environment as her psyche. This environment influences her psyche and

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denudes two sides, giving way to conscious and unconscious recognition.

Carl G Jung excavated the depths of the psyche through his works. He depicted two personalities within an individual-conscious and unconscious dominion (Jung et. al., 1990, p. 23). Consciousness is advanced through a civilised state, which is imperfect. The mind is covered with darkness, yet needs to reconnoitre the unperceivable aspects. They are concealed within the psyche. These are known as unconscious. Within the unconscious dominion are little-known or unknown attributes and qualities of ego-‘shadow’ (p. 168). Shadow, cast by the conscious mind, contains hidden, repressed, and unfavourable aspects of personality (p. 118). ‘Shadow’ is one of many archetypes. Archetypes have a conspicuous impression on uplifting human emotions, personality, and ethics as they manifest through thoughts, symbolic imaginations, and acts (Gunanda & Puspita, 2022, p. 10). Furthermore, ‘shadow’, according to Ladkin et al., produces a definite result in understanding a character's personality. It is considered an emotional quality that an individual

hankers to enshroud and impede from reappearing into the conscious world. An individual must maintain a balance between the conscious and the unconscious mind in executing the assiduous individuation process (as cited in Asl & Ramli, 2021, p. 891). The individuation process transpires through observing patterns, which is part of a great web of psychological factors (Jung et al., 1990, p. 160).

Understanding 'Shadow' In Narrative Context :

Carl G Jung describes how 'shadow' appears in stories and myths and how it affects the narration. His explanation of the part when 'Moses meets Khidr' elucidates the integration of shadow. At first, Khidr is seen as lawless, law-abiding, and capricious. Later, it revealed Khidr's God-like nature while helping people (Jung et al., 1990, p. 175). The conflict between good and evil often manifests the concept of shadow in English literature. The antihero undoubtedly embraces the shadow archetype. The battle with Grendel in Beowulf exemplifies the shadow of the hero. The collective shadow of Victorian society is replicated through Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Similarly, Count Dracula discloses then-contemporary qualms and cravings. Deplorable feminine traits are epitomised through witches. Dark lords like Sauron and Voldemort are considered significant figures of shadow. Even Shakespeare introduced shadow characters such as Lady Macbeth, Iago, Richard III, Claudius, and Shylock (Kechan & Ismail, 2022).

Gholamhossein Sâedi profoundly explores the human psyche through his works. In his *House Should Be Clean*, the

symbolisation of 'mouse' is embodied as an insidious and devious aspect of the protagonist's shadow, which haunts his personality. The 'dog' in *Bayal's Mourners* denotes the protagonist's unresolved internal conflicts and desires. The death of the 'cow' symbolises the downfall of the protagonist's psyche and a loss of self. In his *Fear and Shiver*, the protagonist's encounter with a dark figure exposes his shadow, evoking fear and instability. The dual nature of shadow is accompanied in the fourth story of *Bayal's Mourners* through the 'strange child'. The child's dual-coloured eyes and the wind accompanying him evince the dual nature of the shadow, which encourages the development of distress (Veskari et al., 2018).

Sally Rooney's work *Normal People* describes the behaviours and actions of characters Connell, Marianne, and Alan, influenced by their psychological condition and social environments. Connell's shadow exhibits repressed emotions. Mariannes's shadow is manifested through her rude behaviour and unconventional voluptuous behaviour. Alan's habit of demeaning others, jealousy, and violence illustrate his darker aspects; his shadow (Rahayu & Hum, 2023).

The characters of Edgar Allan Poe and Tunku Halim unveil grotesque behaviour and self-discovery. Moral challenges are signified as shadows in this condition and the characters' acknowledgement apprehends their individuation. The works of Poe, *The Premature Burial* and *The Fear of the Death*, demonstrate the narrator's shadow. The protagonists in *The Black Cat* and *The Tell-Tale Heart* are haunted by their murder, illustrating their shadows. The narrator's obsession with

Berenice's teeth represents the shadow in *Berenice*. As in Halim's work, *Haunted Apartment*, the grotesque imagery and her father's voice resemble the shadow. In *The Rape of Martha Teoh*, the protagonist's shadow emerges from her hatred towards her deceased husband. These characters were unsuccessful in comprehending their shadows, which resulted in their downfall (Asl & Ramli, 2021).

Environmental Symbolism and the Shadow Within :

Imaginations are a part of the human psyche. The human psyche is never wholly traversed. Hence, some parts are still obscure, belonging to the dominion of the unconscious. Unconsciousness in literature is characterised in several ways. We will look at the theoretical aspects. In his work *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud discusses the representation of unconscious thoughts through a dream environment. The unconscious desires and conflicts are echoed within the dream environment.

On the other hand, Jung reconnoitres the environmental elements in literature through the organisation of archetypes. In his work *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (1980), he contemplates the collective unconscious through archetypal images and environments in literature. Dark forests, caves, and such natural elements constitute the unconscious mind. Nonetheless, we zero in on the character Amecia de Rune and the game environment and inspect the pivotal points where the environmental settings aid as influential symbols of Amecia's unconscious mind, especially her 'shadow'. Through the integrated lens of environmental psychology and environmental storytelling,

we examine crucial plot points and comprehend how the game environment manifests Amecia's psyche while integrating her shadow.

The Woods as a Representation of the Unconscious :

In the initial stage of the game, players perceive the atmosphere as it depicts a bright environment. It gradually fades and gives way to a darker, eerie environment through the integration of a Wild Boar escaping into the woods. This shift mirrors Amecia's journey into the unconscious. As Jung stated, the threshold of consciousness, as the sun's circuit followed by an ascent to the bright peak of consciousness, is lowered through the descent into the night, representing the zenith of the unconscious (Jung et al., 1990, p. 299). Similarly, 'King of the Forest' depicted 'woods' and 'water' as a symbolisation of the unconscious. (Jung, 1980, p. 222). The dark and tangled pathways of the woods became a symbol of her inner turmoil and uncertainties. The foreboding nature of the woods signifies the transition from a state of conscious awareness to an encounter with her unconscious fears representing her 'shadow'. The transformation in the wood's atmosphere affects her psychological condition. The oppressive and unpredictable nature of the environment evokes a sense of menace and bewilderment - characteristics of directing one's shadow.

Plague-Ridden Environment as an Indicator of Inner Turmoil :

The game's depiction of the plague-ridden environment serves as a visual representation of Amecia's internal turmoil. The overwhelming nature of shadow is reflected

through her surroundings as it portrays decay and death. However, the portrayal of death parallels with the transition into a new life (Jung et al., 1990, p. 122). Gholamhossein Sāedi symbolised the 'mouse/rat' as a treacherous and devious aspect of the protagonist's shadow (Veskari et al., 2018). This element is already within us, representing feral, chthonic aspects of ourselves within the furtive edges of consciousness (Ronnberg & Martín, 2010, p. 292). In this scenario, rats are represented as a direct manifestation of her repressed fears. Their emergence from the depths of the underground mirrors the advent of shadow from her unconscious mind. This visual storytelling accentuates her internal struggles' disturbing and permeating nature. Amecia's difficulties in enduring these environments parallel her internal battle to integrate these 'shadow' aspects into her conscious self.

War-Torn Landscapes and Internal Conflicts :

The chaos and conflict within Amecia's psyche are symbolised through the backdrop of the Hundred Years' War. The visual scenes of dead bodies and destruction epitomise psychological scars and unresolved battles. These scars, left by loss and viciousness, are necessary for her character development. These scenes of dead bodies and the constant threat of danger symbolise the penetrating impact of her shadow on her conscious mind. Death, as stated by Jung, is a pathway or a transformational journey towards a new life, displaying her necessity to confront the darker aspects of her psyche. They are driven by these environments, which is a metaphor for the internal conflicts she

must confront to achieve significant character development.

Loss and Resilience : The Journey Through Grief :

The loss of her family, friends and dog and the necessity to protect her brother Hugo illustrate Amecia's journey through grief and resilience. The death of her dog 'Lion', who represents loyalty and courage, denotes the shattering of Amecia's confidence, leading to her initial psychological journey. Similarly, the deceased father embodies the damnation of the protective structure, enhancing her sense of isolation and fear. The emotional weight of her journey through the oppressive and threatening environments equals the inner struggles and distressing experiences, which leads to the integration of her 'shadow'.

Metaphor of Transformation :

The frequent crossings of rivers in the game symbolise pivotal moments of transformation and self-discovery. Amecia's willingness to delve into her unconscious mind and confront her shadow is implied in each crossing. Further, crossing a river symbolises a fundamental change in attitude (Jung et al., 1990, p. 199). In mythology, a river is a boundary between the living and the dead. The crossing is a metaphor for travelling between two shores of the psyche: conscious (a familiar shore) and unconscious (farther shore) (Ronnberg & Martín, 2010, p. 42). The first leap into the river at the beginning of the game exemplifies Amecia's immersion into the depth of her unconscious mind, as the river is considered a boundary between conscious and unconscious

dominion. She consciously submerges into the unconscious realm, integrating her shadow. The subsequent crossings followed by the initial to the culmination symbolise her progression and psychological development. The final confrontation, where Hugo, her brother, governs his power and obliterates the antagonist with the succour of plagued rats, represents the culmination of her internal turmoil and successful integration of her shadow. Her brother Hugo, a child, symbolises man's pre-conscious and post-conscious essence. The all-embracing nature of psychic wholeness is expressed at the end of the game (Jung, 1980, p. 178).

The Relationship with Shadow :

Amecia's relationship with her shadow evolves as she navigates through these symbolic environments. At the beginning of the game, her shadow is delineated as qualms and vulnerability. As she proceeds, she comprehends and integrates these repressed aspects herself. The journey through the dark and tangled pathways in the woods symbolises her willingness to confront the mysterious aspects of her psyche, indicating the initiation of her individuation process. The plague-ridden and war-torn landscapes drive her to face the fear and despair that threatens to consume her. As she survived the hostile environments, she gained strength and resilience for her personal growth. The swarms of rats and her brother's ability to control them at the end illustrate an invaluable essence of shadow in guiding her repressed emotions and fears in the individuation process. It provides a canny photogravure of the all-embracing nature of psychic wholeness.

Conclusion :

A Plague Tale: Innocence entwines environmental storytelling and environmental psychology to explore the 'shadow' archetype through the protagonist Amecia de Rune. In the game, the environment symbolises Amecia's shadow, bringing internal conflicts and fears to the surface. At the initial stage, the foreboding woods epitomises her venture into the unconscious. The plague-ridden and war-torn landscapes manifest her inner turmoil, conflict, and chaos within her psyche. The swarms of rats ascending within the underground symbolise her bellicose nature of stifled worries and ordeals.

Environmental storytelling in the game uses these settings to convey her descent into the unconscious and gradually uncovering shadow, which engenders a conspicuous connection between the environment and Amecia's internal world. Environmental psychology further ameliorates this narrative by accentuating the impact of these settings on Amecia's psyche. The experiences she encountered further augment the integration of shadow, leading to her individuation process. It allows players to experience her qualms, vulnerabilities, and resilience. The integration of environmental storytelling and psychology provides a spellbinding framework for exploring the 'shadow' archetype. It provides a deep pathway for the players to immerse into the narrative in an emotionally resonant manner. The portrayal of shadow through the game's environment offers an unambiguous elucidation of the human psyche and its transformative power. Enriching these approaches in the narrative allows players to attain an intensely influential and reflective gaming experience.

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Mythopoesis and Feminism: Examining Janak-Sita Relationship in Contemporary Retellings of the Ramayana

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**Pita Dharma Pita Swarga Pitahi Paramantapa
Pitori Preetimapanne Priyontay Sarvadevata**

**Father is dharma, Father is heaven, Father is the supreme subject of meditation
If father is contented, all other gods and goddesses will be satisfied.**

Chanakya- Sloka

The father (Pita) is someone who gives birth; who initiates children (boys) into spirituality/lord through the sacred thread ceremony; who imparts knowledge; provides sustenance; and offers protection from fear. To cultivate the character of a son, a father nurtures him for five years, disciplines him for ten years and thereafter treats him as a friend. This encapsulation of Chanakya's slokas provides the scriptural foundation for the role of a father. The father-son dynamic, prominently featured in ancient Indian texts such as the Upanishads and the Puranas, particularly the epics, underscores societal norms prioritizing male lineage and inheritance. Although the father-daughter relationship is present, it often lacks the same depth of exploration, leading to a notable scarcity of literature and research on this dynamic. However, contemporary novels that reimagine traditional stories such as the

Ramayana and Mahabharata are gradually bridging this gap.

This paper seeks to explore a father-daughter relationship (Janak-Sita) that not only challenges traditional gender roles but also supports feminist interpretations, thereby setting the stage for a broader discussion on the role of feminist perspectives in mythological literature. By examining how mythopoesis defies patriarchal norms, this study aims to highlight an exemplary father figure from our epics, illuminating the progressive aspects of his character by analysing the novel *Sita: Now You Know Me* by Sini Panicker. Through this analysis, the paper will emphasize the importance of reinterpreting classical narratives to reflect contemporary values and contribute to the ongoing discourse on gender equality in literature.

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Janak, also known as Siradhwaja, is traditionally celebrated as the wise and benevolent king of Mithila, renowned for his scholarship and virtue. Janak is known to hold spiritual conferences encouraging intellectual debates between not just rishis but women seers who challenged and questioned their male counterparts. In the classical Ramayana, he is depicted as a loving father who nurtures Sita and supports her choices, notably in her marriage to Rama, which is arranged through a svayamvara - a ceremony allowing Sita to choose her husband. His actions are seen as progressive within the constraints of his time, but contemporary retellings of the Ramayana offer deeper insights into his character, presenting him as a figure who embodies feminist principles in a more explicit and profound manner.

Novels such as *The Forest of Enchantments* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, *The Ramayana Series* by Amish, *Sita: Now You Know Me* by Sini Panicker, *Sitayana* by Amit Majumdar, and *Sita's Sister* by Kavita Kane, among others, explore the Ramayana's narrative from new perspectives. Each novel helps us rediscover the story's characters as progressive, traditional, and yet modern. Through these modern retellings, Janak emerges not merely as a virtuous king but as a character who embodies feminist ideals and an exemplary father. He is portrayed as a supportive father who respects Sita's autonomy, raising her to be a scholar, a warrior, a ruler, an administrator, and a sensitive and strong woman.

Sini Panicker's *Sita: Now You Know Me* reimagines Janak's relationship with

Sita from a feminist perspective, presenting him as a father who actively supports his daughter's choices and challenges societal expectations. Panicker's portrayal emphasizes Janak's role in empowering Sita, not just as a father but as a mentor who instills in her the confidence to challenge patriarchal structures. This interpretation of Janak underscores his alignment with feminist ideals, particularly in his support for Sita's independence and agency. In the prologue of the novel, Panicker writes, "I felt I was a daughter. I was not a mother anymore. Not a wife anymore. I was just a daughter. A blissful daughter." Sita finds solace in her identity as a daughter even in her final moments, highlighting the deep bond with her father.

Janak and his kingdom are depicted as progressive from the beginning of the novel. "My father and mother prayed to the goddess for something else too. For a daughter. Not for a son, but a daughter." (Panicker 13) While other kings performed elaborate yajnas for sons, King Janak and Queen Sunetra wished for a daughter and adopted Sita without hesitation. Janak's love for farming, despite being a king, and his joy at finding a daughter in Sita further illustrate his progressive nature. "The farmers and the priests laughed as they knew their king and his love for farming. My father ploughed on enthusiastically." (Panicker 13) King Janaka also proves to be a leader to his people; he is equally involved in farming as in administration and family. While ploughing the field is done by farmers and the king is supposed to plough for the sake of a ritual, King Janaka finds happiness in farming.

Janak not only became a father but

also a friend to his daughters, involving them in activities beyond traditional princess roles. He made Sita and Urmila scholars, allowing them to attend and participate in debates on the Vedas and Upanishads. Sita grew up in a household where women were valued equally to men. When she expressed a desire to lift Shiva's bow, Janak, after consulting Sunetra, encouraged her: "You may, Sita! You may." (Panicker 21) Janak treated both daughters equally, despite Sita being adopted, and prepared her to rule Videha. He was content with passing the kingdom to a woman in an era where patrilineal succession was the norm. He believed Sita could balance ruling with having a family, emphasizing the importance of both aspects: "Sita, I want you to be married. I want you to have a family, a loving husband and several children. Otherwise, you will be very lonely in life, especially if you become a ruler. I don't want that. I am serious about the wedding, Sita. And you have to take it seriously too." (Panicker 25)

At the Svayamvar, King Janak does not shy away from showing his emotions as he has to give away his daughter to Ram. Although he wanted her to rule Videha, giving her away was also a norm he had to accept. Despite the pain of giving away his daughter, Janak felt happy that Sita was in love. In a time when Svayamvars were just a front for political alliances between kingdoms, Janak happily obliged to give his daughter away in a marriage of love. Janak also stood as a pillar to his daughters at the Vidai, "Don't think of Mithila and us as a world that you lost. You will never lose us, and we are here for you. Always. You both can come and visit whenever you feel like. I

suggest that you come every other month. You don't even have to ask for a chariot from Ayodhya. I will send one. And... we will visit you as often as we can." In a time when daughters were brought up with the lesson that their house is the one they will be married into, Janak stands as a strong pillar for his daughters, making sure they know how much they mean to him.

Beyond Janak, Sita found another father figure in Valmiki after being abandoned by Lakshman on Rama's orders. Valmiki rescued her and provided solace, much like Janak had earlier: "A thin, saffron-robed man, his eyes saturated with this world's endless agony, the sage held me close and comforted me as my dear father would. He made me look at his eyes, and he began to absorb my pain." (Panicker 9)

Janak's portrayal in contemporary retellings of the Ramayana offers a progressive and feminist interpretation of his character. His supportive and empowering relationship with Sita challenges traditional gender roles and highlights the potential for mythological literature to reflect contemporary values. The values and strength in both his daughters are well visible in the Ramayana as Sita being a single mother brought up her two son without any animosity towards Ram, who sent her to the forest; and Urmila bore the pangs of marital separation alone without shedding a tear of self-pity or remorse. Unfortunately, the Ramayana does not elaborate on Janak after Sita's wedding, leaving this complex character incomplete. He stands at the intersection of feminism and fatherhood. By reinterpreting classical narratives, authors like Sini Panicker

present Janak as an exemplary father who embodies feminist ideals and gradually bridge the gap to present the complexity of a father-daughter relationship. This analysis underscores the importance of re-examining mythological characters through modern lenses to contribute to the ongoing discourse on gender equality in literature. The exploration of Janak's character demonstrates the potential for mythopoesis to challenge patriarchal norms and inspire progressive thinking in both literature and society.

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प्रवासी कथाओं में सांस्कृतिक मूल्यों का स्वरूप, स्त्री विमर्श के बदलते समीकरणों, के विशेष संदर्भ में

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समीकरण गणितीय कथन है। यह दो भिन्न-भिन्न चीजों को एक तुल्यता के आधार पर मापता है। प्रवासी शब्द के अनेक पर्याय हैं। प्रवासी शब्द का अभिप्राय है अपनी जन्म भूमि से इतर विदेशी भूमि पर निवास करना। हिंदी साहित्य में प्रवासी विमर्श किस समय चर्चा का विषय बना इसको लेकर अनेक मत हैं। विमर्शों के प्रारंभ होने का कोई निश्चित समय नहीं होता। हिंदी साहित्य का हर कालखंड प्रवृत्तियों के आधार से चल रहा है। प्रवृत्तियों से विमर्श भी अछूते नहीं हैं। परिवेश के अनुसार स्त्री विमर्श के समीकरण और स्वरूप प्रभावित होते हैं।

प्रवासी कथाओं में सांस्कृतिक मूल्यों का रूप भारतीय और अफ्रीकी संस्कृतियों के सामासिक रूप में प्रयोग हुए हैं। सांस्कृतिक मूल्यों से आशय कीमत और महत्व होता है। स्त्री विमर्श के समीकरण हर क्षेत्र में एक समान नहीं होते। स्थान बदलने से भाव बदल जाते हैं। साहित्य समाज का बिम्ब होता है। बिम्ब समाज की सच्चाई दिखाता है। साहित्य और समाज का सम्बंध अभिन्न है। समाज अनेक सांस्कृतिक मूल्यों से बना है। मनुष्य की बौद्धिक क्रियाएं मनुष्य को जिज्ञासु बना देती हैं। प्रारंभिक अवस्था में हर मनुष्य सांस्कृतिक रूप से अविच्छिन्न होता है। अविच्छिन्नता के कारण वह आस्थावादी बन जाता है।

बिना तथ्य और तर्क के हर बात को स्वीकार करना उसकी फितरत बन जाती है।

बौद्धिक प्रतिक्रियावादी समाज ने अनेक विमर्शों को जन्म दिया। हर विमर्श की अपनी-अपनी सांस्कृतिक धरोहरें और मूल्य हैं। सांस्कृतिक मूल्य समय-समय पर परिवर्तित होते हैं। समय के कालचक्र का स्थायित्व नहीं होता। विमर्शों ने साहित्य को नया मार्ग और नई ऊर्जा प्रदान की। उपेक्षित वर्ग की दमित चेतना का उदय विमर्शों में संरक्षित किया गया है।

प्रवासी विमर्श में करुणा और व्यापकता है। प्रवासी विमर्श ने विदेशी संस्कृति और साहित्य को अपने भाव में समाहित किया। प्रवासियों को अलग-अलग समय में अलग-अलग स्थानों पर अनेक संघर्षों से गुजरना पड़ा। अलग-अलग संघर्षों के कारण विमर्शों का सांस्कृतिक स्वरूप बदलता है। विमर्शों के स्वरूप के संदर्भ में राकेश बी. दुबे ने 'प्रवासी हिन्दी साहित्य और ब्रिटेन' नामक रचना में लिखा है :

'अलग-अलग समय पर, अलग-अलग देश-काल में प्रवासियों के कष्टों का स्वरूप भी बदलता रहा है। प्रारंभ में उन्नीसवीं शताब्दी में गिरमिटिया प्रवासियों के समय के कष्ट जितने शारीरिक थे, उतने ही मानसिक भी। यद्यपि उस समय के प्रवासी साहित्य में शारीरिक कष्टों का निरूपण प्रधानता से

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किया गया है, लेकिन बाद में यह कष्ट शारीरिक से अधिक मानसिक हो गया। यह कहना अतिशयोक्ति नहीं होगी कि प्रवासी साहित्य किसी न किसी प्रकार के कष्टों का ही साहित्य है।¹

ऊपर कहा जा चुका है कि समीकरण एक जैसे नहीं रहते। राकेश दुबे की रचना से यह भी विदित हो गया कि समय एक जैसा नहीं रहता। भारतीय गिरमिटिया मजदूरों को समय-समय पर अनेक प्रकार के संघर्षों का सामना करना पड़ा। पुरुष वर्ग के साथ शारीरिक और मानसिक शोषण किया गया तो भला स्त्रियों पर क्या गुजरी होगी? स्त्री हर समय दोहरे मापदंड का शिकार होती है। स्त्री को किससे सामना नहीं करना पड़ता। घर में पिता और भाई का, शादी के बाद पति और ससुर का, अंत में स्त्री के गुण और दोषों का मूल्यांकन समाज करता है। जिस प्रकार के मापदंड स्त्री के लिए निर्धारित किए गए हैं क्या वैसे ही मापदंड पुरुष पर लागू होते हैं?

मैंने अनेक सांस्कृतिक उत्सवों में देखा है। सांस्कृतिक कार्यों का रख रखाव पुरुष समाज से अधिक स्त्री समाज के हाथों में रहता है। सोहर, सरिया, कजरी, लोकगीत, जैसे कार्यों को स्त्रियों ने अपने स्वर से हमेशा आवाज़ प्रदान की हैं। अनेक प्रकार के गीतों में सांस्कृतिक मूल्यों का पल्लवन और पोषण होता है। सांस्कृतिक मूल्यों का स्वरूप देशकाल और वातावरण के अनुसार बदलता है। प्रवासी विमर्श ने स्त्रियों के जीवन के स्वरूप को प्रभावित किया। स्त्री ने संघर्ष की परिभाषाओं को नवीन रूपों में स्थापित किया है। नवीनता की स्थापना के लिए स्त्री को शायद सृजनशील प्राणी माना गया है।

प्रवासी कथाओं के सम्बंध में कहा जाए तो इनमें भारतीय, अफ्रीकी और यूरोपीय संस्कृतियों की मान्यताओं का समुच्च्य दर्शाया गया है। प्रवासी भारतीयों ने हर क्षेत्र में कड़ी मेहनत की है। प्रवासी विमर्श के केन्द्र में संघर्ष है। मजदूरों और बेसहारा लोगों ने भारतीय संस्कृति को संजोकर भारतीयता की मिशाल

को जलाया है। प्रवासी विमर्श की कथाओं में स्त्री की कला और संघर्ष को भारत की हर स्त्री सहन नहीं कर सकती। प्रवासी समाज की स्त्रियां एक साथ दो नहीं बल्कि तीन-तीन जीवन जीती हैं। प्रवासी स्त्रियों को पुरुष के साथ कंधे से कंधा मिलाकर कार्य करना पड़ता है। स्त्री घर परिवार के दायित्वों का निर्वाह करती है। समाज में सांस्कृतिक मूल्यों की वाहक स्त्री होती है। प्रवासी कथाओं में पौराणिक और धार्मिक कथाओं के स्थान पर संघर्ष दिखाया गया है। प्रवासी विमर्श कठिनायों और संघर्षों का समुच्च्य बन गया। कठिनाई अपनी पहचान और अपनों की पहचान का बोध कराती हैं। सुविधा भोगी समाज में कौन अपना और कौन पराया है इसका बोध आवश्यक है। प्रवासी विमर्श की कठिनाइयों का वर्णन करते हुए अनिल जोशी ने अपनी रचना 'प्रवासी लेखन नयी ज़मीन, नया आसमान' में लिखा है :

'विदेश में हिन्दी से जुड़ा रहना कठिन कार्य है पढ़ने के लिए ना पुस्तकें उपलब्ध हैं न पत्रिकाएं और ना ही साहित्यिक परिवेश। इस सबके बावजूद हिन्दी के प्रति अगाध निष्ठा रखने वाले और रचनात्मक क्षमता रखने वाले सैकड़ों कठिनाइयों के बावजूद हिन्दी से जुड़े रहते हैं और अपनी रचनात्मक क्षमता को हिन्दी में अभिव्यक्त करते हैं। यह सिर्फ़ किस्से-कहानियां नहीं यह प्रवासी भारतीयों का इतिहास है, नये समाज में उनके रचने-बसने, उनकी आशाओं-निराशाओं, संघर्षों, उनके अंतर्विरोधों, विडंबनाओं, सफलता और असफलता की कहानी है।'²

प्रवासी कथाओं के मूल आधार में कठिनाइयों, संघर्षों, और अभावों को दर्शाया गया है। प्रवासी कथाओं का स्त्री विमर्श के संदर्भ में मूल्यांकन करने से हर क्षेत्र में स्त्री के संघर्ष की झांकी दिखाई देती है। हर देश में स्त्री का रूप एक जैसा नहीं होता। स्त्री विमर्श के समीकरण हर क्षेत्र में परिवेशगत होते हैं। समय एक जैसा नहीं होता ठीक उसी प्रकार से विमर्शों में निहित समीकरण एक जैसे नहीं होते। प्रवासी विमर्श के केंद्र में जातिवाद नहीं है बल्कि

क्षेत्रवाद दिखाई देता है। साहित्य के कट्टर समर्थक इस सच्चाई को स्वीकार नहीं करते कि हर प्रकार के विमर्शों में राजनीतिक हस्तक्षेप होने लगा है। विमर्श राजनीतिक हस्तक्षेपों से अछूते नहीं रहे।

प्रवासी विमर्श में या स्त्री विमर्श में स्त्रियों के हित में अनेक कार्य किए जा रहे हैं। विमर्श अपनी मूल अवधारणाओं से अलग होने लगे हैं। विमर्श या सरकार की कल्याणकारी योजनाएं। सरकार की कोई योजना पूर्ण रूप से उस व्यक्ति को प्राप्त नहीं हो पाती जिसके लिए योजनाओं का निर्माण किया जाता है। संघर्षशील या मजदूर वर्ग की स्त्रियों को क्या पता विमर्श क्या होता है। विमर्श पुरुष सत्ता के विरोध की प्रक्रिया स्वरूप प्रारंभ होता है अंत में विमर्श के धुरंधर निजी स्वार्थ में चले जाते हैं। प्रवासी विमर्श की केंद्रीय समस्या उनको जिस भूमि में रहना पड़ता है। उसी भूमि में नागरिकता सिद्ध करने के लाले पड़ जाते हैं।

विमर्शों की एकता तभी संगठित हो सकती जब राजनीतिक हस्तक्षेप को चुनौती देने का विमर्शों में सामर्थ्य हो। समाज कितना भी शिक्षित क्यों न हो यदि उनमें संगठित होने के भाव नहीं हैं तो वह किसी भी उद्देश्य में सफल नहीं हो सकता। अनेक स्त्रियों ने प्रारंभ में पुरुष सत्ता से लोहा लिया अपने मानवाधिकारों को प्राप्त करने के लिए सफल लेखन किया। समस्या तब बनी जब व्यक्तिगत लाभ को विमर्श के मार्ग में रख दिया। विमर्श को कालजर्ई बनाने के लिए विमर्श के आयामों के साथ किसी प्रकार का आडंबर नहीं होना चाहिए। स्त्री विमर्श आत्मसम्मान और अस्तित्व का भाव है। स्त्री की आज़ादी किसी के ऊपर आश्रित नहीं होती। बल्कि आज़ादी स्त्री के ऊपर आश्रित होती है। स्त्री पुरुष का सृजन कर सकती है तो वह समय के अनुसार आज़ादी का सृजन क्यों नहीं ? साहित्य को कैसे कालजर्ई बनाया जाए इस संदर्भ में बच्चन सिंह ने अपनी रचना 'हिंदी साहित्य का दूसरा इतिहास' नामक पुस्तक में लिखा है :

‘स्त्री लेखन की अपनी दुनिया होती है जो पुरुष लेखन की दुनिया के समानांतर चलती रहती है- इतनी समानांतर भी नहीं कि कही उसका स्पर्श भी न करे, उसे काटे भी नहीं। स्त्री से सर्वथा अलग न पुरुष की दुनिया हो सकती है और न पुरुष से सर्वथा अलग स्त्री की दुनिया। फिर भी ऐतिहासिक- राजनैतिक, प्राणीशास्त्रीय कारणों से उनमें अलगाव दिखाई देता है। इस अंतर या पार्थक्य से स्त्री-लेखन की पहचान बनती है।’³

स्त्री विमर्श में स्त्री की मुकम्मल पहचान और उसका अस्तित्व आवश्यक है। विमर्शों द्वारा स्त्री की अपनी दुनिया का गठन हुआ। स्त्री की हर सीमा का विस्तार हुआ। पाखंड की जड़े हिलने लगी। वैज्ञानिक और तार्किक पैमाने स्थापित हुए। कर्मशीलता की महत्त्वता स्थापित हुई। विमर्श के केंद्र में विघटन नहीं होना चाहिए। दक्षिणपंथी आलोचक बौद्धिक विमर्शों को सिरे से खारिज़ करते हैं। दक्षिणपंथी विचारकों का तर्क होता है कि विमर्श भारतीय ज्ञान परंपरा के अंग नहीं हैं। विमर्श पाश्चात्य शैली का विघटन और विस्फोटक रूप है। पाश्चात्य विधा का भारतीय भाषाओं में अध्ययन और अध्यापन तर्क संगत नहीं है।

विमर्शों को सिरे से खारिज़ नहीं किया जा सकता। विमर्श दबाई गई चेतना का स्वर है। हाशिए के समाज की स्त्रियों का शारीरिक और मानसिक शोषण किया गया। शोषण के दर्द को स्त्री लोकगीतों के द्वारा व्यक्ति कर रही है। दर्द को अभिनय द्वारा व्यक्त कर रही है। स्त्री की अभिव्यक्ति से शिष्ट समाज या अभिजात्य समाज भयभीत क्यों है? विमर्शों की जहां भी बात होती है वहां दक्षिणपंथी विचारक नई-नई अफवाहें क्यों फैलाते हैं? उनका कहना है विमर्शों से देश विभाजित हो जाएगा। वर्ण व्यवस्था के संदर्भ में सवाल उठता है तो दक्षिणपंथी विचारकों के मुंह में गुण जम जाती है। आखिर सच्चाई क्या है?

साहित्य और समाज में उदारवादी दृष्टिकोण देखने को मिल रहा है। स्त्रियां सरकारी आपिस जाती

हैं उनका पति उनके लिए खाने और पीने का बंदोबस्त कर देता है। स्त्री का लंच पैक करने से या खाना बना देने से वैदिक परंपरा की कहां लंका लग गई? घर के कपड़े, घर की सफाई पुरुष और स्त्री एक साथ करने लगी तो कहां अकाल पड़ गया? स्त्री और पुरुष के समन्वयात्मक कार्यों से कौन सी महामारी फैलने लगी?

हर स्त्री एक जैसी नहीं होती। उसमें बहुत सी प्रतिभाओं का वास होता है। प्रतिभा को निखारने के अवसर विमर्श में मिलने लगे हैं। इस सन्दर्भ में डॉ. नगेन्द्र में 'हिन्दी साहित्य का इतिहास' रचना में लिखा है :-

'इन्ही चीजों को ध्यान में रखकर स्त्री-विमर्शवादी अपने को स्त्री केंद्रित करते हैं। यह स्त्री केन्द्रण बहुत अर्थ पूर्ण है। जातिवाचक संज्ञा के रूप में जब स्त्री शब्द का प्रयोग किया जाता है, तब उसमें बहुत सी सम्भावनाएं अंतर्निहित होती हैं। हर स्त्री एक जैसी नहीं होती। हर स्त्री एक व्यक्ति के रूप में एक विशिष्ट इकाई होती है। फिर प्रत्येक स्त्री जीवन के विभिन्न मोड़ों पर और स्थितियों में अलग-अलग होती है। वह एक ही जीवन में अनेक स्त्री जीवन जीती हैं। स्त्री के अनेक चेहरे हैं। फिर भी स्त्री पर अपने को केंद्रित करना स्त्री विमर्शको का मुख्य सरोकार है।'⁴

स्त्री की भावनाओं ने हिंदी साहित्य को अनेक प्रश्नों के उत्तर देने के लिए बाध्य कर दिया। स्त्री विमर्श साहित्य और समाज की विशिष्ट इकाई है। हर पुरुष, पिता, भाई, पति और बेटे के रूप में स्त्री को प्रेम करता है। स्त्री के मानवाधिकारों के पक्ष में प्रेम करने से कठिनाई क्यों?

विमर्शों में उग्रवादी रूप की झलक दिखाई देने लगी है। विमर्श में उग्रवाद के समर्थक भी दिखाई देते हैं। किसी समस्या का समाधान उग्रवाद नहीं हो सकता। विमर्शों में उग्रवाद नहीं, बल्कि समन्वय और प्रेम होना चाहिए।

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राष्ट्र निर्माण में लोक साहित्य एवं संस्कृति का योगदान

नितिश कुमार

शोधार्थी (हिंदी विभाग)

हिमाचल प्रदेश केन्द्रीय विश्विद्यालय धर्मशाला

लोक साहित्य एवं संस्कृति का विश्लेषित स्वरूप:

लोक की उत्पत्ति सामूहिक चेतना का सकल परिणाम है। इसका व्यक्त रूप लोक साहित्य के स्वरूप को स्वतः ही प्राप्त कर लेता है। लोक साहित्य के अंतर्गत लोक संस्कृति की संपूर्ण ऐतिहासिक अभिव्यक्ति होती है। शिष्ट साहित्य के उद्गम स्रोत की प्राप्ति भी इसी प्रकार की लोकाभिव्यक्ति का सकारात्मक परिणाम है। लोक तथा साहित्य दोनों ही अपने भीतर एक महान् परंपरा को संजोए हुए हैं और दोनों का समासयुक्त रूप हमारी पुरातन परंपरा में चिरकाल से विद्यमान है। लोक साहित्य अंग्रेजी के 'फोक लिटरेचर' के रूप में हिंदी भाषा में ग्रहण किया गया है। जबकि फोक (थ्वसा) शब्द का संबंध एंग्लो सैक्सन थ्वसा के विकसित स्वरूप से है। शब्द प्रयोग की दृष्टि से इसका प्रयोग असंस्कृत, गूढ़ समाज और जाति के संदर्भ में किया जाता रहा है। लोक शब्द का अनुवाद अंग्रेजी के फोक (Folk) शब्द के रूप में माना गया है। 'सहस्रशीर्षापुरषः सहस्रपात' ऋग्वेद में लोक शब्द एक विराट समाज की और संकेत करता है। अतः लोक शब्द का मूल अर्थ जन समाज ही माना गया है। लोक साहित्य मौखिक रूप से पीढ़ी दर पीढ़ी संप्रेषित होता है। समाज के भावों, विचारों व जन विश्वास के क्रियाकलापों की अभिव्यक्ति विभिन्न रूपों में लोक साहित्य के माध्यम से की जाती है। पूर्व ऋग्वैदिक काल से ही मानव सामूहिक रूप में रहना

सीख चुका था। अतः वह अपनी लोक भाषा में अपनी अनुभूति को गीतों, गाथाओं, आख्यानों के रूप में अभिव्यक्त करता रहा। लोक साहित्य शब्द लोक और साहित्य दो शब्दों के मेल से बना है। लोक शब्द का शाब्दिक अर्थ है 'देखना' तथा साहित्य का अर्थ है 'जो हित सहित हो'। जिस साहित्य में आम लोगों के सहज एवं आदिम परंपराओं के विचार वेशभूषा के द्वारा जन सामान्य का हित होता है सही अर्थों में वही लोक साहित्य है। लोक साहित्य के सर्वांगिण स्वरूप को भली-भांति समझने के लिए आवश्यक है कि क्षेत्र विशेष की संस्कृति व उसकी सामाजिक संरचना को समझा जाए। संस्कृति वह आधार भूमि है, जिस पर लोक साहित्य का सृजन होता है। अतः स्वतंत्रता प्राप्ति के बाद से ही साहित्यकार भारतवर्ष में लोक साहित्य को भली-भांति समझने हेतु गहनता से प्रयासरत हैं। लोक साहित्य और अन्य साहित्यिक उपलब्धियों के आधार पर ही नृ-वैज्ञानिकों व मानव शास्त्रवेत्ताओं ने लोक साहित्य व संस्कृति के विविध रूपों को आधार मानकर कुछ निश्चित मानदंडों को पूर्ण रूप से परिभाषित करने का प्रयास किया है। विद्वानों द्वारा मानदंडों के उचित विश्लेषण के आधार पर ही साहित्य शब्द के पूर्व लोक विशेषण को जोड़ा गया है। साहित्य और लोक साहित्य की भिन्नता और उसके व्यवच्छेदक धर्म पक्ष को लेकर परस्पर भेद व्यक्त किया गया है। किसी भी साहित्य को मौखिकता

या आदिमता के कारणवश लोक साहित्य की संज्ञा प्रदान नहीं की जा सकती। हिंदी साहित्य जगत में लोक साहित्य, लोकगीत, लोक कथा इन सभी के संदर्भ में लोक शब्द का प्रयोग प्रारंभ से ही संदिग्ध अर्थ के रूप में प्रयुक्त हुआ है। लोक शब्द का प्रयोग कई बार अंग्रेजी के 'बैलेडस' शब्द के पर्याय के रूप में भी प्रयोग हुआ है। अंग्रेजी भाषा में 'फोक' शब्द का प्रयोग मानव शास्त्रवेत्ताओं द्वारा मानव विज्ञान संबंधी आरंभिक खोजों की अनिश्चितता के कारण आदिम और प्राचीन लोगों की संस्कृति के संदर्भ में प्रयोग किया गया है। परंतु कालांतर में अंग्रेजी शब्द फोक के अर्थ में व्यापकता का मिलन हुआ। इस व्यापकता को लाने वाले पाश्चात्य मानव शास्त्रवेत्ता जेनफर्थ, राजेल, स्टेनले, टेलर, फ्रेजर आदि हैं। डब्ल्यू जे. टोमस ने फोक शब्द का प्रयोग किसी वर्ग विशेष की रीति-नीति, प्रथाओं व पारंपरिक विश्वासों आदि के संदर्भ में किया है। लोक संस्कृति से हमारा अभिप्राय जनसाधारण की उस संस्कृति से है जो अपनी प्रेरणा लोक से प्राप्त करती है। किसी भी वस्तु का संशोधन कर उसे उत्तम स्वरूप प्रदान करना व उसे परिष्कृत करना ही संस्कृति है। भौतिक संसाधनों के प्रयोग पश्चात मन और आत्मा को संतुष्ट करने हेतु मनुष्य जिस विकास पथ पर अग्रसर रहता है वह संस्कृति ही है। प्राचीन भारतीय साहित्य के अवलोकन से स्पष्ट होता है कि वैदिक काल की लिखित साहित्यिक रचनाओं के पूर्व भी इस देश में संस्कृति की पृथक धाराएं प्रवाहित हो रही थीं। इनमें प्रथम स्थान पर शिष्ट संस्कृति है जो बौद्धिक विकास के उच्चतम शिखर पर अपनी विजय पताका फहरा रही थी। संस्कृति समाज से पृथक वस्तु नहीं बल्कि जीवन के विविध पक्षों, सामाजिक रूढ़ियों, दार्शनिक चिन्तन और कलात्मक सृजन की अभिव्यक्ति है। लोक साहित्य में लोकगीत, लोक नाटक, लोकगाथाएं, आस्था मनोरंजन, पौराणिक परंपराएं व मनोकामनाएं किसी न किसी प्रकार से जुड़ी ही होती हैं। जिस कारणवश

इनमें निरंतरता का गुण निहित रहता है। अतः लोक जीवन का संपूर्ण अंश पूर्ण रूप से लोक संस्कृति से अंतरमुक्त होता है जो की अत्यंत नैसर्गिक है। संस्कृति जीवन पद्धति का दूसरा नाम है। अतः इस जीवन पद्धति का विकास मनुष्य की उत्पत्ति के साथ ही हुआ है। संस्कृति केवल मनुष्यों का ही अटूट अंग नहीं है अपितु संस्कृति का संबंध पशु जगत से भी रहा है। किसी भी राष्ट्र की श्रेष्ठता व उत्थान का मूल्यांकन उस राष्ट्र की कला संस्कृति व सभ्यता से किया जा सकता है। जिस राष्ट्र के पास अपनी कला व संस्कृति का अभाव रहता है, वह राष्ट्र सदैव अन्य राष्ट्रों के उपनिवेश रूप में कार्य करता है। भारत जैसे विभिन्न सांस्कृतिक इकाईयों के देश में केवल राष्ट्रवाद के स्वरूप को एकत्र कर आधुनिक राष्ट्र निर्माण की परिकल्पना की जा सकती है। भारतवर्ष के आधुनिक राष्ट्र पुनर्निर्माण के लिए राजनीतिक सामाजिक आर्थिक उपादानों का प्रयोग अनिवार्य है। जबकि चेतना में निहित यह राष्ट्रवाद वर्तमान भारतवर्ष के आधुनिकीकरण में वरदान सिद्ध होगा। हिंदी साहित्य जगत में उच्च व मध्यम वर्ग की चेतना में निहित राष्ट्रवाद के स्वरूप को समझने के पश्चात लोक चेतना में राष्ट्रवाद को समझने का अधिक प्रयास किया गया है। लोक चेतना का प्रतिभास ही लोक संस्कृति है। कला, साहित्य व संस्कृति राष्ट्र की वह विरासत है जो किसी भी राष्ट्र के लिए दर्शन और ज्ञान के नवीन मार्ग प्रशस्त करते हुए उस राष्ट्र को आधुनिकता की ओर उन्मुख करती है।

राष्ट्र निर्माण में योगदान :

आधुनिक चिंतनधारा प्राचीन दर्शन व पारंपरिक जीवन शैली से विच्छिन्न नहीं बल्कि प्राचीन दर्शन व विचारों का ही परिवर्तित स्वरूप है। वर्तमान भारतवर्ष एक लोक कल्याणकारी राज्य के रूप में विकसित है। राष्ट्रीयता का मूल आधार विचारमूलक आवश्यक है किन्तु राष्ट्रीयता का विषय पूर्ण रूप से भावनात्मक पक्ष से अधिक प्रखर है। आधुनिक सामाजिक एवं

सांस्कृतिक चिंतन का उद्गम सांस्कृतिक एवं साहित्यिक परिवर्तनों का सकारात्मक परिणाम है। इसी कारणवश राष्ट्रीयता की यह भावना व्यक्ति को क्षुद्र स्वार्थों से विरक्त करने में समर्थ है। भारतीय संस्कृति जितनी अधिक प्राचीन है, उतनी ही अधिक विभिन्न संस्कृतियों के सम्मिलित स्वरूप की वाहक भी है। लोक साहित्य के इतर संपूर्ण भारतीय साहित्य जनसाधारण के कल्याणकारी उद्देश्य को समाहित किये हुए है। राष्ट्र निर्माण में साहित्य का सर्वाधिक योगदान निहित रहता है। साहित्य के योगदान को इस प्रकार से समझा जा सकता है की जिस प्रकार शरीर से श्वास को पृथक नहीं किया जा सकता उसी प्रकार राष्ट्र को भी साहित्य से पृथक नहीं किया जा सकता। लोक साहित्य और लोक संस्कृति अपने स्वाभाविक प्रवाह में तत्कालीन इतिहास को समेटते हुए अग्रसर होती है। हिंदी साहित्य के अंतर्गत विविध भाषाओं के लोक साहित्य में नवजागरण के साथ ही स्वाधीनता संग्राम, भारत विभाजन और देश आजाद होने की अनेक कहानियां व लोककथाएँ प्राप्त होती हैं। लोक साहित्य साधारण जनमानस की अभिव्यक्ति व अनुभूतियों को व्यक्त करने का सशक्त माध्यम है। लोक साहित्य में पर्याप्त शक्ति निहित है की वह समाज व संस्कृति में हो रहे नवीन परिवर्तनों को आत्मसात कर आधुनिक राष्ट्र निर्माण में अपना पूर्ण सहयोग प्रदान कर सके। आधुनिक जीवन शैली व संदर्भों ने लोक मानस को प्रत्यक्ष व अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से प्रभावित किया है। जिस कारण से लोक साहित्य की रचना शैली में विभिन्न परिवर्तन दिखाई पड़ते हैं। आधुनिक जीवन संदर्भों ने भाषिक संरचना व उसके अनुप्रयोग को जिस प्रकार से प्रभावित किया है वह सभी गुण लोक साहित्य में परिलक्षित होते हैं। लोक साहित्य और लोक से जुड़े तत्वों ने आधुनिक राष्ट्र संबंधी संपूर्ण साहित्य को प्रत्यक्ष व परोक्ष रूप से प्रभावित किया है। भारतीय साहित्यकारों का मुख्य कर्तव्य है कि वे ऐसे साहित्य का निर्माण करें की जिससे राष्ट्रीय एकता एवं राष्ट्र

के आत्म गौरव में वृद्धि हो। देश का सर्वांगीण विकास और समग्र राष्ट्र का चारित्रिक पुनरुत्थान पूर्ण रूप से शिष्ट साहित्य पर निर्भर है।

निष्कर्ष :

लोकसाहित्य ने धरातल से उठकर अपना एक शीर्षस्थ स्थान बनाया है जहाँ उसे वैदिक साहित्य के समकक्ष आसन प्राप्त है। हमारे लोकजीवन के बहुत से सांस्कारिक तथा धार्मिक कार्य वैदिक मंत्रों से पूर्ण होते हैं। जहाँ ये मंत्र संस्कृत में पढ़े जाते हैं, वहीं ग्रामीणों द्वारा गाए जानेवाले लोकगीत तथा लोकाचार पर आधारित अन्य क्रियाकलाप भी चलते रहते हैं। एक ओर पुरोहित मंत्रोच्चारण करता है तो दूसरी ओर ग्रामीण स्त्रियाँ व्यवहारिक लोकगीतों का गायन करती हैं। मुंडन, कर्णवेध, यज्ञोपवीत तथा विवाह आदि संस्कारों पर और मकान, धर्मशाला, कुंए, तालाब तथा पोखर आदि का शुभारंभ करते समय भी मंत्र तथा लोकगीत साथ-साथ चलते हैं। ऐसा नहीं है की सांस्कारिक एवं धार्मिक तथा परमार्थ का कार्य लोकजीवन में नहीं मिलता। प्राचीन ज्ञान परंपरा व साहित्य के अनुरूप ही लोकसाहित्य को भी उच्च स्थान प्राप्त है। लोक साहित्य बहुधा अलिखित ही रहता है और अपनी मौखिक परंपरा द्वारा एक पीढ़ी से दूसरी पीढ़ी तक आगे बढ़ता रहता है। इस साहित्य के रचयिता का नाम अज्ञात रहता है। लोक का प्राणी जो कुछ कहता-सुनता है, उसे समूह की वाणी बनाकर और समूह से घुल-मिलकर ही कहता है। लोक भाषा के माध्यम से लोक अभिव्यक्ति लोक साहित्य व संस्कृति की सबसे बड़ी विशेषता है। लोक संस्कृति उच्च जीवन मूल्यों एवं संस्कारों को सदैव सहेज कर रखती है। महाभारत और रामायण जैसे धार्मिक ग्रन्थ इसके प्रबल प्रमाण हैं। समयानुरूप समन्वयात्मकता का प्रबल भाव लोक संस्कृति का विशेष गुण है जोकि सामाजिक लोक जीवन एवं राष्ट्रीय पुनरुत्थान के लिए अति आवश्यक है।

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Voices of Empowerment: Investigating the Nexus of Language, Culture, and Education in Indigenous Communities through the Works of Beatrice Culleton, Katherena Vermette, and Lee Maracle

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“Words are like arrows that can be shot at the narratives of the colonial power. Word arrows have transformative power and can help Indigenous people come home. They help to establish a new discursive space. Every time a story is told, every time one word of an Indigenous language is spoken, we are resisting the destruction of our collective memory.”

Neil McLeod (67-68)

Introduction :

Indigenous communities globally face challenges like language loss, cultural assimilation, and educational inequities. In Canada, efforts to revitalize Indigenous languages and cultures in education are key to promoting cultural continuity and self-determination. This research article examines how Indigenous authors Beatrice Culleton, Katherena Vermette and Lee Maracle contribute to this discourse through their literary works. By comparing their writings, the article explores the intersection of language, culture and education in Indigenous contexts and its implications for education policy and practice.

Author Profiles :

Beatrice Culleton : Beatrice Culleton Mosionier, also known as Beatrice Culleton, is a Métis author born in St. Boniface, Manitoba, Canada, in 1949. She is best known for her groundbreaking novel *In Search of April Raintree*, which explores the experiences of Métis sisters growing up in the Canadian foster care system. Culleton draws from her own experiences as a survivor of the Sixties Scoop, a period during which Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families and placed in non-Indigenous foster homes. *In Search of April Raintree* has become a seminal work in Canadian Indigenous literature, addressing themes of identity,

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family, resilience, and the legacy of colonialism.

Katherena Vermette : Katherena Vermette is a Métis writer, poet and filmmaker from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, born in 1977. She is of Métis descent and has deep roots in the Red River Métis community. Vermette gained widespread acclaim for her debut novel *The Break*, which won the Amazon.ca First Novel Award, the Margaret Laurence Award for Fiction, and was a finalist for the Governor General's Literary Award for Fiction. *The Break* is a powerful exploration of inter-generational trauma, violence against Indigenous women, and the resilience of Métis and Indigenous communities. Vermette is also known for her poetry collections and her work as a screenwriter and filmmaker.

Lee Maracle : Lee Maracle is a Stó:lô author, poet, educator, and activist from the Sto:lo Nation in British Columbia, Canada, born in 1950. She is widely regarded as one of the most influential Indigenous writers in Canada. Maracle's writing spans various genres, including novels, poetry, essays and autobiographical works, and addresses themes such as colonialism, Indigenous identity, feminism and the importance of Indigenous knowledge and storytelling. Some of her notable works include *Ravensong*, *Celia's Song*, and *I Am Woman: A Native Perspective on Sociology and Feminism*. Maracle is also a respected elder, teacher, and community leader, known for her advocacy for Indigenous rights and social justice.

Battiste says :

Indigenous Knowledge encompasses a diverse array of languages, traditions,

and practices cultivated and upheld by Indigenous societies. Predominantly conveyed orally and symbolically, it is disseminated through rituals, linguistic structures and experiential learning, rather than conventional written documentation. This knowledge is intricately woven into the fabric of Indigenous cultures, transmitted through generations via storytelling, ceremonies, problem-solving techniques, and cultural expression, rather than being catalogued in libraries or academic journals. (Battiste, 2008, p. 87)

These authors have made significant contributions to Indigenous literature in Canada, using their writing to explore complex issues facing Indigenous communities, celebrate Indigenous resilience and culture, and advocate for social change.

Analysis :

Indigenous education in Canada has been shaped by a long history of colonialism, assimilationist policies and cultural genocide. The residential school system, in particular, had a devastating impact on Indigenous languages and cultures, as generations of Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families and communities and forbidden from speaking their own languages. In recent decades, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of Indigenous languages and cultures in education, as well as a concerted effort to incorporate Indigenous perspectives and knowledges into the curriculum. Indigenous authors have played a central role in this movement, using their literary works to challenge dominant narratives, celebrate Indigenous resilience and resistance, and advocate for the revitalization of Indigenous languages and cultures.

Walker added that :

Because of that stark revelation, organic leaders and intellectuals were forced to adopt the radical strategy of seceding from mainstream education. They took control of the education of their own children by setting up a parallel system of schooling. The immediate goal was to rescue the Māori language from extinction (p. 165).

The residential school system in Canada, with its profound impact on Indigenous communities, is a recurring theme in the works of Beatrice Culleton, Katherena Vermette, and Lee Maracle. Each author approaches this dark chapter of Canadian history with sensitivity and depth, weaving narratives that shed light on the intergenerational trauma, cultural disconnection, and resilience experienced by Indigenous people affected by the residential school system.

Beatrice Culleton, in her seminal work *In Search of April Raintree*, delves into the lasting effects of the residential school system on Indigenous families. Through the experiences of the Métis sisters April and Cheryl Raintree, Culleton explores the trauma of separation from family and culture, as well as the struggle to reclaim identity and self-worth in the aftermath of residential school experiences. Culleton's novel provides a poignant portrayal of the complex legacy of the residential school system and its enduring impact on Indigenous individuals and communities.

A client recalls the racism and other abuse she suffered while being held in foster care :

To me it was a house of hell because they tried to break my spirit. They called

down the native people . . . I was trained that native people were dirty, were ugly, a disgrace and because of me being the darker one of the family. They always called me squaw or dirty or filthy things, you know. But, one thing I am grateful for, I never got raped. But I was abused mentally, physically. I was locked up in basements my whole day, when I wasn't in school. I worked hard like a slave, got nothing out of it in return but lickings, you know. And at the age of about seventeen, I got out of that place. (Waldram et al. 12)

Similarly, Katherena Vermette's novel *The Break* delves into the repercussions of historical trauma, including the legacy of residential schools, within an Indigenous community in Winnipeg. As the characters grapple with the aftermath of a violent crime, Vermette skilfully intertwines past and present, revealing how the trauma of residential schools reverberates through generations, shaping relationships, identities and perceptions of self. Through her powerful storytelling, Vermette confronts the painful realities of colonization while also highlighting the resilience and strength of Indigenous communities in the face of adversity.

Through the interconnected narratives of various characters affected by a violent assault, Vermette exposes the pervasive influence of systemic racism and colonialism, constraining every character's life in some way. Despite the diversity of responses to trauma, from criminal behaviour to resilience, each character grapples with the legacy of historical injustices.

Vermette skilfully delves beneath the surface of each character's persona, revealing their internal conflicts and vulnerabilities. Through intimate portrayals

of familial bonds, cultural traditions and everyday acts of kindness, she demonstrates the profound healing power of love, community and cultural identity. By showcasing the importance of family, tradition, and culture in the face of adversity, Vermette underscores the devastating impact of colonial policies, such as the banning of potlucks, which aimed to erode Indigenous identity and connection.

Resilience in the novel is depicted through everyday acts of endurance and solidarity within kinship networks, particularly among the women of the Charles and Traverse families. These women support each other through tough times, much like a pack of wolves. Métis officer Tommy observes how they 'hold each other up,' reflecting the support his own Métis mother and aunt provide. Aubrey Jean Hanson highlights that resilience is found in the simple, essential tasks of daily life, such as sharing coffee, taking walks, making phone calls, and being present for one another.

The association of the family with wolf imagery features the communal strength and interconnectedness among its members. Just as wolves rely on their pack for survival and protection, the women in the novel draw strength from their familial bonds and mutual support. This portrayal highlights the resilience inherent in collective solidarity and emphasizes the importance of community in navigating adversity. Through their shared experiences and mutual aid, the characters demonstrate that resilience is not merely an individual trait but a collective endeavour grounded in shared experiences and communal support.

The novel powerfully addresses the urgent issue of violence against Indigenous

women and girls, vividly depicting its impacts on individuals and communities. By confronting systemic injustices and their toll on Indigenous lives, the novel gains thematic depth and relevance, especially in the context of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, which characterizes this violence as a form of genocide.

Vermette's works, including *The Break*, *North End Love Songs*, and *The Seven Teachings Stories*, explore Indigenous resilience through language, culture, and education. She highlights urban Indigenous life, the importance of storytelling, and the role of oral traditions in maintaining cultural connections. Vermette emphasizes Indigenous agency and creativity in reclaiming identities and shaping futures.

Through literature, Vermette invites readers to empathize with Indigenous experiences and challenge misconceptions, offering a pathway towards reconciliation and understanding. By immersing readers in the intimate lives of her characters, she fosters empathy and compassion, encouraging readers to confront their own biases and engage in meaningful dialogue about reconciliation and justice.

Lee Maracle, in works like *Ravensong* and *Celia's Song*, explores the impacts of the residential school system, focusing on cultural loss, intergenerational trauma, and healing within Indigenous communities. Her nuanced characterizations and lyrical prose shed light on the complexities of Indigenous identity and the lasting legacy of colonialism.

Lee Maracle's works highlight the crucial connection between language, culture and education in Indigenous

communities. Her narratives provide insights into the challenges and opportunities for Indigenous cultural empowerment and self-determination. To decolonize education and promote revitalization, it's vital to prioritize Indigenous perspectives and knowledge systems.

Lee Maracle, a prominent Indigenous writer and activist, has made significant contributions to literature that delve into the interconnectedness of language, culture and education within Indigenous communities. Through her novels, essays, and poetry, Maracle illuminates the complexities and challenges faced by Indigenous people in reclaiming and revitalizing their cultural identities. This analysis explores several key themes and motifs present in Maracle's works, shedding light on the ways in which she portrays the nexus of language, culture, and education in Indigenous contexts.

Maracle's works consistently highlight the central role of language in Indigenous cultures as a vehicle for cultural transmission, identity formation, and resistance against colonial oppression. In novels such as *Ravensong* and *Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel*, Maracle portrays characters who actively reclaim and assert their Indigenous languages as acts of cultural resistance against assimilationist policies and linguistic marginalization. Through these narratives, Maracle underscores the resilience and strength inherent in Indigenous languages as symbols of cultural survival and resurgence.

Maracle sensitively explores the impacts of colonial violence and intergenerational trauma on Indigenous communities, particularly regarding language and cultural loss. In her essays and autobio-

graphical writings, such as *I Am Woman* and *Memory Serves*, Maracle reflects on her own experiences of growing up in a post-colonial society and the enduring effects of historical trauma on Indigenous people. Through these personal accounts, Maracle highlights the deep connections between language, culture, and trauma, highlighting the urgent need for healing and cultural revitalization within Indigenous communities.

Maracle's works advocate for the integration of Indigenous knowledge systems and epistemologies into mainstream education as a means of promoting cultural revitalization and empowering Indigenous youth. In essays like *Oratory: Coming to Theory*, Maracle challenges Western-centric notions of knowledge and education, advocating for a holistic approach that values Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Through her characters and narratives, Maracle envisions educational settings that honour and incorporate Indigenous languages, cultures, and worldviews, thereby fostering a sense of belonging and empowerment among Indigenous students.

Methodology :

This research article employs a qualitative research methodology, drawing on textual analysis and literary criticism to examine the works of Beatrice Culleton, Katherena Vermette, and Lee Maracle. The primary sources for this study include a selection of novels, short stories, poetry collections and essays written by each author. These texts are analysed thematically, with a focus on key themes related to language, culture and education in Indigenous communities. Additionally, the article draws on secondary sources, including

scholarly articles, book chapters and Indigenous education policy documents, to provide context and background for the analysis.

Results and Discussion :

Culture can be defined as the shared experiences of people, including their languages, values, customs, beliefs, and mores. It also includes worldviews, ways of knowing, and ways of communicating. Culturally significant factors encompass, but are not limited to, race/ethnicity, religion, social class, language, disability, sexual orientation, age and gender. Contextual dimensions such as geographic region and socioeconomic circumstances are also essential to shaping culture. (American Evaluation Association, p. 2)

The analysis of Culleton's, Vermette's, and Maracle's works reveal a number of recurring themes and motifs related to language, culture, and education. All three authors foreground the importance of Indigenous languages as repositories of cultural knowledge and expressions of Indigenous identity. They also highlight the ways in which language loss and cultural assimilation have been perpetuated through colonial education systems, while also offering visions of decolonized education that prioritize Indigenous languages and knowledges. Furthermore, the authors explore the role of storytelling and oral tradition in Indigenous education, emphasizing the power of narrative to transmit cultural teachings and foster intergenerational connections. Overall, Culleton, Vermette, and Maracle offer nuanced and multifaceted perspectives on the nexus of language, culture, and education in Indigenous communities, providing valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and scholars alike.

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Conclusion:

This research article concludes by reflecting on the implications of the findings for Indigenous education policy and practice in Canada and beyond. By centering Indigenous voices and perspectives, Culleton, Vermette and Maracle challenge dominant discourses and offer alternative visions of education that prioritize cultural revitalization, language revitalization and Indigenous self-determination. Their works serve as powerful reminders of the resilience and strength of Indigenous people in the face of ongoing colonization and provide inspiration for transformative change in Indigenous education. Ultimately, this research article underscores the importance of listening to and learning from Indigenous authors as we work towards more inclusive, equitable and culturally responsive education systems.

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Exploring the Sacred Resonance of AUM Chanting and Its Healing Power in Classical Indian Texts

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Introduction :

The universe is composed of energy vibrating at different frequencies, creating sound. According to spiritual science, sound frequencies give rise to the diverse world through various combinations. All entities in the cosmos, including humans, are made up of sound vibrations called nāda, the flowing energy of sound. Within this cosmic sound “field,” there are two types of sounds: anāhata or “unstruck” sound, and āhata or “struck” sound. Ahata sound is the “struck” sound caused by physical impact and is audible. Anahat nāda is an unstruck sound that can be experienced through deep silence and a clear mind, not caused by any physical impact. The sound is not externally audible but originates from within [1].

1. Nada Yoga as per the Indian Metaphysical System :

As per the Indian metaphysical and yogic system,

‘By sound vibration, one becomes liberated’ (Vedāntasūtra 4.22).

So nāda yoga acts as a tool to uplift

to a higher conscious level leading ultimately to liberation.

In Narada Purana, it is mentioned that- ‘Struck’ sound is said to give pleasure, ‘unstruck’ sound leads to Liberation” (Nārada Purāna).

Lakshmana Desikendra in Sharada Tilaka Tantra says that the consciousness of all beings is the Shabda Brahman itself.

“Caitanyam sarva bhutanam shabda bramheti me matihi”

According to Indian Vedic philosophy, human consciousness is divided into five layers: Annamaya (physical), Pranamaya (breath), Manomaya (mind), Vijnanamaya (wisdom), and Anandamaya (bliss). Each kosha represents a different level of awareness, from sensory experience to the blissful state of ultimate consciousness, manifesting through Nada [2]. Nada is the sound coming from the sphere beyond the anandamaya kosha.

During external chanting, sound enters consciousness through the ears (Annamaya Kosha), converting mechanical energy into electrochemical signals sensed in the

mind (Manomaya Kosha). The rhythmic sound focuses the mind, controlling breath (Pranamaya Kosha), and invoking inner awareness, connecting the self to higher consciousness and promoting optimal physical health. "Prana is both macrocosmic and microcosmic and is the substratum of all life" [3]. Living beings sustain themselves through prana, drawn from the universe. Disruptions in this flow cause stress and imbalance, affecting the overall health and performance [4].

2. The science behind sound healing and How Mantra Works :

Sound has powerful healing effects by bringing the body and mind into harmony using sound frequencies. Every object in the universe has a unique resonant frequency, which is experimentally demonstrated with the struck tuning fork resonating with another tuning fork placed near by the tuning fork to resonate [4]. Making sound waves travel deeply into the body along the energy pathways can promote healing.

Sound travels at the speed of 340 meters per second, in the air medium. In water, sound travels at the speed of 1,500 meters per second. The human body is composed of 70% water, making it an excellent sound conductor. As per the principle of resonance, sound therapy possibly can bring the body back into harmony, without medication or surgery (29). Laurel Elizabeth Keys (1973), defines that, toning is achieved by vocalizing an elongated vowel sound for an extended period. Rhythmic vocal chanting deepens breathing, oxygenates the body and relaxes muscles. Regular chanting helps to restore a healthy mind, body, and spirit [5].

Mantra has its effects through the vibrations of the sound. Recitation of a mantra stimulates the meridian points connected on the upper pallet of the mouth. A yogi in the West, Yogi Bhajan revealed that in the mouth, we have meridians located at different places. Out of that, 84 meridian points are located on the hard upper palate. Along the inside of the teeth, there are thirty-two pairs of meridian points, and 20 more are present on the central part of the palate in a U shape. When we chant and repeat the mantra the motion of the tongue stimulates the meridians by affecting the hypothalamus [6].

Loud chanting can alleviate psychological stress before surgery and in cardiac patients it reduces blood pressure and respiratory rate [7] and reduces tension during medical scans and alleviate sleep disorders [8].

In the U.S., studies found that certain vocal sounds indicate stress and altering voice patterns improves brainwave frequencies, aiding in conditions like hypertension, diabetes, and pain management.

3. Mantra and Effect of Mantra chanting :

"A mantra is a sacred utterance, numinous sound, or sound that is charged with psychospiritual power. A mantra is a sound that empowers the mind, or that is empowered by the mind [6]." Mantra Yoga is a scientific method to activate extra-sensory strength centers in the body and connect with universal energy. Mantras work in the inner realms of consciousness with long-term practice.

The Vedic literature mentions different strategies of Japa to achieve a goal. The

repetition of the mantra can be done verbally, in a whisper, and mentally. Vocal repetition is called Vaikhari Japa, while whispering or humming is known as Upamshu Japa [9]. The mental repetition of the mantra is termed Manasika Japa. In this process, emotion gets added to the mental repetition adding mental purification. So, the effect of Manasika Japa is always powerful [10]. Mantras combine rhythm and meaning to guide the mind to meditation and higher consciousness. Proper pronunciation of syllables is important as they possess special healing potential.

4. Sacred Syllable and Etymology :

A “sacred syllable” is a sound with spiritual significance in various traditions. In Vedic philosophy, the sacred syllable is “Omkar,” and the Sanskrit word ‘Om’ represents omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence [11]. Omkar is plays a central role in religious prayers and meditative practices.

The 14th Dalai Lama described Omkar as composed of three pure letters: A, U, and M. These symbolize the impure and pure exalted body, speech, and mind of everyday unenlightened life and an enlightened Buddha. The “Aum” is deeply rooted in Indian philosophy, particularly in the Vedas and Upanishads, symbolizing the ultimate reality or consciousness (Brahman) and encapsulating the essence of the entire universe.

ॐ कारं बिंदुसंयुक्तं नित्यं ध्यायंति योगिनः ।
कामदं मोक्षदं चैव ॐकाराय नमो नमः ॥११॥

In the shloka, Yogis meditate on Omkar forever attached to the point, Omkar is the giver of salvation, desires,

and inner peace. We call you, Lord of hosts, Poets of poets, most famous; The Supreme King of Spiritual Knowledge, Lord of Spiritual Knowledge, by His grace hear us and reside at that place (of sacrifice).

This mantra refers to the fact that the OM mantra represents the supreme spirit Bramha. (Rgveda 3.62.10) [11].

5. Omkar in Ancient Review :

5.1. Patanjali Yoga Sutra :

OM is well-defined in Patanjali Yoga Sutra as Patanjali has said,

‘Tasya Vachaka Pranava’; name of Iswara Pranava i.e. OM.

“Tatajapastadarthabhavanam” which means repetition of Omkar or japa, is to be done first loud then by understanding the meaning, and then silently with mind [12].

Patanjali also mentions the benefits of Om chanting in the form of the power to overcome the 9 types of obstacles of physical, and mental states like :

‘व्याधिस्त्यानसंशय प्रमादालस्याविरति भ्रान्तिदर्शनालब्ध भूमिकत्वानवस्थितत्वानि चित्तविक्षेपास्तेऽन्तरायाः
“(Patanjali’s Yoga Sutra, 1.30).

Vyādhi or physical illness, Styāna or Apathy, Samsāya or Self-doubt, Pramādā or negligence, Alasyā or lethargy, Avirati or Craving, Bhrāntidarśanā or living under illusions, Alabdhabhūmikātvā or doubting in progress and Anavasthitātvā or inability to maintain achievements [13].

Chanting of Omkar also removes sorrow, dejection, the restlessness of the physical state and the breathing distractions.

5.2. Bhagavad Gita :

Lord Krishna has mentioned in Srimad Bhagavad Gita that, essence of all veda is Pranav i.e Om.

ॐ इत्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन्।

यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देहं स याति परमां गतिम् ॥13 ॥

(Bhagavad Gita 8:13)

It means the person who departs by uttering the Omkar, the single syllable brahman by meditating on Om, attains the supreme goal at the end.

Lord Krishna describes the formless aspect of God in the form of the sacred syllable Omkar in Srimad Bhagavad Gita [14].

In another verse, Lord Krishna emphasizes the usage of the syllable Om at the start of every mantra in Vedas.

तस्माद् ॐ इत्युदाहृत्य यज्ञदानतपःक्रियाः ।

प्रवर्तन्ते विधानोक्ताः सततं ब्रह्मवादिनाम् ॥24 ॥

(Bhagavad Gita 17:24)

Therefore, when performing acts of sacrifice, offering charity, or undertaking penance, expounders of the Vedas always begin by uttering “Om” according to the prescriptions of Vedic injunctions [14].

Eight of the Upanisòads have sections dealing with ‘Om’. These are discussed below;

5.3. Mandukya Upanishad :

Mandukya Upanishad is a part of Atharva Veda. Among all the Upanishads Mandukya Upanisad describes the Omkar in every aspect in each of its 12 verses.

हरिः ओम् । ओमित्येतदक्षरमिदं सर्वं

तस्योपव्याख्यानं भूतं भवद्भविष्यदिति सर्वमोङ्कार एव ।

यच्चान्यत्रिकालातीतं तदप्योङ्कार एव ॥11 ॥

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“Aum is the eternal syllable of which all that exists is but the development. The past, present, and future are all included in this one sound, And all that exists beyond the forms of time is also implied in the word Aum.” It states in the first verse- All is Om. It also describes the four states of consciousness as

Vaisvanara - जागरितस्थानो बहिःप्रज्ञः सप्ताङ्ग
एकोनविंशतिमुखः स्थूलभुग् वैश्वानरः प्रथमः पादः ॥

Vaiswanara, the Universal Male, has seven limbs and nineteen doors. He enjoys gross objects. This is known as the waking state can be related to the jagrat Avastha [16].

Taijasa- स्वप्नस्थानोऽन्तःप्रज्ञः सप्ताङ्ग
एकोनविंशतिमुखः प्रविविक्तभुक् तैजसो द्वितीयः पादः ॥

He who is wise in the inner self, who has seven limbs and nineteen doors; who perceives and enjoys subtle objects; Taijasa, the inhabitant of the radiant mind. This is the second state known as the dreaming state can be described as the subtle state or inward knowing state.

Prajna - यत्र सुप्तो न कञ्चन कामं कामयते न
कञ्चन स्वप्नं पश्यति तत् सुषुप्तम् ।

सुषुप्तस्थान एकीभूतः प्रज्ञानघन एवानन्दमयो
ह्यानन्दभुक् चेतोमुखः प्राज्ञस्तृतीयः पादः ॥

He who has attained perfect slumber, who is one with all, and is a repository of wisdom, consisting solely of pure delight, who experiences joy without cause, and for whom the conscious mind is the gateway, is known as Prajna. This is the third state known as the deep sleep state and can be related to the underlying state of consciousness which is undistracted.

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Turiya- नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिष्प्रज्ञं नोभयतःप्रज्ञं न
प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं नाप्रज्ञम्।

अदृष्टमव्यवहार्यमग्राह्यमलक्षणमचिन्त्यमव्यपदेश्यमे
कात्मप्रत्ययसारं प्रपञ्चोपशमं शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं चतुर्थं
मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः ॥

The verse describes the ultimate reality, the Self (Atman), as the essence of one's self-consciousness, peaceful, auspicious, and non-dual. It is considered the Fourth state (Turiya), a pure state of consciousness beyond the other three states, characterized by pure silence. The Upanisad tries to mention with the help of Omkar, the vehicle it becomes easy to move toward Turiya. Each state explores the one before becoming subtler and merging into the next [16].

5.4. Mundaka Upanishad :

प्रणवो धनुः शारो ह्यात्मा ब्रह्म तल्लक्ष्यमुच्यते।

अप्रमत्तेन वेद्भ्रुव्यं शरवत्तन्मयो भवेत् ॥4॥

(Mundaka Upanishad 2.2.4)

The Mundaka Upanishad explains that "Om" is used in meditation to achieve self-realization. It is likened to a bow, with the individual self as the arrow aiming for Brahman. Om serves as a bridge to immortality, allowing one to move from darkness to the light of knowledge and truth through meditation.[17].

5.5. Chandogya Upanishad :

The Chāndogya Upanisad describes concepts of chanting 'Omkar in the form of Brahman and atman, good and evil, Space, the universe as a whole, the soul and self, oneness with the world and Brahman, and so on [18].

ओमित्येतदक्षरमुद्गीथमुपासीत।

ओमिति ह्युद्गायति तस्योपव्याख्यानम् ॥1.1.1॥

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It means Om is the closest expression to Brahman. Recite Omkar in the form of worshipping Brahman.

तदेतन्मिथुनमोमित्येतस्मिन्नक्षरे संसृज्यते यदा
वै मिथुनौ समागच्छत आपयतो वै
तावन्योन्यस्य कामम् ॥1.1.6॥

It describes the syllable Om as Udgita means the source or the quintessence of the essences, the supreme. The Rik is speech, Saman is breath and the Udgitha is the syllable, Om. Speech and breath, or Rik and Saman, form one couple. And that couple is joined together in the syllable Om. By coming together, they fulfill each other's desires. So by meditating on the syllable "Om", one can fulfill their desires [19].

आपयिता ह वै कामानां भवति य एतदेवं

विद्वानक्षरमुद्गीथमुपास्ते ॥1.1.7॥

Who worships Om as the Udgitha, (Brahman), acquires the qualities of Om kara. and receives everything he desires.

Manu Smriti :

This ancient text announces the mono syllable as the highest of everything.

एकाक्षरं परं ब्रह्म प्राणायामः परं तपः।

सावित्र्यास्तु परं नास्ति मौनात् सत्यं विशिष्यते ॥83॥

(Manu Smriti 2.83)

It means the mono-syllable Omkar is the highest Brahman; Breath-suspensions are the highest austerity; no other mantra is higher than the Sāvitrī verse; truth is better than Silence [20].

क्षरन्ति सर्वा वैदिव्यो जुहोतियजतिक्रियाः।

अक्षरं दुष्करं ज्ञेयं ब्रह्म चैव प्रजापतिः ॥84॥

(Manu Smriti 2.84)

It declares this syllable (om) is to be regarded as imperishable, and all other

Vedic acts of oblation, and sacrifice can be surpassed; because Omkar is Brahman, and also Prajâpati [21].

So undoubtedly one can reach the ultimate by japa of Om alone, despite whether he does or doesn't perform other rites.

Svetasvatara Upanishad :

It describes that Om is like the fire which though potentially present in firewood is not seen until two sticks are rubbed against each other. The self is like that fire; it is realized by constant awareness of the sacred syllable Om. Let the body be the stick that is rubbed and Om be the stick that is rubbed against.

स्वदेहमरणिं कृत्वा प्रणवं चोत्तरारणिम् ।

ध्याननिर्मथनाभ्यासादेवं पश्यन्निगूढवत् ॥14॥

It describes that through the practice of the friction of meditation, one can perceive the hidden Self much like the fire remains in wood. The body is represented by the lower piece of wood, while Om is represented by the upper piece [22].

Brihadaranyak Upanishad :

ॐ । पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते ।

पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

ॐ खं ब्रह्म । खं पुराणम्; वायुरं खम् इति ह

स्माह कौरव्यायणीपुत्रः; वेदो'यं ब्राह्मणा विदुः;

वेदैनेन यद्वेदितव्यम् ॥1॥

Om. That which is infinite is this universe and that which is infinite comes from that infinite. Taking the infinite universe, it remains as the infinite Brahman. "Om" refers to the ether-Brahman, which is the eternal ether. 'The air contains ether, according to the son of Kauravyāyanī . The Veda is within it and the Brāhmanas, who

know Brahman, recognize this. It is through the Veda that one comes to know what is to be known. Therefore, this chapter is intended to instruct on the meditation of Om as a part of all other meditations. Additionally, it promotes self-control, charity, and compassion [24].

Katha Upanishad :

सर्वे वेदा यत्पदमामनन्ति तर्पां सि सर्वाणि च यद्वदन्ति ।

यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण

ब्रवीम्योमित्येतत् ॥15॥

(Katha Upanishad 1.2.15)

The Katha Upanishad depicts a conversation between sage Nachiketa and Yama, the god of death. They discuss the nature of Atman, Brahman, and Moksha.

This verse describes the Vedas extolling one goal, which all acts of tapas speak of, and for which men lead a Brahmachari life. I will briefly tell you what that goal, it is – Om kar [23].

Prashna Upanishad :

The Prashna Upanishad presents questions inquired by various Hindu sages (Rishi) and answered by Sage Pippalada. It discusses the knowledge about Brahman, with the relation of the universal (Atman), by different means such as meditation, immortality, etc [24]. The verses on Omkar are-

एतद्वै सत्यकाम परं चापरं च ब्रह्म यदोङ्कारः ।

तस्माद्विद्वानेतेनैवायतनेनैकतरमन्वेति ॥2॥

(Prashna Upanishad 5.2)

The syllable 'Om' represents both higher and lower Brahman and allows the knower to reach either of them [25].

स यथ्येकमात्रमभिध्यायीत स तेनैव संवेदितस्तूर्णमेव
जगत्याभिसंप्रध्यते ।

तमृचो मनुष्यलोकमुपनयन्ते स तत्र तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण
श्रद्धया संपन्नो महिमानमनुभवति॥३॥

(Prashna Upanishad 5.3)

If one meditates on a single measure of it, will soon become enlightened. The verses will guide them to the world of men, where they can combine with tapas, Brahmacharya, and faith to experience greatness.

ऋग्भिरेतं यजुर्भिरन्तरिक्षं सामभिर्यत्तत्कवयो वेदयन्ते ।
तमोङ्कारेणैवायतनेनान्वेति विद्वान्यत्तच्छान्तमजरममृतमभयं
परं चेति॥७॥

(Prashna Upanishad 5.7)

Through the recitation of Riks, Yajus and Saman, one can attain the three realms of existence, namely the earthly realm, the celestial realm and the realm of the seers (Brahmaloka). By chanting the sacred syllable 'Om', one can attain the state of tranquility, immortality, fearlessness, and supreme bliss.

Taittiriya Upanisòad :

The śruti first speaks of Pranava, the object of contemplation:

ओमिति ब्रह्म । ओमितीदं सर्वम्॥१॥

(Taittirīya Upanisad 8.1)

'Om'kar is Brahman. 'Om' is this all. One should contemplate on sound 'Om' by holding in mind, Brahman. Every sound form is pervaded by the syllable 'Om' as mentioned in the śruti, "As all leaves are fast bound in stalk".

ओमित्येतदनुकृतिर्ह स्म वा अप्यो श्रावयेत्याश्रावयन्ति ।
ओमिति सामानि गायन्ति । ॐ शोमिति शस्त्राणि शंसन्ति
। ओमित्यध्वर्युः प्रतिगरं प्रतिगृणाति । ओमिति ब्रह्मा
प्रसौति । ओमित्यग्निहोत्रमनुजानाति । ओमिति ब्राह्मणः
प्रवक्ष्यन्नाह ब्रह्मोपाप्नवानीति । ब्रह्मैवोपाप्नोति ॥२॥

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The priests chant 'Om' to begin recitations and convey acceptance. By wishing for Brahman, one truly obtains it.[26].

6. Different Methods Of 'Om'kar Chanting :

Pulsing Repetition :

In this way of chanting at whatever speed is comfortable and natural, Omkar can be chanted. It may be several cycles per second or it can be extremely slow with mmmmmm...kar sound.

- OMmmOMmmOMmm...
- AA, UU and MM.....[27].

With the Flow of Breath :

Imagining the mantra with inhalation Omkar chant can be done while exhaling loudly with the flow of breath.

- Exhale: "OMmmmmmmmm..." Inhale: " (silence) "
- Exhale: "OMmmmmmmmm..." Inhale: " (silence) "

Another method can be a mental repetition of Om kar chanting with inhalation and exhalation only with the breath pattern without making a sound. In both ways of practice mind, breath and flow of mantra unitedly can be experienced. So, the rate of speed of chanting naturally slows down [28].

7. The Resonance Harmony Theory of Om Mantra Chanting :

Goldman (2002) explains that when the frequency of a body part changes, it vibrates out of harmony, leading to disease. If the correct resonant frequency for a healthy organ is projected into the diseased part, healing should occur (p. 90) [29]. Chanting the Om mantra creates

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vibrations that resonate with the respiratory, cardiovascular and nervous systems, facilitating coherence and synchronization.[30].

This resonance enhances communication between physiological processes, resulting in well-being [31]. Based on Vedic texts, the AUM mantra has healing effects on physiological and psychological well-being by improving synchronization and coordination among bodily systems.[32].

8. Conclusion :

Our study suggests that incorporating AUM mantra chanting into mindfulness practices can offer a holistic approach to well-being and stress management with an understanding of self-awareness at the Pancha kosha level affecting the energy centers (chakras) in the physical body and subtle energy pathways (Nadis). Further research demands an empirical relationship between sound, resonance and human well-being.

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लघु समाचार पत्रों की बढ़ती स्थानीय लोकप्रियता पर अध्ययन

माधुरी तिवारी

शोध छात्रा

श्रीराम स्वरूप मेमोरियल यूनिवर्सिटी, लखनऊ

डॉ. अजय शुक्ला

विभागाध्यक्ष

आर्यकुल कालेज ऑफ एजुकेशन, लखनऊ

परिचय :

समाचार पत्र का एक उद्देश्य लोकप्रिय भावना को समझना और उसे अभिव्यक्ति देना भावनाएँ जगाना, निडर होकर लोकप्रिय दोषों को उजागर करना (महात्मा गांधी, हरिजन, 25 मई 1946)। समाचार पत्र ऐसे तथ्य और विश्लेषण प्रदान करने का प्रयास करते हैं जो सूचित नागरिकों को एक जटिल, सूचना-संतृप्त समाज में प्रभावी और जिम्मेदार निर्णय लेने की अनुमति देते हैं। समाचार पत्रों की भूमिका उनके पाठकों की बदलती जरूरतों के जवाब में विकसित हुई है और वर्तमान में अन्य मीडिया की जीवनशैली, मनोरंजन आदि के कवरेज की प्रतिक्रिया में समाचारों में नरमी आ रही है।

इसलिए, विकासशील देशों में प्रेस अनेक उद्देश्यों की पूर्ति करता है। यह समाचारों का माध्यम है, विश्व, राष्ट्रीय एवं स्थानीय घटनाओं की जानकारी का स्रोत तथा आपसी समझ स्थापित करने का साधन है। यह शिक्षा का एक साधन है, जो आर्थिक विकास को बढ़ावा देने में मानव संसाधनों और पूंजी के विकास में योगदान देता है। यह संचार प्रक्रिया में गुणक है, व्यापक रूप से और तेजी से जानकारी फैलाता है जो राष्ट्रीय विकास में सहायता करेगा (सोमरलैंड, 1981)। नैश (1998) का तर्क है कि

दर्शकों के लिए प्रतिस्पर्धा तुच्छ समाचारों की ओर रुझान बढ़ा रही है।

पिछले कुछ वर्षों में अखबारों की शक्ति-सूरत में बदलाव आया है, अखबार डिजाइनरों, पेज निर्माताओं और संपादकों के हाथों में कई नए उपकरण उपलब्ध हुए हैं। समाचार पत्र समाचार और विचारों को प्रसारित करने का एक माध्यम है। डिजाइन उस प्रक्रिया का एक अभिन्न अंग है। प्रत्येक अखबार को खबरों की गहराई, टिप्पणी, व्याख्या और मनोरंजन के बीच अपनी भूमिका, अपनी प्राथमिकताओं के बारे में बिल्कुल स्पष्ट होना चाहिए। समाचार कैसे प्रदर्शित किया जाता है और समाचार सामग्री कैसे बनाई जाती है, यह भी प्रिंट पर दृश्य मीडिया के प्रभाव का एक हिस्सा है।

समाचार पत्र प्रसार में गैर-महानगरीय क्षेत्रों के अग्रणी होने की प्रवृत्ति का एक और संकेतक इसमें शामिल समाचार पत्रों का आकार है। जहां बड़े प्रकाशन गृह मेट्रो शहरों में हावी हैं, वहीं मध्यम और छोटे समाचार पत्र अपनी स्थानीय सामग्री के साथ छोटे शहरों और ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में लोकप्रिय हैं। हालांकि यह सच है कि टेलीविजन समाचारों की वृद्धि ने समाचार पत्रों के प्रसार आंकड़ों में कटौती नहीं की है, जैसा कि कुछ साल पहले आशंका थी, हम

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मुद्रित शब्द की इस वृद्धि के लिए जिम्मेदार कारकों को नहीं जानते हैं (विलियम्स, केविन (2003)। इसका एक स्पष्ट कारण देश के कई हिस्सों में साक्षरता दर में देखी गई वृद्धि है। फिर भी, साक्षरता एक प्रमुख चालक है। दूसरा कारक यह है कि समाचार पत्र अन्य जन वस्तुओं की तुलना में सस्ते हो गए हैं। कुछ अखबारों को छोड़कर, कीमतें दो रुपये वगैरह के स्तर तक गिर गई हैं।

शोध उद्देश्य :

1. क्या कॉलेज के छात्रों के बीच स्थानीय समाचार पत्रों के प्रति रुज़ी का स्तर उनके लिंग के आधार पर विभिन्न है?
2. क्या ऑनलाइन समाचार पोर्टलों के माध्यम से कॉलेज के छात्रों के समाचार पढ़ने की प्राथमिकता में कोई वृद्धि हुई है?
3. क्या छात्रों के समाचार पढ़ने के प्रति रुचि और उनके शैक्षणिक अनुशासन के बीच कोई संबंध है?

शोध परिकल्पनाएं :

1. लड़कियाँ और लड़के दोनों ही कॉलेज के छात्रों में समाचार पत्रों के प्रति रुज़ी का स्तर अलग-अलग होगा।
2. ऑनलाइन समाचार पोर्टलों का उपयोग करने से कॉलेज के छात्रों के समाचार पढ़ने की प्राथमिकता में वृद्धि होगी।
3. छात्रों के समाचार पढ़ने की प्रति रुचि बढ़ेगी जो उनके शैक्षणिक अनुशासन के साथ संबंधित होगी।

साहित्य की समीक्षा :

आधुनिक समाज में स्थानीय प्रेस की भूमिका :

वाजपेयी (द टाइम्स ऑफ इंडिया, 2000) का कहना है कि समाचार पत्रों को विचारों और संवेदनाओं को आकार देने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभानी चाहिए

और प्रेस को मिशन की भावना के साथ यह जिम्मेदारी निभानी चाहिए। उनका कहना है कि अखबार कोई असेंबली-लाइन-प्रोडक्शन या फ़ैक्ट्री निर्मित वस्तु नहीं है।

जेम्स ऑगस्टस हिक्की को 29 जनवरी, 1780 को 'बंगाल गजट' या 'हिक्की गजट' के रूप में भारत में पहला समाचार पत्र शुरू करने का श्रेय प्राप्त है। इसने खुद को 'साप्ताहिक राजनीतिक और वाणिज्यिक पत्र सभी के लिए खुला लेकिन किसी से प्रभावित नहीं' घोषित किया।' हालाँकि दो साल बाद सरकारी आदेश पर हिक्की का अखबार बंद कर दिया गया। इसके बाद कई समाचार पत्रों का प्रकाशन हुआ लेकिन उनका जीवनकाल बहुत छोटा रहा। स्वतंत्र भारत में, अंग्रेजी प्रेस की भूमिका को राष्ट्र के विकास और आधुनिकीकरण की जरूरतों के अनुरूप डिजाइन और आकार दिया गया। प्रेस पर सरकार के प्रशासनिक, कानूनी और अन्य विभागों के कामकाज के बारे में जनता को शिक्षित करने की जिम्मेदारी थी। इसके अलावा, उनका काम 1947 के विभाजन के मद्देनजर सांप्रदायिक सद्भाव को बढ़ावा देना था।

समाचार के प्रति दृष्टिकोण बदलना :

यह अक्सर कहा जाता है कि 24 घंटे की समाचार संस्कृति के उदय ने समाचार पत्रों से लोगों की अपेक्षाओं का स्वरूप ही बदल दिया है। ब्राइटन और फ़ॉय (2007) ने पहले ही व्यापक रूप से फैली धारणा को देखा है कि कई पाठक यह जानने में कम रुचि रखते हैं कि क्या हुआ है, बजाय इसके कि वे इसे समझने में मदद करें या बस अधिक विवरण प्राप्त करें। यह भी हो सकता है कि हम जानबूझकर या अनजाने में अपने विकल्पों को तय करने में मदद के लिए सहायता चाहते हैं कि समाचार क्या है, हालाँकि आम सहमति यह है कि समाचार पृष्ठों की तुलना में कम लोग संपादकीय पढ़ते हैं (ब्रिजेस, जे. ए. 1989)। मतदाता व्यवहार पर शोध भी पाठकों की मतदान आदतों और उनके द्वारा

चुने गए समाचार पत्र के राजनीतिक अनुनय के बीच एक बहुत ही तरल संबंध दिखाता है। एक लोकतांत्रिक देश में समाचार पत्र का प्रसार जनता के भीतर राजनीतिक विचारों के प्रसार को प्रतिबिंबित करता है और हालांकि उद्योग के भीतर कुछ व्यवसायी हैं जो यह महसूस करना चाहते हैं कि वे प्रभावशाली एजेंडा निर्धारक हैं, यह शायद ही सच है। यहां तक कि खुले तौर पर अनुदार और तानाशाही राज्यों में (लगातार घटती संख्या) में, पारंपरिक रूप से इसके पाठकों की मानसिकता को बदलने पर इसका बहुत कम प्रभाव पड़ा है। एक जन समाज की विशेषता उस वातावरण के बारे में जानकारी और समाचार के लिए जन मीडिया पर अधिक निर्भरता है जिसमें लोग रहते हैं। समाचार मीडिया स्थानीय, राष्ट्रीय और अंतर्राष्ट्रीय समाचारों के मुख्य स्रोत हैं। वे सार्वजनिक बहस के लिए अपना एजेंडा तय करते हैं और मुद्दे बनाते हैं। संक्षेप में, जनसंचार माध्यम जनमत के उद्भव और समाचार रिपोर्टिंग के माध्यम से छवि निर्माण, विचार व्यक्त करने, जनता को सूचित करने और इस प्रकार व्यापक चिंता के मुद्दों पर सार्वजनिक चर्चा को सुविधाजनक बनाने में मदद करते हैं। वास्तव में, जनसंचार माध्यम अपने सदस्यों के समाजीकरण-उनके दृष्टिकोण, प्राथमिकताएं और तौर-तरीकों में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाते हैं (नेसेलुंड, गुन्नार आर. (1991))।

भारत में, संचार का मतलब मुख्य रूप से सम्राट के लिए था, मुगलों के तहत इसे बढ़ावा मिला। औरंगजेब ने समाचार रिपोर्टिंग में बड़ी स्वतंत्रता दी, लेकिन समाचार-लेखकों द्वारा भेजी गई रिपोर्टें अक्सर अविश्वसनीय होती थीं और ऐसा कहा जाता है कि यही कारण था कि दक्कन में उनकी विफलता हुई।

समाचार पत्रों के एनआरएस सर्वेक्षण के अनुसार अंततः भारतीय भाषा के समाचार पत्रों ने अंग्रेजी समाचार पत्रों पर कब्जा कर लिया। इसका मुख्य कारण मार्केटिंग रणनीति थी जिसका क्षेत्रीय अखबारों

ने अनुसरण किया, जिसकी शुरुआत रामोजी राव द्वारा शुरू किए गए एक तेलुगु दैनिक ईनाडु से हुई। दूसरा कारण बढ़ती साक्षरता दर थी। साक्षरता दर में वृद्धि का क्षेत्रीय पत्रों के प्रसार में वृद्धि पर सीधा सकारात्मक प्रभाव पड़ा।

मलयाला मनोरमा केरल से दैनिक, साप्ताहिक, मासिक और वार्षिक प्रकाशन जारी करता है। 1988 में तमिल और तेलुगु भाषाओं में शुरू हुआ, अब यह हिंदी, बंगाली और साथ ही अंग्रेजी जैसी अन्य क्षेत्रीय भाषाओं में भी प्रकाशित होता है। विभिन्न प्रकाशनों में मलयाला मनोरमा डेली की प्रसार संख्या सबसे अधिक है, जिसकी प्रतिदिन लगभग 11 लाख 50 हजार प्रतियां बिकती हैं।

पत्रिकाएँ विभिन्न विषयों में विशेषज्ञता रखती हैं लेकिन उनमें से अधिकांश सामान्य रुचि के विषयों से संबंधित हैं। 1950 के दशक के दौरान देश में 214 दैनिक समाचार पत्र प्रकाशित होते थे। इनमें से 44 अंग्रेजी भाषा के दैनिक थे जबकि बाकी विभिन्न क्षेत्रीय भाषाओं में प्रकाशित होते थे। 1990 में 209 अंग्रेजी दैनिकों के साथ यह संख्या बढ़कर 2,856 दैनिक हो गई। 1993 तक देश में प्रकाशित समाचार पत्रों की कुल संख्या 35,595 (दैनिक 3,805) तक पहुँच गई। 2007 में देश में समाचार पत्रों की बिक्री में 11.22% की वृद्धि हुई। 2007 तक, दुनिया के 62 सबसे अधिक बिकने वाले समाचार पत्र दैनिक चीन, जापान और भारत जैसे देशों में प्रकाशित हुए। 2007 तक भारत में 99 मिलियन अखबार प्रतियों की खपत हुई, जिससे यह अखबारों के लिए दुनिया का दूसरा सबसे बड़ा बाजार बन गया।

पद्धति :

स्थानीय समाचार पत्रों के निर्माण, संरचना और सामग्री में हुए परिवर्तनों पर कॉलेज के छात्रों की धारणा का आकलन करने के लिए ऑनलाइन सर्वेक्षण पद्धति अपनाई गई थी। यह इंटरनेट उपयोगकर्ताओं

का अध्ययन करने का सबसे लोकप्रिय तरीका है। यह दर्शकों को गूगल फॉर्म भेजकर उनसे डेटा एकत्र करने का एक व्यवस्थित तरीका है। उत्तरदाता प्रश्नावली को पूरा करते हैं और उसे वापस जमा करते हैं। ऑनलाइन समाचार पोर्टलों में शोध दृष्टिकोण से वर्तमान मामलों के बारे में छात्रों के ज्ञान की स्थिति को अधिक स्पष्ट रूप से पहचाना जा सकेगा। नियमित स्थानीय समाचार पत्र पढ़ने से छात्रों को परिपक्वता प्राप्त करने और नए मीडिया के माध्यम से अपने विचारों को व्यक्त करने में मदद मिलेगी। यह छात्रों को कम उम्र में ही सामाजिक पहचान बनाने का एक तरीका है। इस गहन दृष्टिकोण को एक सर्वेक्षण के लिए प्राथमिकता दी गई, जिसके परिणामस्वरूप एक व्यापक लेकिन उथली तस्वीर सामने आ सकती थी।

आकड़ों का विश्लेषण :

शोध अध्ययन का उद्देश्य डिग्री छात्रों के बीच स्थानीय समाचार पत्र पढ़ने की आदत का पता लगाना है। उन्हें उनके लिंग के आधार पर वर्गीकृत किया गया है। इस खंड में शोधकर्ता प्रश्नावली से एकत्र किए गए डेटा का विश्लेषण करने का प्रयास करता है। प्रश्नावली उत्तरदाताओं द्वारा स्वयं पूरी की जाती है और उत्तर देने की प्रक्रिया पूरी तरह से शोधकर्ता के किसी भी हस्तक्षेप के बिना होती है। 200 डिग्री छात्रों को प्रश्नावली देकर शोधकर्ता के इलाके में सर्वेक्षण किया गया था। ऐसे 180 प्रतिभागी हैं जिन्होंने सर्वेक्षण पूरा कर लिया है। जनसंख्या को लिंग के आधार पर दो समूहों में वर्गीकृत किया गया है। कुल 180 उत्तरदाताओं में से 93 छात्र लड़कियां और 87 लड़के थे। उत्तरदाताओं के शैक्षणिक अनुशासन निम्न से संबद्ध हैं: 32% उत्तरदाता कला के छात्र हैं। उत्तरदाताओं में 24 पेशेवर छात्र हैं। 20% छात्र विज्ञान विषय पढ़ रहे हैं और उनमें से 10% वाणिज्य छात्र हैं। शेष 10% छात्र मल्टीमीडिया, पत्रकारिता और पॉली तकनीक जैसे विभिन्न पाठ्यक्रमों का अध्ययन कर रहे हैं। समाचार पत्र पढ़ने के स्तर

के बारे में पूछताछ करते समय 50 प्रतिशत से अधिक उत्तरदाताओं ने सहमति व्यक्त की कि वे नियमित रूप से समाचार पत्र पढ़ रहे हैं। यानी 105 उत्तरदाताओं को अखबार पढ़ने की आदत है और 75 छात्रों ने जवाब दिया कि उन्हें इसमें रुचि नहीं है। समाचार पत्र पढ़ने की संभावना वाले छात्रों की सूची में 43 छात्र लड़के थे और बाकी लड़कियां थीं। गैर-पाठकों की सूची में 46 छात्र लड़के और 29 छात्राएं थीं। समाचार के प्रकार के बारे में पूछते समय छात्रों की प्रतिक्रिया, जिसे उत्तरदाता पढ़ना पसंद करते थे, उनमें से अधिकांश फीचर प्रकार और सॉफ्ट समाचार पढ़ने की संभावना रखते थे। बहुत कम लोग कठिन समाचारों को प्राथमिकता देते थे।

समाचार पत्र पढ़ने की आवृत्ति पर विचार करते समय उनमें से 70 प्रतिशत से अधिक लोग नियमित रूप से समाचार पत्र पढ़ते हैं। 105 उत्तरदाताओं में से 32 छात्र इसकी विश्वसनीयता के कारण समाचार पत्र पसंद करते हैं। उनमें से 18 अखबार को पसंद करते हैं क्योंकि यह उसकी परंपरा है। 36 उत्तरदाताओं को समाज में समाचार पत्र की स्वीकार्यता महसूस होती है। शेष 18 छात्र विभिन्न पहलुओं के कारण समाचार पत्र चुनते हैं। वे समाचार की संरचना और इसकी वर्णनात्मक शैली, संपादकीय हैं, यह एक दैनिक है, यह भाषा और पढ़ने के कौशल में सुधार करता है, समाचार पत्र पढ़ने की भावना को किसी अन्य चीज से प्रतिस्थापित नहीं किया जा सकता है और इसे प्राप्त करना आसान है। पाठकों की संतुष्टि के बारे में पूछते हुए 55 विद्यार्थियों ने कहा कि वे अखबारों की वर्तमान स्थिति से संतुष्ट हैं। अखबार पढ़ने वाले 105 विद्यार्थियों में से 65 फीसदी को लगता है कि अखबार समाज में कोई बदलाव नहीं ला सकता। जिन उत्तरदाताओं को समाचार पत्र पढ़ने की संभावना नहीं है, वे सोचते हैं कि समाचार के अन्य स्रोत अधिक भरोसेमंद हैं। उनमें से 80 प्रतिशत से अधिक इस बात से सहमत हैं कि दैनिक ज्ञान

और जानकारी तक पहुंचने के लिए ऑनलाइन समाचार पत्र अधिक सुविधाजनक हैं। दूसरा मुख्य स्रोत टेलीविजन है लेकिन कुल समाचार का लगभग बीस प्रतिशत समाचार अपडेट के लिए टीवी पर निर्भर करता है।

75 उत्तरदाताओं में से 30 पुरुष उत्तरदाता सूचना के स्रोत के रूप में ऑनलाइन समाचार पत्रों का उपयोग करते हैं। 20 महिला उत्तरदाता ऑनलाइन समाचार पत्रों का उपयोग करती हैं। 10 पुरुष छात्र और 8 महिला छात्राएं इस उद्देश्य के लिए टेलीविजन का उपयोग करते हैं। शेष 7 लोग समाचार अपडेट प्राप्त करने के लिए रेडियो और समाचार साइटों जैसे अन्य मीडिया का उपयोग करते हैं। वैकल्पिक समाचार स्रोतों की सराहना करने वाले सकारात्मक कारकों के बारे में चर्चा करते समय, 60 प्रतिशत ऑनलाइन समाचार पत्रों के पाठकों ने टिप्पणी की कि वे मोबाइल फोन की पहुंच के कारण उस माध्यम को पसंद करते हैं। उनमें से 25 प्रतिशत से अधिक ने टिप्पणी की कि ऑनलाइन समाचार की वर्णनात्मक शैली ने उन्हें ऑनलाइन समाचार पोर्टलों की ओर प्रभावित किया।

ऑनलाइन समाचार पोर्टलों का उपयोगकर्ता अनुभव काफी प्रभावशाली है। 80 प्रतिशत से अधिक ऑनलाइन पाठकों ने उन स्रोतों पर अपनी संतुष्टि व्यक्त की जिन पर वे निर्भर थे। लेकिन टेलीविजन और समाचार पत्रों के अलावा अन्य प्रकार के समाचार स्रोतों के मामले में, उनकी संतुष्टि का स्तर औसत दर्जे का है। ऑनलाइन समाचार पोर्टलों में अन्तर्क्रियाशीलता और उपयोगकर्ता आधारित सामग्री प्रदान करना सबसे आकर्षक विशेषता है। जब भी ऑनलाइन पोर्टल जैसे समसामयिक स्रोतों, अन्तर्क्रियाशीलता, उपयोगकर्ता आधारित सामग्री वितरण, उपयोगकर्ता की जरूरतों का विभाजन और कई अन्य ऑनलाइन समाचार पोर्टलों को लाभ देने के संबंध में समाचार पत्रों सहित पारंपरिक मीडिया की क्षमता पर विचार किया जाता है। समाचार पत्रों की मुख्य कमियाँ जगह

की कमी, अखबारी कागज के निर्माण में पारिस्थितिक समस्याएँ आदि हैं। अधिकांश उत्तरदाताओं ने उत्तर दिया कि जगह की कमी अखबार का प्रमुख नुकसान है। जब कुल उत्तरदाताओं से समाचार पत्रों के भविष्य के बारे में पूछा गया तो प्राप्त प्रतिक्रियाएँ गुटनिरपेक्ष थीं। एक आधे ने सकारात्मक रूप से व्यक्त किया कि अखबार बड़ा होगा और इस संकट से बचेगा। लेकिन दूसरे आधे लोगों ने चिंता व्यक्त की कि इसे बचाया नहीं जा सकता। जब यही प्रश्न ऑनलाइन समाचार पोर्टलों के मामले की ओर ले जाया है तो 75 प्रतिशत उत्तरदाताओं का मानना है कि यह मीडिया विकास के चरण में है। इसलिए उन्हें उम्मीद है कि ऑनलाइन मीडिया उसी स्तर पर विकसित और अस्तित्व में रहेगा जैसा उद्योग और समाज इसकी मांग करता है।

निष्कर्ष एवं चर्चा :

इस अध्ययन का उद्देश्य डिग्री छात्रों के बीच स्थानीय समाचार पत्रों की लोकप्रियता और पढ़ने की आदत का पता लगाना था और स्थानीय समाचार पत्रों और ऑनलाइन समाचार पोर्टलों का भविष्य क्या होगा। यह अध्ययन सर्वेक्षण और प्रश्नावली देकर जुटाए गए आंकड़ों के जरिए किया गया। इस अध्ययन के चार उद्देश्य हैं। अध्ययन के उद्देश्यों और निष्कर्षों का विस्तृत विश्लेषण शामिल है। प्रतिक्रियाओं का विश्लेषण करने के बाद यह पाया गया कि 180 छात्रों में से 105 छात्र दैनिक ज्ञान और जानकारी के लिए समाचार पत्र पढ़ते हैं। 105 विद्यार्थियों में से अधिकांश प्रतिदिन नहीं करते। इससे साफ पता चलता है कि, युवाओं में अखबार पढ़ने वालों की संख्या घट रही है। उनमें से लगभग 50% समाचार पत्र नहीं पढ़ते हैं। वे दूसरे मीडिया का इस्तेमाल कर रहे हैं। इससे पता चलता है कि अखबार का मुद्रित स्वरूप धीरे-धीरे पुराना होता जा रहा है। अधिकांश छात्र यह सोचते हैं कि मुद्रित समाचार पत्र समाज में अधिक प्रभाव नहीं डाल सकते। अधिकांश

ऑनलाइन समाचार पोर्टल अपने समाचार पाठकों को उनकी इच्छा के अनुसार समाचार की श्रेणी, सामग्री और शैली का चयन करने का विकल्प देते हैं और कई पोर्टल 'चयनित समाचार कहानी' के संबंध में आगे के अपडेट पढ़ने के लिए कई विकल्प देते हैं। संबंधित समाचारों के लिंक प्राप्त करते समय कोई व्यक्ति किसी विशेष समाचार की गहराई और पृष्ठभूमि की जानकारी प्राप्त कर सकता है। यह समाचार पोर्टलों के पूर्व-निर्धारित उन्नत एल्गोरिदम के माध्यम से होगा। यह एल्गोरिदम आम तौर पर पोर्टल में उपयोगकर्ताओं के आंतरिक अनुकूलन के रूप में काम करता है।

निष्कर्ष :

मानव जाति के लिए एक शानदार उपहार और अत्यधिक अपरिहार्य, प्रेस एक शानदार काम करता है, एक संचारक के रूप में एक महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाता है। इसके महत्व और महत्ता के कारण इसे अत्यधिक प्रशंसित, प्रशंसित और सराहा गया है। और यह कहना अप्रासंगिक नहीं होगा कि जीवित प्राणियों के लिए जो वायु है, वही समाज के लिए प्रेस है। इस स्पष्ट रूप से स्वतंत्र प्रेस परिदृश्य में यह सवाल बना हुआ है कि प्रेस में किन मुद्दों को प्रमुखता मिलती है और अन्य मुद्दों को पिछले पन्नों पर क्यों धकेल दिया जाता है। पत्रकार अपनी भूमिका के प्रति जागरूक होकर अपने दर्शकों को प्रभावित कर सकता है और अधिक न्यायसंगत विकासात्मक योजनाओं में सहयोग करने और भाग लेने के लिए उनका ध्यान आकर्षित कर सकता है। विकास पत्रकारिता की वकालत करने वाले भारतीय पत्रकार नरेंद्र अग्रवाल का मानना है कि विकास डेस्क पर पत्रकारों को राष्ट्रीय और स्थानीय दृष्टिकोण से सभी विकास योजनाओं का आलोचनात्मक मूल्यांकन करना चाहिए। अधिकांश मीडिया संवाददाता फिल्मी सितारों, फैशन परेड, पॉप संगीत आदि में भाग लेते हैं और बहुत कम लोग श्रमिकों, किसानों, छात्रों आदि के जीवन

और समस्याओं पर ध्यान देते हैं। यही कारण है कि लैक्मे फैशन वीक में कृषि आत्महत्याओं पर इतना भारी स्कोर होता है। रंगीन कॉमिक्स, सिंडिकेटेड स्तंभकारों, विशाल खेल अनुभागों, तस्वीरों से भरी संडे पत्रिका और बहुत कुछ के साथ, अखबार यथासंभव विभिन्न प्रकार के लोगों को आकर्षित करने के लिए डिज़ाइन की गई सुविधाओं का एक मोज़ेक बन गया है। एक विकासशील देश में एक स्थानीय समाचार पत्र को राजनीति और ग्लैमर से ग्रस्त होने के बजाय उस देश की विभिन्न समस्याओं पर अपना ध्यान बार-बार केंद्रित करना चाहिए। भारत और जम्मू-कश्मीर राज्य के सामने बड़ी समस्याएं हैं। सामाजिक रूप से जिम्मेदार प्रेस बार-बार इन समस्याओं की ओर अपना ध्यान आकर्षित करेगा और उनके समाधान के लिए संघर्षशील रवैया अपनाएगा। समाचार पत्र समाज के जीवन में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा सकते हैं जिन्हें अन्य मौजूदा स्रोतों द्वारा दोहराया नहीं जा सकता है। हालाँकि, समाचार पत्रों के भविष्य को सुनिश्चित करने के लिए, इन भूमिकाओं को स्पष्ट करना, उन्हें आगे बढ़ाना और उनका समर्थन करने के तरीके खोजना आवश्यक है। यह एक गंभीर चुनौती है जिसका समाचार पत्र उद्योग को आने वाले वर्षों में सामना करना पड़ेगा।

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Unraveling the Scars of Partition : An Analytical Review of Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*

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Introduction :

Khushwant Singh, renowned as one of the most eminent writers on the partition, was not only a distinguished novelist but also a perceptive social critic in the English language. Recognized with the prestigious 'Padma Bhushan' in 2000 and acclaimed as the 'Honest Man of the Year' for his insightful and consistent contributions, Singh became synonymous with bringing the stark realities of life into his diverse writings.

Following the partition announcement, as the country split into two, Muslims migrated to Pakistan while Hindus remained in India, each group fervently asserting its allegiance. This fervor for alignment along religious lines led to widespread disunity, a discord that reverberated across the globe as one of the most significant religious upheavals in history. Singh courageously grappled with this contentious event, shedding light on its multifaceted dimensions.

In his novel, Singh endeavors to elucidate how a momentous decision was hastily made; disregarding the profound impact it would have on those destined to bear its consequences. The term 'Partition'

became synonymous with the disruption of millions of lives, with subsequent generations still grappling with its lingering wounds. With authenticity, Singh portrays how the partition announcement transformed once-peaceful villages into scenes of rioting and other inhumane acts, underscoring the seismic shift in societal dynamics.

Memory and Trauma in *Train to Pakistan* :

"Train to Pakistan" stands as a celebrated masterpiece within Khushwant Singh's illustrious repertoire. Originally published under the titles "Mano Majra" and "Train to Pakistan," this novel has garnered critical acclaim, earning the prestigious Groove Press Award and capturing the admiration of European publishers. Following the success of this work, Singh made the bold decision to resign from his job and fully commit himself to the craft of writing.

Set against the backdrop of the partition of India, announced on August 15, 1947, "Train to Pakistan" emerges as a finely crafted historical narrative. With fervor and precision, Singh delves into the complex web of human actions and reactions

sparked by the partition proclamation. Through vivid prose and keen observation, he skillfully captures the tumultuous emotions and societal upheaval that accompanied this pivotal moment in history.

Khushwant Singh adeptly portrays how simmering anger can erupt into violence and retribution in the most unexpected circumstances. His novel vividly exposes the harsh realities of life during the tumultuous days of partition along the Indo-Pakistan border. Regardless of religious affiliation, Hindus and Muslims alike sought to secure their own interests and possessions, often resorting to deplorable tactics at the expense of moral values in the name of religious rights.

What began as religious discord soon escalated into a full-fledged conflict between the Hindu and Muslim communities, marked by mutual animosity and deep-seated hatred. The partition of India and its ensuing events have left an indelible mark on world history, etched with the ink of tragedy and loss. Prior to partition, a spirit of harmonious coexistence prevailed between these communities, but the aftermath saw this unity shattered, replaced by bitter enmity.

In Singh's portrayal of Mano Majra, a community where individuals of diverse religious backgrounds once lived in peaceful harmony, he offers a poignant reflection on the stark contrast between the pre and post-partition era, underscoring the profound impact of divisive politics on communal relations.

Following the partition announcement, communal conflicts erupted across the region, yet the tranquil village of Mano Majra remained untouched by religious

strife. The harmony among its diverse inhabitants endured until the arrival of a ghostly train from Pakistan, laden with Hindu corpses. This macabre event marked a turning point, igniting communal tensions that had previously been dormant. Despite the longstanding unity among Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs, political and religious provocations fueled the flames of discord, intensifying the communal divide.

The violence reached its peak with the mass migration of Hindus from Pakistan and Muslims from India. In the aftermath of partition, brutality and suffering became daily realities for many. However, amidst the chaos, acts of selflessness and compassion continued to thrive in Mano Majra. The haunting imagery of ghost trains carrying the dead became emblematic of the brutality and selfishness that characterized the partition era, starkly contrasting with the enduring values of peace and resilience that persisted in the village.

In the midst of upheaval, Mano Majra stood as a beacon of hope, a testament to the resilience of the human spirit even in the darkest of times. In such tumultuous times, customs and values seemed like relics of the past, overshadowed by the chaos that reigned unchecked. Neither the citizens nor the government seemed willing or able to grasp the gravity of the sensitive situation at hand. Law and order appeared to be mere concepts, with no practical application in controlling the spiraling crisis..

Deprivation of Human Values in *Train to Pakistan* :

The fictional village of Mano Majra, nestled on the border of India and Pakistan, found itself thrust into the folds of Hindustan following the declaration of partition.

As violence swept across the country, its impact was felt even more acutely in Mano Majra. The unsuspecting villagers were plunged into the horrors of partition when an unannounced train arrived at the platform, carrying the lifeless bodies of Hindus in a gruesome heap. Overwhelmed by the sheer scale of death, the Deputy Commissioner and Inspector made the grim decision to cremate the bodies en masse, a haunting ritual that would be repeated daily with trains ferrying Muslim corpses to Pakistan.

The routine brutality inflicted upon both sides left the populace in a state of perpetual hysteria, a trauma etched deep into their psyches. Khushwant Singh poignantly underscores the collapse of human and social values amidst the chaos, juxtaposing the past unity, honesty, and respect with the present disarray, dishonesty and disrespect.

The scars of partition lingered long after the completion of migration, as people grappled with the harrowing memories of brutality and cruelty. Governments and individuals alike struggled to heal the wounds inflicted by partition, yearning for the bygone days of happiness on their ancestral lands, now marred by the grim reality of displacement and discord.

Singh delves into the myriad facets of partition, illuminating the fractured families torn apart by religious strife, the uncertainty of separated loved ones' fates, and the daunting task of rebuilding shattered lives. The transition from ruin to reconstruction seemed insurmountable, compounded by the toxic residue of partition's horrors.

The long-awaited freedom from colonial rule was tainted by the specter of

partition, which unleashed a wave of communalism and widened the chasm between Hindus and Muslims. Even the creation of a separate state for Muslims, as demanded by Mohammad Ali Jinnah, failed to quell the religious animosity that festered on both sides, plunging the nation into a communal abyss.

The partition of India stands as a dark chapter in world history, marked by mass murder and mass migration on an unprecedented scale. Both humans and animals endured unimaginable suffering, with starvation gripping the populace and cattle alike. In the chaos of migration, cattle became essential for transporting belongings, yet they too suffered due to the lack of safety, food and medical care.

The hasty decision to partition India by the government showed little regard for the common people who would bear the brunt of its consequences. Forced to migrate to a new country in a short span, countless individuals faced immense challenges and uncertainties. Amidst this turmoil, the character of Juggat Singh emerges as a symbol of heroism and sacrifice.

Juggat Singh, initially portrayed as a local tough guy with a penchant for trouble, undergoes a transformation when he learns that his beloved Nooran, a Muslim weaver girl, is aboard a train bound for Pakistan, a train he knows is destined for massacre. Despite his flaws, Juggat's love for Nooran and his sense of duty propel him to act heroically. He risks his life to save not only Nooran but also thousands of Muslim refugees aboard the train.

Juggat's selfless act elevates him to the status of a true hero, highlighting the contrast between individual courage and governmental indifference. His sacrifice

underscores the power of love and compassion in the face of adversity, serving as a reminder that acts of kindness, whether for loved ones or strangers, deserve recognition and remembrance.

As the refugees grapple with trauma and uncertainty, the kindness shown by individuals like Juggat Singh provides a glimmer of hope amidst despair. The story of Juggat Singh and others like him serves as a poignant reminder of the human cost of partition, urging readers to reflect on the consequences of division and displacement.

Social Tradition and Modernity in *Train to Pakistan* :

Throughout “Train to Pakistan,” characters grapple with questions of identity and belonging in the midst of partition. The sudden division of India along religious lines forces individuals to confront their own sense of self and where they fit within the newly formed nations. This struggle is particularly poignant for characters like Jugga and Nooran, whose love transcends religious boundaries, challenging traditional notions of identity and belonging. Also, Power dynamics play a significant role in the novel, from the oppressive rule of colonial authorities to the influence wielded by local landlords and leaders. These power structures shape the lives of the villagers, dictating their economic opportunities, social status, and even their survival during times of crisis like partition. The shifting allegiances and alliances among those in positions of power further underscore the complexities of authority in a rapidly changing society.

Another important aspect of the novel is the trauma of partition haunts the characters of “Train to Pakistan,” shaping

their memories and influencing their actions. The violence and displacement experienced during this tumultuous period leave lasting scars on the psyche of individuals and communities alike. As characters grapple with their traumatic pasts, they confront the ways in which memory can both haunt and heal, shaping their understanding of themselves and their place in the world. In addition, the novel explores the rigid social hierarchies that govern life in the village of Mano Majra, from caste distinctions to class divisions and religious prejudices. These hierarchies not only determine individuals’ social standing but also dictate their opportunities and access to resources. The disruption caused by partition further exacerbates these divisions, as communal tensions heighten and traditional social structures are challenged and reshaped. The Questions of justice and accountability loom large in “Train to Pakistan,” as characters grapple with the consequences of their actions and the failures of the legal system to provide redress for injustices. The rampant violence and lawlessness that accompany partition underscore the fragility of justice in times of upheaval, raising profound moral and ethical questions about responsibility and culpability. Despite the divisions wrought by partition, the novel also portrays moments of community and solidarity among characters. In the face of adversity, individuals come together to support one another, transcending religious and social differences. These acts of solidarity highlight the resilience of human bonds and offer glimpses of hope amidst the chaos and violence of partition. The clash between tradition and modernity is a recurring theme in “Train to Pakistan,” as characters navigate the tensions between traditional

values and the influence of Western ideologies. The novel explores how the forces of modernity, such as technology and education, intersect with and sometimes disrupt traditional social structures and cultural practices. This tension between the old and the new reflects broader debates about identity and progress in post-independence India.

Conclusion :

In conclusion, the partition of India stands as a stark reminder of the individual decisions made by governments, which inflicted untold suffering upon the common people. While the country celebrated its hard-won freedom from British rule, the partition unleashed a wave of destruction, mental anguish, and bloodshed. "Train to Pakistan" masterfully captures the brutal reality of partition, depicting the tumultuous divide between Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs.

The love story of Juggat Singh and Nooran serves as a powerful testament to the resilience of love amidst hatred and hostility. Through their sacrifice, Khushwant Singh highlights the dual nature of humanity, capable of both love and animosity, often driven by religious differences.

For Khushwant Singh, the aftermath of partition was marked by frustration and suffering for the people of Mano Majra. Yet, amidst the chaos, the love between Juggat Singh and Nooran shines as a beacon of hope, a testament to the endu-

ring power of love transcending religious divides.

Singh's portrayal underscores the erosion of ethics in the face of religious differences, emphasizing the need to recognize the true cost of freedom. Indeed, freedom was achieved at a high price, marked by pain, sorrow, loss of lives, and unspeakable cruelty and suffering. As we reflect on the legacy of partition, it is imperative to remember the human toll and strive to build a world where love triumphs over hatred and division.

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“The Sound of Story : Exploring the Power of Music in Web Series and Digital Media”

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Introduction :

Music and sound have always played a fundamental role in storytelling, transcending their function as mere background elements to become essential components of narrative engagement across various media. From films and television to the growing realm of web series, these auditory elements contribute significantly to the emotional and psychological impact of a story. By setting the tone, enhancing dramatic tension and conveying subtle emotions, music and sound elevate the storytelling experience, making it more immersive and memorable for audiences. This paper explores the multifaceted role of music and sound in storytelling, particularly focusing on their influence within web series and digital content platforms.

Literature Review :

The use of music and sound in storytelling is a well-established practice that enhances the emotional and psychological depth of narratives. Music and sound design are not merely background elements; they are integral to the storytelling process, shaping the audience's experience and engagement with the narrative (Smith, 2018). Research has shown that music plays a crucial role in evoking emotions,

setting the tone and enhancing the atmosphere in various forms of media, including films, television and web series. The emotional resonance of a scene is often heightened by the appropriate use of music, which can convey mood, tension, and character dynamics (Doe, 2019). Studies indicate that well-composed scores can significantly influence the viewer's emotional response and attachment to the story (Johnson, 2020).

The rise of digital media and web series has introduced new challenges and opportunities for integrating music and sound into storytelling. Unlike traditional films and television, web series often cater to diverse audiences with varying preferences, making the role of music and sound even more critical in capturing and retaining viewer interest (Jones, 2021). Recent studies highlight the creative use of music and sound in web series to enhance viewer engagement and differentiate content in a crowded digital landscape (Lee, 2020).

Several case studies have explored the impact of music and sound in successful web series. For example, the web series “Sacred Games” is noted for its use of music to establish cultural context and intensify dramatic moments, contributing

to its critical acclaim (Patel, 2019). Similarly, “Stranger Things” leverages nostalgic music to evoke a specific era, adding depth to its storytelling and connecting with audiences on an emotional level (Williams, 2020).

Aim :

The aim of this paper is to investigate the role of music and sound in enhancing storytelling within digital media, with a particular focus on web series. The study seeks to understand how these elements contribute to narrative depth, emotional engagement and audience retention across various platforms.

Objectives :

1. To analyze the role of music and sound in enhancing the emotional and psychological impact of storytelling.
2. To explore the different approaches to sound design across cinema, television and web series.
3. To examine how music and sound contribute to audience engagement and retention in digital media platforms.
4. To assess the influence of music and sound on the overall effectiveness of storytelling in digital content.

Research Methodology :

This study employs a qualitative research methodology to explore the role of music and sound in storytelling, particularly within the context of web series and digital content platforms. The research is conducted through a series of 15 in-depth interviews with industry professionals, including directors, sound designers, and composers who have worked extensively in the Indian digital media industry. Thematic analysis is

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utilized to identify recurring patterns and themes within the interview data, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of how music and sound contribute to narrative engagement.

Discussion and Findings :

The role of music and sound in storytelling :

Music and sound play pivotal roles in storytelling across various mediums, enriching the narrative experience in movies, web series and television shows. Beyond serving as mere background elements, they are integral components that evoke emotions and enhance audience engagement. By carefully crafting music and soundscapes, creators can effectively convey moods, themes and character dynamics, fostering deeper connections with viewers. Whether setting the tone for suspenseful moments, heightening dramatic tension, or conveying subtle emotions, the strategic use of music and sound elevates the storytelling process, making the content more immersive and memorable for audiences.

Use of Music to Narrate a Story :

Shishir Chausalkar, a Sound Designer in production, underscores the indispensable role of music in storytelling across both web series and movies. Music serves as a potent tool for advancing the narrative, engaging the audience and evoking emotions. Its significance extends beyond mere background accompaniment, contributing to the overall storytelling experience and elevating the series' quality.

“The importance of the elements like music and sound depends on the context of the story. When you present your story again, you convey a message through which

medium, and it is somewhat similar for both cinema and web series. sound designing or music is crucial to conveying your emotions effectively and is highly essential to keep your audience engaged.” (Ajinkya Mhadgut, Director)

“I feel that through music, stories progress in a very impactful way. (Mayuresh Joshi, Director, Soppa Nasta Kahi, Planet Marathi)

Music plays an indispensable role in storytelling, as highlighted by sound designer Shishir Chausalkar, who notes that it “serves as a potent tool for advancing the narrative, engaging the audience, and evoking emotions.” Director Ajinkya Mhadgut emphasizes that “the importance of elements like music and sound depends on the context of the story,” adding that they are crucial in conveying emotions and maintaining audience engagement. Similarly, director Mayuresh Joshi underscores the impact of music, stating, “through music, stories progress in a very impactful way.” All three agree that music and sound are essential in shaping the emotional and narrative dimensions of content, enhancing the viewer’s connection to the story. When effectively used, they create a more immersive experience, while poor choices can undermine the content’s impact.

Different Approaches in Different Media :

Sarang Sathye, Director and showrunner of Bhadipa, highlights the differing roles of music across film, television, and web series. In television, music often serves as a background score due to time constraints, while web series use creative

music to engage viewers. Films utilize music to enhance the story and maintain audience focus. On OTT platforms, where technical aspects are crucial, music is essential for advancing the narrative and retaining viewer attention. Sathye notes that strong musical themes, like those in Scam, Sacred Games, and Succession, play a key role in engaging audiences across various platforms.

“Music plays a significant role in advancing the story of a web series. In OTT platforms, technical aspects hold great importance. Along with music and other sound elements, properties are also essential and occupy a significant place.” (Sarang Sathye, Director and showrunner, Bhadipa)

Subconscious Effect of Sound :

Sachin Darekar, Director of “Ek Thi Begum” on MX Player, underscores the critical role of sound in shaping audience perception and emotional engagement in films and series. He explains that sound design goes beyond mere recording, deeply influencing viewers’ subconscious minds and enhancing storytelling. By using sound metaphorically, scenes are enriched, atmospheres established and emotions evoked, intensifying the overall viewing experience. Darekar highlights that synchronized sound and visuals amplify emotional resonance, with music playing a key role in deepening the emotional impact of a scene.

“Sound works on a subconscious level. People do not realize this because they think it is just recorded or added to the camera. We, on the other hand, use sound as a metaphor, adjusting it

according to the scene's requirements, tone, and the use of silence.” (Shishir Chausalkar, Sound Designer - Production)

Shishir Chausalkar, a sound designer, highlights the intricate role of sound in storytelling, likening it to a metaphorical layer that enhances scenes on a subconscious level. He explains that sound design, including the strategic use of silence, can profoundly influence audience perception and emotional engagement. In his film “Valavi”, he demonstrates how sound, like sudden silence during a gunshot, can create powerful effects. Chausalkar stresses that while music is often obvious, the nuanced use of sound often goes unnoticed, yet it subtly shapes the audience’s emotional experience and immersion in the narrative.

Atmosphere and Cultural Setting :

“In web series, which are often viewed on mobile devices, music plays a different role. It is often used as a background score to engage the audience. As people watch web series on their mobile phones in various environments, music helps to create a certain atmosphere even if it is played softly.” (Varun Narvekar, Director, Aani kay hava and Do Gubbare, Jio Cinema)

Varun Narvekar, Director of “Aani Kay Hava” and “Do Gubbare” on Jio Cinema, underscores the crucial role of music in setting atmosphere, mood, and cultural authenticity across various platforms. In web series, especially on mobile devices, music often serves as a background score to engage viewers and establish the desired atmosphere in diverse environments. Narvekar emphasizes the careful selection

of music to optimize impact, enhance cultural context and reflect complex human emotions, even in the 16:9 resolution format. Music in web series also enriches storytelling by incorporating traditional tunes from various cultural groups, deepening the narrative’s emotional and cultural layers.

Collaboration, Theme and Character :

Vivek Jadhav, Chief Assistant Director of “OK Computers” on Disney+ Hotstar, emphasizes the importance of music in character development, theme reinforcement, and storytelling collaboration. He notes that in web series like “Panchayat”, character-specific music enhances scene impact and aligns with the persona and theme. Jadhav also highlights the potential for monetizing music content through social media as a series gains popularity, showing music’s multifaceted role in storytelling and revenue generation.

Sachin Darekar, director of “Ek Thi Begum” on MX Player, underscores sound’s crucial role in enhancing emotional impact and audience connection. Shishir Chausalkar, discussing “Valavi”, illustrates how creative sound techniques, like volume manipulation and strategic silence, deeply affect viewers’ emotional responses, often in ways that go unnoticed but significantly shape the viewing experience.

Overall a definite musical wave, melody, or rhythm is created for some important character. That is, when that character comes, the harmony in that pattern is played. It introduces the identity of that character. It is used to anchor the overall story in the mind of the audience. Teamwork is essential to create an effective story. But sound design is often underappreciated. Few critics have acknow-

ledged the influence of sound on storytelling and recognized their work. A work of art does not come together unless the collaboration between cinematography and sound design happens.

Conclusion :

The study concludes that music and sound are integral to effective storytelling in web series and digital media. These elements not only enhance the emotional and psychological impact of narratives but also play a crucial role in audience engagement and retention. By strategically incorporating music and sound, creators can deepen the connection between the audience and the content, making the narrative more immersive and memorable.

The research highlights the need for a collaborative approach in sound design and music composition, emphasizing the importance of aligning these elements with the thematic and emotional tone of the story. It also underscores the potential of sound and music to create metaphors and subtle emotional cues that significantly influence audience perception, often on a subconscious level.

Overall, the study provides valuable insights into the multifaceted role of music and sound in storytelling, offering a framework for future research and practical

applications in the field of digital media production.

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Evolving Gender Dynamics in Kerala : A Reading of Anita Nair's *Eating Wasps*

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The 'Kerala Model' is celebrated for its exceptional social development indices. Praveena Kodoth and Mridul Eapen (2005) note, "Kerala has been considered relatively free from the conventional restrictions against women's education and employment or women owning property. Indeed, the state-level gender development index estimated by several scholars places Kerala ahead of other states" (p.1). Sreekumar (2007) adds, "The social indices of Kerala display gender equality that one scarcely encounters in developing regions of the world. These favourable indicators coexist with pervasive female unemployment, increasing incidence of dowry, gender violence and an escalating sense of danger in women's lives" (p. 34). Evidently, there exists a situation of "gender paradox" in Kerala, which Sreekumar (2007) explains as "contradiction' whereby women's high showing in socio-demographic indicators of development exists simultaneously with their low public participation and the increasing incidence of violence upon them (p.34). This paper attempts to 'close-read' the Keralan writer in English, Anita Nair's *Eating Wasps* (2018), within the discourse of the "gender paradox" associated with the Kerala Model.

Anita Nair, a recipient of both the Sahitya Akademi Award and the Crossword Prize, writes about the intricacies of interpersonal relationships and modern-day struggles that Indian women, especially those from the middle class, face. She tackles issues like inequality, feminism, women's psychology, identity crises, patriarchy, and gender roles. Her important novels are *A Better Man*, *Ladies Coupe*, *Mistress*, *Lessons in Forgetting*, and *Idris: Keeper of the Light*.

Eating Wasps narrates the interconnected stories of ten women who variously converge at 'Near the Nila', a private riverside resort in Kerala. They are strangers to each other, yet they have a common factor - they are here to seek escape from a certain trauma. Sreelakshmi, the protagonist, commits suicide at the age of 35, and the story unfolds from her perspective. Sreelakshmi's lover, Markose, retrieves the bone of her index finger from the funeral pyre and keeps it in his cupboard, chaining her soul to the mortal realm as a living ghost. Others see the cartilage as a piece of chalk or plastic. In the early 2000s, Megha, a six-year-old guest at the private resort, uncovers this from the cupboard. Sreelakshmi consequently reclaims life and narrates the story of the women she encoun-

ters here. The story spans from the era in which Sreelakshmi lived to the early 2000s, capturing the transition from a time when women had to struggle for educational opportunities to a period when they began to recognise equality in marriage and sexual pleasure as fundamental rights.

An unmarried college professor of Zoology in her 30s, a celebrated writer who is the youngest recipient of the Kerala Sahitya Akademy Awards, Sreelakshmi is educated, financially independent, and from a well-to-do family, embodying empowerment in every sense. She is also pursuing a Ph.D. Despite her accomplishments, society considers her “damaged goods” due to her unmarried status. Her relationship with Markose, a married priest six years younger to her, ends in tragedy. Following a journey to Madras, where they engage in physical intimacy, Markose vanishes the next day, leaving Sreelakshmi in a state of profound emotional distress and disillusionment. Compounding her anguish, the same week, she witnesses the release of her latest story series, which delves into sexual themes. This results in derision from her colleagues and students, estrangement from her family, and the rejection of her Ph.D. candidature by a prospective advisor, who indirectly critiques her work. These cumulative setbacks precipitate a deep sense of hopelessness and despair. Sreelakshmi’s story ends in 1965 with her suicide.

Sreelakshmi lived at a time when explicit and open conversations about sexual desires and physical intimacy were taboo in society. It is all the more pronounced when the individual engaged in the conversation is a woman, and unmarried. The immediate reaction is to question the

woman’s moral character and shame and ostracise her. This mirrors the real-life experience of Kamala Das, who wrote *Ente Katha* (My Story) in 1973 and was considered a scandalous figure by society. The society’s dictum was that female sexuality was not to be publicly acknowledged or discussed. Sreelakshmi’s story can be seen as a reflection of this broader societal context. It also shows how women who transgressed these boundaries faced severe social penalties.

Sreelakshmi’s spirit remains on the earth as a spectral presence and observes the lives of women in the 2000s across various ages, languages, and classes, only to realise that even decades later, the plight of the women remains the same. The narrative shifts to the experiences of these women who unexpectedly meet at the private resort, battling their own struggles. Their experiences expose the continuing and relentless struggles of women over the years.

Urvashi embodies a frustrated woman who appears happily married, epitomising the image of a perfect wife and mother with a luxurious life. She is a successful journalist, as well as a marathon runner. However, she is discontented and struggles with a pervasive sense of hopelessness. She resorts to dating apps, which surged in popularity in the 2000s, to explore new relationships. It was an outlet for her unmet needs. Her relationship with Surya turns toxic when he becomes a stalker. Urvashi’s story addresses two critical aspects—women acknowledging their sexual desires and needs and their handling of a toxic relationship. As Surya turns abusive, Urvashi ends their relationship pronto, demonstrating her clear understand-

ding of her boundaries. She confronts the situation, refusing to endure toxicity. Perhaps this is a result of her empowerment and her agency in pursuing her happiness and well-being. Her story further explores the possibility of polyamorous relationships, a controversial topic in the Indian cultural context even now.

Unlike Sreelakshmi and Urvashi, Najma comes from a conservative and economically disadvantaged background. Uneducated and a widow by seventeen, her mother, Ammi, was determined to provide Najma with a proper education, hoping she would become a teacher. Ammi worked tirelessly as a kitchen help for a catering company specialising in Hyderabad cuisine. Contrary to her traditional background, Ammi did not impose the burkha on Najma, reflecting her progressive mindset. Najma becomes a victim of an acid attack by a potential suitor rejected by her mother. He goes on to accuse her of being a prostitute for allowing other men to see her. Her choice of not wearing a burkha is depicted as immoral. The attack leaves her disfigured, whereon she loses her job as a teacher, and subsequently, her mother suffers a stroke. Left without support and contemplating suicide, Najma finds strength in her mother's memory. She finds a job as a helper at the resort, determined to persevere despite her challenges.

Liliana's story emphasises the dangers of social media exposure and the stigmatisation of women involved in MMS scandals. Liliana flees from her country, Italy to the private resort in Kerala to escape from the relentless judgements and rumours surrounding the scandal. However, even the small town recognises

her identity, and she is immediately derogatorily labelled "koothichi," translating to "whore." The patriarchal society notoriously targets only women in such scandals, while the involvement of men is ignored and disregarded. Liliana eventually reaches a mental state where is no longer afraid and decides to confront the situation. This is how she preserves her identity, refusing to be subjugated by fear.

The novel also addresses child abuse, reminding us that even small children are not spared by society. Megha Naidu is a first-grade student and daughter of a lieutenant colonel, who is sexually abused by her school van attendant. Megha does not even fully understand what is happening to her and is mentally disturbed. Koman and Maya's story narrates the story of an elderly couple who fall in love. Maya is a 71-year-old who stays with her 39-year-old autistic son, Naveen, from a previous toxic marriage. Koman accepts Maya the way she is, while Maya struggles to believe that such men exist. Molly and Theresa are sisters, and their story discusses sibling rivalry and jealousy. Theresa's husband and his mistress die in a car accident, which renders Theresa mentally unstable. Her deranged mind assumes her brother-in-law, Anto, is her own husband. The narrative examines how personal trauma can disrupt one's identity.

As discussed, the novel examines the lives of ten women from different generations, ages, classes and geographical boundaries, all of them seeking happiness at their terms. It emphasises how a patriarchal society scorns women who demonstrate their choices. Anita Nair says,

I thought Eating Wasps would be about women preserving their identity despite

the constant challenges they face on numerous fronts every day, be it patriarchy, misogyny, the male gaze or even the all-pervasive touch of technology. I also wanted to focus on the challenges a woman faces from within herself, especially as the world we live in today ceaselessly drums in tropes on how a woman may or may not be. (Chhibber, 2018)

The narrator, Sreelakshmi, from a different generation, is surprised by the technological changes in contemporary life. The author notes, “Whatever she was going through then is pretty much what women go through now-whether dealing with speculation or salacious gossip. And because it’s out there in the world for everybody to look at and scrutinise all the time, it’s even tougher” (Rajaram, 2018).

Despite Kerala’s acclaim as a model for women’s empowerment and high literacy rates, a critical question persists: have these advancements been genuinely translated into substantive empowerment for women? Sreelakshmi’s narrative, set in the mid-1950s, vividly demonstrates the societal constraints faced by women of that era. Although she attained significant educational achievements-opportunities not afforded to her contemporaries, who were married off at a young age-she nonetheless encountered substantial barriers. Her notable accomplishments did not shield her from pervasive societal judgments and limitations. Transitioning to the millennial years, the novel illustrates that, despite considerable technological advancements, women

continue to confront enduring challenges. Anita Nair effectively portrays how technological developments have introduced a new dimension of issues for women, such as the erosion of privacy and the proliferation of digital threats. Spanning from the 1960s to the present, the narrative draws attention to how platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Tinder influence women’s lives. Through a nuanced exploration of past and present, Anita Nair’s *Eating Wasps* underscores the unsettling continuity of gender inequities in Kerala, revealing that despite the state’s celebrated social progress, the deep-seated challenges faced by women remain remarkably persistent across generations.

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‘सुबह, दोपहर, शाम’ में कृषि एवं पर्यावरण में लीन ‘अम्मा जी’ का चित्रण

गीतु दास

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मूल आलेख :

पर्यावरण का तात्पर्य उस समूची बौद्धिक एवं जैविक व्यवस्था से है जिसमें सभी प्रकार के जीव-जंतु जीवनयापन करते हैं। प्रकृति में उपस्थित प्रत्येक चीज़, चाहे वह सजीव हो या निर्जीव, उसका प्रकृति और पर्यावरण से कुछ ना कुछ संबंध अवश्य रहता है। आज पर्यावरण का स्वरूप इसलिए बिगड़ गया है क्योंकि मनुष्य ने अपनी विकास के लिए प्राकृतिक संसाधनों का अंधाधुंध दोहन किया है। जिसके कारण पर्यावरणीय गुणवत्ता लगातार गिरती जा रही है। पर्यावरण दो शब्द - ‘परी’ और ‘आवरण’ का मेल से बना है। ‘परी’ का अर्थ है ‘चारों ओर’ तथा आवरण का अर्थ है ‘लबादा’ या ‘घेरने वाला’। जिस माहौल या परिवेश में हम रहते हैं तथा जो कुछ भी हमारा चारों ओर उपस्थित है वह सब कुछ हमारा पर्यावरण है।

भारत की मिट्टी भी अति विशिष्ट है जिस कारण हम भारतीयों को अपनी मिट्टी से सदा लगाव रहती है। कभी आक्रमणकारियों ने भारत से इसका ज्ञान और समृद्धि को मिटाना चाहा, चाहे वह मुगल हो या अंग्रेज। अभी विकास के नाम पर स्वयं हम भी पर्यावरण एवं प्रकृति के नाश करके स्वार्थ बन रहे हैं। आज की पीढ़ी को कृषि एवं अपने पर्यावरण से इतना लगाव नहीं जितनी पुरानी पीढ़ी को रही। आज

के लोग विकास एवं सफलता के पीछे चलकर प्रकृति एवं पर्यावरण को काफी पीछे छोड़ दिया है। इसी बात को केंद्र में रखकर कमलेश्वर ने अपना उपन्यास ‘सुबह दोपहर शाम’ लिखा है।

समकालीन चेतना से प्रभावित साहित्यकार कमलेश्वर ने समकालीन परिवेश को ही अपनी रचनाओं का विषय बनाया है। स्वतंत्रता प्राप्ति भारतीय जीवन की महत्वपूर्ण घटना है जिसके फलस्वरूप भारतीय जीवन में असंख्य नूतन परिवर्तन का श्रीगणेश हुआ। भारतीय समाज के परिवर्तन उसकी पारिवारिक परिस्थितियाँ, गाँव, नगर, जाति, धर्म-व्यवस्था, व्यक्ति और समाज के परस्पर संबंध, आधुनिकीकरण और औद्योगिकीकरण का व्यक्ति और समाज पर प्रभाव आदी से रहा। कमलेश्वर ने इस स्थिति को अपनी रचनाओं में व्यक्त करने का भरपूर प्रयास किया है।

प्रस्तुत उपन्यास ‘सुबह, दोपहर, शाम’ में मध्यवर्गीय परिवार का चित्रण किया गया है जो संयुक्त पारिवारिक व्यवस्था में जीवन बिताते हैं। लेकिन स्वार्थ एवं धन तथा सफलता के लिए उसका संयुक्त परिवार टूट जाती है। उपन्यास का मुख्य पात्र ‘अम्मा जी’ है जो अपनी पर्यावरण एवं प्रकृति से जुड़ी जीवन बिताती है। उनकी कृषि भूमि थी और उनका पूरा परिवार पीढ़ियों से ही खेती-बारी में जुड़ा हुआ था। अम्मा जी प्रकृति की सभी हाव-भाव को समझती

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थी। वह जीव-जंतुओं एवं पशु-पक्षियों से भी बातें करती थी। अपनी मिट्टी एवं प्रकृति के प्रति उनका काफी लगाव था। अम्मा जी की पति का मृत्यु भी अंग्रेजों के खिलाफ अपनी महाराजा की रक्षा करते दौरान हुआ। वे महाराजा के विश्वस्त थे और अंग्रेजों की गोली लेकर उनकी मृत्यु हुई थी। अपने देश से वही लगाव अम्मा जी को भी था और वे अपने पति के अरमानों का पूरा करते शेष जीवन बिता रही थी।

अम्मा जी का पोता जसवंत को रेल गाड़ी चलाने का नौकरी प्राप्त होती है। अम्मा जी नहीं चाहती की जसवंत अंग्रेज़ बहादुर की गाड़ी चलाने जा रहा है। अम्मा जी की राय में वह अंग्रेजों की गुलामी करने जा रहा है। वह कई बार जसवंत से पूछती है कि, क्या उसे जाना जरूरी है? लेकिन घर के सभी लोग जब जसवंत को नौकरी करने के पक्ष में थे, तो अम्मा जी मना नहीं कर पायी है। अम्मा जी उससे कहती है कि- 'क्या अपना घर, अपनी धरती तुझे कम पड़ती है जो रेलगाड़ी की महकमे में जा रहा है।' अम्मा जी चाहती थी कि जसवंत भी घर में सब के साथ रहकर खेती संभाले। वह चाहती थी कि जब जसवंत जाएगा तो उसकी बेटी शांता (संतो) उनके साथ रहे। जिस दिन जसवंत अपनी पत्नी के साथ नगर चला जाता है, उस दिन देर रात तक बड़ी अम्मा रोती रही। किसी को भी इस बात का अंदाज़ा भी नहीं था कि अम्मा जी जसवंत से इतना प्रेम करती होगी। अगले दिन सुबह हुआ तो बड़ी अम्मा कहीं भी दिखाई नहीं दे रही थी। सब जगहों पर ढूँढ लिया मगर अम्मा कहीं भी नहीं थी। जसवंत भी अपनी बड़ी अम्मा को ढूँढने आया, लेकिन उसका कुछ पता नहीं चला। संतो और जसवंत की माँ को सदा बड़ी अम्मा की याद आती थी। फिर निराश होकर संतो भी गांव छोड़कर अपने पिता जी के साथ चली जाती हैं। संतों को यह नगर और नया शहर बिल्कुल अच्छा नहीं लग रहा था। उसके लिए अपना गाँव और घर ही सब कुछ था। सभी लोग जसवंत के साथ नगर चले

जाते हैं और इसी तरह उनकी खेती-बारी लुप्त हो जाती है।

एक पंडित जी के पास जसवंत अपना भाग्य और भविष्य देखने जाता है। पंडित जी के द्वारा कमलेश्वर ने अपना मत प्रकट किया है, वे जसवंत को आखिर इतना ही कहते हैं कि- 'तुम्हारी रेल की धुआ खेती को चौपट कर रहा है। पटरी डालने के लिए खेत काट डाल गए हैं, चारागाह खत्म हो गए हैं। गाँव-घरों के आंगन के बीच से तुम्हारी रेल चलती है। जानवर उटकने लगे हैं... धरती थरथरती है जिससे पेड़ों की जड़ें ढीली पड़ गई है।' पंडित जी की इस कदन द्वारा कमलेश्वर यह व्यक्त करते हैं कि मानव अपनी सुविधा बढ़ाने के लिए तकनीकी युग में विकास करते-करते आगे तो बढ़ता है। लेकिन उसको यह मालूम ना होता कि वास्तव में वह क्या-क्या खो रहा है। वह प्रकृति से दूर हो रहा है तथा अपनी आने वाली पीढ़ी को भी प्रकृति संपत्ति से वंचित कर रहा है। इसके साथ-साथ कई प्रकार के दुष्परिणाम भी झेलना पड़ता है जैसे- प्रदूषण, जलवायु का मलिन होना, तापमान, जिससे जानवर एवं पशु पक्षियों का जीवन पर भी बुरा असर पड़ता है की या तो उनकी मृत्यु हो जाती है अथवा उन्हें अपना वास स्थल छोड़कर जाना पड़ता है।

त्योहार मनाने के लिए सारा परिवार गाँव वापस आए, तो आधी रात को जंगल का हरकरा आकर कहता है कि एक बूढ़ी माँ जंगल में वनदेवी की तरह ध्यान में लीन बैठी रहती है। वह जंगली जानवरों से बातें भी करती रहती है और जानवर भी उनके पास ही बैठे रहते हैं। यह बात सुनकर सबको पता चल जाता है कि वह बड़ी अम्मा ही है। हरकारा के साथ सभी मिलकर जंगल में जाकर बड़ी अम्मा से उनके साथ चलने का अनुरोध करते हैं एवं अपनी गलतियों के लिए क्षमा भी माँगते हैं। अम्मा उन्हें काफी समझाती है कि किस प्रकार उनका जीवन धरती से जुड़ी रहती है। जंगली जानवरों में भी उन्हें प्यार दिखाई देता है

जो आजकल के मनुष्य में भी दिखाई नहीं देता। वह कहती है कि उनके पति भी महाराज की रक्षा करके इसी जंगल की ओर भागे थे। मानव जोनी मिलने में हजारों बरस लगते हैं मगर जानवर की जोनी से जीव जल्दी-जल्दी मुक्त हो जाता है। उन्हें यह उम्मीद थी की न जाने कौन सी जोनी में उनका पति मिल जाए। अम्माजी अपने को स्वयं उस जंगल में काफी चैन एवं सुख का महसूस करती थी। सब के अनुरोध पर वह घर वापस चली आती है। उसके कुछ समय बाद अम्मा जी का प्राण विसर्जन हो जाता है। बड़ी अम्मा को भी यह बात पता चल जाती है की उनका समय आ गया है, तो वह एक रात पहले शांता को अपने पास बिठाकर केवल इतना ही अनुरोध करती है कि उनकी सपनों को अब शांता ही पूरा करें और उनकी मर्जाद की रक्षा करें। अगले दिन अम्मा जी की मृत्यु हो जाती है।

निष्कर्ष : निष्कर्ष रूप से कमलेश्वर ने अपने इस उपन्यास में निम्नलिखित बिन्दुओं पर प्रकाश डाला है -

- आज का व्यक्ति किस प्रकार अपनी स्वार्थ के पीछे भाग-दौड़ में अपना पर्यावरण एवं प्रकृति को नष्ट कर रहा है।
- विकास के नाम पर न जाने कितना कुछ मनुष्य खो देता है।

- केवल कुछ लोग ही हैं जो निस्वार्थ भाव से कृषि जीवन बिता रहे हैं।
- पुरानी पीढ़ी का अपनी धरती, पर्यावरण एवं प्रकृति से लगाव तथा पीढ़ी दर पीढ़ी इसका कम होता जाना।
- पहले जहाँ गाँव में हरियाली दिखाई देती थी, अब चारों जगहों में केवल ईट और पत्थरों के इमारते ही दिखाई दे रही है।
- अपनी सुविधा बढ़ाने के लिए प्रकृति का नाश एवं शोषण करना।

कमलेश्वर का यह उपन्यास भले ही साल 1982 में लिखी हुई हो लेकिन इसका विषय सदा ही समकालीन है।

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An Exploration of Sita's Journey through Annette Hanshaw's Jazz Tunes in *Sita Sings the Blues*

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The Ramayana, an age-old mythological tale focused on virtues and ethics, has evolved from oral tradition to modern formats like television, cinema and theatre, influencing societal norms and cultural practices. Its alignment with prevailing ideologies has contributed to conventional gender stereotyping. Nina Paley's seventy-two-minute animated film offers a contemporary take on a woman's struggle for justice and equality, featuring striking visuals and music. Despite its innovative storytelling, the film has faced criticism for its provocative interpretation of the Ramayana. Lodhia (2015, p. 376) states that :

The film not only positions Sita as the protagonist, but through a strategic deployment of different animation styles, diverse narrator perspectives, and blues music, it simultaneously engages with a body of critique about the epic's central teachings on virtue, righteousness, and idealized gender roles, placing the film firmly within a long-standing tradition of textual, visual and performative retellings of the Ramayana.

While traveling to Trivandrum, India, to reunite with her husband, Dave, Paley had discovered The Ramayana. After

receiving an email from Dave ending their marriage on her return to Brooklyn, she resonated with Sita's feelings of helplessness, sorrow, and abandonment. To channel her feelings, she empathetically portrayed Sita's experiences with Ram. The Ramayana then "took a new depth and meaning for me. It no longer resembles a sexist parable; rather it seemed to capture the essence of painful relationships, and describe a blueprint of human suffering the greatest breakup story ever told... *Sita Sings the Blues*, a 72-minute feature, would be my salvation" (Paley, 2005).



Figure 1 : Source Image: *Sita Sings the Blues*
www.pintinterest.com

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“Sita Sings the Blues” features three Indonesian shadow puppets that engage in playful disputes while providing satirical commentary on the storyline, akin to a Greek chorus. The highlight of the film is the inclusion of Annette Hanshaw’s 1920s and 1930s jazz blues songs, which echoes Sita and Paley’s experiences and emotions. The chosen songs effectively highlight gender disparities and offer a woman’s perspective on her circumstances, as the film spans several timelines and cultures. The Indonesian shadow puppets as narrators narrate the tale conversationally. They comment on the originality of when Ramayana was written and where it took place. As Vibha Shetiya (2015, para 4) comments:



Figure-2 : Source Image: Sita Sings the Blues
www.pinterest.com

Paley shows the complexity of the Ramayana without actually telling it: the three narrators... reflect the “fluidity” of the story when they “recall” the same event differently and mix up names of people and places; they reflect the “historicity” of the story when they speak of places such as Rama’s birth place, Ayodhya, “which exists even today therefore the story must

be true”.... questioning the Ramayana, an unfortunate and ironic matter given that fluidity and mutability are what define the story (Shetiya, 2015).

In the film, puppets use satire to explore character motivations and the impact of myths on life. They recount Ram’s exile and Sita’s choice to follow him, then shift to Paley’s husband leaving for a six-month assignment in India. Sita’s abduction and hope for Ram’s rescue parallel Paley’s longing for her husband. The emotional distance between Paley and her husband reflects Ram and Sita’s reunion after Ravan’s defeat, highlighting doubts in their relationship. Ram questions Sita’s virtue and asks her to undergo *agnipariksha*:

Ram : The very sight of you is painful. You are free to go wherever you want. I have no more use of you Sita.

Sita : If I had known this, I would’ve killed myself before and spared you this war. Build me a funeral pyre. I cannot bear to live. Despite my virtues my husband has rejected me.

Female Voice 2 : He’s obviously doubting her umm... Pureness.

Male Voice 1 : I find the whole pureness thing really odd. (Question Copyright, 2009, 38:25)



Figure 3: Source Image: Sita Sings the Blues
www.epicsofindiavk.blogspot.com

In addition to the veneration of Hindu divinities, epics, and myths the notion of women's chastity and purity has been deeply ingrained in the collective consciousness and identity of the nation (Banerjee, 2006). The concept of purity, often valued in women, is a social construct. Sita's self-sacrifice, or *agnipariksha*, showcases her devotion to Ram, elevating her status among Indian women. However, this focus on purity places a heavy burden on women to emulate her virtue. The puppets satirically discuss the ethicality of the 'purity' test and question whether any woman should endure such scrutiny. When Sita emerges from the flames unharmed, Ram, who had doubts, is convinced and remarks, "Oops, I guess you were pure" (Question Copyright, 2009, 43:18). Later, after Sita's pregnancy is revealed, Ram exiles her due to suspicions, prompting the puppets to voice the audience's concerns about his decision:

Male Voice 1 : I think basically as a king he had to sort of do if the common man was doing that to their wives. Why would the king treat his wife any differently kind of a thing?

Female Voice 2 (interjecting) : I felt that he always had this element of doubt. I mean it, it coupled with of course his, his virtue. You know that everybody spoke of and he kept his word to his dad and then his subjects. But I felt he always had this doubt that she might not be pure (Question Copyright, 2009, 56:10).

Judith Butler opines that a person's gender is formed by their repeated expression of it. Sita accepting the coldness from her husband and letting herself be treated like trash till this point defines this repetitive submissiveness. This inequality comes

into being because an "individual's gender is not only a part of who they are, but, more essentially, it is something they do, and do recurrently, in connection with others" (West & Zimmerman, 1987). More importantly, what is always on display is our gender. Our performance is what classifies a particular gender. Based on our actions we are classified as man/woman. As Butler (1988) points out that "Gender is instituted through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self" (p. 519). When Sita realises that Ram has banished her, she literally cries a river. The frame shifts to Brooklyn where the animated Paley begs her husband to take her back. The idealization of unwavering loyalty to husbands, viewing them as infallible or '*pati parmeshwar*', persists in contemporary society, influencing our expressions of gender roles.

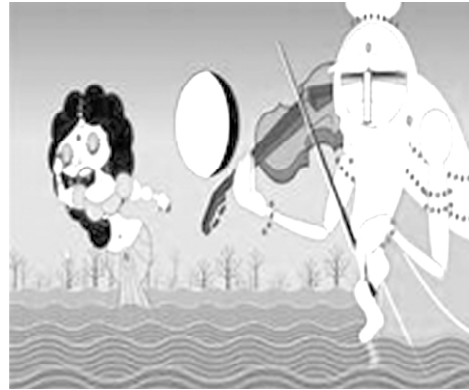


Figure 4 : Source Image: Sita Sings the Blues
www.shadowdistribution.com

She calls him and cries "Please take me back. Please. Please. I'll do anything. Please" (Question Copyright, 2009, 1:07:00). These two scenes-abandonment, loneli-

ness and begging to be taken back speak many things. It is only a woman who does all the begging, is shown submissive, and is made to face the brunt of society? Has a man ever begged to be taken back? Animated Paley begging her husband makes the puppet comment:

Male Voice 3 : If you had a girlfriend who was being treated really badly by like her ex- or like her current boyfriend or whatever ... Aren't you gonna turn out and say "Listen he doesn't like you or talk to you so move on. Something is wrong" (Question Copyright, 2009, 1:07:05).

Analysing Sita's reverence for Ram, they also indicate and condemn Sita's part too in putting up with such behaviour with unquestioning devotion, which is a virtue considered in patriarchy stating "That's her mistake" (Question Copyright, 2009, 1:07:49). Through a scene of Luv Kush singing, Paley criticizes Ram for treating Sita in such a harsh manner not so subtly and shreds his "divine virtue". The song starts with praises of Ram and quickly descends to mock his pride in kingship:

Rama's just, Rama's right, Rama's our guiding light

Perfect man, Perfect son, Rama's loved by everyone



Figure 6: Source Image: Rama Praise Song from Sita Sings the Blues www.youtube.com

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Always right never wrong we praise Rama in this song

Sing his love, sing his praise, Rama set his wife ablaze

Got her home, kicked her out to allay his people's doubt

Rama's wise, Rama's just, Rama does what Rama must

Duty first Sita last, Rama's reign is unsurpassed!

(Question Copyright, 2009, 1:05:14)

Sarcastically these lines sheds light on a poignant truth about Ram that for him being the perfect son and perfect king came foremost. The songs echo Paley's yearning for her husband and longing for his return and accept her back. In the end, when Ram comes across Luv and Kush, he wants to take them back. But when Sita enters the scene, he is surprised to see her and one of the puppets comments, "He still hasn't thought about taking her back" (Question Copyright, 2009, 1:11:27). Ram confused and hesitant ultimately wants her to prove her purity again so that he can validate her to his sceptical subjects:

Ram : Sita. Yes, well of course, Sita. Uh! All Sita has to do is prove her purity. Again. Another trial by fire. Perhaps. Or we could try trial by water. You know see if she sinks or floats. If she sinks she is pure. If she floats ... No wait. If she floats she is pure. If she sinks... (Question Copyright, 2009, 1:11:28).

Filled with sorrow at her husband's lingering distrust, she realizes she no longer has a place in his life. Acknowledging that her constant compliance has led him to take her for granted, she refuses to entertain him any longer. Seeking freedom, Sita ultimately returns to Mother Earth,

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liberating herself from the constraints of her relationships, especially with her husband.

The scene next shifts to New York where we see the animated Paley happy, having moved on from her pain of failed marriage, now a working woman, having an identity of her own and working on a new endeavour. Paley thus through her cartoonish sketches, narration and songs tries to revisit the male-dominated narrative of The Ramayana. Her perspective is different. Finding a resonance with Sita's life, she gives birth to her version of The Ramayana.

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Anxiety in Postmodern Age : A Substantiation with Don DeLillo's *White Noise*

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Don DeLillo, an eminent American postmodern writer, whose literary works are known for unravelling the contemporary traits of society such as mass culture, hybridity, scientific developments, technology, nuclear threats, paranoia, pop culture and many others. He is also dissident about the evolution of technology, materialistic life, capitalism, consumerism, media and other postmodern elements.

Postmodernism was an artistic movement that began after World War II, initially in architecture, but later passed into literature, culture, films, philosophies, music, and many other trends. There are myriads of culture in the postmodern society such as LGBT community, pop culture, counter culture, drug culture, cyberpunk culture and many others, which are hybrid and also scientifically advanced.

The term postmodernism was first used by Arnold Toynbee in 1947, who critiqued about the western society and its culture. Postmodernism render multiple meanings and concepts, rather than relying on a single idea or concept. Many postmodern works reflect the impact of World War II

and postmodern society and its drastic changes on individuals and society.

The characteristics of postmodern literature are metafiction, irony, black humor, historiographic metafiction, pastiche, magical realism, paranoia, minimalism, maximalism, cyberpunk, technoculture and hypereality. There is neither an ideal truth nor universality in postmodernism, as it embrace disorder and decentralization. Hence, Jean Francois Lyotard defines postmodern in his book *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* as "incredulity toward meta-narratives" (Lyotard, xxiv). The World Wars have created paranoia, anxiety and depression, which become the themes of postmodern discourses.

White Noise is DeLillo's eighth novel and also considered to be his magnum opus, published in 1985. A classic and quintessential postmodern novel that won U. S. National Book Award in 1985, laden with labyrinth of postmodern themes: death, mass consumption, hyperreality, impact of mass media, fear, family life, and technology. This novel established DeLillo to be an acclaimed postmodern

writer, for critiquing the postmodern condition of America.

The author has portrayed the post-modern life through the family members of Gladney and their anxiety throughout the novel. The protagonist Jack Gladney lives with his fifth wife Babette and they have six children from different marriages. Similarly Babette has been married two times but divorced her husbands. Both of them live happily along with their children Heinrich Gerhardt, Denise, Steffie, Wilder, Bee, Mary Alice and Eugene.

In this novel, DeLillo depicts how fear manifests into anxiety, through the protagonist. A rail car derails and crashes in Blacksmith town, which causes the chemical spill of Nyodene Derivative into air and forms "A black billowing cloud" (111). Jack's son Heinrich informs him about this collision but Jack ignores it. Nonetheless, the news about the toxic impact of airborne chemical spread everywhere and the government asks for evacuation.

Heinrich insists about the evacuation but Jack remains convinced that it will cause no harm. He states that "It's perfectly calm and still today. And when there's a wind at this time of year, it blows that way, not this way" (109). Despite being informed that "thirty-five thousand gallons" (111) of Nyodene Derivative contaminated the cloud, Jack disregards the information as it causes him anxiety. He adds that "These things happen to poor people who live in expose areas. Society is set up in such a way that it's the poor and the uneducated who suffer the main impact of natural and man-made disasters" (112).

Jack Gladney is exposed to Nyodene D for two and half minutes during evacuation and fears that it will cause him health complications and death. He states that the disaster is "made in the laboratory, defined and measurable" (124). In the evacuation center, the data analyst access Jack's profile and medical history from the government server and aggravates his anxiety:

He made a silencing gesture as if something of particular morbid interest was appearing on the screen. I wondered what he meant when he said he'd tapped into my history. Where was it located exactly? Some state or federal agency, some insurance company or credit firm or medical clearinghouse? What history was he referring to? I'd told him some basic things. Height, weight, childhood diseases. What else did he know? Did he know about my wives, my involvement with Hitler, my dreams and fears? (135)

Jack feels uncomfortable in accessing his domestic information and fears that such technology will ruin his peacefulness.

Jack wants his medical history to be confidential. This is because Jack fears that such news can harm the peacefulness of his family. This is a typical postmodern condition of a society, in which people's data remain public and are able to access it by anyone using technologies. In post-modern life, there is lack of privacy in people's domestic life. Hence Butler says "we are on the point of entering a new era, one characterized by the way that technology can remake the human body and the world" (Butler, 167).

DeLillo is vociferous about the technological innovations in the present

society. Though it eases the life, still technology jeopardizes the course of nature and living. Malpas asserts that “Technology, and its capacity to disrupt humanist ideas of the self-identical subject, has variously been presented as a threat and an opportunity” (Malpas, 75). The chief traits about the technology is that it invades a person’s domestic life and create pandemic. Jack Gladney is unable to adapt to this new society as he fears that technology will manipulate his family and other people’s emotions, even during death time. DeLillo contemplates it through Jack:

It is when death is rendered graphically, is televised so to speak, that you sense an eerie separation between your condition and yourself. A network of symbols has been introduced, an entire awesome technology wrested from the gods. It makes you feel like a stranger in your own dying. (137)

Besides, Jack’s anxiety for death has also exaggerated his imagination that the chemical spill will remain in his body forever, even after his death. He strongly believes that at any point in his life time, he will face death but Nyodene D will make his death sooner than the usual time to die. He says that:

That little breath of Nyodene has planted a death in my body. It is now official, according to the computer. I’ve got death inside me. It’s just a question of whether or not I can outlive it. It has a life span of its own. Thirty years. Even if it doesn’t kill me in a direct way, it will probably outlive me in my own body. I could die in a plane crash and the Nyodene D. would be thriving as my remains were laid to rest. (144)

Due to the recurring thoughts on death, Jack experiences “Déjà vu” (114). It is a weird experience in which one feels like seeing the future events. Heinrich says that exposure to the chemical Nyodene D “could cause a person to experience a sense of *déjà vu*” (122) as Jack’s daughter Steffie says that “I saw all this before” (122). Jack asserts that the dramatization about the impact of Nyodene D, through radio news, could have influenced Steffie to misinterpret the meaning of *déjà vu*, only to control his emotions.

Jack knows that he has anxiety for death and is unable to control his emotions over the fear for death. The only thing that comforts Jack is his family members as they alleviate him from anxiety. He says: “I wanted to be near the children, watch them sleep. Watching children sleep makes me feel devout, part of a spiritual system. It is the closest I can come to God” (141). Boxall critiques this as “Gladney, as narrator and character, seeks immersion in the empty time of his narrative as an antidote to his fear of death, or as an antidote to death itself” (Boxall, 111) in his books *Don DeLillo The Possibility of Fiction*.

In postmodern age, anxiety has become omnipresent. It is because the lifestyle in postmodern age is materialistic. When such materialistic life do not meet the required needs, anxiety paves in. Materialism becomes a significant aspect in postmodern age. It is because money becomes a deciding factor in a person’s status. As money and materialistic life coexists together in the postmodern society, the rise of capitalism and rapid consumption have become unstoppable. Lyotard defines that “the status of knowledge is altered as

societies enter what is known as the post-industrial age and cultures enter what is known as the postmodern age” (Lyotard, 3).

The capitalism in postmodern age has created anxiety rather than a comfortable life. In postmodern age, the gap between rich and poor gets larger. People want to earn money. So whenever people started losing someone or something in their life, especially money, anxiety prevails in their life. It results in survival of life, rather than living it. Thus, money becomes a key factor. In this novel, Jack Gladney claims himself to be an expertise in Hitler studies, but doesn't know anything about it. Despite that, Jack continues to be an imposter because he want to survive.

From twentieth century onwards, scientific developments paved way for an easy and comfortable life. But the World Wars have made people to distrust science and its inventions, especially after the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nuclear sciences have aggravated the anxiety about the end of world, which is reflected by DeLillo and other novelists in their works. Hence Chris Butler concludes that “postmodernist analysis is an attack on authority and reliability” (Butler, 110) in his book *Postmodernism: A Very Short Introduction*.

DeLillo concludes that “The greater the scientific advance, the more primitive of fear” (154). This is because science is used more for destruction purposes, rather than protecting the world. Hence, Jack and Babette started having anxiety after the derailment of tank car. It is a man-made disaster which caused contamination of Nyodene D in air. But people's survival instincts aggravated, when media dramatizes the news subjectively. Shaw contemplates this in her book *Technoculture: The Key Concepts* as “a profound anxiety with regard to the pervasive influence of the media” (Shaw, 18).

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Identifying Ableism : A Critical Re-reading of *Jane Eyre*

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The meaning of disability has evolved into different layers since the advocacy of Disability studies in the 1980s. The monochromatic synonym of disability revealed its vicissitudes when studied in the light of society, culture, literature, etc. It took a deviant step aside from the narrowed terminology of medicine. The impact it created in the various fields of study and the scope of disability studies has widened since then. Even though the predicament of people with disabilities has been addressed vehemently, the perception of society towards a disabled person has not undergone a major shift. The tendency of dichotomous thinking and the general trend of ableism still flourishes in literature and society. Celebrated protagonists without abled bodies in literature and films are intentionally portrayed to invoke select affective encounters in readers/viewers such as empathy, pity, misery, etc. As Ria Cheyne (2019) opens up the first paragraph of her book *Disability, Literature, Genre: Representation and Affect in Contemporary Fiction*,

Disability makes us feel. This is what guarantees its perpetual representation in literature, art, film, television programmes, video games and other forms

of cultural production. Whether it is encountered in representation or reality, adhering to one's own body or someone else's, disability evokes and invokes a host of affective responses that blur the boundaries between emotion, sensation and cognition. (p. 1)

Blurring the boundaries of perception and emotion, the creator of the text achieves the dimension of proving that disabled bodies derive a very contrasting space from normalcy. A fine line of ableist tendency is highlighted in each text whether in literature, TV programmes, art, or films. Through this paper an attempt is made to point out one such ableist technique used by the writers to attain the glorification of a character (mostly the protagonist) by evoking the emotion of pity or empathy in readers, and the main focus of the paper would be Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*.

The infamous statement of Mr. Justice Holmes that the three generations of imbeciles were enough, in the Buck V. Bell, The Test Case for Virginia's Eugenical Sterilization Act and the American Eugenics Movement of late 19th century had declared to the world that the defective people who do not belong to the definition

of pure and normal should be sterilized and wiped out from the entire human race. A society that is believed to be open, modern and scientifically developed, openly revealed its disdain towards the disabled in the 19th century. It not only demonstrated the arrogant nation's hostile attitude towards disabled individuals but also revealed the widespread negative perception of disability among the general population. Compared to how women, people in third-world countries, and lower classes are positioned as inferior, disabled people are at the bottom of the social hierarchy. The claims of excuses that we have progressed so much in time from the Buck V. Bell case and the Eugenics Movement could be easily negated by understanding the social perception of today's people towards people with disabilities by closely reading the texts produced. "A system of compulsory able-bodiedness", as Robert McRuer (2012) elaborates in his *Crip theory: Cultural Science of Queerness and Disability*, thrust the foundation of a society and the representation of people with disability in literature, film, or TV programmes is simply to invoke the emotions of the reader/viewer (p. 93). Contrary to the statement mentioned above, Wendy L Chrisman (2011), in his article, "A Reflection on Inspiration: A Recuperative Call for Emotion in Disability Studies", refers to the argument put forth by Jose Alaniz :

For people with physical, visible disabilities, these images have arguably been challenged and, perhaps to some degree, replaced. José Alaniz, for example, suggests narratives and images of disability have moved away from inspiring fear, pity, and the image of the "supercrip", toward awareness, acceptance, and integration. (p. 173)

The visible drift of people's attitudes and emotions towards the disabled (as Jose Alaniz suggests) has only happened peripherally and the portrayal of the disabled in the films/literature/ TV programmes is especially meant to evoke sentiments of the audience/reader. For instance, the quadriplegic hero of the bestselling romance novel *Me Before You* by Jojo Mayes (2012), which was later adapted to a movie with the same name, ends his life as it is unbearable for him to live in a wheelchair, leaving behind his lover cum caretaker affecting readers/viewers emotionally, or how producers of the TV reality shows employ sentimental background score when introducing the candidate with a disability to enthruse pity in the audience delineate the ableist strategy used to highlight the difference of the abled and disabled subconsciously. Apart from the affective influence mentioned, the disabled in the text are intentionally utilized to glorify a specific character. This tendency of ableism has been implemented in many works and this could be analysed in a large measure in Charlotte Bronte's (1992) famous novel *Jane Eyre*. The pseudo-morality and hypocrisy of the Victorian era are indirectly or unconsciously subjected in this novel. The societal bias that configures power in the hands of unbeatable males could be interpreted as being ridiculed in the novel. Disability plays an important role in the novel and it also places the plight of the disabled on the common ground of perspective. The perspective of the modern American society of the 19th century which had the consciousness to erase the disabled and consider them as belonging to the lowest strata of society, is reflected in every work.

In genre texts, the disability narratives and tropes that circulate in wider culture frequently take on genre-specific flavours. Thus, when disabled characters appear in genre texts, specific expectations about the possibilities for those characters are mobilised. Readers of romance, for example, may anticipate that a disabled protagonist in a romance novel may be cured en route to finding true love, while a reader of crime fiction might expect that a neurodivergent detective will have unique insights that will allow them to crack the case. (p. 29)

As Ria Cheyne (2019) points out in her work, *Disability, Literature, Genre: Representation and Affect in Contemporary Fiction*, in romance novels, if a protagonist is portrayed as disabled, the readers expect those characters to be cured and included in normal and finally a love unification. Readers desire for the disabled to be rescued from their pathetic state of being. Nevertheless, this inclination had a change as mentioned earlier, that an acceptance of something beyond normal had been portrayed in works. Even though the disabled are accepted, there are still tools for discrimination that deliberately depict the boundaries between the abled and the disabled. The treatment of disability in these works may seem ordinary but a detailed study of the text will open up a boundless degree of ableism.

The famous Victorian novel *Jane Eyre* has been subjected to various interpretations and analyses. The feminist study of this text was popularized and widely discussed after the publication of the work *Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* by Susan Gubar and Sandra Gilbert (2020). This book has also

provided a discussion of a platform for disability studies. Bertha's madness and Rochester's blindness have been studied and analyzed deeply. As Lennard J. Davis (2012) quotes in the forward of the book, *The Madwoman and The Blindman: Jane Eyre, Discourse, Disability*, "In fact, the surprise one registers after reading all the chapters comes from wondering how it has been possible to read *Jane Eyre* without a serious consideration of disability." (p. X). Unlike the numerous viewpoints analyzed about disability in this text, the paper focuses on a single recurring ableist tool that could be easily identified in this novel. The characters with disability in the text serve the purpose of glorifying another character by instilling emotional reactions in the reader. This ableist tool enhances the emotional quotient defining a fine line of abled/disabled bodies.

The macho hero of the novel, Mr. Edward Rochester has the commanding and the authoritative voice at the Thornfield. Being the master of the huge house, he has several servants in control, little Adele as a ward as well as admiration of suitable young ladies who have the secret intention of marrying him. Giving orders, throughout the novel, he is portrayed as powerful except for the last part. His very own dialogue,

Of course: that is the established answer. Go into the library-I mean, if you please.- (Excuse my tone of command; I am used to say, 'Do this,' and it is done: I cannot alter my customary habits for one new inmate.)- Go, then, into the library; take a candle with you; leave the door open; sit down to the piano, and play a tune. (p. 121)

Jane Eyre acquiesces to every demand put forth by Mr. Rochester and is happy

to be useful to her master which paves the way for her falling in love with him later. Reading the novel through the eyes of Jane, the reader is assured of Jane's character and plain looks. But this Victorian heroine extracts the praise of the reader in the final chapters after he "is now helpless, indeed blind and a cripple" (p. 435). The courageous protagonist, despite her love for him, refuses to marry Mr. Rochester when she finds out he has another wife but later comes back for him and accepts him willingly with all his disability. As the disabled Rochester is well aware of his predicament and the huge fortune she owns, he underlines his disability when he proposes to Jane to marry him,

A poor blind man, whom you will have to lead about by the hand?"

"Yes, sir."

"A crippled man, twenty years older than you, whom you will have to wait on?"

"Yes, sir."

"Truly, Jane?"

"Most truly, sir." (p. 451)

Their conversation and especially Jane's response elate the minds of the readers whose desire is to see the lovers unified. Peripherally it may seem ordinary since the climax is well attuned and as expected of the romance novel but looking closely, Charlotte Bronte has very well established the glorification of this Victorian heroine making her readily accept the crippled and blind Rochester. Specifically when everything favours her, as she is enormously rich, abled, and educated, this decision entuses the affective encounters of the reader which finally channelizes to the character's dignifica-

tion and ennoblement which in turn uplifts the reader's admiration of the character. This ableist tool elaborates on the position of the disabled in the social hierarchy and also cements the power of the unattractive heroine who challenges Victorian hypocrisy.

The main focus of the text *Jane Eyre* is the mysterious element kept alive by the secret wife Bertha. The downfall of the powerful Rochester happens because of this mentally disabled character. When the innkeeper shares Rochester's unfortunate incident with Jane, she seems relieved as she thought something worse had happened to Rochester, and expresses her feelings to the readers. "I had dread worse. I had dread he was mad" (p. 434), announcing that a mental disorder is worse than death. The attitude of the writer, the protagonist, and the text towards disability (mental or physical) is set in this dialogue as it nods to the definite boundary of abled/disabled. And when Jane agrees to marry Rochester it affirms her power and authority. The reason she denies the perfect, handsome St. John for a blind, crippled Rochester could be viewed in this light. She refuses to accompany St. John under his authority to India, instead, she decides to marry the disabled Rochester to attain power and control. The pity of the reader towards Rochester who suffered due to his secret wife takes a double admiration for Jane Eyre when she accepts him.

Within the underlying pretext of a romance novel and clutching on to the noble concepts of love and sacrifice Bronte's work *Jane Eyre* becomes an extolled literary work that had moved the hearts of hundreds but when scrutinized in the view of disability framework, the text clearly articulates various shades of ableism.

As disability studies carved their way into the literary canon, the perspective, the understanding and the angle in which a text is viewed took a turn around. Most sought-after works became disarrayed and dishevelled in the ableist tendencies portrayed. Even in the 21st century, the plight and the position of the disabled in the social, cultural, and literary scenario have not witnessed a drastic transformation. Like the mute consent of mass consciousness to the Eugenics movement of sterilization, the people of this modern society have their minds cemented in ableism, despite the various research and theories produced in the field of disability studies.

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Conceptualising Crip Ecologies : The Study of Ecological Disablement in Ambikasutan Mangad's *Swarga*

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Introduction :

Disability is a dynamic concept that evades fixed definitions. The development of various models of disability has led to the rise of heterogeneous understandings of the term over time. For instance, while the medical model defined disability as a pathological defect present within an individual, the social model focused on the systemic barriers operating within societies. However, by focusing mainly on how built environments favour certain bodies and minds over others, the social model failed, to a certain extent, to engage with the ways in which natural ecosystems also become disabling spaces.

Recently, scholars working within the interstices of disability studies and environmental humanities have initiated conversations on how natural environments transpire to become both disabled and disabling expanses. The presence of toxic pollutants in natural ecosystems has resulted in the escalation of chronic illnesses and various disabilities among living beings. Building upon this fact, the disability theorist Sunaura Taylor advanced the notion of 'ecological

disablement' referring to how contaminated ecosystems drastically alter the "capacities and functionings of an entity or system which limits its ability to sustain itself and others as it previously had" (Othering & Belonging Institute, 2019, 9:06). Taylor refers to the present period as an epoch of disability, a time in which the mass disablement of environments is significantly interconnected with the collective disablement of human beings.

The novel *Enmakaje*, written by Ambikasutan Mangad (2009), a prominent novelist and short story writer from Kerala and translated into English as *Swarga* by J. Devika (2017), is a fictional rendering of the catastrophic endosulfan disaster that unfolded in Kasargod, the northern-most district of Kerala for over two decades. Through a textual analysis of the novel, this article seeks to examine how natural ecosystems become both disabled and disabling spaces, particularly for indigent communities. In the present anthropocentric era, the impact human beings have on the environment is on the rise. Despite the knowledge that toxins are perilous to both

environmental and public health, neo-liberal forces focus solely on exploiting natural resources and seeking greater profits. The study attempts to comprehend how these anthropogenic influences instigate the occurrence of mass ecological disablement, endangering the health and well-being of both human beings and natural habitats alike.

Disabled Ecologies and Precarious Existences :

In 1978, the Plantation Corporation of Kerala began the impetuous aerial spraying of endosulfan, a toxic organochlorine insecticide, on over forty-five thousand hectares of cashew plantations spread across several Gram Panchayats of Kasargod district, including Enmakaje. This mercenary operation, which continued for over twenty years, resulted in the deaths of several residents and destroyed the rich biodiversity of the land. Furthermore, it triggered the rise of various forms of disabilities, birth deformities, reproductive issues, and multiple illnesses among both humans and animals. Although the pesticide was banned in 2005, the repercussions of its utilisation were far-reaching. Through his literary creation, Mangad seamlessly blends these real-life incidents with fictitious elements, throwing light upon the adversities that befell the village of Swarga, an isolated hamlet in Enmakaje.

The narrative unfolds through the eyes of the novel's protagonists, Neelakantan and Devayani, whose sequestered life amidst the dense forests of Swarga becomes disturbed when Devayani brings home an orphaned child covered with festering sores. They learn that the child is around seven years old but looks younger because his growth has been stunted. This harrowing image of the child becomes one

of the first manifestations of the ecological calamity that had been transpiring in Swarga.

Subsequently, Neelakantan observes several children suffering from strange, irremediable illnesses, including Bhagyalakshmi, whose tongue protruded from her mouth, another young girl whose head was bigger than her body, as well as a twenty-six-year-old boy named Anwar, who appears to be only twelve, with long, thin octopus-like fingers. Bhagyalakshmi's father, Sivappa, reveals that all twenty-seven homes in their immediate surroundings had both adults and children who were suffering from various ailments. The land was overflowing with deformed human bodies, emphasising the fact that "disability is not an individual condition but co-exists in relation to the environment" (Long, 2020, p. 43).

The poison's lethal effects also affect the permanence of non-human lifeforms in the region. The lizards, fishes, frogs, snakes, cockroaches, crows and bees that prevailed in and around the land and waters of Swarga have all ceased to exist. Furthermore, the water in the Kodangiri canal has become severely contaminated, resulting in the proliferation of multiple illnesses. As Jayarajan, an eco-activist, affirms in the novel, "this poison has spread everywhere – in air and water and soil" (Mangad, 2009/2017, p. 172). The idea of 'disabled ecologies' propounded by Taylor to denote "the material and cultural ways disability is manifested and produced between and among human and nonhuman entities" (Othering & Belonging Institute, 2019, 5:53) resonates discernibly in Mangad's work through the gruesome imagery of disfigured bodies and decimated land, transforming Swarga into a crippled ecological landscape.

Moreover, the disastrous consequences of pesticide toxicity foreground the 'slow violence' that was unleashed upon the land for over two decades. Rob Nixon (2011), the environmental theorist, defines slow violence as "violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space ... unfolding over years, decades, and even centuries" (pp. 2-3). He opines that slow violence benefits the affluent populace while the risk shifts to indigent communities because the invisible nature of slow violence combined with the hidden dimensions of their poverty exacerbates the plight of the deprived. Concurrently, the profits shift back to the opulent sponsors who live in distant lands and will never have to face the long-drawn effects of the pesticide. Evidently, in the novel, the victims who are gravely affected by the proliferation of the toxin are forest dwellers whose sustenance depends on natural resources such as honey. The residents of Swarga also discover that the hazardous levels of endosulfan present around them can contaminate the soil for over fifty years, eliciting indomitable mutations in the DNA structures of the natives over several generations. These findings rightly point out that toxic environments not only affect the viability of life during the present age but also "have transgenerational impacts, rendering the entire land uninhabitable for future generations" (Dwivedi, 2022, p. 21).

Neelakantan comes to know that the source of the ecological maelstrom lies in the incessant aerial spraying of the toxic endosulfan by the Plantation Corporation of Kerala on acres of cashew plantations. The Corporation claims that the spraying is done to kill the tea mosquitoes that infest the plantations, which, in turn, drastically impacts the production of cashews. How-

ever, in reality, the magnitude of the level of ecological disablement perceived in the land of Swarga has been the result of the reciprocal agreement formed between multinational companies and governmental authorities who have reaped enormous benefits for espousing products such as endosulfan, oblivious to its ramifications. Consequently, as their medical practitioner, Dr. Arun Kumar, reveals, every home in Swarga has a patient, which includes not just children but people of all ages. With great anguish, he expresses his helplessness in treating them as none of the medicines prove to be effective against the grave toxicant that has become a curse to their land, leading to the death of many. Mathew J. C. Cella (2013) claims that "negotiating a 'habitable body' and a 'habitable world' go hand in hand" (p. 575). This is undeniably an elusive dream for the inhabitants of Swarga, as the toxic contaminant has made their land too hostile to support and sustain all forms of life.

Alarmed by the ensuing horrors, Neelakantan shares his anguish with Devayani, vociferating that "'This is not Swarga – heaven – Devi, this is Naraka – hell'" (Mangad, 2009/2017, p. 89). Therefore, the title of the novel 'Swarga,' which signifies 'heaven,' indubitably emerges as an ironic choice by way of which Mangad discards the idea that the problem of disability lies within the individual and instead highlights how disability spreads trans-corporeally through contaminated landscapes.

The native people who advocated for a ban on the pesticide are silenced and thwarted by the authorities even when the number of individuals suffering from physical impairments, mental illnesses, cancer, skin conditions and epilepsy proliferated. The state-sponsored violence

reaches its zenith when both Neelakantan and Devayani are brutally beaten up, and Jayarajan is shockingly murdered. Mangad concludes his novel with an image of Neelakantan and Devayani seeking refuge in a cave, disheartened by their inability to revive their toxic land and its people. Consequently, the entire ecosystem of Swarga and its neighbouring lands lead a life of precarity, owing to the hazardous usage of the toxin, which transforms the heaven that the land once was into a living and breathing hell.

Conclusion :

The novel vividly portrays the extent of mass ecological disablement unleashed upon the land and its inhabitants, particularly the marginalised populace. As observed through the novel, it is mainly the deprived forest dwellers living at the peripheries whose lives are put at risk because of the mercenary practices of neoliberal forces. Hence, Taylor's notion of 'ecological disablement,' which affects an entity's capability to sustain itself as it had done formerly, finds expression in the novel, in which Mangad delineates how pesticide poisoning impacts human health and biological diversity. The webs of disability that are thus created transform the land of Swarga into a disabled ecology as reflected in its diseased and disappearing life forms. This underscores the fact that the disablement of environments is significantly interconnected with the communal disablement of human beings, as the precarious human body becomes intermeshed with the toxic environment it inhabits.

The Endosulfan Tragedy of Kerala draws parallels with several other anthropogenic ecological disasters, including the Bhopal Gas Tragedy of 1984 and the Chernobyl Nuclear Disaster of 1986, pointing to how, in the present age, similar catastrophes have no longer become uncommon occurrences. Hence, the relevance of the novel transcends its primary locale, becoming synecdochic for comprehending and condemning human-induced environmental calamities on a global level.

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हिंदी साहित्य में संतों की वाणी एवं उनका जीवन दर्शन

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संगीत एवं मंच कला संकाय

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प्रविधि :

इस शोध पत्र के लिए द्वितीयक माध्यमों से सहायता ली गई है।

प्राचीन काल में संत शब्द विशिष्ट व्यक्ति से संबंधित था जो किसी विचार धारा, भावना से संबंधित होते थे। परंतु वर्तमान में संत शब्द का प्रयोग साधु, भक्त, सज्जन आदि को संबोधित करने के लिए किया जा रहा है। हिंदी साहित्य में संत शब्द सगुण, निर्गुण, सूफी तथा अन्य सभी महात्माओं के लिए प्रयोग किया गया है। अतः संत शब्द का प्रयोग विभिन्न रूपों में होता है। जो मनुष्य अटल सत्य को समझ चुका है तथा उसके प्राप्ति के लिए प्रयासरत है वही संत कहलाता है।

संतो के लक्षण :

प्रायः सभी विद्वानों ने संतो के लक्षण पर अपना सामान्य मत प्रस्तुत किया है विद्वानों के मतों का सार यह है कि संत इस संसार के गुण, माया से विरक्त होकर अपनी आत्मा के उद्धार हेतु कर्म करने लगते हैं। संत द्वारा उनके जीवन में उपस्थित सभी लोगों के साथ एक-समान व्यवहार किया जाता है। वह भगवान भजन में लीन रहते हैं। वह अपने सभी अच्छे-बुरे कर्मों का अर्पण भगवान के चरणों में करते हैं। किसी भी प्रकार की सांसारिक मोह-माया, सुख-खुशी, दुःख, ममता आदि उनको प्रभावित नहीं करती है। दूसरों के

हित के लिए वह अपने प्राण त्याग के लिए भी तैयार रहते हैं। यह पूरा विश्व ही उनका घर होता है। वह किसी भी इच्छा या कामना में खुद को नहीं बांधते हैं कबीर कहते हैं-

“कबीर माया मोहनी, जैसे मिठी खांड
सतगुरु की किरपा भई, नहीं तो करती भांड”

गौतम स्मृति में संत के मुख्य आठ गुण बताए गए हैं-

1. दया
2. क्षमा
3. अनुसूया
4. शौच
5. अनायास
6. मंगल
7. अकार्पण्य
8. अस्पृहा।

संतों की क्रियाएं, गति, विश्वास प्रायः सामान्य जनों, संसार के गतियों, विश्वास से प्रतिकूल होती है। सामान्य संसार जिसे सुख समझता है, संत उसे अभिशाप मानते हैं। संसार जिन मोह-माया के बंधन में खुशी-खुशी बंध जाता है, संत उन बंधनों का अपनी इच्छा से त्याग कर देते हैं। साधारण संसारी मृत्यु के अनंतर मुक्ति का स्वप्न देखाता है। पर संत मृत्यु के अनंतर प्राप्त होने वाली मुक्ति पर विश्वास नहीं करता है, क्योंकि वह जीवन मुक्ति में आस्था रखता है।

संतों की भावना शांत होती है। इनके रहन-सहन का तरीका संसार से पृथक होता है। संत सदैव

ब्रह्माआनंद में निमग्न रहते हैं। इसी आनंद से वे उल्लासित रहते हैं। वह काम भावना से दूर होकर शांत भावना में जीते हैं। अमीर या गरीब से किसी भी प्रकार की बनी हुई बातें नहीं करते। इस संसार में न ही संत किसी से प्रेम रखते हैं न ही बैर की भावना।

“संत पलटू साहिब का कथन है, कि वास्तव में वही संत है जो हरि की चर्चा करता, अथवा एकांत में रहकर ईश्वर का स्मरण करता है। संतों की रहनी इस बात का द्योतक है कि हरि का स्मरण एकांत एवं शांत वातावरण में ही संभव है, अन्यथा नहीं।”²

संतो ने अपनी इसी भावना के फलस्वरूप विभिन्न क्षेत्र में अपना योगदान देकर सभी के हित के बारे में बात कही है।

सर्वप्रथम संतों ने सामाजिक हित में वर्ण व्यवस्था का विरोध करते हुए प्रायः यह बताया है कि ईश्वर की रचना ही है, जो प्रकृति व मनुष्य के रूप में परिलक्षित होती है। ईश्वर ने इन्हें मनुष्य बनाकर भेजा है, वर्ण व जाति का बंधन तो समाज द्वारा लगाया जाता है, ईश्वर द्वारा नहीं। समाज ने मानव जाति को चार वर्णों ब्राह्मण, क्षत्रिय, वैश्य व शूद्र में विभाजित किया है। ब्राह्मण को शिक्षक दल, क्षत्रियों को रक्षक दल, वैश्य को उत्पादक दल व शूद्र को सेवक दल की संज्ञा दी गई। ये जाति व वर्ण व्यवस्था प्रारंभ में कार्य आधारित थी, परंतु समाज परिवर्तन, काल परिवर्तन के साथ इसमें कुरीतियां शामिल होती गईं और ये व्यवस्था जन्म आधारित हो गई। इसलिए संतों ने बताया कि ईश्वर ने कोई भेद नहीं किया, ये समाज की देन है, ईश्वर के घर से सब एक प्रकार से ही आते हैं तथा वापस जाने का रास्ता भी समान ही होता है।

स्वामी रामानंद के अनुसार :

“जाति-पाति पूछे नहीं कोई।
हरि को भजे सो हरि कौ होई।”³

फिर उन्होंने समाज हित में ही अर्थोपार्जन के भेदभाव का विरोध अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से किया।

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बनावटी वेष-भूषा का विरोध करते हुए संतो ने कहा कि-

“मन न रंगाये-रंगाये जोगी कपड़ा।
आसन मारि मंदिर में बैठे, ब्रह्म छाड़ि पूजन लागे पथरा।
कनवा फड़ाय जटवा बढ़वले, दाढ़ी बढ़ाय जोगी
होई गइले बकरा।
जंगल जाय जोगी धुनिया रमैले, काम जराय जोगी
होय गईले हीजरा।।
मथवा मुंडाय जोगी कपड़ा रंगइले, गीता बांच के
होई गइले लबरा।
कहहीं कबीर सुनो भाई साधो, जम दरवाजा बाँधल
जैवे पकड़ा।।”⁴

अतः कबीर ने घोषणा कि की वेष धारण के चक्कर में न पड़कर मन को अपने वश में करना प्रत्येक व्यक्ति का मुख्य कर्म व कर्तव्य है। संतो को झूठी शान नहीं पसंद थी, इनमें सादा खान-पान की विचार भावना विद्यमान थी। इनके रहन-सहन एवं खान-पान में सादगी एवं विचारों में श्रेष्ठता थी।

धार्मिक क्षेत्र में संतों का काफी योगदान रहा है, जैसे- धार्मिक क्रिया-कलापों का खंडन, धार्मिक क्रिया-कलापों की निस्सारता बताते हुए संतों ने प्रमुख पदों की रचना की, जिसमें इनके दो रूप दिखाई देते हैं। पहला हिंदुओं के धार्मिक क्रिया-कलापों का खंडन और दूसरा मुसलमानों के धार्मिक क्रिया-कलापों का खंडन। संतों ने ब्रह्म की उपासना में धर्म के बाह्य आडंबरों की कोई आवश्यकता नहीं बताई है। जहां संतों ने हिंदुओं के जप, तप, माला, छाया, तिलक, तीर्थ (स्नान), वृत्त, संध्या, गायत्री आदि की निंदा की, वही संतों ने मुसलमानों के रोजा, नमाज़, ज़कात, हज़, शेख और काज़ी आदि का भी विरोध किया है। कबीर हिन्दू समाज पर विचार करते हुए कहते हैं - “केऊ-केऊ तीरथ व्रत लपटाना, केऊ-केऊ राम जिन जाना अजरा अमर एक अस्थाना, ताका मरम काहु बिरलै जाना जब नहीं होते सबद न स्वादं, तब नहीं होते विद्या न बादं जब नहीं होते गुरू न चेला, गम अगमै पंथ अकेला”⁵

मन-हृदय की पवित्रता पर बल देते हुए संतों ने अपने उपदेशों में मनुष्यों को स्वयं के विकारों को दूर करने के लिए अपने तन मन एवं हृदय को शुद्ध व पवित्र रखने की बात बतलाई है। संत कबीर ने स्पष्ट बात बताई कि जब तक मन में विकार रहते हैं, तब तक मनुष्य संसार से मुक्त नहीं होता है। आत्मा को शुद्ध परमतत्व के स्वरूप की प्राप्ति तभी होती है, जब मनुष्य के मन से सभी विकार नष्ट हो जाते हैं और उसका मन निर्मल हो जाता है।

“जब लगी मनहि विकारा, तब लग नहिं छुटै संसारा। जब मन निर्मल कर जाना, तब निरमल माहिं समाना।।”⁶

जो योगी मन में जप, तप, संयम, व्रत, आसन व निवास करता है, कबीर ने इन्हीं विशिष्टताओं से पूर्ण योगी को सदाचारी एवं सच्चा योगी बताया है।

इसी प्रकार से संतों ने निम्न जातियों के उत्कृष्टता के लिए भी प्रयास किया जिनमें उन्होंने मनुष्यों में विशिष्ट गुणों को विकसित करने पर मुख्य बल दिया।

1. विवेक :

कबीर का कथन है- वास्तविक मनुष्य वही है, जिसमें विवेक एवं विचार शक्ति है, जिसमें यह नहीं है, वह व्यक्ति पशु, नरपशु, गुरु, नारिपशु एवं वेदपशु के समान है।

2. मानव के सद्गुणों का महत्व :

मनुष्य में आध्यात्मिक शक्ति तभी विकसित होगी जब उसमें सत्य, क्षमा, शील, संतोष आदि सद्गुणों का विकास हो।

3. मनुष्य में एकता व समानता का भाव :

मनुष्य में सबके प्रति समानता का भाव व एकता की भावना ही उनके उत्तम चरित्र के विकास में सहायता करती है।

4. शूद्रों का उद्धार :

शूद्र जाति सेवक दल थी, जिनपर उच्च वर्ग द्वारा बहुत शोषण किया जाता था। समाज में

उन्हें प्रमुख कार्यों जैसे शिक्षा, भक्ति आदि से वंचित रखा गया था। यह जानते हुए भी कि ब्राह्मण और शूद्र दोनों में एक ही रक्त प्रवाहित होता है दोनों में तत्त्वतः कोई भेद नहीं है।

गरीबदास जी एक पद में कहते हैं कि -

“कैसे ब्राह्मण कैसे शूद्र। एकै हाड़ चाम सब गूद।। एकै बिन्द एक भग द्वारा। एकै सब घट बोलनहारा।।”⁷

संतों का हिंदी भाषा के क्षेत्र में भी योगदान रहा है। भारतीय संत संस्कृत के विद्वान थे परंतु जन के हित के लिए उन्होंने हिंदी भाषा में उपदेश दिए। ऐसा करने का मुख्य कारण जनता का अधिकांश भाग हिंदी को समझने वाला होना। इसलिए ही उन्होंने अपने विचारों का प्रकटीकरण हिंदी भाषा में उपदेश के रूप में किया। संतों को कई अन्य भाषाओं का ज्ञान भी था क्योंकि वह भ्रमण करते रहते थे परंतु उनके उद्देश्यों की पूर्ति हिंदी भाषा से होती थी इसलिए वे वाणियों की रचना हिंदी भाषा में करते थे। देसी भाषा उन्हें प्रिय व सहज प्रतीत होती है। कबीर भी लोक भाषा के पक्षधर थे।

वाणियों को और अधिक प्रभावशाली बनाने के लिए संतों ने अपने वाणियों, उपदेशों में लोकोक्ति एवं मुहावरों का प्रयोग भी किया जिससे जनसाधारण में उनकी वाणीयां आज भी प्रिय है।

संतों का साहित्य :

संतों ने जिस साहित्य का सृजन किया वह किसी अमूल्य खजाने से कम नहीं है। अपने साहित्य में संतों ने स्वयं व जनता के स्वभाव की अभिव्यक्ति की। जिसमें संतों ने परम ब्रह्म की प्राप्ति का मार्ग ढूंढना नहीं है, अनुभव करना है, इसको समझाया। प्रायः सभी संतों ने अपने काव्य में एक ही विचारधारा का अनुसरण किया और वह है इस संसार जगत और उस परम ब्रह्म को एक ही नज़र से देखने का तरीका। कबीर प्राकृतिक तत्वों के विषय पर रचना करने के पक्षधर नहीं थे उनके अनुसार वास्तविक

कवि वह है, जो ब्रह्म के साक्षात् अनुभव का ही गायन अथवा रचना करें।

“जग-भव का गावना का गावै।
अनुभव गावै सो अनुरागी है।।”⁸

संतों का साहित्य मनुष्य की भावनाओं को परिष्कृत व उनका परिमार्जन करने वाला है। अपने साहित्यों में संतों ने बताया कि मानव एक संवेदनशील प्राणी है। और यही संवेदनशीलता मानव द्वारा रचित रचनाओं में परिलक्षित होता है। संसार के मानवों की भावनाएं एवं क्रियाएं-प्रतिक्रियाएं सभी साहित्य में झलकती हैं। संतों ने यह भी बताया कि मनुष्यों को नकारात्मक भावनाएं भी घेरे रहती हैं। क्योंकि संतों ने अपने साहित्य के माध्यम से मनुष्यों को परिष्कृत करने का ध्येय रखा था, इसलिए उन्होंने भूले-भटके प्राणियों को सत्य मार्ग पर चलकर अपने भावनाओं को परिष्कृत करने के लिए उपदेश दिया और निम्नलिखित नकारात्मक भावनाओं को त्यागने का उपदेश दिया। जैसे- काम, क्रोध, लोभ, अहंकार, मोह, माया, झूठ, कपट, तृष्णा, आशा, मन, मान, चोरी, निंदा और नशा।

संतों के साहित्य की प्रमुख विशेषताएं यह हैं कि संतों ने संसार के मनुष्यों, उनकी भावनाओं और देश-काल की परिस्थितियों को ध्यान में रखते हुए अपने साहित्य की रचना की। संतों के साहित्य की प्रमुख विशेषताएं निम्नलिखित हैं -

मानवता :

मानवता का मूल उद्देश्य परोपकार है, जिसमें दूसरों की सहायता करना ही श्रेष्ठ है। यही मानवता की भावना ही संसार के समस्त प्राणियों में कष्टों को दूर करने में सहायता प्रदान करती है।

धार्मिकता :

संतों द्वारा रचित साहित्य की दूसरी विशेषता धार्मिकता है जिसमें प्राचीन सभ्यता व संतों के समकालीन समाज में धर्म संबंधित बाह्य आडंबरों का प्रबल

विरोध किया गया। धर्म संबंधित कुरीतियों का विरोध करके संतों ने अपने साहित्य में धर्म व धार्मिकता को और अधिक कल्याणकारी बताया।

प्रगतिशीलता :

संतों के साहित्य की अन्य मुख्य विशेषता इनमें पाई जाने वाली प्रगतिशीलता है। अर्थात् देश-काल, परिस्थितियों के अनुसार साहित्य में भी भाषा की उत्कृष्टता, बोलियों का प्रयोग, लोकोक्ति व मुहावरों का प्रयोग समाज के आवश्यकता के अनुसार युवाओं को प्रोत्साहित करने वाले वाणियों का प्रयोग आदि परिलक्षित होता है।

अन्ततः संत साहित्य का अवलोकन करने पर हमें यही प्राप्त होता है कि धर्म की व्यर्थ बातों का विरोध करके परम तत्व की प्राप्ति के लिए मध्यम मार्ग का चयन करें। इसके साथ ही मन की शुद्धता एवं पवित्रता भी आवश्यक है, तभी मानव धर्म का सच्चा स्वरूप प्राप्त किया जा सकेगा। मानव को प्रेम से रहते हुए मानव धर्म का प्रचार-प्रसार करना चाहिए। मानव एक समान है न ही उच्च वर्ग, न ही निम्न वर्ग सब समान है। ईश्वर ने ही सबको एक जैसा बनाकर भेजा है उनमें ही चारों वर्ण विद्यमान हैं इन सब पर ही परमेश्वर की कृपा है, वही परमेश्वर जो सर्वव्यापी है, सर्वशक्तिमान है। जो मनुष्य ब्रह्मा में विश्वास रखता है उन्हें मानता है वही ब्राह्मण है और जो नहीं, वही शूद्र एवं निम्न वर्ग है। मुगल काल में अरबी एवं फारसी राज्य भाषा थी जिस कारण प्रत्येक जन के लिए इसको समझने में कठिनाई होती थी। साथ ही भारतीयों की प्राचीन भाषा संस्कृत भी उसके नियमों के कारण समझने में कठिनाई होती थी। इसलिए संतों ने हिंदी भाषा में अपने पदों की रचना करके धर्म से संबंधित रहस्यों को अधिकांश जनता तक वाणियों के माध्यम से पहुंचा। संतों की हिंदी भाषा सरल व जनसाधारण में लोकोक्तियों व मुहावरों से युक्त होने के कारण प्रचलित है। अतः मुगल काल जैसी विषम परिस्थितियों में कबीर, रैदास आदि संतों ने अपना वर्चस्व स्थापित

कर, जहाँ हर तरफ धार्मिक, राजनीतिक, आर्थिक, सांस्कृतिक अशांति व कलह विराजमान था वहीं ऊँच-नीच, जाति-पाति, छुआ-छूत, मूर्तिपूजा व बाह्य आडंबरों के विरोध में संतों ने अपने साहित्य के माध्यम से जनता को जागरूक करने का प्रयास किया। तथा मानव जाति को प्रेम व एकता के साथ रहते हुए परम ब्रह्म की उपासना करने का उपदेश दिया।

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2. उत्तरी भारत के सांस्कृतिक विकास में संतो का योगदान (15-16) वीं शताब्दी, डॉ. नैपाल सिंह, पृ०-73
3. वही, पृ०-97
4. वही, पृ०-111
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Challenges and Strategies in Translating Titles in Select English-translated Novels of S. L. Bhyrappa

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In the area of translation, titles have not been given much attention. However, I felt the title holds a grip over the literary text. Newmark proposed descriptive and allusive titles to tackle the translation of titles. Descriptive primarily focuses on the topic of the text, and allusive focuses on the figurative relationship to the topic. A combination of these two might be necessary to avoid cultural misunderstanding. He also says the title of the work in translation “should usually bear some relation to the original” (56), without which the reader might not get the original flavor of the title, as there may be levels of meaning embedded in the title. The communicative approach of Skopos’ Theory (purpose is prominent) is the most viable approach in translating the titles. Nord classifies titles into two groups. She calls titles as representatives of the source text in the target culture. She classifies it into “essential (distinctive, metatextual, and phatic) functions and optional (referential, expressive, and appellative) functions” (261). The distinctive differentiates the cultural product from other existing works. The meta-textual function implies

that the title must align with the norms of the culture it appears within. The phatic function is a long relationship between the hearer and the title and recognizing a culturally accepted title. Referential has to do with the content of the work. The expressive function is evaluated based on the opinion in relationship with the values of the culture it belongs to. Appellative principally serves commercial or dissemination purposes. Her classification of the title appeals to the rules of producing a culturally acceptable and effective title. In fact, translators can use the function she suggested to test the adequacy and acceptability of their chosen titles.

Four novels of Bhyrappa are taken for study. The cultural conflict that arises when one wants to accept the new and deny the old is the theme of *Vamshavriksha*. *Daatu* revolves around the gripping story of people who are divided in the name of caste. *Grahabhanga* portrays the social conditions during the pre-independence and some years after independence. The fourth novel taken for study, *Tabbaliyu Neenade Magane*, is a cultural conflict between Eastern and

Western ideas, motherhood, and the family system.

Tabbaliyu Neenada Magane in Kannada is titled *Orphaned* in English by Sandeep Balakrishna. The title operates at various levels. At the level of the Punyakoti cows, how this breed is Orphaned after the death of Kalinga ajja. “Venkataramana walked some distance and looked at the faces of the tethered cows. To his eyes, they appeared merely as brutes, nothing else. He was instantly reminded of the Elder Gowda’s barn.” (Orphaned p. 196) Further, Venkataramana is also disheartened to see how the cows remain just as numbers in Jr. Kalinga’s barn, who believes that the livestock is only used as a profit-earning business. “Venkataramana stepped closer and observed. The food trough in front of each cow was marked with numbers-1, 2, 3... and an aluminum badge was tied around the neck of each cow with a number on each badge. In Elder Gowda’s time, each cow had a real name like Ganga, Gowri, Tunga, Bhadra, Kamadhenu, Sita, and Savitri. Each cow was an individual Goddess by itself. But now in his grandson Kalinga’s barn, each cow standing here has become a mere number. The complete supervision of all of them is in the hands of this foreign woman.” (Orphaned p. 196) The painful realization that cows here remain Orphaned without real names.

On another plane, we see how orphanhood works with the characters in the novel. The cutting of the pastures to build a tar road is the most heart-rending scene in the book. Kalinga Gowda loses his son’s grave, who gave up his life saving the Punyakoti cow, and the cow, in turn, did not heed any medicines and gave its life up to be one with Krishna in heaven. This particular episode of division makes Kalinga

a helpless man despite his relentless efforts to stop road construction. He remains a man who is orphaned between two major metaphors, one being technology-driven modernity in the name of progress and the other marking the end of Gowda’s era and the beginning of the new.

When Tayavva dies, Venkataramana officiates her last rites, which are performed by the orphan Honna. This opens up multiple dimensions of orphanhood that the novelist offers. Her biological son Kalinga isn’t informed about the mother’s death, making him not only an orphan, as he lost his father long back, but also orphaned from the privileges of performing the last rites for his mother. The orphan Honna takes his place in performing the last rites to Tayavva. Eventually, on the physical plane itself, the entire village orphaned Kalinga by keeping him out of the village. Venkataramana also fenced off the temple, making it inaccessible to Kalinga.

Kalinga’s final guilt is when he contemplates what has happened in the past - losing his mother, selling the cows to the slaughterhouse, and the internal fear of Hilda leaving this country. All of this eventually makes him helpless, and the novel ends with an internal conflict in Jr. Kalinga to either go back to the conventional or stick to the modern. The title “Orphaned” chosen for this novel is apt as we see the reflection of orphanhood at each level.

Daatu means “to crossover” in English. *Daatu* dives deep into the value system of patience, empathy, determination and sacrifices at all levels and urges humans to become global citizens by crossing over the sense of pride and ego attached to the superiority of birth. Shathavadhani R. Ganesh, an ardent critic of Bhyrappa’s

novels, says, “Daatu is both a noun and a verb.” ‘Crossing over’ the gerund in the title has both positive, negative and revolutionary implications. We see Venkataramanayya, Thirumala Gowda, Melgiri Gowda cross hedges to the Dalit colony and have illegitimate relationships with the Dalit women.

Similarly, the Dalit women cross over too. Venkatesha crosses boundaries when he falls in love with Satya, a Brahmin girl, and later again falls in love with Meera, a Dalit; Satya gives Geethopadesha to Meera, a Dalit girl; Mohan Das’ revolutionary attitude to break the caste barrier, and finally, the great floods that washed away everything leaving the heart and mind transcend through the philosophical realization to overcome the illusions connected to the superiority and inferiority of caste. The translators of Daatu have retained both the original and the translated title as subtitles.

The translator of *Vamshavriksha* has retained the same title in translation for the novel *Vamshavriksha*, translated by Bhyrappa and Sushma Chandrashekhar. The novel operates on the strong foundation built on family values in Indian society. We notice that it underscores the importance given to the family tree and believes that this family tree transmits the perceived values of the Indian family system.

For Shrotri, marriages have only two purposes – one is to discharge the duties of a householder, and the second is to perpetuate the family line. In his marriage with Bhagiratamma, an embodiment of the ideal Hindu wife, he finds fulfillment as he discharges his duty as a householder

and begets a son to carry the family line. His son, unfortunately, drowns in river Kapila leaving behind a son and a young widow Katyayani.

When Katyayani falls in love with Raja Roa and wants to marry him, Shrotri refuses to allow the grandson Chennai to go with his mother, stating the reason that the boy belongs to the Shrotri lineage and must be brought up according to the traditions of Shrotri family. However, there is an agonizing twist in the novel where Shrotri gets to know the secret of his lineage and later pained by this, leaves the worldly pleasures to follow the path of sannyasa dharma. Throughout the novel, the lineage is upheld, and retaining the title *Vamshavriksha* in translation could not have been a better title for the novel.

“A Broken Home” is the subtitle in English for Bhyrappa’s Kannada novel *Grihabhanga*. This novel is a portrayal of the struggle of Nanjamma against poverty and plague. She is steadfast and refuses to give up despite adversity and apathy. Gangamma, a widow, has failed to give a good upbringing to her sons Channigaraya and Appannaiah, who remained abusive, lethargic, selfish, uneducated and gluttonous. Nanjamma gets married into this dysfunctional family. Better instructed Nanjamma gradually took the role of Shanubhog to support the family. Gangamma breaks this family by telling her son about her assumed illicit relationship about his wife, and Nanjamma falls out of the house, making her living all by herself and educating her children. Her husband did not help her raise the children but only came home to eat, sleep and abuse her and the children.

Gangamma, the lady with the foulest of obscenities, does not let her younger son's family live in peace too. Saattu, her second daughter-in-law, leaves the house in the face of abuse by her mother-in-law and husband. The marriage of Nanjamma's brother Kallesha, who was in the service of the Police department, also did not bring any bliss; instead, it ruined both lives.

This novel brings out the treachery towards each other in the village in the rawest sense. It is not a story of the innocent, naïve villagers but a plot of widespread ignorance, cruelty, heights of laziness, selfishness, treachery, and abuse. Even the daughter of Nanjamma, who was married to Soorya Narayana, a schoolteacher, did not survive as she succumbed to the epidemic. So, the subtitle "A Broken Home" is apt as this is a story of homes that are broken at the fate of disaster, ignorance, and epidemic.

Conclusion :

Novel title translation involves examining the word's language context, practical situations, and connotations before adhering to style guidelines. Should the initial title fail to convey the meaning of the content succinctly, the translator should change it, remove any superfluous words, emphasize the primary idea, and make it seem more welcoming. Regardless of what transpired, it is preferable to retain the original title on the cover so that readers can recognize it. When translating a title, the translator must take into account the entire text, the title's implied meaning, and the reader's reaction. While equivalency is sought, if it is not achievable, the translator may alter it, include a subtitle, or just retain the original title. The three works *Vamshavriksha*, *Daatu* and

Grihabhanga have retained the original title and added a subtitle for it. At the same time, the translator of *Tabbaliyu Neenada Magane* has given a new title that is apt for the novel.

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Expressionist Strategies in Gunakar Dev Goswami's *Abhigyanam : The Journey of a Ring*

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Introduction :

*Abhigyan Shakuntalam*¹ (also known as *The Recognition of Shakuntala*) is a classic Sanskrit play by the ancient Indian poet and dramatist Kalidasa. Widely regarded as one of the greatest works in classical Indian literature, this play has had a profound influence on Indian art, culture, and drama. Goswami in his re-reading of this masterpiece employs Expressionistic tools and techniques to concoct an Assamese retelling of Kalidasa's story whilst focusing on what causes the entire plot to unfold in *Abhigyanam: The Journey of a Ring*². Personifying the ring as a human character Goswami employs physical demonstrations and shining outfits where the audience is hooked at where the ring shall take them and the characters' fate next.

The first scene unfolds in a setting of big, round rings, foregrounding Goswami's emphasis on Dushyant's ring that Shakuntala loses and must produce to prove their union. Sets in Expressionist dramas are often abstract, exaggerated, and distorted to reflect the emotional states of characters rather than realistic environments. These sets can include angular shapes, disorienting perspectives and symbolic elements, which

is how Goswami stylizes his massive circular set designs to centralize the agency of the ring in forwarding the plot and how a personified ring decides entangled fates of his characters. These huge rings fashioned in swirls of flowers and creeping stalks with a happy Shakuntala immersed in nature playing with her girl friends and merry making is an ode to a blooming youth, naïve and oblivious, protected at Rishi Kanva's hut seated deep inside the forest. Then enters a gorgeous Dushyant, who's out on a hunt and stumbles on an innocent Shakuntala, and the choir hums the humming of a bee sucking on the nectar and pollinating a flower. It must be noted that not one dialogue is exchanged all throughout the progression of this scene; the audience is stimulated through sensual dance routines between Dushyant and Shakuntala, declaring their union and thus the beginning of a cursed fate. As both dance their dance of sex and union, Dushyant leaves with the promise of coming back, and hands her a *ring*, their suggestive dance ritual a reminiscent of the art of evocative choreography in Indian art history.

The Affective *Ring* and Goswami's Expressionism :

As a euphoric Shakuntala floats in the utopia of love and unison, she sits once again raw and ignorant of an approaching Rishi Durvasha, who'd come to visit their hut, oblivious to his callings. Goswami once again invokes the Expressionist dramatist inside him where we see Durvasha dance to the beats of *tandava*, the Indian evocation of *roudra* and German expression of anger. It ought to be noted how it is not just Durvasha alone who makes an entry but two more people as well somehow a humanized manifestation of the calm and the storm in any individual's psyche. One must note the usage of various dance forms as material expressions of human emotions in Goswami's work, owing to his education as the son of Padmashree Nrityacharya Shri Jatin Dev Goswami, an eminent personality and academic of *Sattriya*, the 8th Indian classical dance form from Assam. Rishi Durvasha curses Shakuntala of her naivety and petulance as Priyamvada, her best friend, begs him for his mercy on her behalf. Goswami scripts his poetic dialogues attuning to the mood of his characters, the beats portraying the emotions they feel as they articulate their innermost vulnerabilities in rhymes depicting an impending turmoil. The Rishi leaves with a Priyamvada who is left aghast, beware of her friend's impending doom. Rishi Kanva follows with a flashback of Shakuntala's birth, invoking dialogues in rhythms and lyrics, much like a song, with an acute ring to it, this is where Goswami is at play as one of the finest playwrights in Assam, incorporating the characteristic Expressionist speech in drama that is fragmented,

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repetitive and poetic. Rishi Kanva's monologues conjure recalling of a pathetic human hamartia, appealing pain in his audience, bringing up his obstacles as a single father painting a wrenching *karuna* in the tabula rasa of his unsuspecting viewers. It is amazing how Goswami recurrently keeps going back to his theme: the *ring*, once again summoning the symbolism of the circle of life, as the audience watches Shakuntala experiencing a dream inside a circle, remembering her mother Menaka, a crude depiction of an upcoming untoward pregnancy much like her mother's. The chorus once again hums an unsettling melody, unnerving the audience of a vicious future that lies ahead. Shakuntala is covered in meters of clothes, as she lies cursed and fragile inside a ring. The fishnet which finds the cursed *ring* is itself personified in human characters that crawl onstage to capture the (human) ring.

Expressionist drama, with its distorted sets and exaggerated performances, can be seen as attempting to transmit affective intensities directly to the audience, bypassing emotional identification. While affect theory suggests that expressionist drama can transmit intense, pre-linguistic feelings directly to the audience, the genre's emphasis on exaggerated emotional expression might seem to contradict this idea. When critiquing expressionist drama through the lens of affect theory, it's essential to distinguish between affect and emotion. Affect refers to the pre-personal, pre-linguistic intensities that circulate between bodies, while emotions are personalized, named feelings. However, by examining the affective resonances that circulate between characters, environments,

and audiences, we can allow gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which expressionist drama reflects and shapes the social and political contexts in which it was created, and to appreciate the ways in which its affective dynamics continue to resonate with contemporary audiences. Affect acts as a dynamic intermediary, fostering encounters between objects or assemblages- such as *rings* in Goswami's *Abhigyanam* and subsequently influencing the bodies at either end of the exchange. These formidably glamorized rings can be observed as an object reality, a symbol of the chaotic human psyche and its inception a visualized truth of the fostered subconscious prior to its linguistic invasion. Moreover, as Massumi (2002) suggests, affect possesses "autonomous" capacities that transcend mere connection, asserting agency within the encounter.³ The encounters of and within the personified ring structures the dramatic plot even before it enters verbal commute between actors, bridging dialogues with the audience in a strategic vacuum, in bodily movements, beyond speech acts. Interestingly enough Goswami's *Shakuntala* barely has any dialogues. As Gregg and Seigworth (2010) aptly describe, affect dwells in a state of "in-between-ness" and accumulates as a "beside-ness" (p. 2), persisting beyond the initial mediation to circulate autonomously among bodies.⁴ This perpetual circulation of affect has profoundly impacted the conditions of representation, challenging both the limits of representational frameworks and the very essence of representation itself. Affect's agency and autonomous circulation reconfigure the dynamics of representation, revealing the intricate web of relationships between objects, bodies,

and encounters. When contemplating the inaccessible realm in the interpretation of literature and art, the boundaries of representation become duplicated, revealing a dual paradox. On one hand, literature and art serve as reflective surfaces, mirroring a reality already filtered through mediation, while also constituting constructed, imperfect representations that inevitably fall short of attaining the authenticity of the real, perpetually oscillating between the actual and the imagined. Goswami successfully and visibly shatters the shackles of realism, plunging audiences into a maelstrom of intense emotions, distorted realities and primal screams. Like a frenzied canvas of colors, he splatters the stage with vivid, nightmarish tableaux, as characters' innermost thoughts and desires are flayed bare, writhing in anguish. Goswami, a visionary of the avant-garde, wields language like a scalpel, dissecting the human condition with surgical precision, laying bare the festering wounds of societal hypocrisy, and the abysmal voids within.

In his direction of a frenzied Dushyant who's faced with the sins of forgetting his beloved whom he humiliates in public, one witnesses dancers dressed in *dokhona*⁵ and *aronai*⁶ stamp to the beats of *deodhani*⁷ a shaman folk dance of the Bodo community in Assam. The dancer's loose hair and blinding red sindoor bindis stir the primal madness in its audience as much as it portrays Dushyant's psychosis. In Goswami's re-reading of the expressionist drama, his music and setting converge in a swirling vortex of sonic and spatial experimentation, shattering the fetters of realism and plunging the audience into a realm of eerie, hallucinatory intensity. The score, a symphony of discordant whispers,

wailing woodwinds, and throbbing percussion, seethes and pulsates like a living entity, its rhythms and melodies contorting to evoke the twisted, nightmarish visions unfolding on stage. Meanwhile, the setting, a distorted funhouse of exaggerated shadows, stark lighting and fractured scenery, seems to writhe and twist in tandem with the music, as if both were spawned from the same fevered imagination. Together, sound and space conspire to evoke the inner turmoil of the characters, their anguished cries and frenzied movements mirrored in the discordant harmonies and jagged silhouettes that assault the senses. It is astounding how Goswami incorporates his knowledge of the Assamese folk dances when he blends the agitated passion of *deodhani* to the rage and fury of Dushyant's emotions employing his dancers as a primal, visceral language that unleashes the torrent of human emotions, as if the very fabric of the soul had been torn asunder. Altieri (2003) proposes innovative "bodies of grammar" to capture the intricate realities of psychological emotions, which are masterfully represented and evoked by literary and artistic works.⁸ Like a wild, tempestuous storm, the dancer's body convulses and contorts, every twitching muscle and flailing limb a testament to the turmoil that roils beneath the surface. The choreography, a frenzied, staccato sequence of jerky movements and angular poses, shatters the constraints of classical grace, instead embracing a raw, unbridled intensity that threatens to consume all in its path. As the dancer's feet stamp out a frenetic rhythm on the stage, the audience is hurled into a maelstrom of kinetic energy, the boundaries between performer and spectator dissolving

in a shared, cathartic release. In this whirlwind of movement, the dancer becomes a mere vessel for the expression of the deepest, most primal human emotions - fear, despair, and the unbridled joy of liberation.

Conclusion :

In the tumultuous world of expressionist drama, affect is the primal force that shatters the fragile veneer of reality, unleashing a maelstrom of emotions that ravage the soul. Through the distorted lenses of music, setting, and dance, the expressionist playwright in Goswami conjures a realm of unbridled intensity, where the very fabric of existence seems to unravel. As the audience is hurled into this whirlwind of affective expression, the boundaries between performer and spectator dissolve, and the raw, visceral emotions that lie at the heart of the human experience are laid bare. In this crucible of feeling, Goswami's *Abhigyanam* forges a new language, one that transcends the limitations of words and worlds, and speaks directly to the deepest, most primal recesses of our being. And it is here, in this abyss of affect, that we discover the true power of the Assamese expressionist drama and Goswami's grave potential in his production abilities: to shatter the complacent surfaces of our existence, and to reveal the seething, turbulent depths that lie beneath. His concoction of the classical with the folk and the modern remains a potent force to be reckoned with.

References :

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2. Goswami, G.D. *Abhigyanam: Journey of a Ring*. 2007.
3. Massumi, B. (1998). *Autonomy of Affect*. Duke University Press.
4. Gregg, M. & Seigworth, G.J. (2010). An Inventory of Shimmers. *The Affect Theory Reader*. Duke University Press.
5. Dokhona is a traditional dress worn by Bodo women in Assam in the North East. They wrap it around their chest.
6. Aronai is a Bodo garment that symbolizes respect in the community and is gifted to elders and guests of honor.
7. Deodhani dance is a sacred ritual performed in reverence for the serpent goddess Manasa, embodying the devotional journey of worshipping Devi Manasa. Accentuated by classic jewelry, the dancers surrender to the rhythmic beats of the Jaidhol and Khutitaal instruments. As they dance with unrestrained passion, their open hair flows like a wild mane, and their whirling heads spin in rapid circular motions, creating a mesmerizing spectacle. This ancient dance, steeped in mythological significance, is said to have been performed by Behulaa, a devoted character from the Padma Purana, who danced before Goddess Manasa to revive her husband Lakhindar's life. Whether performed solo or in a group of three or four women, the Deodhani dance remains a testament to the power of devotion and the enduring legacy of a timeless tradition.
8. Altieri, C. (2003). *The Particulars of Rapture: An Aesthetics of Affect*. Cornell University Press.



जन संवेदना का प्रतिबद्ध कवि : राजेश जोशी

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जिस कविता में जन चित्त के हृदयस्पर्शी संवेदनात्मक छंटे होंगे उस कविता में जन हित के समकालीन परिदृश्य का समावेश होगा। राजेश जोशी की कविताएँ जनता की अनुभूति व संवेदनशीलता का प्रत्यक्षदर्शी सबूत हैं, जिसमें हाशियाकृत जन जीवन की बहुविध संवेदनात्मक यथार्थधर्मिता का समग्र प्रस्तुतीकरण है। राजेश जोशी की कविताएँ जीवन का संवेदनात्मक यथार्थ केवल स्वप्न एवं स्मृति रूप में नहीं करती हैं, बल्कि अनुभव की संपदा, अनुभूति की तीव्रता और वैचारिक दृष्टि की प्रतिबद्धता से करती है अर्थात् वह यथार्थ की ठोस भावभूमि से उपजी है और चेतना की जनधर्मिता से पगी एवं संवेदना के तत्त्व से पली है। वह जीवन का संवेदनात्मक ससंदर्भीकरण है। समय का सार-संक्षेपीकरण है। समाज का सापेक्षिक विस्तारीकरण है। राजेश जोशी जनता का प्रतिबद्ध कवि हैं और उनकी कविताएँ जनता की संवेद्य भावभूमिका का यथार्थ हैं। वह जन संवेदना का संघर्ष एवं अमर्ष ही नहीं, परंतु सरोकार एवं विसंगति का बोध भी करती है और काल की केंद्रीयता भी चिह्नित करती है। वह लोकतंत्रीकरण का मूल्य जानती है, वैचारिक कमिटमेंट की संकल्पना समझती है और जन चेतना की एकता एवं अखंडता का समग्र दृष्टिकोण बनाती है। वस्तुतः राजेश जोशी जन हित एवं जन चित्त के कवि हैं और इनकी कविताएँ जन की संवेदनात्मक दृष्टि से निष्पन्न हैं, जो यथार्थ के थोथे पक्ष का बोध भी कराती है और

आदर्श के आयातित भाव संदर्भ का भी प्रस्तुतीकरण करती है।

राजेश जोशी की कविताएँ समाज के ऐसे हिस्से तक जाती हैं, जिनकी अभी तक कोई पहचान नहीं है अथवा जो अभी भी नाम और काम से नहीं जाने जाते हैं अर्थात् जो अर्थ एवं सामाजीकरण के स्तर पर हाशियाकरण का जीवन जीते हैं या जीने पर विवश है तथा जी रहे हैं। ऐसे मध्यवर्गीय व निम्नवर्गीय लोग जो उपेक्षित हैं, साधारण हैं, बेनाम हैं, इत्यादि हैं और जिनके कोई ओहदे नहीं हैं; वह अस्तित्वहीन जीवन जी रहे हैं और जिनकी समाज में उपेक्षा भी है और वह व्यवस्था से भी उदासीन हैं। 'इत्यादि' कविता सत्ता पक्ष के विरुद्ध एक सशक्त पब्लिक स्ट्राइक है, जिसमें जनादेश व जनांदोलन का प्रतिपक्ष स्पष्ट होता है। यह ऐसे बेनाम लोगों के जीवन दृष्टि का प्रतिनिधित्व अथवा प्रत्यक्षीकरण करता है, जो शामिल तो हर जगह रहते हैं; लेकिन उनका जिक्र और पहचान कहीं भी नहीं होती है-

'कुछ लोगों के नामों का उल्लेख किया गया था जिनके ओहदे थे

बाकी सब इत्यादि थे'

यह 'कुछ लोगों के नामों का उल्लेख' उच्चवर्गीय और ओहदेदार लोगों के सत्तारूढ़ प्रतिष्ठित हो जाने का पूर्ण स्पष्टीकरण करता है, जिसमें 'इत्यादि' क्षमताहीन एवं संघर्षरत है और ये कुछ लोग बेहद

शक्तिसंपन्न है, क्योंकि-

‘इत्यादि हर जगह शामिल थे पर उनके नाम कहीं भी शामिल नहीं हो पाते थे’²

राजेश जोशी की कविताएँ बाल जीवन की मासूमियत, भोलापन, मार्मिकता और सहजता के साथ-साथ उनकी दुर्दशा व संघर्षरत जीवन को यथार्थ ढंग से वर्णित करती हैं। ‘उनका भरोसा’ कविता बाल मनोवैज्ञानिक विश्लेषण व तर्कशीलता से अधिक सामाजिक सरोकार का व्यावहारिक प्रतिपक्ष है, जो व्यवस्था की यथार्थ पतों को उधेड़ती हुई सीधा सवाल उठाती है कि, बच्चे भीख क्यों माँग रहे हैं! उन बच्चों का भीख माँगना समय की ऐसी क्रूर उपज है, जिसने उसे एक ऐसी दुनिया में धकेल दिया है, जहाँ उसके पास अपने हाथों में एक खाली कटोरा है और भूख की असहनशीलता का प्रश्न है, जिससे भावुकता व दया की अपेक्षा खीज ही पैदा होती है-

**‘अपने छोटे-छोटे हाथ फैलाते हैं
गिड़गिड़ाते हैं पेट दिखाते हुए कहते हैं वे कई
दिन से भूखे हैं**

**तुम्हें दयार्द्र कर डालने का लगभग हर
हथकंडा अपनाते हैं
इतने अभ्यस्त हो चुके हैं हम इन सारे दृश्यों के**

**कि बस एक खीज पैदा होती है अक्सर
कभी कभी एक हल्की सी भावुकता भी
हमारी पीठ फेरते ही**

**अपने ही स्वांग पर जोर जोर से खिलखिलाते हैं
भीख माँगनेवाले बच्चे’³**

ये भीख माँगने वाले बच्चे ‘फब्रियाँ कसते हैं उस पर जो बिना भीख दिये चला गया’ क्योंकि, ‘ये बच्चे, जो उन्हें कुछ दिए बगैर आगे चला जाता है, उसकी नकल उतारते हैं और जो उन्हें कुछ देता है, उसके पैसे को भी हाथ में लेकर उसका मजाक उड़ाते हैं। तात्पर्य यह कि हमारी क्रूरता और दयालुता दोनों ही उनके लिए एक स्वांग का विषय है। राजेश ने इस घटना के लिए उन भिखमंगे बच्चों को नहीं, बल्कि

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समाज को ही दोषी ठहराया है।⁴ इस कविता में बच्चों के भीख माँगने की सामान्य गतिविधि के साथ उनका संघर्ष, दशा और स्थिति पूर्णतः उपस्थित है। गौरतलब है कि, यहाँ बच्चों की जिम्मेदारियाँ भी हैं और समाज की उनके प्रति उदासीनता भी है, भूख भी है और बेबसी, मजबूरी, दुख व पीड़ा भी है, उम्मीदें भी हैं और निराशा भी है, परंतु एक सपना भी है जिस पर उनका पूरा भरोसा है; बेशक यह भरोसा यथार्थ की क्षमता और स्वप्न की हकीकत में परिवर्तित होता है या नहीं!

**‘कभी कभी वे एक स्वप्न भी देखते हैं
जिसे हमारे समय की रंगीन आपराधिक फिल्मों ने
रचा है उनके दिमाग में**

**जिस पर उनका भरोसा है कि उस तरह एक दिन
बदल जाएगा उनका भी जीवन!’⁵**

मध्यवर्गीय जनजीवन के दैनिक परिदृश्य की सार्थक व संगत उद्भावना राजेश जोशी के कविता की आंतरिकता है। दैनिक जीवन में आने वाली गड़बड़ियों, तकलीफों और दिक्कतों को दूर करने के लिए ऐसे बहुत सारे लोग हैं जो कामगार भी हैं और अनुभवी भी हैं। ये लोग मुख्यतः साधारण जीवन जीते हैं और समाज में सदैव ही उपेक्षित रहते हैं। यह भी सच है कि, समाज ऐसे लोगों को याद रखने में दिलचस्पी रखता है जो प्रतिष्ठित, उच्च और सोशल आइकन हो; न की किसी प्लम्बर या मध्यवर्गीय जनता की रोजमर्रा जिंदगी को। ‘उस प्लम्बर का नाम क्या है’ कविता ऐसे साधारण लोगों का प्रस्तुतीकरण है जो दैनिक जीवन की समस्या को दुरुस्त करने का काम करते हैं, लेकिन उनके नाम और पते याद रखना एक बेहद कठिन काम है, क्योंकि यह उच्च व मध्यवर्गीय समाज के अंतर्संबंध का भी जायजा है और समय की विसंगति बोध भी है, जो सत्ता और जनता के बीच का फासला निरंतर बढ़ा रहा है, क्योंकि, ‘उनकी कविताओं में जनचित्त को छूने वाले मुहावरे हैं और रोजमर्रा के अनुभवों में पके कथ्य भी। राजेश जोशी की कविता में समय अपने पूरे वैविध्य

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के साथ उपस्थित होता है।⁶ इसी जनचित्त व मध्यवर्गीय जनता की पक्षधरता का स्पर्श कविता का केंद्रीय प्रतिपाद्य है-

**‘लेकिन घंटे भर से कोशिश कर रहा हूँ
पर याद नहीं आ रहा है इस वक्त उस प्लम्बर का नाम
जो कई बार आ चुका है हमारी पाइप लाइन में
अक्सर हो जाने वाली गड़बड़ी को ठीक करने
वो कहाँ रहता है, कहाँ है उसके मिलने का ठीका
कुछ भी याद नहीं’⁷**

समय-तत्त्व की गतिशीलता और जनबोध का पक्ष-प्रतिपक्ष जिस कविता में अभिव्यक्ति का केंद्र बिंदु होता है; स्वाभाविक है कि उसकी अंतर्वस्तु अथवा संवेदनशीलता और प्रेरक-तत्त्व भी जनसरोकार से संपृक्त होंगे। अक्सर देखा गया है कि, जब किसी प्रसिद्ध व्यक्ति के नाम पर किसी बड़े शहर का नाम रखा जाता है और उसे बनाने वाले मजदूर लोगों को नाम व सम्मान से वंचित किया जाता है। ‘हमारे शहर की गलियाँ: दो’ कविता इसी आशय का अभिप्राय है, जहाँ असल हकदार व्यक्ति को अपने हक से वंचित व उपेक्षित करके समाज को उच्च एवं निम्न वर्ग की रूपरेखा में विभक्त किया जाता है। यह कविता मूलतः अनाम जन के प्रति दुःखात्मक अभिव्यक्ति का संवेदनात्मक टिप्पण है। कविता का संदर्भ इस प्रकार है-

**‘सड़कों के नाम अक्सर बेगमों और नवाबों
के नाम पर थे
जबकि गलियों के नाम जिन लोगों के नाम पर थे
उनका कोई लिखित इतिहास नहीं था
काली धोबन की गली, शेख-बत्ती की गली
नाइयों की गली, बाजे वालों की गली
गुलिया दाई की गली...’⁸**

राजेश जोशी की कविता पोलिटिकल कमिटमेंट की यथार्थ भूमि से उपजी हुई है। वह लोकतांत्रिक मूल्य की संवेदनात्मक अभिव्यक्ति करते हैं और सत्ता एवं व्यवस्था की नाकामी अथवा विसंगतियाँ प्रस्तुत

करते हैं। ‘मेरा नया फोन नम्बर’ कविता जनतंत्र और जनसाधारण नागरिक का एक ऐसा अंतर्संबंध है जहाँ सत्ता पक्ष का वर्चस्व तो है, लेकिन उसकी मूल संवेदना जनबोध के प्रश्न में निहित है। कविता का उद्धरण है कि-

**‘क्या इस जनतंत्र में प्रधानमंत्री और एक
साधारण नागरिक के बीच
चुनाव में वोट देने के अलावा कोई सम्बन्ध
नहीं हो सकता?’⁹**

वस्तुतः यह कविता अपने शुद्ध रूप में राजनीतिक शक्ति का जनसाधारण नागरिक की जीवन शैली में एक हस्तक्षेप है। कविता में जहाँ एक पक्ष सत्ता का उभरता है वहीं दूसरा पक्ष जनसंवाद का भी पैदा होता है, इसलिए मुख्यतः शक्ति और संघर्ष अथवा सत्ता और नागरिक के बीच का अंतर्संबंध और अंतर्विरोध कविता का मूल प्रतिपाद्य व आंतरिक स्पष्टीकरण है। कवि अपने बदल गए फोन नंबर की सूचना देने के लिए प्रधानमंत्री को पोस्टकार्ड से अपना नंबर इस उद्देश्य से भेजता है कि, कहीं कभी प्रधानमंत्री को मुझसे कोई काम हो और किसी सिलसिले से बात करनी पड़ जाए! जब प्रधानमंत्री कवि को समय पूछने के लिए फोन करता है तो उसके उत्तर में एक साथ बहुत सारे प्रश्न और सत्ता व जनसंवाद के फासले का जिक्र भी होता चला जाता है, क्योंकि दो अंतर्विरोधी तत्त्व में नागरिक के अपने पेचीदा सवाल होते हैं और सत्ता की अपनी अलग चुनौतियाँ होती हैं। तर्कहीनता के इस परिदृश्य में विडंबनात्मक परिस्थिति के कारण जनतंत्र में यह कल्पना करना भी मुमकिन नहीं है कि, सत्ता की घड़ी और जनता की घड़ी में कितने समय का फर्क है और सत्ताएँ अपनी घड़ी की सुइयों को जनता की घड़ी की सुइयों के समय के साथ क्यों नहीं मिलती! इसी मूल्यहीन वैचारिक अंतर्विरोधात्मक गतिशीलता में-

**‘प्रधानमंत्री की घड़ी में और एक साधारण
नागरिक की घड़ी में
बजनेवाला समय क्या एक ही हो सकता है?’**

जिसमें सत्ता की घड़ी और जनता की घड़ी का समय एक ही हो?

मेरी दिक्कत को थोड़ा-बहुत समझ रहे होंगे आप लेकिन यकीन कीजिए कि सत्ताएँ अपनी घड़ी का समय

अपने देश के नागरिकों की घड़ी के समय से कभी नहीं मिलातीं

और ज्यादातर गड़बड़ियाँ यहीं से पैदा होती हैं¹⁰

‘संग्रहालय’ कविता सामाजिक वर्गीकरण की रूपरेखा और जनसरोकार की प्रतिबद्धता को अलग-अलग दृष्टिकोण से अनुभूत व अभिव्यक्त करती है, जहाँ एक वर्ग के पास शक्ति और सत्ता है और दूसरा वर्ग पूर्णतः उपेक्षित, शोषित और संघर्षरत है अथवा शक्ति व सत्ता संपन्न वर्ग वेरिफिकेशन टैग से संपृक्त है और जनसाधारण नागरिक अस्तित्वहीन पहचान से चिंताग्रस्त व उपेक्षित है। वस्तुतः वर्गीकृत समाज का एकपक्षीय हितसाधन कविता की विषयवस्तु का मूल आधारस्तंभ है। गौरतलब है कि, चीजों का इस्तेमाल करने वाले प्रमुख हैं और चीजों को बनाने वाले इत्यादि या गौण, जिसके कारण संग्रहालय में गुजरे वक्त के लोगों द्वारा मुख्यतः चीजों व वस्तुओं को इस्तेमाल करने वालों का ही नाम, समय और चित्र मौजूद है; अपेक्षाकृत उन चीजों व वस्तुओं को बनाने वालों का न तो कहीं नाम दर्ज है न ही समय का उल्लेख और न ही किसी चित्र की फ्रेम -

‘दीवारों पर सुनहरी फ्रेम में मढ़े हुए उन शासकों के विशाल चित्र थे

जिनके नीचे उनका नाम और समय भी लिखा था जिन्होंने उन चीजों का उपयोग किया था

लेकिन उन चीजों को बनानेवालों का कोई चित्र वहाँ नहीं था

न कहीं उनका कोई नाम था¹¹

यह ‘चीजों को बनानेवालों का कोई चित्र वहाँ नहीं’ होना मध्यवर्गीय समाज का उपेक्षित, संघर्षशील और शोषित जनजीवन का ही प्रत्यक्षधर्मी आकलन करता है।

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‘दाग’ कविता श्रम के सौंदर्य और जन-वेदना की संवेदनात्मक दस्तावेजीकरण है। यह कविता टायर रिपेयरिंग करने वाले मनुष्य समाज की सिग्नेचर कविता है। कविता का मूल श्रम जीवन के पेचीदा प्रश्नों का अन्वेषण करना है, जहाँ एक श्रमिक अथवा कामगार व्यक्ति की रोजी रोटी कमाने का संकल्प, दृढ़ता और निश्चलता का शानदार दृश्य बोध उभरता है। बेशक उस श्रम के पीछे लंबी यात्राओं की थकान और अनेकों मुल्क की सड़कों के विविध संस्मरण हैं, जिसकी प्रत्यक्षधर्मी दृष्टि जोखिम उठाकर मूलभूत आवश्यकताओं की पूर्ति में है न की ताकत, अन्याय और सत्ता के बलबूते पर आश्रित व अवलंबित! कहने का आशय है कि एक कामगार अथवा श्रमिक व्यक्ति के लिए मेहनत या श्रम का प्रतिफल मेहनताना ही है, जिसकी कसौटी जीवन का मूलाधार है और यही कारण है कि उस श्रमिक व्यक्ति के लिए मेहनत से कमाई हुई रोजी रोटी हमेशा ही स्वास्थ्यवर्धक और स्वादिष्ट होती है, क्योंकि उसमें तसल्लीवश मेहनत का अपव्यय हुआ है-

‘मेरी कमीज की आस्तीनों पर कई दाग हैं

ग्रीस और आइल के

पीठ पर धूल का एक बड़ा-सा गोल छपका है

जैसे धूल भरी हवाओं वाली रात में चाँद

मैं इन दागों को पहनता हूँ

कि किसी दूसरे की रोटी नहीं छीनी मैंने

अपने को ही खर्च किया है एक-एक कौर के लिए¹²

‘बच्चे काम पर जा रहे हैं’ कविता एक ओर तो बाल श्रमिकों की दशा व संवेदना को चित्रित करती है और दूसरी ओर उसके मूल सवालों व संकटों से टकराती है। यह कविता समाज के मध्यवर्गीय परिदृश्य को ही प्रस्तुत नहीं करती, बल्कि उसके बुनियादी सरोकारों से संपृक्त भी है। राजेश जोशी उन बच्चों का विवरण भी देते हैं और उसकी दशा और समाज की लापरवाही पर भी टिप्पणी करते हैं, जो किसी होटलों में, कारखानों में और मीलों आदि में काम करने के लिए मजबूर है अथवा काम करने के लिए

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विवश होकर जाते हैं। 'बच्चे काम पर जा रहे हैं' कविता समय की क्रूरता और समाज की भयानक त्रासदी का एक जीवंत साक्षात्कार है, जो अपने जटिल प्रश्नों से उतना ही टकराता है जितना अपने प्रसंगों व संदर्भों के दृश्य-परिदृश्य से जद्दोजहद करता है। कविता का उद्धरण है-

**'कोहरे से ढकी सड़क पर बच्चे काम पर जा रहे हैं
सुबह सुबह**

**बच्चे काम पर जा रहे हैं
हमारे समय की सबसे भयानक पंक्ति है यह
भयानक है इसे विवरण की तरह लिखा जाना
लिखा जाना चाहिए इसे सवाल की तरह
काम पर क्यों जा रहे हैं बच्चे?'**³

समाज की विडंबना और उसके अंतर्विरोध के बीच जीते हुए, संघर्ष करते हुए, प्रताड़ित व पीड़ित होते हुए, विस्थापित जीवन जीने वाले और बेबस लोगों के प्रति राजेश जोशी की कविता में करुणा और सहानुभूति है। 'सड़क पर चलते हुए' कविता सड़क बनाने वाले उन श्रमजीवी स्त्रियों और पुरुषों की व्यथा व जटिलता का दस्तावेज है जो महीनों से अपने घर नहीं लौटे हैं, जिन्होंने डामर गाड़ी में बची मद्धिम रोशनी में प्याज के साथ रोटी खाकर दिन काटे हैं और लू के थपेड़े सहते हुए निरंतर धूल-मिट्टी में काम करके नगरों और महानगरों की शानदार सड़कें बनाई हैं। ये सड़कें केवल शरीर की ताकत को खर्च करके ही नहीं बनी हैं; बल्कि आजीविका की खोज से भी बनी है, जिसमें रोजगार का हिस्सा कम और विवशता व संघर्ष का प्रश्न ज्यादा है-

**'मैं नगरों और महानगरों की शानदार सड़कों
पर चलते हुए
अक्सर शर्मिन्दा हो जाता हूँ
न जाने किन-किन इलाकों के अकाल से
धकियायी गई
स्त्रियों और पुरुषों ने ही बनाई हैं इस मुल्क की
ज्यादातर शानदार सड़कें'**⁴

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'मारे जायेंगे' कविता का केंद्रीय प्रश्न है- समय-तत्त्व की शिनाखा और वैचारिक अंतर्विरोध का अतिक्रमण। ये वैचारिक अंतर्विरोध का अतिक्रमण कविता के आरंभ में ही अभिव्यक्त होता है-

**'जो इस पागलपन में शामिल नहीं होंगे
मारे जायेंगे**

**कटघरे में खड़े कर दिये जायेंगे, जो विरोध में बोलेंगे
जो सच सच बोलेंगे, मारे जायेंगे'**⁵

स्पष्ट है कि ये 'पागलपन' कालदर्शिता की भयावहता का संकेत है, जिसमें जुर्म व ताकत के बलबूते किसी भी तरह के काम को अंजाम दिया जाता है और सत्यता की कसौटी को सर्वश्रेष्ठ व सर्वोच्च मानने वाले को दंडित किया जाता है। कविता का अंतिम अंश समय-तत्त्व की पहचान करता है और एक दुर्बोध प्रश्न भी पैदा करता है, जिसमें जनता की पक्षधरता का समर्थन भी है और सत्ता की ताकत का अतिक्रमण भी है। वस्तुतः 'मारे जायेंगे' कविता में समय-तत्त्व की क्रूर सघनता व वैचारिक अंतर्विरोध का परिदृश्य जनवादी ढंग से स्पष्ट व प्रस्तुत हुआ है -

**'सबसे बड़ा अपराध है इस समय
निहत्थे और निरपराध होना
जो अपराधी नहीं होंगे
मारे जायेंगे।'**⁶

महाविपदा के इस दौर में मीडिया की बेतर्क बहसबाजी और खबरों व तथ्यों की कवरेज के पीछे जहाँ सत्ता की ताकत दिखाई दी, वहाँ समाज के ज्वलंत मुद्दों व सवालों के प्रति भी उनमें प्रखरता की कमी स्पष्टतः नजर आई। कोरोना महामारी में जहाँ हजारों-लाखों की संख्या में आम आदमी की रोजी-रोटी और आजीविका के तमाम साधन व घर-झोपड़े उजड़े वह दिल दहलाने वाले दृश्य है। राजनीतिक क्रूरता ने बेरहमी व निर्दयता के साथ जनजीवन की शकल को कुचला है, जिसकी खबर होते हुए भी खबर नहीं बनी; परंतु इस कठिन समय में निरंतर

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खबरें बनती-छपती गईं, लेकिन ये खबरें वास्तविक मुद्दों व प्रश्नों की वकालत करने में असमर्थ हैं-

‘रोजी-रोटी खो चुके लाखों लोग सिर पर अपनी गृहस्थी उठाए भूखे-प्यासे, नंगे पाँव वापस अपने गाँव लौट रहे होंगे पर खबरें नहीं होंगी खबरों में असल खबरों के लिए जगह ही नहीं होगी’¹⁷

निष्कर्ष :

राजेश जोशी जनजीवन की विविधता को समग्र रूप से वर्णित व अभिव्यक्त करते हैं। मध्यवर्गीय चेतना और उसका समर्थन उनकी कविता की मूल अंतर्वस्तु है। उनकी कविता में सामान्य जन का वर्णन है और उसकी दशा व स्थिति पर उन्होंने खुलकर बातचीत भी की है। युगीन संदर्भ और समय की टकराहट उनकी सृजनात्मकता को अधिक युगधर्मी बनाती है। वह सशक्त ढंग से समाज की स्थिति, परिस्थिति एवं अवस्थिति को अपनी कविता में उकेरते हैं और उसका विस्तृत प्रत्यक्षीकरण करते हैं। मध्य एवं निम्नवर्गीय समाज के प्रति उनकी सहानुभूति और संवेदनशीलता बराबर दिखाई देती है, इसलिए उन्होंने उसके यथार्थदर्शिता को बड़ी मार्मिकता के साथ उपस्थित किया है। राजेश जोशी जनपक्षधरता का प्रतिबद्ध ऐडवोकेट है और उनकी कविताएँ समग्र रूप से जनहित की वकालत करती हैं, इसलिए उसमें जनबोध का पक्ष भी है और जनजीवन की व्यावहारिकता के वास्तविक दृश्य-परिदृश्य भी व्यापक रूप में विद्यमान है अर्थात् सच का सौंदर्य भी विशिष्टता के साथ संलग्न है।

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Unravelling the Poetic Psyche : Exploring Allen Ginsberg's Impact on Literature and Culture

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Allen Ginsberg, one of the most influential poets of the 20th century, is renowned for his impactful contributions to literature and culture. As a central figure of the Beat Generation, Ginsberg's work transcended conventional poetic forms, revolutionizing the literary landscape with its raw emotion, unfiltered language and social criticism. Ginsberg's most celebrated work, "Howl", serves as a testament to his revolutionary style and thematic depth. Published in 1956, "Howl" is a long-form poem that captures Ginsberg's frustrations, observations, and critiques of post-war America. The poem is a visceral outpouring of emotion, addressing taboo subjects such as sexuality, drug use, and mental illness with an unapologetic candour that shocked and captivated readers. Through "Howl", Ginsberg sought to challenge societal norms and give voice to the disaffected youth of his generation, laying bare the struggles and aspirations of a burgeoning counterculture. Central to Ginsberg's poetry is his unique blend of personal experience and social commentary. His poems often draw from his own life, chroni-

cling his experiences with love, loss and self-discovery. At the same time, Ginsberg uses his poetry as a vehicle for broader social critique, addressing issues such as war, capitalism, and the erosion of civil liberties. This dual focus on the personal and the political imbues Ginsberg's work with a sense of urgency and relevance that continues to resonate with readers today. Beyond his poetry, Ginsberg's activism was a defining aspect of his legacy. Throughout his life, Ginsberg was deeply engaged in political and social causes, using his platform as a poet to advocate for change. He was a vocal critic of the Vietnam War, a champion of civil rights, and a staunch advocate for free speech. Ginsberg's activism was rooted in a belief in the power of art to effect social change, and he used his poetry as a tool for activism, often performing at rallies and protests to galvanize support for various causes. Ginsberg's influence extends far beyond the literary world. His work has had a profound impact on popular culture, inspiring musicians, artists, and filmmakers alike. Ginsberg's poems have been set to

music by artists such as Bob Dylan and The Clash, and his ideas have been echoed in films, novels, and art installations. His work continues to be studied and celebrated for its boldness, its honesty and its unwavering commitment to truth and authenticity. Despite his enduring legacy, Ginsberg's work has not been without its critics. Some have questioned the literary merit of his poetry, criticizing its lack of formal structure and its sometimes-rambling style. Others have taken issue with Ginsberg's explicit language and controversial subject matter, arguing that it detracts from the overall message of his work. However, these criticisms have done little to diminish Ginsberg's impact or his stature as one of the most important poets of his generation. In conclusion, Allen Ginsberg's contributions to literature and culture are undeniable. Through his poetry and activism, he challenged the status quo, pushed boundaries, and inspired generations of artists and activists to follow in his footsteps. His work continues to resonate with readers today, serving as a reminder of the power of art to provoke thought, inspire change, and shape the world around us.

“Howl” and the Beat Generation :

Allen Ginsberg's poem “Howl”, published in 1956, stands as a seminal work not only in his oeuvre but also in the broader context of American literature. The poem, a lamentation and celebration of the “best minds” of Ginsberg's generation, serves as a manifesto for the Beat Generation, a group of writers who rejected mainstream societal norms and sought to create a new literary and cultural ethos. According to literary critic Ann Charters, “Howl” was a “revolutionary manifesto”

that captured the spirit of a generation disillusioned by the conformity and materialism of post-war America. The poem's raw emotion and unfiltered language resonated with readers who were hungry for a new form of artistic expression. One of the most striking aspects of “Howl” is its raw emotional intensity. As Ginsberg expressed the poem was “an emotional time bomb that would continue exploding in U.S. consciousness in case the military-industrial-nationalist complex solidified its power (Ginsberg).

The poem is a howl of anguish and ecstasy, a cry of protest against the dehumanizing effects of capitalism, consumerism, and militarism. Thematically, “Howl” explores a wide range of topics, including sexuality, spirituality, politics, and mental illness. According to literary scholar John Tytell, “Ginsberg's ‘Howl’ became a *cri de coeur* against the dehumanization and banality of American culture.” The poem's frank discussion of taboo subjects challenged readers to confront the darker aspects of human experience. Stylistically, “Howl” is characterized by its long lines and free verse structure. Ginsberg's use of long, breathless lines mirrors the stream-of-consciousness style of writers like Walt Whitman, whom Ginsberg admired. As Ginsberg writes in the poem:

*I saw the best minds of my generation
destroyed by madness, starving
hysterical naked,
dragging themselves through the negro
streets at dawn looking for an angry fix.
(Howl)*

This style allows Ginsberg to create a sense of urgency and immediacy, drawing

the reader into the poem's emotional landscape. Despite the controversy surrounding its publication, "Howl" has endured as one of the most important poems of the 20th century. Its themes of alienation, rebellion, and the search for meaning continue to resonate with readers today, cementing Ginsberg's place as a literary giant and a voice of his generation.

Major Themes and Techniques :

Allen Ginsberg's poetic oeuvre intricately interlaces thematic elements that confront societal conventions and exalt the unfiltered essence of the human experience. One of the most prominent themes in Ginsberg's work is his critique of mainstream American society. He vehemently opposed the dehumanizing effects of capitalism, consumerism, and militarism, which he saw as pervasive in post-war America. Through poems like "America" and "A Supermarket in California", Ginsberg employs satire and irony to cast a critical eye on the materialistic and conformist aspects of American culture, urging readers to question the values that underpin their society. Ginsberg's poetry is characterized by its uncompromising social criticism and its deeply felt empathy for the marginalized and dispossessed. In "Howl", Ginsberg writes, "I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving hysterical naked / dragging themselves through the negro streets" capturing the despair and disillusionment of a generation caught in the grip of societal forces beyond their control. Another central theme in Ginsberg's work is a celebration of personal freedom and self-expression. Ginsberg was a strong advocate for the rights of individuals to

live and love as they saw it, and his poetry often reflects this belief. In poems like "Howl", Ginsberg celebrates the beauty and diversity of human experience, urging readers to embrace their true selves and reject the constraints imposed by society. Stylistically, Ginsberg's poetry is characterized by its use of free verse and long, flowing lines. This style, influenced by the works of Walt Whitman, allows Ginsberg to create a sense of rhythm and musicality in his work. According to literary scholar Ann Charters, Ginsberg's poetry is "marked by its long, flowing lines and its use of repetition and refrain, which give his poems a hypnotic quality." Ginsberg's use of language is another key aspect of his poetic technique. He often incorporated slang, obscenities, and colloquialisms into his work, creating a sense of immediacy and authenticity. This use of language was controversial in his time but has since been recognized as a groundbreaking development in American poetry. Thematically, Ginsberg's poetry is also deeply influenced by his spiritual beliefs. He was deeply interested in Eastern religions, particularly Buddhism, and this interest is reflected in poems like "Sunflower Sutra," where Ginsberg finds beauty and meaning in the ordinary and overlooked aspects of life. In this poem, Ginsberg writes,

*Ah, dear father, graybeard, lonely old
courage-teacher,
what America did you have when
Charon quit poling his ferry
and you got out on a smoking bank and
stood watching
the boat disappear on the black waters
of Lethe (SS)?*

Critics have praised Ginsberg's poetry for its honesty, passion and innovation. Literary scholar John Tytell notes that Ginsberg's work is characterized by its "uncompromising social criticism" and its deeply felt empathy for the marginalized and dispossessed. Tytell argues that Ginsberg's poetry "became a *cri de coeur* against the dehumanization and banality of American culture (Tytell, 23). Despite the controversy surrounding his work, Ginsberg's poetry has endured as a powerful and influential force in American literature. His themes of alienation, rebellion, and the search for meaning continue to resonate with readers today, cementing his place as one of the most important poets of the 20th century. Through his bold themes, innovative style, and profound spirituality, Ginsberg continues to captivate readers and challenge them to see the world in new and unexpected ways. His poetry remains as relevant and powerful today as it was when it was first written, a testament to the enduring power of his vision and voice.

Influence on Contemporary Literature and Culture :

Allen Ginsberg's influence on later generations of poets and artists has been profound, shaping the landscape of contemporary literature and culture. His bold exploration of taboo subjects, innovative use of language, and commitment to social justice continue to inspire writers and artists around the world. Ginsberg's impact on contemporary literature is evident in the work of poets who have followed in his footsteps. Poets like Patti Smith, Bob Dylan and Anne Waldman have cited Ginsberg as a major influence

on their work, praising his willingness to tackle difficult subjects and his innovative approach to form and structure. Smith, a musician and poet, has described Ginsberg as "a true revolutionary whose work opened up new possibilities for what poetry could be." Ginsberg's influence is also evident in the world of visual art. Artists like Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns, who were associated with the Beat Generation, were inspired by Ginsberg's work and incorporated elements of his poetry into their art. Rauschenberg, in particular, was known for his use of found objects and collage, a technique that mirrored Ginsberg's own approach to poetry. Critics have praised Ginsberg's work for its enduring relevance and impact. Poet and critic Robert Creeley has described Ginsberg as "a poet of immense power and importance," noting that his work continues to resonate with readers across generations. Similarly, literary scholar Helen Vendler has praised Ginsberg's "uncompromising vision" and his ability to capture the "anguish and ecstasy" of the human experience. Ginsberg's influence extends beyond the world of literature and art, shaping broader cultural movements and social causes. His activism on behalf of civil rights, gay rights, and anti-war causes inspired a generation of activists and paved the way for the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Ginsberg's poems were often performed at rallies and protests, where they served as anthems for the movements of the time. In conclusion, Allen Ginsberg's influence on contemporary literature and culture is undeniable. His bold exploration of taboo subjects, innovative use of language and commitment to social justice continue

to inspire writers, artists and activists around the world. As poet and critic Kenneth Rexroth wrote, Ginsberg's work is "a great lava flow of emotion and consciousness, sweeping away everything in its path." Through his poetry, Ginsberg has left an indelible mark on the cultural landscape of the 20th century and beyond.

Conclusion :

Allen Ginsberg's profound and enduring impact on literature, culture and society is evident. As a leading Beat Generation figure, his poetry challenged his era's conventions, pushing boundaries in form and content. Ginsberg's exploration of taboo subjects such as sexuality, drug use and mental illness expanded poetic possibilities, inspiring future writers. His poetry is known for its raw emotional power and capturing the complexities of human experience. In poems like "Howl," Ginsberg voiced the disillusionment and alienation of post-war America, reflecting its anxieties and uncertainties. He sought to break down barriers and foster a more compassionate and inclusive society. One of Ginsberg's enduring legacies is his commitment to social justice and political activism. His poetry often urged readers to question authority and strive for a better world. His activism for civil rights, gay rights, and anti-war causes made him a pivotal figure in the 1960s and 1970s movements, inspiring a generation of activists. Ginsberg's influence extends beyond literature and activism, shaping popular culture and inspiring artists across disciplines. Musicians like Bob Dylan and Patti Smith, and visual artists like Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns, drew inspiration from his work. His poetry was

also adapted into film, notably the 2010 film "Howl" starring James Franco. Despite his passing in 1997, Ginsberg's work remains relevant and powerful. His poetry resonates with readers worldwide, addressing universal themes of love, loss, and longing. Ginsberg's willingness to confront difficult subjects and his commitment to artistic and political freedom highlight poetry's power to provoke thought, inspire change, and challenge the status quo. In his words, "Poetry is not an expression of the party line. It's that time of night, lying in bed, thinking what you really think, making the private world public, that's what the poet does." Through his poetry, Ginsberg dared to make the private world public, giving voice to a generation's hopes, fears, and dreams. His legacy lives on, inspiring future generations.

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The Dynamics of Conformity in the Black Community in Toni Morrison's *Sula*

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Morrison explores the mythic power of femininity in a poor and isolated rural Black community where women rule as mothers, warriors, witches and storytellers... one of the most compelling writers at work today .

The Times

Toni Morrison's *Sula* is the story of two friends, Sula Peace, and Nel Wright, and their meandering voyage of self-discovery from childhood to adulthood. As children, Nel and Sula were raised by strong, independent women, Helene Wright, Hannah Peace, and Eva Peace. These women however only happened to break down the sense of self that these girls possessed, and did not foster it. The men who entered their lives later, Jude, and Ajax, were also invariably indifferent to them. While Sula continued to strive towards selfhood for herself, and also wished for other women, especially her friend Nel, to assert themselves, this happens very late in life for Nel, with her long and loud cry for her dead friend, remembering all the sacrifices that she had made, both for Nel, as well as for other people. The two friends had always complimented each other, and are incomplete without each other. For Nel, the journey begins early, with her secret

desire to rebel against her mother's standards of beauty.

As evidenced by Carl Jung, identity is a social construct. Sula, and Nel, the two prominent characters in the novel *Sula*, begin, by seeking reassurance for their identities with their mothers, respectively. This reassurance is however not obtained, as Sula's mother Hannah Peace vows to merely 'love' Sula as her own flesh and blood, but does not particularly 'like' her. Hannah remarks to her friends " 'You love her, like I love Sula. I just don't like her. That's the difference.' 'Guess so. Likin' them is another thing.' 'Sure. They different people, you know ...' " (*Sula*, 2005, p. 57). Nel's mother, Helene Sabat Wright, on the other hand attempts to mould her daughter, Nel, into what she believes to be a better version of herself, and does not offer any reassurance about the person that Nel is.

Nel and Sula approach the men in their society, but they are merely commo-

dified as “pig- meat” (Sula, 2005, p. 50). The men have failed to come to terms with their own individual traumas, related to White supremacy, and are hence unable to value the women around them. Despite this, when Nel decides to become a conformist and decides to marry Jude, Sula feels alienated from her minimal support system and so she leaves town.

On returning after ten years of travelling across the length and breadth of the USA, Sula finds that her best friend Nel still prefers her husband, Jude, and the people of her town only look upon her with disgust and ridicule. Sula is thus doomed to die alone, but with a reassurance that she has experienced all that there is to experience in this world. “There aren’t any more new songs and I have sung all the ones there are...” (Sula, 2005, p. 137). In her quest for identity Nel Wright is stifled by her mother Helene Sabat, who imposes her idealistic norms upon her daughter:

She rose grandly to the occasion of motherhood-grateful, deep down in her heart, that the child had not inherited the great beauty that was hers: that her skin had dusk in it, that her lashes were substantial but not undignified in their length, that she had taken the broad flat nose of Wiley (although Helene expected to improve it somewhat) and his generous lips.

Under Helene’s hand the girl became obedient and polite. Any enthusiasms that little Nel showed were calmed by the mother until she drove her daughter’s imagination underground. (Sula, 2005, p. 18)

This manifests in Nel’s joy at being part of the rough and tumble household of the Peace family, as compared to the methodical organisation of her own home.

Nel enjoyed the way in which there was always something being cooked at Sula’s house, both in the literal and figurative sense. There was the luxury of a messy house, and the joy of getting little treats, and having dreams read. The true labyrinth of identity unfolds for Nel when she discovers the custard that her mother is made of, and resolves to never be like her. Nel discovers that despite the strong facade that Helene Sabat puts up, she is unable to face the segregation on the trains during that period. Black soldiers on train are annoyed by the differential behaviour of Helene Sabat. “She (Nel) had been frightened of the soldiers’ eyes on the train, the black wreath on the door, the custard pudding she believed lurked under her mother’s heavy dress, the feel of unknown streets and unknown people” (Sula, 2005, p. 28). All this time, Sula is happy to remain in Nel’s shadow, to the point of mutilating herself for the sake of her friend’s honour:

Sula squatted down in the dirt road and put everything down on the ground: her lunchpail, her reader, her mittens, her slate. ... of the slate.

Sula raised her eyes to them. Her voice was quiet. “If I can do that to myself, what you suppose I’ll do to you?” (Sula, 2005, p. 54-55).

It is only when Nel dons the robes of matrimony that Sula is left to fend for herself. Ten years later she returned, drained, in search of Nel, to complete her: “She thought of looking out of the windows of all those trains and buses, looking at the feet and backs of all those people. Nothing was ever different. They were all the same. All of the words and all of the smiles, every tear and every gag just something to do” (Sula, 2005, p. 147).

This futile endeavour only yielded her the loss of her friendship and the label of a witch. The men of the Bottom community gave Sula her final label of being atrocious to the extent of sleeping with White men. This label earned Sula an evil reputation across genders and ages, which she could not overcome until the very end. Only Ajax, Sula's boyfriend supported her empowerment, and not her vulnerability. "Sula began to discover what possession was. Not love, perhaps, but possession or at least the desire for it. She was astounded by so new and alien a feeling" (Sula, 2005, p. 131). It is only after her death that Sula is able to live on in Nel's memory, steering her back on the course of self-discovery, and hence achieving the peace that is found in her surname:

She knew it was all due to Sula's return to the Bottom. It was like getting the use of an eye back, having a cataract removed. Her old friend had come home. Sula... Talking to Sula had always been a conversation with herself. Was there anyone else before whom she could never be foolish? In whose view inadequacy was mere idiosyncrasy, a character trait rather than a deficiency? Anyone who left behind that aura of fun and complicity? Sula never competed; she simply helped others define themselves. Other people seemed to turn their volume on and up when Sula was in the room. (Sula, 2005, p. 95)

It is then that Nel realises the true gravity of the radiating character that Sula has always been. Nel is in this way also able to overcome her insecurity with regard to being alone, and becomes secure in herself. "Because each had discovered years before that they were neither white nor male, and that all freedom and triumph was forbidden to them, they had set about

creating something else to be" (Sula, 2005, p. 52). Despite having been parented by a strong grandmother, and mother, the journey to self-discovery does not come easily to Sula. This can be compared to the courage of Eva, and Hannah. Owing to the loss of one leg, Eva is forced to use a wagon. Eva does this with great dignity, though :

The wagon was so low that children who spoke to her standing up were eye level with her, and adults, standing or sitting, had to look down at her. But they didn't know it. They all had the impression that they were looking up at her, up into the open distances of her eyes, up into the soft black of her nostrils and up at the crest of her chin. (Sula, 2005, p. 31)

Hannah Peace takes confidence to a whole new level. She goes beyond Eva's potential and makes men dance around her in circles. But then, Sula seems to have done the ultimate sacrifice in losing herself, in order to help others, find themselves. As in the case of Nel:

'All that time, all that time, I thought I was missing Jude.' And the loss pressed down on her chest and came up into her throat. 'We was girls together,' she said as though explaining something. 'O Lord, Sula,' she cried, 'girl, girl, girlgirlgirl.'

It was a fine cry—loud and long—but it had no bottom and it had no top, just circles and circles of sorrow. (Sula, 2005, p. 174)

Herbert Kelman has been quoted by Tamilselvi to define identity as "the enduring aspects of a person's definition of her- or him' self, the conception of who one is and what one is over time and across situations" (qtd. in Tamilselvi, Prabha, 2016, p. 81). Jennifer S. Conway describes Morrison's characters as neither being entirely

enslaved, nor entirely free. She that these characters create identities for themselves, based on the dominant social mores of the period. "...Jung considers our persona [identity] as a socially constructed concept affected by social institutions such as family and school. Although he believes in collective psyche, he does not deny the function of these institutions in the process of individuation" (Ramin, 2014, p. 94).

Though African American writers like Zora Neale Hurston and Alice Walker have made forays into the African American woman's quest for identity with novels like *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and *The Color Purple*, it is Toni Morrison who is credited with a nuanced portrayal of the voyage of self-discovery, with her novel *Sula*. The protagonist displays multiple facets of passion, unpredictability, curiosity, adventure, danger, and freedom. Morrison has drawn upon her own struggles during the segregation era to portray two contrasting characters -Nel who is a conformist, conforming to the standards of beauty and morality, set by the society, and Sula, a non-conformist, attempting to break away from social traditions, both having been raised in different social and familial contexts struggle to survive. The novel attempts to bring out the trials and tribulations of women who were Black and poor. Morrison in this novel can be accredited with a perfect blend of beauty and joy, with sorrow and melancholia. Sula's portrayal of the Black female experience within the community of the Bottom is epigrammatic of the collective unconscious explained by

Jung. Just as Sula's non-conformity is a heritage that has been passed on to her from her grandmother Eva Peace; Nel has also inherited the conformity from her great grandmother Cecile Sabat.

The concept of Collective Consciousness defined by the noted French sociologist Émile Durkheim can be applied to Nel's behaviour. Nel attempts to conform to the ideas, morals and beliefs of her community, and in doing so, fits into Jung's concept of the persona, which believes in individuals masking their true identities, in order to fit into society. Sula however, does nothing of the sort. Morrison through this portrayal asserts the capacity of an individual to differentiate from the norms of society, carving a niche of their own, a belief which has found new footing in today's day and age.

Full of beauty, eccentricity, bustle, laughter, sensuality, generous affection... Toni Morrison's work is strikingly individual

Times Literary Supplement

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Rethinking Storytelling : The Transhumanist Consequences of Artificial Intelligence In Literature

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The emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) has shattered the basic foundations on which human tales have historically been built, bringing about a significant upheaval in the worlds of literature and storytelling. We have seen a seismic shift in recent years as Hollywood authors have spoken out against the overuse of AI-driven creative tools. This may seem like a ridiculous incident in the history of technological disruption, but it actually serves as a clear sign of how the field of human storytelling tradition is changing. AI-generated novels have become a prominent and significant force in this environment, necessitating our reflection and analysis.

It becomes abundantly evident as the conflict between Hollywood authors and AI develops that the impact of AI on the tradition of human storytelling is not only real, but also unavoidably inescapable. A significant revolution is taking place in storytelling, an art form that has been

weaving the tapestry of human experience for millennia. Previously restricted to menial chores, AI is increasingly infiltrating the creative realm, where language and imagination have always held sway. Fundamental concerns about authorship, creativity and the traditional bounds of literature are being reframed in the crucible of this upheaval, calling us to reconsider our knowledge of these fundamental categories.

In order to understand the complex web of transhumanist implications that AI-generated books cast upon the human storytelling tradition, this research paper sets out on an engaging journey into the center of this narrative upheaval. We delve deeply into the fundamental questions that arise as the distinctions between human and machine authorship blur by looking at this modern nexus of technology and art. This investigation explores the wide range of AI's contributions to storytelling, highlighting its revolutionary influence on the development of literature.

The Rise of AI-Generated Novels :

The interesting history of AI-generated books is explored in depth in the first chapter of this research paper, which also traces the technological advancements that have enabled this revolutionary change in literary form. The development of artificial intelligence has been nothing short of revolutionary, going from early trials with text generated by AI to modern state-of-the-art language models. In its early phases, AI-generated text was mostly used for straightforward tasks like automatically finishing sentences and was frequently characterized by disconnected phrases and a lack of consistency. However, the ability of AI to produce intricate and coherent narratives has significantly increased with the development of deep learning techniques, neural networks, and large datasets.

The emergence pushes us to investigate how modern AI models, such as GPT-3, can produce in-depth and captivating narratives. These models aren't just text generators; they're highly developed robots that can understand context, conjure intriguing plotlines, identify distinct characters, and even modify their writing style to imitate famous authors. The chapter offers samples of AI-generated writing that highlight the field's astounding advancements and highlight AI's potential to create stories that are both fascinating and plausible. The effects of AI-generated novels on the literary scene are also covered in this chapter. A new assessment of creative agency and authorial authenticity has been prompted by the development of AI-generated content, which puts the conventional responsibilities of human authors, editors, and publishers under scrutiny. As AI has the ability to enable a wider variety of

voices and stories, it also raises concerns about the democratization of literature.

The Blurring of Authorship Boundaries:

This chapter explores the fundamental transhumanist ramifications of AI-generated fiction, including the fuzziness of authorial lines. Here, the basic nature of creativity and the traditional identity of authors are scrutinized. The complex and nuanced interaction between human authors and AI systems assumes centre stage and provides important insights into how storytelling is changing. This paragraph questions accepted standards and notions of what it means to be an author. Authorship has historically been a fundamentally human activity that includes the creative process, the expression of personal experiences, and the transmission of distinctive viewpoints. The introduction of AI, however, has upended this paradigm and rendered authorship utterly obsolete.

As creators use AI to assist, improve, or even co-author their works, the dynamics of collaboration between human authors and AI systems are becoming more complicated. AI makes us wonder where the creative process really begins because it can produce information that is not just comprehensible but also contextually relevant and stylistically appropriate. Do we credit the person who starts the process as the author, the AI, or a combination of both? Understanding the revolutionary potential of AI in the creative sphere depends critically on this query. This essentially acts as a key entry point into comprehending the changing dynamics of writing, where the effect of AI is not just an unavoidable force but also a catalyst for reinventing the very underpinnings of the changing dynamics of authorship,

where AI influence is both a necessary force and a catalyst for reinventing the fundamental roots of storytelling and the human narrative tradition.

The Nexus of AI and Narrative :

We go deeper into the dramatic alteration that arises at the nexus of AI and narrative in this crucial chapter. Here, the change goes beyond the technological, stretching into the very core of narrative and uniting the art of prose with computer code. Reading, writing, and academics now participate in a dynamic and developing frontier of human-machine creative symbiosis thanks to the narrative web spun by artificial intelligence, marking a considerable shift from traditional authorship. Strings of code are frequently the starting point for AI-generated stories. These algorithms, when combined with massive databases and computing power, may create stories with depth, complexity, and, surprisingly, emotional appeal. This chapter explores the complex technological processes that enable the conversion of these lines of code into narrative text. We investigate the workings of AI language models, including their comprehension of style, narrative progression, and context. These models can emulate the subtle tonal differences of well-known authors or even change their style to fit other literary genres, in addition to producing comprehensible narrative. This capacity for change and evolution demonstrates how significantly AI is influencing the environment of storytelling.

Furthermore, the narrative nexus that AI has produced goes much beyond simple content creation. It brings about a transhumanist society that transcends conventional notions of authorship and

creativity by fusing human and machine elements. Readers are drawn into narratives that may be influenced by both human and artificial intelligence. Previously the lone creators of their stories, authors now collaborate with AI to co-create, adding an entirely new level to the art of storytelling. This chapter examines the changing dynamics of storytelling, as stories produced by AI systems upend accepted conventions and widen the range of possible creative outcomes. It emphasizes the complex interplay between AI and narrative while highlighting how transformative this interaction is.

Redefining Storytelling and Creatorship :

In the final portion of our investigation, we explore the fundamentally altered definitions of storytelling and authorship in the context of AI-generated narratives. Our narrative journey comes to a head in this section, as we see how AI-generated novels have the power to rewrite the stories that have shaped our cultural history. We also consider the collaborative literary mosaic that is being created at the nexus of human inventiveness and artificial intelligence, which marks the beginning of a new era in the field of narrative. In a world driven by technology, the meaning of storytelling and creatorship is changing in a dynamic, multifaceted way. AI-generated narratives produce a narrative tapestry that defies conventional categorizations because of its distinctive combination of human and machine input. The stories that develop are typically more imaginative than what one mind could conjure because they are infused with algorithmic grasp of language, style, and context. The entire nature of storytelling

is put to the test by this revolutionary potential, which forces us to think outside the box and explore the countless opportunities that this combination of human and machine invention offers.

Additionally, a collaborative literary mosaic develops as novels created by artificial intelligence continue to acquire popularity. In order to create stories that bridge the gap between humans and machines, human authors work with AI systems in a collaborative process that was once lonely and individual. The narratives that come from this dynamic new storytelling tradition connect with a distinctive fusion of viewpoints, concepts and inventiveness. This section concludes by urging serious thought on the paradigm change we are experiencing. The idea of storytelling and authorship has undergone a significant mutation that affects not just how tales are created but also how readers and authors alike see, value and interact with them. The evolution of tales and the collaborative mindset of this time reveal an inclusive and innovative literary scene. The limitations of conventional storytelling are transcended in this setting, encouraging us to embrace a narrative tradition that is formed by both human and artificial intelligence as well as the shifting viewpoints and values of our technologically sophisticated society.

Conclusion :

The paper has studied the significant and transformational effects of AI-generated novels on the human narrative tradition in this stimulating study journey. We are left with a mosaic of revelations as the last chapter unfolds, which emphasize the necessity of careful evaluation of the

numerous aspects of this paradigm shift. The digital revolution has ushered in a new era of storytelling, one in which human creativity and artificial intelligence coexist, challenging accepted conventions and inviting us to reconsider, adapt and reinvent our conceptions of literature and authorship. The interaction between transhumanism and storytelling, where the lines separating human and machine authorship have blurred, serves as the main theme running through this study paper. A dynamic narrative environment characterized by cooperation, innovation, and diversity has emerged as a result of this shift. It is a narrative tradition that has been influenced by AI's computational prowess as well as human inventiveness. This change calls into question how we typically define authorship, creativity, and the very character of storytelling.

Transhumanism's central role in the change becomes more and more clear as we negotiate this changing narrative terrain. It is not just a technological advancement; it is a major factor influencing how literature will develop in the future. Storytelling and creatorship are being redefined as narratives are no longer constrained by established conventions and the collaboration of human and machine invention is paving the way for a more diverse and dynamic narrative heritage. This research study advocates for a considerate embracing of the evolving narrative landscape in its conclusion. It is a landscape that purposely blurs the distinction between human and computer authorship and is enriched by the collaborative spirit of the digital age. The revolutionary potential of AI-generated novels puts our conceptions of storytelling and the creative process in

question. In order to redefine our notion of literature, authorship, and the dynamic collaboration between human and machine creation at the core of the narrative tradition, it is crucial that we acknowledge and celebrate this progress in a world that is constantly changing.

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Incorporating Stories within Novels : An Eco-Cultural Aspect of Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island* and Sarah Joseph's *Gift in Green*

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Amitav Ghosh is a legend in incorporating the nuances of storytelling, connecting it with a larger issue that's happening around. One fine example is his novel *Gun Island* (2019), which brings in a mythical story of the Bengali tradition, to critically compare it to two issues like, the climate catastrophe and the illegal migration of people from West Bengal to Bangladesh. Without putting much burden to the main plot, the novel travels with an impression of a mild folklore, which puts the readers to the corner of their seats, wondering what would happen next. *Gun Island* is more like following a route map, that takes the readers to many places, real and imaginary. The readers are likely to get into the mainstream, when they trace out the inferences. Likewise, the novel *Gift in Green* (2011) by Sarah Joseph, carries assorted stories told by different narrators, which signify the importance of holding on to culture, preserve nature and conserve water. Both the novels invoke further ruminations, on what steps should be taken, following the footsteps of the authors.

Both Ghosh and Joseph are good at the art of storytelling, with reference to Ecology. It is amazing how the stories connect the readers with real life incidents, throwing deep insight into the severity of problems prevailing in the society.

The novel *Gun Island* is like retelling a folklore, allying it to the current era. The protagonist is Dinanath Datta, who is popularly called by his Americanised name Deen. He is settled in New York as a rare book-dealer and comes to Calcutta occasionally. He holds his Ph.D degree in Bengali Folklore, the domain he is more interested in. When he comes back to India, he happens to meet different people who wants to share their knowledge about folklore which was a subject of his fascination. One among them is his childhood friend Kanai Dutt, who introduces him to the legend of a Snake Goddess, Manasa Devi and her disciple, the Gun Merchant. The other one is Nilima Bose, who wants Deen to visit the Manasa Devi shrine, before it gets submerged in water.

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Deen remembers these sorts of stories right from his childhood, which inspired him to do further research. He was also able to reflect the same patterns of his life in those tales, as they brought back his childhood memories of Bengal in his past. This shows that he is more attached to his native and even felt a diasporic feel within him. The thoughts of his past were unconsciously present within him, which set the quest to explore folklore.

In the legend, a merchant flees from place to place, in order to escape the persecution of Manasa Devi and seeks refuge in a Gun Island, where there were no snakes. The Goddess charges him with famine, flood and insects, since he keeps on disobeying her. But finally, as he accepts her as his deity, she blesses him with several riches. Manasa Devi appears to be the metaphor of Mother Nature, who urges humans to return to their natural way of living. The calamities and natural disasters denote the mishap in nature, created by man-made factors like climate disorders and global warming. Ghosh, concentrates on this issue, by connecting the Sundarbans of West Bengal to Venice of Italy. Ghosh traces the real locations between these two places, through the technique of ancient storytelling.

For example, the Gun Merchant travelled through places like “Taal-misirir-desh (Bengali) or the Land of Palm Sugar Candy” (Ghosh, 2019, p.38) which denoted Egypt (Ghosh, 2019, p.138), “Rumaali-desh (Arabic) or the Land of Kerchieves” denoted Turkey on the outskirts of Istanbul (Ghosh, 2019, p.138), “Shikol-dwip denoted the Island of Chains” (Bangla) (Ghosh, 2019, p.17), “Siqillia” in Arabic (Ghosh, 2019, p.247)

denoted Sicily and “Bonduk Dwip or the Gun Island” (Ghosh,16) meant the floating city, Venice. This meant that the Gun merchant has travelled overseas, as a captive of the Portuguese pirates and while in Goa, he has been rescued by a Portuguese Jew, Nakhuda Ilyas who takes him through the Maldives Island to Egypt, Istanbul and finally to Venice. The seventeenth century legend is allied to the twenty- first century, especially in picturing great fires, migration of sea creatures and climatic change and sea-level-rise.

Meanwhile, Joseph writes with a perspective that, the depletion of culture is proportionate to destruction of nature. She gives importance to both nature and culture, which form integral parts of people all over the world. Especially, when it comes to rustic life, it is more significant. The setting of the novel is a lush green village named Aathi, in Kerala, where the villagers are so dedicated to their daily works and sustainable lifestyle. People are in coordination with nature and they fight against its excessive destruction, as edified by culture. They are aware on what constitutes their ecosystem and find every means to safeguard it.

Villages are not sophisticated wholes but are wholesome with nature as their asset, lacking nothing. The people of Aathi in *Gift of Green* were devoted much to their habitat and fondly called it as a “greenbangle” (Joseph, 2011, p.210) as it is encircled by mangroves. The culture of their indigenous community, prompted them to protect the natural environment and to satisfy their needs from nature. Cultures are meant to enhance the bond of man with nature, without which, he is

sure to develop a void within. The Western culture knows the significance of being with nature, as they tend to live apart from wilderness.

Robert Greenway, a retired journalist, educator and ecopsychologist in his essay “The Wilderness Effect and Ecopsychology” refers to the Western culture saying that there’s a kind of duality between man and his natural environment, as he is summoned to an urbanised living. “In urban-industrial Western culture, consciousness is often experienced as separate from Mind” (Roszak, 1995, p.130). By referring to the thrust of culture, upon an individual, he brings in the set patterns it creates on the psyche of man. He adds on that “Every culture tends to reinforce different patterns of egoic processing” (Roszak, 1995, p.131). The mind, being the main component in processing all the information happening around, associate them with “cultures that in fact intertwine in some systematic manner with mental processes” (Roszak, 1995, p.130). Greenway says that without the wilderness effect, people may turn mad as trapped by the repressing (Western) culture. In contrast, spending time in the wilderness, breaks the chains that hold on to their Westernised lifestyle.

From this above finding, it is explicit that culture plays a significant role in binding a man with his natural environment. As culture is associated with urbanisation, there is break in this bond, worldwide. In countries like India, the nature-culture bond is withstanding despite development, as being one with nature, marks a part of culture. Sensing of seasons, glorifying elements of nature, considering nature superior and to be feared upon are

engraved in different cultures. Worshipping trees as deities, enclosing ponds to temples and constructing temples upon mountains are religious interferences knitting with the conservation of nature. It turns out to be respectful, as being sacred. But the beliefs of urbanisation are set apart from cultural clinging, which does earth-fillings and blasting of mountains, making it unsafe under human hands.

In *Gift in Green*, Kumaran and few youngster welcome new cultures, leaving their culture at stake. Kumaran flees from Aathi, the water-covered village, for a massive gap of thirty-six years as he had to exercise his body for different sorts of work from tilting the land, to feeding the cattle and fishing. So, he shifts to a city, which he sees as a place of comfort, with less labour and a demanding lifestyle.

Except Kumaran, who abandons Aathi for an urban living, even a single blade of grass sung the praise of the village. The villagers worshipped a sageous man Thampuram, by devoting a shrine for him. They create a human chain when the men of Kumaran come to destroy the shrine. For instance, youngsters like Dinakaran find it a privilege to live in Aathi.

Dinakaran had been nursing a dream: of living in peace...no matter how alluring the world beyond...A majority of the people in Aathi felt the same way/ The world outside was, however, not only changing itself inside out, but also intruding...Driven by a rapacious greed,...whose hunger aggravated the more he ingested. (Joseph, 2011, p. 200)

But Kumaran is attracted towards worldly riches and finds his own village impoverished and under-developed.

Cultural theorist, Stuart Hall terms this as a “popular culture” (Hall, 1995, p.185) which is dominant and powerful, considering other cultures marginalised.

Culture differs from community to community and the idea of culture differs from person to person. The communal cultures are always of indigenous origin and they are carried forward, until it meets an alien culture that devalues and de-promotes its ideology. Many cultural theories voice out the same and at its base, it stresses out the importance of sticking onto the roots, for it determines a man of his identity. Getting assimilated to foreign customs, results in losing his or her identity.

Cultures teach a man, the manner of living, that are memoirs from their ancestors. As stories have the capability of extricating passive minds to be productive, different cultures adopt this method, to spell out the moral values to people. This ideology is brought out by the indigenous people who were dependent on natural living, which was far away from a mechanical lifestyle. They set their practices, keeping nature at the centre. The melodies they crafted had nature embedded in it and the art they created showcased the elements of nature. Also, they searched for ways to be in accordance with nature and live a life, unclipping its growth. When the man-nature relationship turns absurd, all that man does turns into selfish accomplishments.

In *Gun Island*, Giacinta Schiavon (Cinta), an Italian friend of Deen, plays a vital role in untangling the mysteries of the Gun Merchant. She says that, “In the seventeenth century no one would ever have said that it was “just a story” as we

moderns do... They knew that only through stories was it possible to enter the most inward mysteries...- like love, or loyalty...it is they who allow the past to reach out to us” (Ghosh, 2019, p.127). The level of perception of the bygone generation and importance given to embedded stories, is a means to be aware of their history. To understand the underlying meaning of stories, one must know their cultural practices and their environment. Deen understands the strange feeling he had got, while in Brooklyn, which had drawn him straight into the muds of Sundarbans.

While Deen and Cinta travel to the Mediterranean Sea, they spot sea creatures in the ocean and they connect it with the legend, where they rescue the Gun Merchant. The author here annotates the migration of dolphins to the West Mediterranean Sea through the Strait of Sicily. Also, in the Venetian beach, Cinta sees a yellow-bellied snake, which is not indigenous to that place and since the Gun Merchant had finally come to Venice (the land with no snakes) the author, emphasises that the strange arrival of snakes is due to the increase in the heat of the oceans, that they seemed to migrate towards Southern California. Global warming also causes warming up of the oceans, which is new and unsuitable to many aquatic creatures. Hence, the changes occurring in human behaviour has caused a whole shift in the natural processes.

In *Gift in Green*, the stories cover seven nights of storytelling, and all the stories have different storytellers. The motive of storytelling is to unfurl their culture, infesting the importance of their land and water and to promote healthy

moral values to the village people. Water beheld all the customary practices of Aathi.

The Karnavar (the elder of the village), welcomes the storyteller to the prow. Markose, the Introducer begins by saying “Even as human beings were born, stories too were born...From the time the River of Life began to flow, stories have been sailing on it” (Joseph, 2011, p.16). He also takes an oath in front of the water, followed by the storyteller’s bath ritual, considering water as a witness and owing due respect to it. The people from the surrounding islands came up with their stories and the listeners were eager to hear to them. The storytellers were given importance closer to prophets.

The first story told by Noor Muhammad tells the importance of water. It is about a woman named Hagar and her son Ishmael, who starve for water in a desert. She is abandoned by her husband and finally, blessed by God, for her endurance of pain. The starving young mother’s breast milk too dries at a point, but when she sees a water fountain, she returns to her spirits. She, later, emerges to be a protector of water for nomads and tribes in the desert and says, “I know the value of water...Not a drop of water shall be wasted. I won’t allow it” (Joseph, 2011, p.14). Hagar’s husband who abandoned her, abandoned water and life itself. Noor Muhammad ends his story saying, “As long as there is water, stories are sure to sprout” (Joseph, 2011, p.14).

The second story told by Gitanjali, picturises the power of women. She comes to Aathi for daughter Kayal’s treatment through water. She is stopped from story-

telling in the beginning, by the village heads, since she was a woman but then she breaks the stereotype by reciting the story of Duryodhana and Bhima. Aathi is a boon to her in reviving back her daughter’s mental and physical health.

The third story was told by a ventriloquist, Chembraraman who uses his art of storytelling to reflect the plight of Aathi, which was under the cuffs of development. The construction of a bridge across Aathi, abducted Ganesha Subramaniam’s land, gulped trunks of mangroves and vegetation, covering up of waterbodies and polluted the water of Aathi. All these issues were told in a story format, evoking the pity of the villagers. Thankechi, a woman from the neighbouring village expresses her fright to look into the taint water, which was deprived off its living creatures.

Dinakaran narrates the fourth story, by contrasting a historical tale with the present when the villagers were at the verge of leaving their lands, due to the unwelcoming changes. The story was about an activist who fights for the place of the oppressed people in Aathi, riding a Villuvandi or a bullock cart.

The fifth story was told by a Swamiji, Maash, who lost his mind after being rude to his student Govinda, who died in his arms. He shares the story of Govinda (Lord Krishna) who humbled Lord Indran’s pride, by raising Mount Govardhana on the tip of his finger. By telling this, he summarises the importance of mountains, which are chief reasons of rainfall, shielding wind-flow and conserving up all living creatures. By quoting an epic, he picturises the importance of nature and its protection at all cost.

The sixth story is told by Dinakaran, in three forms: Past, Future and Present. The past story is an animal(fox) allegory, which was originally told by a man called Maharshi Kanadhan to teach kings on the art of money-making. Dinakaran compares it to Kumaran's behaviour. The future story is about the war for water. It portrayed a woman called Muktar, who fights with the army men for water. In the present story, the storyteller refuses to come to Aathi, as it was no more in its purest form.

As the seventh story shapes, the whole village is washed by a massive rainfall and flood. The demise of Dinakaran tells a silent story to the villagers, that hard times have come to an end and it is the time for a new beginning. Dinakaran's words, "Even if our mother lay dying, you joined the rest of Aathi desham when the Storyteller arrived" (Joseph, 2011, p.235) shows his love for the land which marks his identity, source of nourishment, embodiment and endearment.

The stories by Ghosh and Joseph magnify the plots of the novels, incorporating religious themes in it, thereby, portraying the importance of their natives. In *Gift in Green*, the alteration of cultural practices, caused by developmental policies, resulted in jolt of the tranquillity of Aathi and the storytelling ritual. In *Gun Island*, the impulse to folklore, divulges into the causes for environmental changes and deterrents to be harmful to nature.

Storytelling is an aspect of cultural significance, in concurrent delivery of ethics and alarms to humankind. Although storytelling is common to many cultures, it is the indigenous cultures, that foster man to be one with nature. The diminish of culture, can result in the downfall of stories, thereby depriving a man of his moral values. When new cultures indulge in, the indigenous culture is forgotten. Under urbanisation, culture and nature stay as distinct aspects and the glorification of nature attains an end. Stories are memoirs of culture, in holding the weightage of his distinctiveness. Just like stories, nature too has the quality of getting assimilated within a human mind and its loss is considered a suffering. Environmentalist Phyllis Windle in *Ecopsychology* stresses that grief is common to all living creatures, despite its human form.

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Emotional Outburst Through Traumatic Memories in Aminatta Forna's *The Memory of Love*

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Introduction :

The Memory of Love recounts the experiences of war which affected the common people of Sierra Leone and the life of people who have been involved in politics. Aminatta Forna brings out the consequences of war from the view of three protagonists, Elias Cole, an old retired History professor, Dr. Adrian Lockheart and Kai Mansary. The novel commonly showcases the violence, mental pressure due to war and aftermath of war, the struggles of women and children. Finally, it is the survivors and wounded person who are affected psychologically and unable to come out of the terrible memories of war.

Trauma is defined as perpetual emotional damage and anxiety, which happens in the life of people who are unable to get out of some terrible grievance in life. In the 1980s the term 'Trauma' moved from the medical field to humankind to illustrate the psychological wounds of the individual who experienced tragic situa-

tions. The distressing sufferings disturb the traumatised patients psychologically through nightmares, flashbacks, amnesia and so on. The major reason for such collateral damage in the minds of people occurs due to war, disasters, abuse, and violence.

Aim of The Study :

Trauma theory became visible in the 1990s which was clearly introduced by Cathy Caruth in *Trauma; Explorations in Memory* (1996). Cathy Caruth gives a clear explanation of the apprehension and statement about that trauma that has been the impact of integrative works on the subjects from various disciplines, like psychiatry, film, and sociology. According to Cathy Caruth trauma is ceaseless, lasting and indescribable. The impact of trauma makes the people to stay in the terrible actions of past and made them to endure in the same situations, which makes them to unable to concentrate on the present situations.

The study suggests how trauma and memory are entangled with each other to probe the psyche of the protagonists in the light of politics, society and environment which have shaped and changed the lives. The paper focuses on the impact of trauma how it affects people psychologically, which is the major reason for the post-war sufferings of the three protagonists. Psychological trauma is also known as mental trauma is probably considered as an emotional molestation, includes post-traumatic stress disorder, moral injury and situational trauma.

Trauma : An Emotional Imbalance in the Aftermath of the War :

Aminatta Forna had insisted on the real gloomy days of the struggle in Sierra Leone through memories. The narrative technique of the novel expresses the resilience and insensibility among people which happened due to psychological trauma. The activities and behaviour of people change due to the impression of war, because the emotional wounds were really hard to treat. According to Cathy Caruth trauma is a wound which can be understood through the stories of victims.

The plot of the novel begins with a retired professor, Elias Cole, who is counting his last days in Freetown city hospital. Elias Cole's life had a drastic change when he encouraged his feelings for Saffia, wife of Julius Kamara. He was affected by post-traumatic stress disorder due to his moral injury. Post-traumatic stress occurs due to apprehension and sadness where else moral injury happens because of culpability. Here Elias is the reason for Julius's death. He betrayed Julius to marry Saffia. Because of this guilt, he could not lead a happy life with her. Finally, that memory leads him to suffer from stress disorder.

Elias Cole's character pictures the life a commoner who thinks about his own safety. During the civil war, most of the people were selfish in safeguarding themselves and scolded the Protestants for creating destruction in society. The emotional distress which is caused by memories of war affects women easily.

While focusing on the character Saffia, after the death of her husband, Julius affected her most. The political issues destroyed the life of Saffia. Saffia was unable to come out from the memories of her husband who was murdered by the government. Elias says that though Saffia married Elias her thoughts were always thinking about the past life, she was unable to move out of it, which affected the life of both Elias and their only daughter Mamakay.

Saffia's emotional trauma because of her husband's death can be compared with Aminatta Forna's *the Hired Man* (2013). In the novel, the protagonist, Duo Kolak, is severely haunted by the memories of his lover's death during the war. After so many years, he still believes that his lover Anka will return one day for sure. Ironically, she died in front of him. From here, we can understand that the survivors of the war personally and emotionally become insane, which affects their present life.

Elias used the political issues as his weapon to get his love, but finally, it bounced back with negative impressions, leading both of their lives to suffer with memories of unhappy events. Apart from them, it even affected their daughter. Here the trauma has continued as a chain reaction. From this situation one can understand the effect of trauma and its effect towards everyone.

Mamakay cuts off her relationship with her father after finding out about his extra-marital affair after saffia's death. Due to her parent's traumatic memories, Mamakay did not get the proper affection. During her college days, she started to protest against the corrupted government for cultivating cannabies. The destruction of her native country made her even more stressed and, finally, even after the war, she was still stressed over the current situation in Freetown, which was struggling with the impact of the civil war.

Mamakay tells the present situation of Freetown that, "Sometimes I think this country is like a garden. Only it is a garden where somebody has pulled out all the flowers and trees and the birds and insects have all left, everything of beauty. Instead, the weeds and poisonous plants taken over" (2010, p. 351).

Dr. Adriaan Lockheart, a psychiatrist from London, was stressed after seeing the condition of Sierra Leone people. All the streets and roads are covered with dust, heat, and demolished buildings. From the view of Adrian, Aminatta Forna, clearly pictured the condition of Sierra Leone after the war. Adrian tells that, "The grass here is spiky, and sharp. Walking across it would be like walking on the hot coal" (78). Because of such unpleasant circumstances, Adrian felt homesick and affected by Malaria.

Adrian's life has changed when he met Mamakay in the bar. He loved her sincerely and continued his relationship with her, which was nothing but an extra-marital affair. On the other hand, he also does not know that she is the daughter of his patient Elias Cole. While listening to the life story of Elias only Adrian found out about the ruined father daughter relationship.

Chief Dr. Attila Asare, appointed Dr. Adrian to treat Schizophrenia affected patients. Schizophrenia is a psychiatric disorder which appears when an individual refuses to accept the truth about the violence during war and political circumstances, and also due to the over-negative thinking and mostly with the behaviours like less social conduct with people. In the schizophrenia department, Adrian took special care of a lady named Agnes who had lost her identity due to her mental disorder and Adrian decided to reunite Agnes with her family.

According to Adrian's research that Agnes's traumatic condition was due to migration during the war days. And such mind state of a patient can be called as fugues. Loss of memory and forgetting about their personal identity is one of the great impacts of war. *The Memory of Love* also focuses on long-term patients in the Freetown hospital. All are affected by different psychological disorders in different situations. Aminatta Forna writes that,

Lamin is Kapuwa Paid a bowl of rice in exchange for twelve hours a day in a diamond pit. The mines are over burn by rebel soldiers. His violent outbursts frightened his family. Borbor occupies the bed in the centre of the ward. (2010, p.159)

Aminatta Forna had brought out the interpersonal relationship between Adrian and Elias Cole. They both connect with each other because of Elias Cole's daughter Mamakay. But as a story line travels, the readers can find out that author Aminatta Forna connected the lives of three protagonists interpersonally. Elias Cole Dr. Adrian Lockheart and Kai Mansary, their experiences, emotions, recollections of memories and their anxiety came from different timelines.

In the novel, Aminatta Forna portrayed Kai Mansary's character as a survivor full of bad memories and flashbacks. Most of his memories are about his lover, Nenebah. Their lives took different paths due to war because Nenebah is a protestant and Kai is a medical practitioner. Kai Mansary's most of the flashbacks deal with physical violence, death, blood shed on the streets of Freetown. So, Kai Mansary decides to migrate towards London to escape from the haunted memories of war. He believes that the new environment will give him a new hope

The relationship between Dr. Adrian Lockheart, Kai Mansary and Elias Cole were about to end at a point because of the interference of Mamakay alias Nenebah. Kai was heartbroken when he saw Nenebah with his best friend Adrian. And the other thing which really drove Kai crazy is Nenebah's pregnancy with Adrian's child. On the other hand, Adrian is also in a confused state because he doesn't want to abandon both of his families now. Finally, Nenebah died during her labour after giving birth to a baby girl.

Reconciliation and Acceptance :

Aminatta Forna brought out the memories of each protagonist and connected their lives interpersonally with love. It shows how war and societal issues change the lives of people personally. In the Freetown city hospital after the death of Nenebah, Kai Mansary blames Adrian and he just accepted the blame which Kai had insisted on him. Aminatta Forna writes that, "To Adrian, Kai's anger is understandable. If Adrian had never come here...

these events would never have taken place. Mamakay would be alive" (2010, p. 422). But he finally calms down by accepting the fact that Adrian didn't force her it all happened according to her wish and this is what written by fate.

Conclusion :

The novel takes a two-year leap. Adrian accepts his life and reunites with his family in London. In Freetown, Kai is raising the daughter of Nenebah. And Elias Cole died in peace after sharing the memories of all his bad deeds to Dr. Adrian and also Adrian made Mamakay to reconcile with her father. The life was going on as time passes by with the memories of love though it is good or bad. Aminatta Forna gives a view that life has more ups and downs and in Africa people are more emotionally and mentally affected due to war directly and indirectly. The impacts of trauma due to war cannot be recovered by medication but with the hope and memories of love by accepting the present facts and situations.

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Tracing the Spaces of Nice-Girl Syndrome Through the Lines of Rupī Kaur

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Has anyone ever wondered why there are so many self-help books focused on womanly issues or self-help groups for women? Forget about the former fact and focus on the next fact. Even after all the initiatives, women still undergo torture and depression. The abusive men should be identified and the extra-niceness of women should be cut short otherwise there will be grave consequences for taking advantage of the niceness. To render a line from the poem *Fire* by Nikita Gill, whenever a woman finds injustice, they should awaken the goddess Kalli¹ in them (Hall, 2022). A girl is taught that her body is for giving to those who wanted it (Kaur, 2015). Most adolescent girls do not know that their body is their right. At times, those who knew it might conveniently forget this when washed away in emotions like love. Being nice and morality rather mixed up by society and injected even at a small age.

Taking for granted is a problem that comes as a complimentary gift for being nice. And the person enduring it doesn't even know that he or she is being taken for granted. To stop being used up, a girl should stand up and talk. But when her

first social group, her family trains her to be silent, it makes the girl afraid of her own voice. For girls spaces of fantasy is really important. Her ideal fantasy world is totally disrupted by the writer Rupī Kaur. Especially for a little girl who was taught perfect behavior in various school textbooks and may find it difficult to survive in a dystopian world because what is seen on paper is often not found in the real world. She is taught to confuse anger with kindness when a girl is asked or taught to behave in a particular way that kills or manipulates her reflexive behavior. Thus, it is important to reevaluate the spaces a girl exists and her behavioral changes in different spaces. The spaces of school texts should always ensure that there is no gender bias or activities that demean a girl.

There are problems of representation in some modern and post-modern texts that call for criticism of spatiality but Kaur brings out a totally different reorientation of female gender in textual space that forces its readers to rethink reality. Patriarchy calls for a set of behaviors that a mother should follow and then by a daughter, of

the family. Kaur speaks of a father and of a son who feasts on his mother. And the son and a daughter who learn the same behavior pattern (Kaur, 2015). This can be based on the fear of validation or to avoid conflict which are features of the nice girl syndrome. It must also be acknowledged that the Défense nature of the poet gets to the extreme that each and every relation is criticized on seeing it in the light of patriarchy, even the female characters of the society are criticized.

Nice girl syndrome of psychology has been termed by an American writer Colette Dowling as Cinderella Complex which was taken from her book *The Cinderella Complex: Women's Hidden Fear of Independence*. The theological representation of chaste women itself projects a symbolic figure of a female who is obedient, beautiful, and well-mannered whereas the disobedient Surpanakha² of *Ramayana* is punished and never accepted. Maybe in a moralistic light, Surpanakha's actions cannot be justified. Even the character Sita was asked to give agnipareeksha³ after her return to Ayodhya from Lanka. The same symbolic figure of the ultimate goodness idol or the idol of sacrifice is again drawn in fairy tales like Snow White and Cinderella. The very name of the character shows the importance of beauty by telling the young readers about her white skin or purity of actions which is acceptable in a male society like, a prince who saves her life. Here the female character is without an agency or purpose. The only purpose of Her's is her need for validation from the prince.

If going back from the pathway, where you met a prince, a little back, to trace the beginning of a girl's life. The first

school, her family, is itself a place where she gets taught to confuse anger with love. In the poem *The Haunting* there is a part that is marked towards the last as *to fathers with daughters* where Rupri Kaur validates that the father who yells at her, makes her confuse anger with kindness (2015). According to Beverly Engel, familial beliefs are one of the main causes of Nice Girl Syndrome development in girls (Engel, 2010). Not only is it a familial conditioning, but it is also a kind of social conditioning. That is, it is common in films and literature books for so long to portray a girl as always dependent. The problem here is that she forgets how to advocate her needs to whoever is concerned. Coming back to the first mini-society, her family, it becomes habitual to take such a person's (a girl's) words lightly by society in general.

There are many spaces where a girl will be trying to occupy but in vain, because she is always taught to shrivel in life that she gets afraid to occupy a space. Fear is that term that accompanies the thought of space for girls. Spaces should not be places of fear for girls. For that matter be it any space, school, home, a room of her own, or a bed, these should not be places that ask her to shrink. Safety is that feeling that will give her confidence in occupying a space. A reader of Rupri Kaur's poem understands the importance of the feeling of safety for a girl. But Kaur depicting the shriveling as "hereditary" (2015) can be better phrased because hereditary gives an impression of an unchangeable thing. Any literary text should give the readers, especially girls, that every space, even the hereditary notions, is editable. Here in this paper, spatial literary studies is taken as a

method of analysis of the text of Rupi Kaur 's *Milk and Honey*, which can bring about many insights for a general reader. The subject of study which has wider perspectives that are beyond a research paper, is analyzed standing inside the boundaries.

Nice girl syndrome is not a gendered issue as such but can happen to any gender for that matter, not only to girls. It's an issue that starts in childhood. This research paper focuses on girls so for a girl the syndrome develops from her childhood when she is taught to behave in various – spaces. She is always taught to be gentle, not fierce and to look beautiful in order to be liked by everyone always. The former is the root reason for this syndrome development in childhood. At the dining table, she sees her mother open her mouth for a conversation she is hushed down by the father says Rupi Kaur in *Milk and Honey* (2015). A few ways to get ourselves out from being a nice girl to society and bad to the self is like knowing how to prioritize yourself. Learning how to say – No. a girl should learn how to say no to circumstances that she finds unfair or abusive and this should start with her very own family members, cousins, etc. While reading through the lines of Rupi Kaur a reader can feel the materialistic treatment of a female by the patriarchal society. One who is well educated on the nice girl syndrome will try to rise upon the scene and will learn how to retaliate. Kaur never tries to blame the father figure for the situation. She says that society might have broken him too (ibid). In the lines of the section, *the hunting* Rupi Kaur elaborately talks about the act of sex. The lines are set in such a way that, the body becomes a space into which the other is trespassing.

In conclusion, it can be said that the nice girl who goes on living her life by occupying different spaces is actually defining that space in a negative way that the future generation of girls might also have to abide by. It is high time that a girl should come out of her disguise as a nice girl and be herself. All the spaces she has been in should talk about her courage and distinctiveness. Leibniz says that space is relational and not absolute, therefore proving the former point (“Teaching Space, Place, and Literature,” 2017). The Yi-Fu Tuan's definition of space and place is often confusing for some but it makes perfect sense when it is analysed in a literary text. A text may say explicitly or implicitly about the compatibility of a place with a particular gender. There are key factors of a place that influence the character of fiction or a film that then influence the character of the reader or a spectator.

The hurting (Kaur, 2015) section of the poem ends with a reference to an alcoholic parent who is not a parent. The reference to the root cause of bad parenting or abuse is the hereditary of these bad thoughts that cannot be erased from the human memory. Often youth who is unable to face reality escape into the syndrome of being a nice girl with the utmost obedience to the domineering power. The only way out is self-awareness, understanding what triggers the nice girl syndrome in you or the people-pleasing attitude in you. Self-compassion and self-acceptance are the two keywords that should spread into ourselves and among others to destroy the nice girl syndrome and help ourselves to be ourselves.

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Footnotes :

1. Kali is the Hindu goddess of death, time, and doomsday. She is often associated with sexuality and violence.
2. She is the sister of Ravana, the evil king of Lanka in *Ramayana*.
3. Sita performed the test of waking through fire to prove her chastity in the work *Ramayana*.



Everyday Chronicles : An Exploration of Mundane to Worthwhile Realities in Easterine Kire's *When the River Sleeps*

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Introduction :

Human beings learn through spatial relationships which exist in the society. Logic clearly has a deep-rooted role in everyday life as each individual journey is shaped by sensible influences. In the novel *When the River Sleeps*, Kire portrays everyday motifs in the life of Naga tribe such as survival instincts, community practices and resilience of individuals in woods. Daily activities, frequent travels and the most inhabited places in day-to-day life find a prominent place in everyday life. The everyday activities often shape the behaviour of individuals in the community. Amid the hustle of everyday life, individuals get immersed in the routine activities and these routines pave the way for occasional adventures into unconventional domains.

Quotidian life in *When the River Sleeps* :

Kire acknowledges the fact that she has recorded the dealings of everyday life in her work *When the River Sleeps*. She says that “The national media has a tendency to project the Northeast as a region simmering with violence. But there

is much more to the Northeast than just political conflict; there is a whole undiscovered world of ordinary people and their not so ordinary lives” (Daftuar, 2015). The ordinary people of Nagaland and the not so ordinary lives, becomes the heart of the novel in *When the River Sleeps*. The everyday life explored by Kire is an uncharted territory, which were purely neglected by the mainstream.

Highmore asserts in his book *Everyday Life and Cultural Theory: An Introduction* that “The non-everyday (the exceptional) is there to be found in the heart of the everyday” (Highmore, 2002, p.30). The exceptional journey of Vilie, gets markedly differentiated from the routine activities of everyday life. Kire in her work *When the River Sleeps* breaks down the everyday life of the protagonist Vilie, which gets interrupted by the unfamiliar situations. His everyday life is an unambiguous one, filled with surprises and twists. He plans his everyday activities in reaching the destination of capturing the heart-stone. Vilie does not fit into the regular capitalist

ideology, implemented by the society. Vilie takes the risky role of a traveller in the novel *When the River Sleeps* and it is an unpredictable one like that of *Sherlock Holmes*. Both the novels starkly mark the ambivalence, which is the core issue lying behind everyday life. Doyle and Kire bring out characters who get humdrum by everyday activities which happen in human life. So, they choose an alternative life which is far away from the boredom of daily activities. The mundane challenges where the individual learn effective coping mechanisms form the basis of Vilie's exceptional journey.

The unravelling of familiar cues is one of the familiar prospects of everyday life. Highmore asserts the opinion of unravelling the familiar cues as such as "even in the aesthetic discourses that are most concerned with the everyday world of experience, transformation and transcendence are the operative procedures" (Highmore, 2002, p. 20). The latent desires, which are inactive have the potential to surface. The unconscious desire of chasing the heart-stone frequently appears in the dream of Vilie. The dream gets repeated for every month for two years and finally he chases his unconscious desire. The unconscious desires get life by means of Vilie's journey in search of the heart-stone. The journey brings transformation and transcendence in the life of Vilie. These things frame out the everyday psychology in individual beings.

"Cultural forces-ideas, attitudes and symbols-can be regarded as having a key role to play in human life" (Inglis,2005, p.16). The cultural forces among Naga tribe, binds up social regulations by means of the folktales. Their society network is a closely knit one and the they automate

it by having certain taboos pertaining to the region. The people get barred from having access to certain regions in the forest, like that of *Rarhuria* forest. *Rarhuria* may represent unclean forest among the Naga tribe.

Kire uses everyday objects in the narrative and adds phenomenal stories behind it. Disenchantment of rationalism is a basic undertone which takes place in the folk story of sleeping river. The everyday object stone, caters a central motif as it unfolds the story of the sleeping river. The story unravels the mystery of the heart-stone which can be taken only when the river is at sleep. The stone, which is gathered at the particular hour has the undelimited power to enhance the life of individuals. Vilie says that,

If you can wrest a stone form the heart of the sleeping river and take it home, it will grant you whatever it is empowered to grant you. It could be cattle, women, prowess in war, or success in the hunt. That is what is meant by catching the river when it is asleep. That way you can make its magic yours. The retrieved stone is a powerful charm called a heart-stone. (Kire, 2014, p.3)

The stone, which is an ordinary object becomes a significant one under certain circumstances. The disillusionment with rational thinking, perturbs the mind of the readers as the story goes on. The logic of human mind gets thwarted by means of the story, which is clearly a disillusionment with rational thinking. "The wisdom of the stone is more spiritual than physical" (Kire,2014, p.238), brings out the basic idea of disillusionment with that of rational thinking.

Body techniques imbibed in cultural milieu is seen in the actions of Vilie. Inglis comments that “Each generation passes on to its offspring its ‘body culture’-the forms of bodily movement and action that are expressive of the cultural life of the group, or as Mauss calls them, ‘body techniques’” (Inglis,2005, p.20). Vilie encounters a pack of jackals, while staying the home of Krishna. He takes the gun and shoots the prime member in the group of jackals. The perpetual risk posed by wildlife honed Vilie’s ancestors’ hunting prowess, a heritage that now fuels his intense desire to hunt. Threats lurking in the woods shape people’s unconscious movements, making them more attuned to their surroundings. The habitus of Vilie, gets shaped by means of the characteristics which is specific to Naga tribe.

Vilie remembers the day-to-day activities of the village people in late afternoons which happens in a matter of undifferentiated linearity. He remembers the songs of people, who get indulged in toilsome labour. Highmore brings down the ideas of Stewart in mentioning about the everyday life which happens in a linear way. He asserts that, “The prevailing notion that everyday time is a matter of undifferentiated linearity may be linked to the prevailing forms of experience within the workplace. Such a notion presents us with an assembly line of temporality, an assembly line in which all experience is partial, piecemeal” (Highmore, 2002, p.6). Stewart asserts the idea that all lives of people are linear, which gets shaped by the workplace experiences. The daily activities of the villagers are similar to that of the assembly line, where everything takes place in bits and pieces.

The everyday activities of the villagers get represented by means of ‘marking time’. On the one hand, ‘marking time’ may represent the track of daily activities and on the other hand it may also represent boredom which is associated with everyday life. Vilie enumerates the daily activities of morning as, “Morning sounds rose up to them from the village. Roosters crowed, and infants could be heard crying. Mothers were rising to get their fires going for morning tea. Sounds they were both familiar with from their childhood. It was how everyday life began in the village” (Kire, 2014, p.153). These are the routine activities, which mark up the daily activities of individuals.

Everyday life is asserted as a dynamic realm, as it goes with the enduring process of reconstructing the familiar and mundane atmosphere. Freud sees everyday life as an endless ordeal between the social manners and repressed desires of individuals. The basic instincts of human beings get wrapped under the thin layer of polite behaviourism. The thin layer of polite behaviourism gets thwarted by Zote in the novel. The Naga society restricts women from entering the village council hall. The repressed desire of Zote gets accomplished by entering the village council hall and thus curates her vengeance.

Food has an important role in everyday life, as it is one of the basic necessities of life. Barthes in his article entitled “Towards a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption” addresses food as “for what is food? It is not only a collection of products that can be used for statistical or nutritional studies. It is also and at the same time, a system of communication, a body of images, a protocol of usages, situations and beha-

viours” (Barthes, 2008, 21). Kire places food as the centre of the communicative system within the network of signs and significations. Foods serve as codes through which social relations gets entangled in the society. Various connotations are associated with the food, which are associated with hospitality and the behaviour of individuals. Ate offers meat to Vilie, as a customary practice which is followed by Naga tribes. Though food is the anthropological need of human beings, the techniques of preparation and flavours get varied. Then the food acts as a signifier, bringing up communication in everyday life. Ate serves food pounded with meat and home-grown ginger. Ate distributes the food to Vilie, and consumes after some time.

Jha in his article entitled “Reminiscences on Naga life, beliefs, and culture” addresses the age old of practices of Naga culture of feeding the guest before feeding one’s own belly. He mentions in his article that. “The age-old wisdom of feeding others before your own body is a tradition, close to Naga consciousness” (Jha, 2024). Ate’s gracious hospitality acts as a social sign for Vilie, leading him to trust her words.

The concept of everyday life is a multi-dimensional one, and it shapes the cultural experiences of individuals. Everyday life is filled with various contradictions and inconsistencies making it difficult to conceptualize in a systematic manner. The domain of everyday life is entrusted with numerous possibilities. In order to understand the concept of everyday life, one needs to take departure from the traditional modes of thought. Indeed, they should be ready to adapt to the complexity and ambiguity of everyday life. Rethinking is

necessary for the change from traditional conceptualized lived experience to meaningful change. Vilie elaborates the traditional roles of people in the community. He mentions that, Not so much the festivals and feasting and the community gatherings, but the ordinary things of village life: the children fetching water in their small water-pitchers; the neighbours calling out to each other; and the village animals beings shooed from the paths before they soiled them (Kire, 2014, p. 8-9)

Vilie is quivering with the longing for daily activities which takes place in the village. He doesn’t miss out the celebrations which takes for once in a while. Indeed, he misses the ordinary things which takes place in everyday life. Vilie rethinks his decision of not choosing the traditional conceptualized lived experience of his ancestors. He rethinks his decision as such as “Who or what would stop me if I should walk back to that life? Nothing and no one!” (Kire, 2014, p. 9). Though his mind is under the confusion of choosing traditional modes of thought, he differs by choosing forest as his dwelling place. He also undertakes the role of traveller with a meaningful purpose of choosing the heart-stone which lies beneath the river.

The travel becomes the spatio-temporal experience, as the individuals travel through time and space. The travel of Vilie becomes a spatio-temporal experience as he continues his travel every day in the landscape. The travel changes the prospective of Vilie as they mould the spiritual life of individuals. The travel and time make Vilie to endure patience in real life situations.

The temporal markers like that of seasonal changes, cyclic patterns of day

and night shape the life of Vilie. He undertakes every day journey by watching the temporal markers. He stays in the Nepali settlement, as it is dangerous for the travellers to travel by afternoon. He also camps before the darkness arrives in the landscape. These temporal markers have a vivid role in the daily life of Nagaland people.

Conclusion :

Kire through the novel *When the River Sleeps*, transcends the seemingly mundane experiences of everyday life. Kire's work unveils the profound significance and beauty that lies within everyday life. The exploration of human evolution within daily life is a significant aspect, which gets highlighted through the activities of village people. Despite individuals like Vilie distancing themselves from quotidian activities, such actions possess the ability to surpass both spiritual and physical boundaries. It also has the power to bring out the repressed desires of human beings. The illuminating complexities of everyday life within a specific cultural and geogra-

phical context get portrayed through the protagonist Vilie and through the life of Naga tribe.

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The Role of Silence and Pauses in Samuel Beckett's Selected Plays

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Samuel Barclay Beckett was an Irish novelist, dramatist, short story writer, theatre director, poet and literary translator. His literary and theatrical work features bleak, impersonal, and tragicomic experiences of life, often coupled with black comedy and nonsense. His works became increasingly minimalist as his career progressed, involving more aesthetic and linguistic experimentation, with techniques of stream of consciousness repetition and self-reference. He is considered one of the last modernist writers and one of the key figures in what Martin Esslin called the Theatre of the Absurd.

Samuel Beckett's literary journey began with his association with James Joyce, which profoundly influenced his early work. However, Beckett soon carved out his own niche, particularly in theatre, where he emerged as a central figure in the Theatre of the Absurd. This movement, which includes playwrights like Eugène Ionesco and Harold Pinter, emphasizes the absurdity of human existence, often through fragmented narratives and unconventional dramatic techniques. Beckett's plays, marked by sparse dialogue and minimalistic staging, deviate from traditional theatrical norms,

focusing instead on the ineffable aspects of human experience. In contrast to his contemporaries, Beckett's use of silence and pauses was particularly radical. Where other playwrights might use dialogue to advance the plot or develop characters, Beckett often employs silence and pauses to underscore the futility and absurdity of such pursuits. These elements become central to the audience's experience, forcing them to confront the void that words cannot fill. Beckett's plays often feature long periods of silence and pauses. This silence can be seen as a way of representing the void or nothingness that lies at the heart of human existence. It can also be seen as a way of forcing the audience to confront the absurdity and meaninglessness of life.

Silence and pauses in theatre are not mere absences of sound; they are potent devices that convey meaning and emotion. In drama, silences can be categorized into various types, such as natural pauses, pregnant pauses and forced silences, each serving different functions. Theoretical perspectives on silence, like those of Martin Esslin and Elaine Aston, highlight its ability to create tension, emphasize

subtext, and reflect the existential crises of characters.

Beckett's innovation lies in his ability to transform silence and pauses into integral components of his plays. In *Waiting for Godot*, for example, the frequent pauses disrupt the flow of conversation, mirroring the characters' existential stagnation and the uncertainty of their wait. These pauses are not merely absences but active spaces where meaning is constructed in the audience's mind. We can see silence and pauses in some of his plays;

In the *Waiting for Godot* :

Waiting for Godot is perhaps the most emblematic of Beckett's use of silence and pauses. The play revolves around two characters, Vladimir, and Estragon, who wait endlessly for someone named Godot. The dialogues in the play are interspersed with long silences, reflecting the characters' existential paralysis. One of the most notable scenes is the extended pause after Pozzo and Lucky leave in Act I. This silence is laden with meaning, as it accentuates the void left by their departure and the uncertainty of Godot's arrival. The pauses and silences in this play highlight the futility of the characters' wait and the absurdity of their situation. Language lost its function of communication and the play is full of repetitions and dialogues' aim is not to gain genuine conversations. Characters randomly ask questions and there are questions without answers and answers without questions and no one listens to the other which reveal the inability of humans to communicate with each other and the incapacity of the character to sustain comprehensive and fluent dialogue. *Waiting for Godot* is full of silences for

instance after a long silence, Vladimir says;

VLADIMIR : say something!

ESTRAGON : I'm trying.

Long silence.

VLADIMIR: (in anguish) Say anything at all!

ESTRAGON : What do we do now?

VLADIMIR : Wait for Godot

ESTRAGON : Ah! Silence

(*Waiting for Godot*, p.41-42)

In the *Endgame* :

In *Endgame*, silence and pauses are used to convey themes of decay and stasis. The characters, Hamm and Clov, exist in a state of perpetual waiting, similar to Vladimir and Estragon. However, their environment is even more desolate, underscoring the sense of inevitable decay. The pauses in their dialogue reflect their inability to change their circumstances or escape their existential plight. For instance, Clov's repeated pauses before responding to Hamm illustrate his internal conflict and the futility of their interaction. These silences emphasize the play's themes of entropy and the inescapability of death. In the play, Clov experiences moments of silence that carries significant weight. His pauses and non-verbal cues convey his unspoken emotions and internal conflicts. Clov's silences highlight the limitations of language in conveying the depth of his feelings and thoughts. In the play *Endgame*, Hamm says,

HAMM : You can't leave us.

CLOV : Then I shan't leave you. [Pause]

HAMM : Why don't you finish us? [Pause]

COLV : I couldn't finish you.

HAMM : Then you shan't finish me.
[Pause]"

(*Endgame*, p.110)

In the *Krapp's Last Tape* :

Krapp's Last Tape presents a solitary figure, Krapp, who listens to recordings of his younger self. The pauses and silences in this play are particularly poignant, as they reflect Krapp's contemplation and regret. The act of rewinding and listening to the tapes is punctuated by long silences, allowing the audience to sense the weight of Krapp's memories. These pauses deepen the emotional impact of the play, as they reveal the chasm between Krapp's past aspirations and his present disillusionment. The play features instances of seemingly meaningless or absurd utterances, contributing to the overall sense of absurdity. Characters engage in discussions that lack clear purpose or logical progression, reflecting the breakdown of conventional communication. These meaningless utterances highlight the characters' struggle to find significance in a world that may be devoid of inherent meaning. The dialogue becomes a reflection of the characters' existential crises and the difficulty of finding purpose in an apparently indifferent cosmos. *Krapp's Last Tape* is full of silences for instance the following lines exhibit;

KRAPP : (briskly). Ah! (He bends over ledger, turns the pages, finds the entry he wants, reads.) Box... three... spool... five. (He raises his head and stares front. With relish.) Spool! (Pause.) Spooooo! (Happy smile. Pause. He bends over table, starts peering and poking at the boxes.) Box... three... three... four... two... (with

surprise) nine! good God!... seven... ah! the little rascal! (He takes up the box, peers at it.) Box three. (He lays it on table, opens it and peers at spools inside.) Spool... (he peers at the ledger)... five... (he peers at spools)... five... five... ah! The little scoundrel! (He takes out a spool, peers at it.) Spool five. (*Krapp's Last Tape*, Act 1)

Beckett's use of silence and pauses is deeply intertwined with the existential theme of his works. Silence often symbolizes the ineffable aspects of existence, such as the inevitability of death, the emptiness of human endeavour, and the failure of language to capture true meaning. Pauses, on the other hand, represent moments of introspection and the breakdown of communication. In *Waiting for Godot*, the frequent silences reflect the characters' existential void and the absurdity of their wait. In *Endgame*, the pauses underscore the stagnation and decay of the characters' world. In *Krapp's Last Tape*, the silences highlight the dissonance between memory and reality, as well as the futility of Krapp's attempts to reclaim his past.

The reception of Beckett's use of silence and pauses has been varied, with some critics hailing it as a revolutionary technique, while others view it as disconcerting. Early audiences were often perplexed by the extensive use of silence, mistaking it for a lack of content. However, as Beckett's reputation grew, so did the appreciation for his innovative approach. Critics like Ruby Cohn and Martin Esslin have argued that Beckett's silences are as expressive as his dialogue, if not more so. These pauses invite the audience to engage actively with the performance,

filling the void with their own interpretations and emotions.

Scholarly debates continue to explore the multifaceted implications of Beckett's use of silence and pauses. Some view these elements as a critique of traditional narrative structures and the limitations of language. Others interpret them as a reflection of Beckett's philosophical inquiries into the nature of existence. Despite differing viewpoints, there is a consensus that Beckett's silences and pauses are crucial to the power and depth of his plays.

In the end we can say that the silence and pauses play a pivotal role in Samuel Beckett's plays, serving as essential components that enhance the thematic and emotional depth of his work. Through a careful examination of *Waiting for Godot*, *Endgame*, and *Krapp's Last Tape*, this paper has highlighted how Beckett uses these devices to convey existential themes,

create dramatic tension, and engage the audience on a profound level. Beckett's innovative use of silence and pauses not only distinguishes his work from that of his contemporaries but also leaves a lasting impact on modern theatre. As theatre continues to evolve, the enduring legacy of Beckett's use of these devices will undoubtedly influence future productions and scholarly studies.

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Critically Examining Christopher Marlow's *Dr. Faustus* : Medieval Tragic Hero

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Christopher Marlowe, a dramatist from Elizabethan England, was born around 1564 and died around, 1593. He is the most renowned English tragic playwright after Shakespeare and represents the University Wits. He is also recognized for his blank verses. Marlowe's father, a shoemaker, taught him that power represents existence, and he reflected this in his plays. Christopher Marlow wrote, *Doctor Faustus* a five-act tragedy published in 1604 but initially performed around a decade earlier. Marlowe's play came only a few years after the first English translation of the medieval legend on which it is based. Marlowe's Doctor Faustus, the Tragic Hero, protagonist, a knowing man who decides to sell his soul to the devil in order to gain knowledge. His desire for abilities comes to a sad finish as he is sent to hell after being maliciously killed by Lucifer. Though many interpreters of this character regard him as a mistaken sinner, there is ample evidence to portray Faustus as a tragic hero. A tragic hero is someone who elicits sympathy as well as dread because he possesses both good and evil qualities. The first occasion in which Dr. Faustus is portrayed as a tragic hero is

when he generates pity in the listeners and readers. It establishes some sort of link between the audience and the character. Before joining Lucifer, he worked as a normal person, studying law, medicine, and religion. He makes the same faults that anyone else may. Like any other normal human being, he is hopeful and ambitious in life, seeking to expand his knowledge. People sympathize with the doctor since he made the wrong option in life, choosing Lucifer above God. People hope that he discovers the truth and embraces repentance and reconciliation with God. His plight is horrible, and the people feel sorry for him. At the end of the play, he is doomed to die and be sent to hell as a result of their actions. Even though Faustus has committed several sins, they pity him and wish God will pardon him rather than punish him so harshly.

As a result, the tragic hero figure emerges at the play's conclusion, when Faustus begs God to pardon him and release him from the devil's clutches. He cries, "My God, my God, do not look so fierce on me" (Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* Act 5 Scene II line 181). In *Doctor Faustus*,

Marlowe narrates the narrative of Faust, a doctor-turned-necromancer who strikes a contract with the devil to gain knowledge and power. Both Doctor Faustus and Mephistopheles, the devil's mediator in the play, are delicately and strongly represented. When we first meet Faustus, he is just about to begin his career as a magician and while we already know that things will go wrong, there is a grandeur to Faustus as he considers all of the marvels that his magical powers will produce. He is an arrogant, self-centred man, yet his objectives are so lofty that we cannot help but inspired, and we even sympathize with him. Marlowe investigates Faustus' lofty intellectual objectives, exposing them as fruitless, self-destructive, and ludicrous.

Marlow's *Dr. Faustus* is regarded as a Renaissance work that flourished in Europe throughout the 14th and 15th centuries. Renaissance is a complicated multidimensional knowledge revolution that began in Italy, moved to other European countries, and eventually reached England. New discoveries and inventions in all areas of human life, including astronomy, navigation and the embodiment of the Renaissance. The fall of the eastern Roman city Constantinople to Turks inspired the literary renaissance, and classical scholars who resided there at the time fled to other nations for fear of their lives. When they left, they brought with them old Greek classical literature, which they distributed wherever they established. As a result, the information world, which was previously solely accessible to individuals in upper social strata, became available to all sections of society. The most significant aspect of the Renaissance was man's

excitement for tearing down boundaries and creating new things. Man's insatiable hunger and quest for knowledge characterize the intellectual renaissance, which resulted in a total alteration of people's lives.

Dr. Faustus is the epitome of the Renaissance spirit. Christopher Marlowe eloquently depicts the hero's restlessness and dissatisfaction with his current knowledge level, as well as how much more he wants to and the repercussions that follow. Certain features of the drama support the idea of Faustus as a Renaissance hero, while others say he is a medieval hero. According to the medieval view of the cosmos, Man was placed in his position by God and should be satisfied with his lot in life. Any endeavour or intention to advance above his appointed position was seen as a major sin of pride. For the medieval, pride was one of the most serious crimes one could do. This thought was founded on the idea that Lucifer's downfall was caused by his pride when he attempted to revolt against God. As a result, ambitious pride became one of the cardinal sins among medieval people. According to the medieval viewpoint, Faustus desires forbidden knowledge. Faustus enters into a bargain with Lucifer to get more knowledge than he is allowed to, resulting in his damnation. Faustus then learns at the end of the play that supernatural powers are reserved for the gods and that anyone who attempts to manage or deal with magical powers would face eternal damnation.

Furthermore, in the play's final line, his peers grieve their slain hero and scholar. This grief and sadness demonstrate how

they lost someone who had a good influence on their lives and the careers of many pupils. They mourn, “Yet he was a scholar once admired, for wondrous knowledge in our German schools” (Act 5, Scene III, Line 18). This happened despite Mephistopheles’ efforts to warn him that his soul will be doomed. Again, this paints him as a tragic hero rather than a mistaken sinner. The tragic hero character is also reflected in Dr. Faustus’ erroneous decision. He resolved to exchange his soul for knowledge from Lucifer. This choice is what causes him to die. It ultimately leads to his demise. The agreement blinds him. As a result, he is unable to determine what is right or wrong. For example, when he approached by the good angels, he becomes blinded and falls into the devil’s methods. This decision causes misery in his life when he is snatched away by the devil after the twenty-four years that they agreed upon. He responds, “Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please...” “I will make my servile spirits to invent” (Act 1, Scene 1, line 88). This desire to learn more is clear in the first Act, when he states that, despite his scientific expertise, he still wants to learn more. However, Faustus’ ambitions cause him to take the wrong path without feeling guilty, indicating a tragic hero rather than a misguided sinner. He is quick in his goals for honour and power, which causes him to hurry into decisions. His craving for power and prestige prevents him from repenting and returning to the light. He is unable to choose between Lucifer’s ways and God’s path, resulting in a sad hero’s death. Faustus sought to attain his aims by making his own decisions.

Dr. Faustus was not the type of person who could not pass up an opportunity. As a result, he has claimed that by following Lucifer’s ways, he will overcome all and improve his life’s fate. As a result, he resolved to work for Lucifer. He therefore embodies the character of a tragic hero. He was a hero, but as a result of this decision, he loses his life as well as the knowledge, power and glory he sought and longed for. Faustus may also be said to be a mistaken sinner in that he chose to follow Lucifer’s path while knowing that God exists. The devil’s work is to mislead him and prevent him from entering paradise. The urges he creates for greater information and abilities in order to master destiny and get power are all the work of the devil. With his conscience and knowledge, he might have rejected the devil’s ability to get in his way and instead focused on his mission.

The character Dr. Faustus is enthusiastic about life, which causes or propels him in the wrong way. As a result, we believe that Marlowe teaches Christians how to strengthen their faith and seek redemption. As a result, a tragic hero is employed to represent the tragic hero’s collapse. Dr. Faustus faces a far worse tragedy than other individuals. His poor life choices cause him to suffer after having a joyful life as a researcher in several subjects. His lack in judgment leads to a horrific end to his life. He chose to defy fate and pursue his own free will by aspiring to be the master of his destiny. The decision he makes is the foundation of his demise and disappearance. This has been represented and illustrated via play. As a result, we agree that the play has portrayed

Dr. Faustus as a tragic hero rather than a mistaken sinner.

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Examining Ecological Concerns through Myth, Culture and Folklore in Amitav Ghosh's *Jungle Nama* and *Kantara* movie : A Study

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Introduction :

In the Indian setting, mythological and cultural tales play a major role in shaping the sense of nature. The abundance of folktales, tribal tales and myths emerging from the deep woods relates to the intimate relationship between forest and human creativity. Mythical stories have always been a storehouse of information and have the power to enlighten and awaken the people. But among all of these stories, there are a few unique ones that are connected to our life and now become essential. Myths are historical and cultural representations of knowledge that are passed through generations and are frequently taken at face value by the next generation without further inquiry. A major spirit of culture in India's distant rural indigenous communities has always been protecting the natural environment. These individuals form a spiritual bond with the environment and safeguard it. With a focus on the Sundarbans, the study intends to investigate the function of myth in environmental protection.

The story that is examined in this research is "Bon Bibi", as it is told in Amitav Ghosh's *Jungle Nama* and the tale of "Panjurli" in the movie *Kantara*. The movie is not based on a novel but the stream of both the novel and the movie runs towards the mythical beliefs that are aimed at protecting the environment.

Discussion :

Mythical stories that prevailed in the folklore of the people are aimed to structure the life of humans. They sometimes seem to scare the people like the discipline act or the laws of court that are followed in the current modernised world. On the whole it is meant for a sustainable living. There are numerous references in literature which captivates such myths in folklore. One such work is *Jungle Nama*, which talks about the Sundarbans Mangroves which were formed by the Ganga, Brahmaputra and Meghna deltas. The story is about a greedy Dhona who wants to get money from forest resources. His brother Mona warns him not to invade the jungle. But

Dhona didn't listen to his voice, he seized his team and impoverished Dukhey, a poor boy. Knowing Dhona's exploitative nature, his mother urged him to recite Bon Bibi, if Dokkhin Rai, a human-hunting ghost, threatened his life. Bon Bibi, a demi-god, protects the forest with her brother Shah Jongoli. Dhona sacrifices Dukhey to Dokkhin as "the greed of Dhona was strong enough to overthrow any humanity left in him. He made a venomous plan to leave the boy there" (Sharma, 2023, p. 152). When reminded of his mother's words, he chants Bon Bibi. Bon Bibi protects him from Dokkhin Rai, the terrible tiger.

Panjurli, a demigod who protects the forest and tribal people of Kadubettu village in Karnataka, is the subject of Rishab Shetty's movie *Kantara*. The story involves indigenous people and a landowner who is the King's heir. The king distributes the land in the forest to the tribal people on the request of Panjurli god. Later generations of the monarch want the land back from the tribes to make profits. Devendra, the heir, devises a smart plan to reclaim the woodlands. Panjurli adopts the Bhuta Kola performer's body, to interact with the people, and performs a dance. Male heirs of a particular family execute this ritual. The protagonist of the movie, is the next successor of the Bhuta Kola performance. He is possessed by Panjurli and overcomes Devendra and kills him to stop him from reclaiming the land. The movie ends with the hero's Bhuta Kola performance, insisting on people's unity and saving the forest.

The movie is action oriented compared to the novel but certain elements and characters of Amitav Ghosh's novel *Jungle Nama* and Rishab Shetty's movie *Kantara*

have similarities in the context of preservation of the forest. In the novel *Jungle Nama*, the spirit named Dokkhin Rai, takes the form of a tiger and kills human beings who enter the forest implying that he is the sole owner of the forest and all the resources belongs to him. This character can be compared with the landlord Devendra in the movie who wishes to own the forest by removing the tribes from the forest. He even murders a Bhuta Kola performer when he refuses to act according to his will in front of the villagers. The materialistic mind of the characters such as Dhona in the novel can be associated with the character Devendra in the movie who is reigning King of the region. Both are trapped by greed though they own more than is needed by them. Dhona says "A dull life is something I never abide. Grief comes to those who dawdle, idle and well fed. It is greedy to want to add to your income?" (Ghosh, 2021, p. 11). They placed others' lives in danger for their own greed. The saviour Bon Bibi in the novel and Panjurli in the movie are considered as the heart of the context as they are the cultural source on which the natives believe in.

Ghosh asserts that "the Bon Bibi legend is a marvel of hybridity, combining Islamic, Hindu and folk elements with such fluency that it is impossible to place the story squarely in a single faith tradition" (Ghosh, 2021, p. 76-77). The story behind Bon Bibi and Panjurli comes from Muslim and Hindu mythologies. According to the Muslim mythology, Bon Bibi and his brother were sent by Allah from Arabia to protect the people of Sunderban from the ferocious tiger which hunts humans. The origin of Panjurli in Hindu mythology

states that the deity Panjurli which owns a face of wild boar is sent by Lord Shiva from Kailasa to protect the tribal people of Tulu. “The two dominant religious communities of the Sundarbans, the Hindu and the Muslim, worship Bonbibi with the common belief that Bonbibi would ensure living and livelihood” (Bawa & Thakar, 2023, p. 4111). Thus irrespective of religion it can be stated that the concern for the environmental protection is made or educated through cultural values. Aravindan Neelakandan emphasises “*Kantara* on the other hand has shown that the general Hindu population, along with the common Indian civilisational psyche, can feel the oneness that underlies all the extraordinarily rich diversity” (Neelakandan, 2022). In addition to revitalising ancient ways of living, *Jungle Nama* and *Kantara* inspire a profound respect for its rich history, culture and ethically oriented life. Understanding both the work of art allows for potential future research in investigation of Indian mythology and the facets of culture on how it leads to the discussion of the environment. It also emphasises the interdependence of all living forms and the pressing need to bring our surroundings back into balance.

Conclusion :

Environmental preservation has been emphasised through myths, culture and tradition from ancient days. By cultivating moral practices for preserving the sustainability of the Earth through culture and folklore, ancient people have skillfully classified the empirical knowledge of living in harmony with the environment. This doesn't stick to the boundaries. The novel tells the story of West Bengal and the movie tells about the myth in Karnataka. It is also to be noted that there are simila-

rities between Bhuta Kola of Karnataka and the Theyyam festival of Kerala. Thus, the current works taken for research predominantly proves the importance of the cultural and mythological elements in preserving the ecology that has prevailed among the people of India. Both the works of art emphasise a release of the human thoughts from the post colonial and modernised thinking. The reason behind prioritising the tribes in both these works is that they are the ones who never change their lifestyle nor come out of the forest for survival.

The life of the tribal people is closely associated with the natural environment. They consider their living place to be a sacred one. In the current scenario of modernisation they stand, abide by and lead a simple life. They never get away from their culture and rituals. “Environmental concerns are problematic in the postcolonial scenario” (Divyasri & Chakrabarti, 2023, p. 48). In an era of civilisation wherein the life of human beings is said to be elevated, tremendous changes occur in the climate. Thus civilisation has failed to bring positive results in safeguarding the land; rather it has brought self estimation through money which has turned a blind eye towards other elements of nature and living beings other than themselves. The tribal lifestyle imbibes the outcomes of education that is aimed to bring changes at present. It is cultivated through the culture that they follow. Deities and demigods, whom people consider as superpowers, suppressed the existence of man's power by devastating personal greed over the land or wealth. Thus, construction of such a traditional and cultural system existing in the life of tribal people helps

them to secure nature and the environment.

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मीरा के काव्य का पुनरावलोकन

सचिन कुमार मीणा

शोधार्थी, हिंदी विभाग,
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आचार्य शुक्ल ने हिन्दी साहित्य के इतिहास में पूर्व मध्यकाल या भक्तिकाल का समय संवत् 1375 से संवत् 1700 माना है। इस काल में उनके अनुसार भक्ति की दो प्रमुख शाखाएँ थीं- निर्गुण भक्ति तथा सगुण भक्ति। प्रत्येक शाखा में दो-दो काव्य-धाराएँ प्रवाहित हुईं- निर्गुण शाखा की संत काव्यधारा और सूफियों से प्रभावित प्रेममार्गी काव्यधारा तथा सगुण शाखा की कृष्णभक्ति काव्य-धारा तथा रामभक्ति काव्य धारा। कृष्णभक्ति शाखा की हिंदी की महान कवियित्री मीराबाई का जन्म 1504 ई. में राजस्थान के मेड़ता राज्य के कुड़की गाँव में हुआ था। इनका विवाह उदयपुर के महाराणा कुमार भोजराज के साथ हुआ था। आरम्भ से ही इनकी कृष्णभक्ति में रूचि थी। परन्तु विद्वानों के बीच में इनके जन्म को लेकर मतभेद दिखाई पड़ता है। कुछ विद्वान् मीरा का समय 1498-1545 ई. निर्धारित करते हैं। स्पष्ट है कि वह अपनी पूर्ववर्ती भक्ति-पद्धतियों से परिचित भी थी और उनके काव्य पर थोड़ा-बहुत इन भक्ति-पद्धतियों का प्रभाव भी पड़ा होगा। मीरा का समय बहुत राजनैतिक उथल-पथल का रहा था। बाबर का हिंदुस्तान पर हमला और प्रसिद्ध खानवा की लड़ाई जो की बाबर और राणा संग्राम सिंह के बीच हुई थी जिसमें राणा सांगा की पराजय हुई और भारत में मुगलों का अधिपत्य शुरू हुआ। इन सभी परिस्थितियों के बीच मीरा का रहस्यवाद और भक्ति की निर्गुण मिश्रित सगुण पद्धति सर्वमान्य बनी रही। मध्यकालीन भक्ति आंदोलन की आध्यात्मिक प्रेरणा ने जिन कवियों को

जन्म दिया उनमें मीराबाई का विशिष्ट स्थान है। इनके पद पूरे उत्तर-भारत सहित गुजरात, बिहार और बंगाल तक प्रचलित हैं। मीरा हिंदी और गुजराती दोनों भाषाओं की कवयित्री मानी जाती हैं। मीरा की भक्ति दैन्य और माधुर्यभाव की है। इन पर योगियों, संतों और वैष्णव भक्तों का सम्मिलित प्रभाव पड़ा है। मीरा के पदों की भाषा में राजस्थानी, ब्रज और गुजराती का मिश्रण पाया जाता है, वहीं पंजाबी, खड़ी बोली और पूर्वी के प्रयोग भी मिल जाते हैं। “वास्तव में उनकी भाषा मारवाड़ी थी। किंतु काव्य-भाषा ब्रजभाषा में उन्होंने रचना की हो, यह असम्भव नहीं है। वे स्वयं वृंदावन आई भी थी। इस समय उनकी जो पदावली उपलब्ध है, उसमें तो राजस्थानी और ब्रज का मिश्रण है”। कबीर की तरह ही मीराबाई की काव्यभाषा के आधार में कई बोली-रूप मिश्रित हैं। मीराबाई की पदावली की भूमिका में परशुराम चतुर्वेदी ने दिखाया है कि मीरा में चार भाषा स्तरों का प्रयोग है- राजस्थानी, ब्रजभाषा, पंजाबी और गुजराती।

संत रैदास की शिष्या मीरा की कुल ग्यारह कृतियाँ उपलब्ध हैं। मीराबाई रैदास को अपना गुरु मानते हुए लिखती हैं- ‘गुरु मिलिया रैदास दीन्ही ज्ञान की गुटकी’। मीराबाई के काव्य में मध्यकालीन नारी का जीवन बिंबित होता है। मीरा की कविताओं में व्याकुलता एवं वेदना की निश्छल अभिव्यक्ति पाई जाती है। मीरा की कविता में रूप, रस और ध्वनि के प्रभावशाली बिंब हैं। मीरा के काव्य पर निर्गुण-सगुण दोनों साधनाओं का प्रभाव है। उन पर नाथ मत का

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भी प्रभाव दिखाई पड़ता है। उनके इष्ट देव तो कृष्ण ही है। किंतु रामकथा से संबंधित गेयपद भी उन्होंने लिखे हैं।

मैनेजर पाण्डेय के कथन के अनुसार “मीरा को अपने विवेक की रक्षा के लिए जिस अग्नि परीक्षा से गुजरना पड़ा उससे भक्तिकाल के किसी दूसरे कवि को नहीं। कबीर जायसी और सूर के सामने चुनौतियाँ और कठिनाइयाँ थी। एक स्त्री, वह भी मेड़ता के राठौर राजपूत कुल की बेटी और मेवाड़ के महाराणा परिवार की बहू, ऊपर से विधवा। यही था मीरा का अपना लोक। उसके धर्म और उसमें स्त्री की स्थिति का अनुमान किया जा सकता है। लेकिन उसके विरुद्ध की कल्पना भी कठिन है। मीरा ने उसके विरुद्ध खुला विद्रोह किया। उस विद्रोह का साक्षी है उनका जीवन और काव्य”²। मीराबाई के काव्य में संयोग और वियोग दोनों का वर्णन हुआ है। किंतु उन्होंने संयोग की अपेक्षा वियोग का अधिक प्रयोग काव्य में किया है। उनके प्रभू उनसे दूर चले गए हैं वह अपने गिरधर को अपने पास देखना चाहती हैं। इसलिए वह कहती हैं कि-

“दरस विण दूखाँ महारा णैण।
सबदाँ सुणताँ मेरी छातियाँ काँपाँ मीठो थारो वैण।
बिरह विथा कासूँ री क्हाँ पैठाँ करवत अँण।
कल णाँ पडताँ हरि मग जोवाँ, भयाँ छमासी रैण”³।

लौकिक से अलौकिक सत्ता की ओर उन्मुख होना रहस्यवाद है। मीरा ने अपनी भक्ति में नवधा भक्ति का समावेश किया है। संतों के बीच बैठकर हरि की चर्चा सुनने में उन्हें सर्वाधिक आनंद आता है।

“कुंजन-कुंजन फिरयाँ साँवरा, सबद सुण्या
मुरली का।
मीराँ रे प्रभु गिरिधर नागर, भजण बिणा नर
फिकाँ”⁴।

मीराबाई का कृष्णभक्ति में नाचना और गाना राज परिवार को नहीं सुहाता था। उन्होंने कई बार मीराबाई को विष देकर मारने की कोशिश की। घर

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वालों के इस प्रकार के व्यवहार से दुःखी होकर वह द्वारका और वृंदावन गई। वह जहाँ जाती थी, वहाँ लोगों का सम्मान मिलता था। लोग इनको देवियों के जैसा प्यार और सम्मान देते थे। इसी दौरान उन्होंने तुलसीदास को पत्र लिखा था-

‘स्वस्ति श्री तुलसी कुल भूषण, दूषण- हरण गोसाईं।
बारहिं बार प्रणाम करहुँ, अब हरहु लोक समुदाईं।
घर के स्वजन हमारे जेते, सबन्ह उपाधि बढ़ाईं।
साधु- सग अरु भजन करत मोहि, देत कलेस महाईं’⁵।

मीरा की भक्ति में माधुर्य-भाव काफी हद तक पाया जाता था। वह अपने इष्टदेव कृष्ण की भावना प्रियतम या पति के रूप में करती थी। उनका मानना था कि इस संसार में कृष्ण के अलावा कोई पुरुष है ही नहीं। कृष्ण के रूप की दीवानी थी।

“बस्याँ म्हारे षोणणमाँ नंदलाल।

मोर मुगट मकराक्रंत कुण्डल अरुण तिलक
सोहाँ भाल।

मोहन मूरत, साँवराँ सुरत षोणा बण्या विशाल।।
अधर सुधा रस मुरली राजाँ उर बैजन्ती माल।
मीराँ प्रभु संताँ सुखदायाँ, भगत बछल गोपाल”⁶।

मीराबाई की पदावली का आज तक कोई ऐसा पाठ नहीं मिला है जिसे पूर्णतः प्रामाणिक कहा जा सके। मीरा के काव्य के अनेक भाव हमारे बीच तैरते दिखाई देते हैं। शोधार्थियों के बीच को लेकर एक सामान्य राय बन चुकी है कि मीरा ने कृष्ण को पति के रूप में ग्रहण किया। मीरा की भक्ति भावना और प्रेम का स्वरूप क्या था? इसका अध्ययन समय-समय पर होता रहता है। कृष्ण का आत्मसातीकरण करने की छुट कृष्ण भक्तिशाखा के कवियों ने विभिन्न रूप से किया है। यही कारण है कि भक्ति की अनेक पद्धतियों का उपयोग कृष्ण शाखा के कवियों में दिखाई देता है। मीरा की भक्ति में माधुर्य-भाव काफी हद तक पाया जाता है। वह अपने इष्टदेव कृष्ण की भावना प्रियतम या पति के रूप में करती है। क्योंकि उनका मानना था कि इस संसार में कृष्ण के अलावा

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कोई पुरुष है ही नहीं। मीरा के जीवन से परिचित होने तथा उनकी रचनाओं का ध्यानपूर्वक अध्ययन करने के उपरांत स्पष्ट हो जाता है कि मीरा को किसी भक्ति-सम्प्रदाय या दर्शन ने भक्त-कवयित्री नहीं बनाया था। जीवन की विषम परिस्थितियों के फलस्वरूप ही मीरा को कवि हृदय प्राप्त हुआ था जिससे उनके भक्ति-भावना का प्रवाह उमड़ा। जहाँ तक उनके उपास्य का संबंध है, उसके संबंध में विद्वानों में भले ही मतभेद हो परन्तु उनके प्रारंभिक जीवन और बाद की घटनाएं स्पष्ट संकेत करती हैं कि उनके आराध्य गिरधर गोपाल, नटनागर, कृष्ण थे। जिन पितामह राव दूदाजी की स्नेह छाया और संरक्षण में मातृहीन मीरा का बचपन बीता वह भी वैष्णव भक्त में डूबा परिवार था। उन्हीं के वैष्णव संस्कारों से मीरा के व्यक्तित्व का निर्माण और विकास में सहायता करते दिखाई देते हैं। मीरा को कृष्ण की एक मूर्ति मिली जिस के रूप-सौंदर्य पर वह मुग्ध हो उठीं। यह भी किवदंती है कि माता ने उसी मूर्ति को उनका नाम बताकर उससे प्रेम करने को कहा था। इस प्रकार के प्रसंगों ने मीरा के बाल-हृदय में कृष्णभक्ति का अंकुर रोप दिया और बाद में जीवन की विषम स्थितियों में भी पति की अकाल मृत्यु में विधवा का दयनीय जीवन में राणा और राजकुल के अत्याचारों में, पुरुष प्रधान सांमंती समाज की क्रूरता ने उन्हें कृष्ण-भक्ति के मार्ग पर चलने की प्रेरणा दी। अनाथ, असहाय, बेसहारा, कुटुम्बी जनों द्वारा सताई जाने वाली मीरा के लिए भक्त वात्सल्य, दीनबंधु, अशरण को शरण देने वाले भगवान के चरणों में आश्रय खोजने के अतिरिक्त कोई चारा न था। यहाँ प्रस्तुत समस्त विद्वानों के तर्क रामचंद्र शुक्ल के उस भक्ति के उत्थान के तर्कों का प्रबल समर्थन भी करते हैं जिसमें उन्होंने कहा कि इस्लाम के आगमन से भक्ति का उदय हुआ।

मीरा ने अपने काव्य में अपने आराध्य को कई नामों से पुकारा है- हरि, श्याम, नंदलाल, मोहन, गोपाल, गोविन्द, ब्रजनाथ, गिरधर लाल, मनमोहन, जोगिया या जोगी। पर जो नाम उन्हें सर्वाधिक प्रिय है वह है गिरिधर गोपाल।

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“**म्हारां ही गिरधर गोपाल, दूसरा जां कूया**”¹⁷।

मीरा के आराध्य गिरधर में राम, कृष्ण, निर्गुणभक्त कवियों में ब्रह्म सभी के गुण समान रूप से उपस्थित दिखाई देते हैं। वह राम की तरह शक्ति, शील और सौंदर्य की त्रिमूर्ति हैं। वह लोकरक्षक दैत्यों का संहार करते हैं, अत्याचारियों से अपने भक्तों की रक्षा करते हैं। वह लोकरंजक होने के नाते विभिन्न लीलाएं- रासलीला, जलक्रीड़ा, चीरहरण, माखन चोरी, गोपियों के साथ वन विहार, ग्वालों के साथ गोचारण आदि करते हैं। उनकी सांवली सूरत तथा मोहिनी मूरत में सत्य, शील और कर्म का समन्वय है।

प्रेम की अभिव्यंजना मनुष्य को कोमल हृदय प्रदान करती है। प्रेम उस प्रेरणादायनी शक्ति के रूप में हमारे समक्ष उपस्थित होता है जिसकी अनुभूति ही बड़े-बड़ा दुःख झेलने की शक्ति प्रदान करता है। डॉ. पीताम्बर दत्त बड़धवाल और शबनम जैसे कुछ विद्वान मीरा को निर्गुण-निराकार ब्रह्म की उपासिका मानते हैं। यह सत्य है कि मीरा के समय में संत मत का पर्याप्त प्रचार और प्रभाव था और मीरा पर भी उसका थोड़ा-सा प्रभाव दिखाई देता है। कुछ पदों में उन्होंने अपने उपास्य को सर्वशक्तिमान, अनिर्वचनीय बताया है, गुरु की महिमा भी स्वीकार की है, अपने उपास्य के साथ एक हो जाने की इच्छा व्यक्त की है, उसके रंग में रंग जाने की बात कही है, कुछ पदों में संत काव्य की शब्दावली-जोगी, जोगिया, निर्गुण का सुरमा, प्रेमहटी का तेल, मनसा की बाती, सुरत-निरत का दिवला, अगम का देस, गगन-मंडल, त्रिकुटभ, निरंजन, अनहद नाद आदि का भी प्रयोग किया है, परन्तु कृष्णभक्त परिवार में जन्म और पालन-पोषण तथा कृष्णभक्त परिवार में विवाह तथा उनके पदों में कृष्ण-भक्ति का स्वर, कृष्ण के गुणानुवाद, अवतार रूप में उनकी लीलाओं का वर्णन-यह सब सिद्ध करता है कि उन्होंने ईश्वर के सगुण स्वरूप श्रीकृष्ण को ही अपना आराध्य बनाकर उनके प्रति अपना अविचल प्रेम, पूर्ण समर्पण-भाव प्रकट किया था। भक्त के लिए जिस तन्मयता एवं समर्पण भाव आवश्यक होते

हैं वे मीरा के काव्य में भरपूर मात्रा में विद्यमान हैं। उनका कृष्ण की जन्मभूमि एवं लीला-भूमि ब्रज प्रदेश, मथुरा, वृन्दावन, द्वारिका की यात्रा, वहाँ कुछ दिन तक रहना और द्वारिका में रणछोड़ जी की मूर्ति की आराधना करते हुए प्राण-त्याग ये सब उन्हें पूर्णतः कृष्ण-भक्त सिद्ध करते हैं।

**महारो बेड़ो लगाज्यो पार, प्रभुजी अरज करूँ छूँ
या भव में म्हे बहु दुख पायो, संसा सोग निवार।
अष्ट करम की तलब लगी है, दूर करो दुःख भार।
यो संसार सब बहो जात है, लख चौरासी री धार।
मीराँ के प्रभु गिरधर नागर, आवागमन निवार।⁸**

जीवन और दर्शन का अतीव घनिष्ठ संबंध है। दर्शन जीवन का आधार है, तो जीवन दर्शन का प्रधान विषय है। दोनों की सत्ता एक-दूसरे पर आश्रित है। मनुष्य के जीवन के प्रत्येक स्तर पर दर्शन का प्रभाव होता है। अन्वेषणोपरान्त दर्शन प्रदत्त सत्य जब जीवन को प्राप्त होता है तो जीवन उसे व्यवहार में लाता है और प्रयोगोपरान्त प्रस्तुत होने वाले प्रश्नों को पुनः विचारार्थ दर्शन को सौंप देता है। जीवन को सदा उसके दर्शन रूपी हृत्पिण्ड से पल-पल विचारों की, जीवन के शाश्वत मूल्यों की श्रृंखला प्राप्त होती रहती है। इसी में जीवन की सत्ता है, अस्तित्व है, उपयोगिता है। सतत क्रियाशील इस प्राणदायिनी प्रणाली के अभाव में न तो दर्शन का अस्तित्व रहता है और न जीवन का, अतः जीवन को सचेष्ट, सक्रिय और सजीव बनाये रखने में दर्शन की परम भूमिका होती है। उनके आराध्य गिरधर में राम, कृष्ण, निर्गुण भक्त कवियों में ब्रह्म सभी के गुण हैं। वह राम की तरह शक्ति, शील और सौंदर्य की त्रिमूर्ति हैं। वह लोकरक्षक दैत्यों का संहार करते हैं, अत्याचारियों से अपने भक्तों की रक्षा करते हैं। वह लोकरंजक होने के नाते विभिन्न लीलाएं-रासलीला, जलक्रीड़ा, चीर हरण, माखन चोरी, गोपियों के साथ वन विहार, ग्वालों के साथ गोचारण आदि करते हैं। उनकी सांवली सूत तथा मोहिनी मूरत में सत्य, शील और कर्म का समन्वय है।

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विरह को प्रेम का तप्त स्वर्ण कहा गया है। प्रेम की पीर और विरह वेदना की अमर गायिका मीरा का कृष्ण भक्ति शाखा के साधकों और कवियों में अत्यन्त महत्त्वपूर्ण स्थान है। कृष्ण-प्रेम की कसक आज भी उसके विरह-गीतों के बोलों में कसक-कसक कर सहृदयों, संगीतकारों की हृदय की धड़कनें बढ़ा देती है। वास्तव में 'प्रेम की पीर' और कृष्ण विरह की अनवरत धड़कन का नाम ही मीरा है। 'नरसीजी का मायरा', 'गीत-गोविन्द की टीका', 'मीरानी गरबी', 'रास गोविन्द', राग सोरठ के पद और 'मीरा के पद' आदि मीरा की प्रमुख रचनाएँ मानी जाती हैं। इन रचनाओं के आधार पर मीरा के काव्य में लोक जीवन और दर्शन का हमें परिचय मिलता है। मीराबाई दर्शन, विचार और उपासना के प्रत्येक क्षेत्र में भिन्न दिखाई देती है। यद्यपि मीरा की भक्ति किसी विशिष्ट सम्प्रदाय या दार्शनिक मतवाद की सीमा में नहीं बँधती, पर उनकी रचनाओं पर नाथपंथ, संतकाव्य, पुष्टि मार्ग, चैतन्य सम्प्रदाय, भागवत की नवधा भक्ति आदि का आंशिक प्रभाव भी दृष्टिगोचर होता है। डॉ. पीताम्बर दत्त बड़थवाल ने मीरा पर निर्गुण प्रभाव को स्वीकार करते हुए लिखा "यद्यपि मीराबाई व्यवहारतः सगुणोपासिका थी और कृष्ण की उपासना रणछोड़ के रूप में किया करती थी, फिर भी यह सच है कि उनके कहे जाने वाले पदों में निर्गुण विचारधारा स्पष्ट दिखती है। उन्होंने अपनी प्रेम सम्बन्धी विनय कृष्ण एवं ब्रह्म दोनों के प्रति एक साथ की है"⁹। विरह-वेदना का तीव्र स्वर जितना मीरा के काव्य में मिलता है उतना सूरदास के 'भ्रमरगीत' को छोड़कर अन्यत्रा नहीं मिलता। प्रो. गोपेश्वर सिंह लिखते हैं- "अपने अंतर में 'भारी पीर' लिए दर्द के मारे दर-दर डोलनेवाली इस भाव-प्रवण भक्त कवयित्री के पास वेदना की जो थाती है, वह उसके समकालीनों में किसी के पास नहीं। अपूर्व दर्द, अपूर्व साहस और अपूर्व विद्रोह से भरी इस प्रेम-साधिका ने 'राणा' को चुनौती दी है, वैसी प्रत्यक्ष चुनौती दुर्जनों को शायद ही उस ज़माने में किसी ने दी हो"¹⁰। विरह की आग में उनका सम्पूर्ण व्यक्तित्व जल रहा है, विरह

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का कीट उनके शरीर में घुन की तरह लगा हुआ भीतर-ही-भीतर उसे क्षीण कर रहा है। उनकी पीड़ा की मार्मिक करुणोत्पादक स्थिति का चित्रा निम्नलिखित पंक्तियों में साकार हो उठा है।

“तेरे कारण वन वन डोलूँ
कर जोगण कौ भेस

अवधि बदी पर भजहुँ न आये
पंडर होइ गया केस’”।

निष्कर्षत : मीरा ने श्रीकृष्ण से प्रेम किया था, फलतः उनका सारा जीवन ही कृष्णमय हो गया था। मीरा के पदों में कतिपय पारिभाषिक शब्दों को आधार बनाकर उनके जीवन पर विभिन्न दर्शनों के मतों के प्रभाव द्वारा की गई आलोचकों ने व्यंजित किया, पर मीरा तो प्रेम दिवानी थी। उसे किसी संप्रदाय विशेष की मान्यताओं के आलोक में ही देखकर मूल्यांकन करना उचित नहीं होगा। मीरा का जीवन ही कृष्ण प्रेम था और दर्शन भी कृष्ण प्रेम, अतः उन्होंने कृष्ण की आराधना कांता भाव या गोपी भाव से की वे अपने आराध्य को भी प्रति मानकर ही पुकारती है, उसके विरह में व्याकुल होकर तड़पती है। इसस उनके सगुणोपासक होने में कोई संदेह नहीं रहता। संभवतः साधु-संगति के प्रभाव से उनके काव्य में निर्गुण शब्दावली आ गई हों, पर भक्ति में ‘मधुरिया भाव’ प्रमुख है। सगुण-प्रेम के विरह मिलन के प्रभाव एवं संस्पर्श अत्यधिक प्रभावी हैं। उसकी माधुर्य भावना अनेक स्थलों पर सूर और तुलसी से भी आगे दिखाई देती है। ऐसा प्रतीत होता है कि प्रेम-विवश मीरा स्वयं भाव-विभोर होकर श्रीकृष्ण के साथ लीलाएँ कर

रही हों, अतः यदि प्रभाव की दृष्टि से ही देखा जाय तो स्पष्ट होता है कि उन पर चैतन्य महाप्रभु की दार्शनिक मान्यताओं का सर्वाधिक प्रभाव था साथ ही उनके जीवन-दर्शन पर पड़ा। समग्र रूप से वह स्वयं ही भक्ति की मंदाकिनी बनकर जगत को रस-आप्लावित कर गई। उस रस सृष्टि में उनका भव्य जीवन और भव्य दर्शन हमें डूबने को प्रेरित करता है।

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Indigenous Communities of the Maikal Hills, Central India : Elucidating their Lifeways and Environmental Resilience

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Introduction :

The Maikal Hills, an extension of the Satpura Range, are characterised by their rugged terrain, dense forests and high peaks, with elevations reaching up to 1,300 meters. This region is known for its biodiversity, housing various flora and fauna, including the elusive tiger and the Indian bison. Geographically, the Maikal Hills is a crucial watershed area¹. Several major rivers originate here, including the Narmada and Son Rivers. One of India's principal rivers, the Narmada, rises in these highlands and flows westward, passing through the centre of the country before draining into the Arabian Sea². In the same vein, the Son River continues eastward till it ultimately meets the Ganges near Patna. In addition to these, the area is home to other smaller rivers and streams. The hydrology of the area is greatly influenced by these rivers, which also have an impact on the local temperature and the natural dynamics of the hills. This mountainous terrain, with its dense forests and diverse ecosystems, is home to several indigenous communities whose lives are intricately intertwined with

their environment³. Among these communities, the Gond and Baiga tribes stand out as prominent aboriginal groups. This article explores the lifeways of these Aborigines of the Maikal Hills, focusing on their cultural practices, economic activities, and environmental resilience.

Environmental Conditions of the Maikal Hills :

The Maikal Hills region is predominantly composed of ancient geological formations, including granite and basalt. These rocks are part of the Precambrian basement complex, which dates back to over 1 billion years. The region's geology influences its soil types, water drainage patterns and vegetation. The hills are covered with a variety of forest types, including tropical moist deciduous forests and dry deciduous forests⁴. The lush greenery of the lower slopes gives way to sparser vegetation as the elevation increases. Key tree species found in the Maikal Hills include sal (*Shorea robusta*), teak (*Tectona grandis*), and bamboo (*Bambusoideae*). The rich flora supports a diverse range of plant species, many of which are used in

traditional medicine and local crafts⁵. This specific location is home to a rich array of wildlife. The region's fauna includes several species of mammals, birds, reptiles and insects. Notable mammals include the Indian leopard (*Panthera pardus fusca*), sloth bear (*Melursus ursinus*), and sambar deer (*Rusa unicolor*). Bird species such as the Indian hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*) and the crested serpent eagle (*Spilornis cheela*) are commonly found. Numerous reptiles and amphibians, including various species of snakes and frogs, also support the biodiversity of the region. Along these, a tropical monsoon climate characterises the climate of the Maikal Hills.

Indigenous Communities of the Maikal Hills :

Several indigenous communities inhabit the Maikal Hills, each with its unique cultural practices and social structures. Prominent among these are the Gond and Baiga tribes, who have traditionally lived in the forested areas of the hills. These communities, collectively known as Adivasis, have lived in harmony with the forest environment for generations. Human activity in the Maikal Hills includes traditional practices by these tribal communities who prominently rely on natural resources for their livelihoods. The human settlements in the Maikal Hills are generally small and dispersed. The inhabitants are primarily engaged in agriculture, forestry and traditional crafts. Villages are often located in the more accessible lower slopes and valleys, while the higher elevations remain less populated⁶. The isolation of the hills has helped preserve the traditional ways of life and cultural practices of these indigenous communities. Below is information on the major ethnic groups living in the Maikal Hills.

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1. The Gond Tribe :

The Gond tribe is one of the largest indigenous groups in central India. Their history and inhabitation of this land go back centuries. Today, the Gonds are primarily settled in the southern part of the Maikal Hills. They practice subsistence agriculture, cultivating crops such as rice, pulses and millet. They also engage in small-scale hunting, gathering, and crafting, particularly making items from bamboo and wood. Their daily affairs mainly depend on the forest and the surrounding environment. The Gonds are also renowned for their vibrant art forms, including Gond painting, which reflects their deep connection with nature and mythology⁷. Gond society is organised into clans, each with its totemic symbols and social responsibilities. The tribe's spiritual beliefs are deeply rooted in animism, with rituals and festivals dedicated to various deities and natural elements. The Gonds celebrate their major festivals, such as Dussehra and Holi, with traditional dances and music that reinforce their communal bonds.

2. The Baiga Tribe :

The Baiga tribe, known for their distinctive rituals and practices, is another prominent community in the Maikal Hills. Traditionally, the Baigas were hunter gatherers, but over time, they have adopted agricultural practices. They are known for their elaborate initiation ceremonies and shamanistic practices. They are considered to be a particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG) due to their remote settlement and traditional livelihood patterns.

The Baiga's spiritual life is centred around the belief in a variety of spirits and ancestors and their rituals often involve complex dances and chants. The Baigas have a unique system of land management and cultivation known as "slash-and-burn" agriculture⁸. This method, while sustainable in the short term, faces challenges due to modern agricultural practices and encroachment on forest lands.

Environmental Resilience of the Aboriginals of the Maikal Hills :

The Aboriginals of the Maikal Hills have developed a remarkable level of environmental resilience, which is evident in their sustainable practices and adaptive strategies. Their deep understanding of the local ecosystem has enabled them to live in harmony with their environment for generations.

1. Shifting Cultivation and Agroforestry :

Shifting cultivation or slash-and-burn agriculture, is a traditional agricultural practice employed by the tribes of the Maikal Hills. This method involves clearing patches of forest for cultivation by burning the vegetation and then planting crops such as rice, millet, and pulses. After a few years, the soil's fertility diminishes, and the land is left fallow to allow natural regeneration. This method is known as *Bewar* agriculture and is banned nowadays, but it still informs about the knowledge tradition of these indigenous communities⁹. This practice, while often criticised for its environmental impact, is adapted by the Gonds and Baigas in a manner that maintains ecological balance. The fallow periods

between cultivation cycles allow the forest to recover and traditional knowledge of soil management helps preserve its fertility. Agroforestry systems, which integrate trees and shrubs into agricultural landscapes, further enhance soil health and biodiversity.

2. Forest Management and Resource Use :

The tribes have long relied on the forest for a variety of resources, including timber, medicinal plants, and food. They practice sustainable harvesting techniques that ensure the forest's health and productivity. For instance, they follow rotational harvesting patterns and respect sacred groves that are left undisturbed to maintain ecological balance. The Gonds and Baigas also have traditional rules governing the collection of forest products. These rules include restrictions on harvesting certain species and regulating the number of resources taken from specific areas¹⁰. Such practices help prevent overexploitation and promote the regeneration of forest resources.

3. Traditional Knowledge of Medicinal Plants :

The Baigas, in particular, are renowned for their extensive knowledge of medicinal plants. They use a variety of herbs and plants for treating ailments, relying on centuries of accumulated wisdom. This traditional knowledge not only supports their health but also contributes to the conservation of plant species used in medicine. Their practices help maintain the ecological balance by fostering biodiversity and ensuring the survival of medicinal plants.

4. **Weather Prediction and Agricultural Adaptation :**

The tribes of the Maikal Hills possess a deep understanding of their environment, including the ability to predict weather patterns. They use natural indicators, such as changes in animal behaviour and plant growth, to forecast weather conditions. This traditional knowledge allows them to adjust their agricultural practices accordingly. For example, the timing of planting and harvesting is often adjusted based on observations of climatic changes. This adaptive strategy helps mitigate the impacts of irregular rainfall and temperature fluctuations, ensuring that agricultural production remains stable despite climatic uncertainties.

5. **Diversified Livelihoods :**

To buffer against environmental fluctuations, the Gonds and Baigas practice diversified livelihoods. In addition to agriculture, they engage in hunting, gathering, and the collection of non-timber forest products. This diversification provides a safety net in times of crop failure or resource scarcity, helping to ensure food security and economic stability¹¹. The tribes also participate in small-scale livestock farming, which complements their agricultural activities. Livestock provides additional sources of food and income, contributing to their overall resilience.

Conclusion :

The tribes of the Maikal Hills, including the Gonds and Baigas, exemplify environmental resilience through their sustainable practices, adaptive strategies, and deep connection with their environ-

ment. Their traditional knowledge and practices have enabled them to live in harmony with the complex ecosystems of the Maikal Hills for generations. Despite facing challenges such as environmental degradation, climate change, and cultural erosion, these communities continue to demonstrate remarkable adaptability and resourcefulness. Supporting their efforts, recognising their rights, and integrating traditional knowledge into conservation and development initiatives are crucial for ensuring their continued resilience and the preservation of their rich cultural heritage. By promoting conservation, cultural revitalisation, and advocacy, there is hope for preserving the unique heritage of the Maikal Hills and ensuring a sustainable future for its indigenous inhabitants. As the world continues to evolve, the resilience and cultural richness of the Maikal Hills communities offer valuable lessons in harmony with nature and the importance of preserving indigenous traditions.

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Fig. 1 (Forested landscape of the Maikal Hills, Source: author)



Fig. 2 (Tribal settlement adjacent to the mountain, Source: author)



Fig. 3 (A wild fruit consists of medicinal value, Source: author)



Fig. 4 (A group of tribal women involved in agriculture, Source: author)

Traditional Architecture of Mizoram

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1. Introduction :

Mizoram, located in the northeastern region of India, is part of the Seven Sister states in the Northeast. Its southern region shares extensive international borders, spanning 722 kilometers, with Myanmar and Bangladesh. Additionally, the northern part of Mizoram has domestic borders with Manipur, Assam and Tripura. Covering an area of 21,087 square kilometers (8,142 square miles), Mizoram ranks as the fifth smallest state in India. Geographically, it extends from 21°56'N to 24°31'N and 92°16'E to 93°26'E. Notably, the Tropic of Cancer traverses the state, nearly dividing it in the middle. The maximum distance from north to south is 285 km, and the maximum east-to-west stretch is 115 km. The state is renowned for its scenic beauty, characterized by picturesque landscapes, verdant hills, and a lively tribal culture.

Mizoram's topography is characterized by hills with very little flat terrain. A Mizo village will always be found perched on the top of a ridge or a mountain. Even though scarcity of water poses a great challenge in having a village on top of a hill, various factors contribute to the choice of elevated locations for village settlements,

with the ease of defense being a significant consideration.

Mizoram experiences a temperate climate, characterized by relatively cool temperatures in the summer, ranging from 20°C to 29 °C. During the winter, the climate becomes milder, with temperatures ranging from 7°C to 22 °C. The area is significantly influenced by monsoons, resulting in heavy rainfall between May and September, while the dry (cold) season sees minimal precipitation. The average annual rainfall is 254 centimeters (100 inches) for the entire state. Given its location, the state is susceptible to weather-related emergencies, including cyclones and landslides.

2. Materials and Methods :

Traditional architecture is the artistic representation of the conventional constructed surroundings unique to the people of a particular area. It presents the traditional, cultural, and primitive approaches of the residents in crafting their built environment, thereby establishing the characteristics crucial to the region. Over time, traditional architecture tends to develop, reflecting the traditional, climatic, cultural, and historical context in which it is situated. The developmental changes

with regard to the tradition of building houses will not be dealt with in this paper.

2.1 Layout of the Mizo village :

Three types of buildings can be identified in a Mizo village - the commoners' house, the Chief's house and the *Zawlbuk*, which serves as the young men's dormitory. At the highest point of a Mizo village, there is typically an open space. Positioned on one side of this open space is the chief's residence, and opposite to the chief's house stands the *Zawlbuk*. The chief, along with the village elders, chosen by the chief, establish their dwellings in proximity to the chief's house. The open space in the village is specifically designated for the chief and is known as "*Lal Mual*" (chief's field). The residences of the elders and the adjacent area are collectively referred to as "*Mual kil upate*" (elders surrounding the chief's field), signifying their elevated status in the village hierarchy.

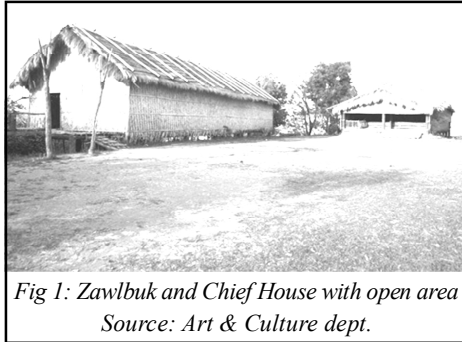


Fig 1: *Zawlbuk and Chief House with open area*
Source: Art & Culture dept.

From the chief's field, smaller streets extend downward, leading to the residences of commoners. Individuals with less influence within the village have limited opportunities to ascend to the *Lal Mual* and witness the dwellings of the chief and elders. Since the site of the house is steep, the natural fall of the ground allows room for domestic animals to stay under

the raised floor at night and also ensures good drainage. This is the case not only with the commoners' house but also with the Chief's house and the *Zawlbuk*.



Fig-2 : *Zawlbuk*
Source: Art & Culture dept.



Fig-3: *Commoner's house*
Source: Art & Culture dept.

2.2 Vernacular Architecture of Mizo village :

The study of traditional architecture can be approached in two ways:

- a) 'Architecture without Architects' (Rudofsky) where structures are built by amateurs without any training in design and construction.
- b) The function of the buildings from the point of view of:
 - i) Local construction techniques
 - ii) Local Labour & Tools
 - iii) Local building materials
 - iv) Climatic conditions of the region

This paper describes the construction technique, the tools and materials used and the climatic condition of Mizoram.

Houses are constructed using timber and bamboo, secured with cane and natural ropes derived from climbing plants. The roofing predominantly consists of thatched materials such as dried cane leaves or grass. All construction materials are sourced locally, with the cane utilized for fastening wood and bamboo obtained through the peeling of bamboo skin and rope skin.

The process of building a house begins with the digging of *Bankhur* (post holes). Typically, *Tumhulh* is the material used for digging these post-holes. In the case of a commoner's residence, eight holes are usually dug - four on each side. The primary supports placed between these opposing holes are referred to as *Sut* (large posts). Typically, these posts are buried at a depth of 3 to 4 feet. In regions with plenty of large logs, they are utilized as underground posts known as *Banril* (foundation/footing). The larger *Banril*, will then be connected to a smaller and more refined log called *Ban* (column). *Ban* will extend up to the top of the house.

A small log named *Kalte* will be longitudinally attached to these posts, running along the length of the house and supported by a *lhawmmawl*. This *lhawmmawl* is another smaller post positioned between the larger *Ban* posts of the house. Positioned just above *Kalte*, there will be *Kalkhang* and *Kaldung*, with *Kalkhang* arranged perpendicular to *Kalte* and *Kaldung*. All of these elements serve as reinforcements for the *Chhuat*, which forms the floor of the house. These logs are strongly tied together using a cane and a rope.

Above the layer of *Kaldung*, a bamboo piece approximately the size of a human wrist, known as *Tluangrel*, is added. *Tluangrel* is securely bound by cane alongside the *Kaldung*. Atop the *Tluangrel*, small bamboo sticks are placed, and the final layer, called *Chhuat*, consists of carefully splitted bamboo serving as the floor. Some individuals may choose to fasten the split bamboo, while others may leave it unclipped.

Liang will be fixed to the post of the house, positioned approximately 6 feet above the floor of the house, functioning as the lowest beam supporting the roof. *Khanchhuk* will be positioned perpendicular to *Liang*, serving as its upper counterpart, and the width of the house will be determined by the length of *Khanchhuk*. To ensure stability, *Liang* and *Khanchhuk* will be securely fastened together.

The largest post, known as the *Sut*, will be positioned centrally within the house, aligning with the smaller posts and surpassing the height of the *Ban*. This configuration facilitates a sloping roof, with the peak starting from the top of the *Sut* and slanting down to the end of the *Ban*. If they want a more slanted roof, the *Sut* will be made much taller than the *Ban*. The height of the *Sut* determines the inclination of the roof. J. Shakespear observes the inclusion of five *Suts* in a typical Mizo house. Additionally, the *Sut* will be larger in size compared to the *Ban*, and the holes dug for it will be deeper than those for the other posts.

All the *Sut* will be linked with a straight and strong beam known as *Tlung*, spanning from one end of the house to the other. Atop the *Liang* (beam), a triangular frame called *Inchhun* (truss) will be positioned,

connecting the *Thung*, the *Ban* (column), and the *Sut*. It will be securely fastened using either a cane or a rope. To ensure that the roof extends about a foot from the *Liang*, covering the house wall, the *Inchhun* will be made longer than the breadth of the house. The roof will be framed with small bamboo structures referred to as *Chum/Chumpui*, while smaller frames, called *Di Chum*, will be crafted using bamboo sticks. Once these frames are completed, the roof's apex will be covered with dried cane leaves or similar foliage known as *Di* (thatched).



Fig 4 : Khumai/Sleeping platform for children
Source: Art & Culture dept.



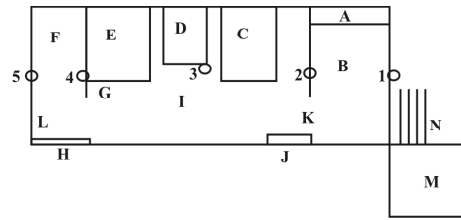
Fig 5 : Tap/Hearth
Source : Art & Culture dept.

The wall of the house is made up of carefully interwoven split bamboo, crafted into various designs. The most prevalent pattern is known as *Bawhtah*. *Bawhtah* involves the interlacing of one split bamboo with another in an overlapping fashion,

creating a twill weave effect. In this twill weave, each horizontal bamboo (weft) traverses over and under multiple vertical bamboo (warp) in a systematic arrangement. This produces a unique diagonal pattern, commonly known as twill lines, whose incline can vary.

Let us explore the layout of a typical Mizo house. It comprises three primary sections: the front verandah located outside the entrance, the central living area, and a compact, partitioned room at the rear. To gain a clearer understanding of this layout, it is recommended to refer to the floor plan created by J. Shakespear.

Kawmchhak/Uphill side



1. Pawn sut/Outside upright post
2. Sumhmun sut/Upright post
3. Tap sut/Upright post
4. Banglai sut
5. Inchar or Char sut
- A. Thingkhawn/Woodstack
- B. Sumhmun/Verandah/Mortar Place
- C. Khumai/Sleeping platform for children
- D. Tap/Hearth
- E. Khumpui/Sleeping platform for parents
- F. In-char/Lumber room
- G. Khumpui lu/Head of the big bed
- H. Chhuar/Shelve
- I. Chhuat/Open floor
- J. Tuium hunna/Water tube enclosure

- K. Kawngkhar/Front door
- L. Inchar kawngkhar/Back door
- M. Luhkhapui/Raised platform
- N. Luhkha/Platform of logs

As depicted in the illustration, the *Sumhmun*, also known as the front verandah or threshold, is accessed through a platform constructed from logs. The *Sumhmun* serves as the space where the daily cleaning of paddy takes place using a mortar called *Sum*. The walls of the *Sumhmun* are adorned with skulls or the remains of animals and birds hunted by the homeowner. Additionally, designated areas are provided for fowls as shelter during the night and to lay and hatch their eggs.

Access to the house is gained through the front door, a modest opening measuring approximately 4 feet by 2.6 feet. Positioned right next to the door, in the corner, is a designated space for hollow bamboo tubes known as *Tuum*, utilized for collecting and storing water. On the opposite side, there is the *Khumai*, a sleeping platform specifically intended for children and unmarried young girl. Adjacent to the *Khumai* is the hearth made of earth, referred to as *Tap/Tapchhak*, serving as the area for kindling fires for cooking and warming the house. Above the hearth, bamboo shelves are arranged, one above the other, facilitating the drying of paddy seeds and providing storage for various miscellaneous items.

Adjacent to the *Tap* is the *Khumpui*, an elevated sleeping space designated for parents. A wall separates the *Khumpui* from the adjoining room, serving dual purposes as a storage space for lumber and as a closet. There is a small door, referred

to as *Inchar/Kawmchar Kawngkhar*, that provides access to outside of the house.

Close to the house entrance, there's an elevated platform called *Luhkhapui*. This space serves various functions, such as sitting, weaving, and drying items. Upon reaching adolescence, young men typically sleep in the *Zawlbuk*, the bachelors' dormitory. However, before midnight, these young men often visit the homes of their female friends to engage in flirtation and to socialize. The *Chhuat*, or the floor, is where guests are accommodated and entertained.

The house of the village chief shares similarities with commoners' houses but is considerably larger. This size difference allows for more space, particularly for sleeping areas and the *Chhuat* area. The *Chhuat* area serves as a space where the chief can entertain guests and conduct meetings with elders. Additionally, chiefs and wealthy individuals in the village may have a *Bahzar*, another verandah-like area. The *Bahzar* is accessible through the *Inchar kawngkhar* or the back door of the house. This architectural distinction emphasizes the chief's status and provides additional areas for socializing and conducting important village affairs.

The *Zawlbuk* holds significant importance in the village, being both the most important and the largest building. Despite being constructed using the same materials as other houses in the village, what sets the *Zawlbuk* apart is the collective effort involved in its construction. Every family in the village participates in building the *Zawlbuk* through a form of community service called *Hnatlang* in Mizo. This communal involvement not only underscores the importance of the

Zawlbuk but also strengthens the sense of unity and shared responsibility among the villagers.

The Mizo people, historically engaged in shifting cultivation rather than nomadic living, periodically moved to new locations for agriculture. In adapting to this lifestyle, their dwellings were constructed to accommodate the need for relocation, using materials that facilitated ease of movement or reconstruction. Emphasizing minimal furniture and equipment was a practical approach, addressing the challenges associated with sudden relocation.

3. Conclusion :

Traditional Mizo architecture is deeply rooted in the region's unique topography, climate and cultural practices. The layout of a Mizo village reflects the hierarchical social structure and the practical considerations of living in a mountainous environment. The construction of houses and communal spaces is a testament to the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the Mizo people. The traditional architecture of Mizo villages in Mizoram represents a harmonious blend of cultural, climatic, and practical considerations deeply rooted in the lifestyle and history of its people. The layout and construction techniques of Mizo houses reflect the geographical challenges and resource availability of the region, characterized by hilly terrains and abundant bamboo and timber.

The strategic placement of structures within the village hierarchy, from the chief's residence to the commoners' houses and the *Zawlbuk*, underscores the social organization and community dynamics prevalent in Mizo society. Each component of a Mizo

house, from the raised platforms and sleeping areas to the verandahs and hearth, serves a specific purpose tailored to the needs of its inhabitants.

Furthermore, the communal effort involved in building structures like the *Zawlbuk* exemplifies the collective spirit and shared responsibility that defines Mizo culture. The emphasis on simplicity and adaptability in architectural design reflects the historical lifestyle of shifting cultivation, where mobility and practicality were essential.

Overall, traditional Mizo architecture not only embodies the aesthetic preferences and building techniques of the region but also serves as a testament to the rich cultural heritage and communal ethos of the Mizo people. Through the preservation and study of these architectural traditions, we gain valuable insights into the history, lifestyle and values of this unique community in Northeast India. Top of Form

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कला और संस्कृति के शहर के रूप में बनारस

पूनम कुमारी

असिस्टेंट प्रोफेसर

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आध्यात्मिक नगर, गाज़ियाबाद, उत्तर प्रदेश

प्रो. (डॉ.) राज मिश्रा

पत्रकारिता एवं जनसंचार विभाग

राजीव गांधी विश्वविद्यालय, रोना हिल्स, दोईमुख,
अरुणाचल प्रदेश

जीवन और मृत्यु दोनों का पर्याय माने जाने वाला बनारस, जिसे वाराणसी के नाम से भी जाना जाता है, उत्तर प्रदेश का एक सुंदर शहर है। यह कला, संस्कृति और आध्यात्मिकता के क्षेत्र में एक समृद्ध पहचान रखता है। दुनिया के सबसे पुराने बसे हुए शहरों में से एक होने के नाते, बनारस की कलात्मक, धार्मिक और सांस्कृतिक विरासत आज भी इसके बोलचाल, संगीत, गंगा घाट और मंदिरों में स्पष्ट रूप से दिखाई देती है। बनारस हर रंग को समेटे हुए है, और इसका अनुभव करना लाखों लोगों की इच्छा रहती है। यह कहा जाता है कि जिसने प्राचीन नगरी बनारस को जीया है, वह दुनिया के किसी भी कोने में जीवनयापन कर सकता है। इस शहर ने देश को कई दार्शनिक, कवि, लेखक और संगीतज्ञ दिए हैं। बनारस के घाटों पर उगते सूर्य के साथ पुरानी इमारतें ऐसी प्रतीत होती हैं, जैसे वे अपनी खुशियों को खुलकर बयान कर रही हों। बनारस भारतीय संस्कृति का भी एक अद्वितीय सांस्कृतिक और कलात्मक केंद्र है, जिसका ऐतिहासिक योगदान अत्यधिक महत्वपूर्ण रहा है। यहाँ की धार्मिक और आध्यात्मिक परंपराओं ने कला और संस्कृति को एक गहन आयाम प्रदान किया है। संगीत, नृत्य, चित्रकला, साहित्य और शिल्पकला की प्राचीन और समृद्ध परंपराएँ बनारस को कला और संस्कृति के शहर के रूप में विशेष पहचान दिलाती हैं।

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बनारस भारतीय संस्कृति का एक अद्वितीय सांस्कृतिक और कलात्मक केंद्र है, जिसका ऐतिहासिक योगदान अत्यधिक महत्वपूर्ण रहा है। यहाँ की धार्मिक और आध्यात्मिक परंपराओं ने कला और संस्कृति को एक गहन आयाम प्रदान किया है। संगीत, नृत्य, चित्रकला, साहित्य और शिल्पकला की प्राचीन और समृद्ध परंपराएँ बनारस को कला और संस्कृति के शहर के रूप में विशेष पहचान दिलाती हैं।

बनारस के लोग और उनकी भाषा :

कहते हैं कि जब तुलसीदास रामचरितमानस की रचना कर रहे थे, तो अस्सी घाट का शांत वातावरण उन्हें इतना भा गया कि उन्होंने सोचा कि भगवान राम की कथा लिखने के लिए इससे पवित्र और उत्तम स्थान कोई नहीं हो सकता। बनारस की भाषा 'काशिका भोजपुरी' है, जो एक ओर अपनी कड़वाहट तो दूसरी ओर मधुरता का अनुभव कराती है। यहाँ के लोग खुली सोच और मस्तमौला स्वभाव के होते हैं, जो जीवन को सरलता और उत्साह से जीते हैं। राजेंद्र त्रिपाठी (2010) ने अपने अध्ययन में बनारस को 'धर्म और संस्कृति का अद्वितीय संगम' बताया है, जहाँ धर्म और कला एक-दूसरे से गहरे रूप से जुड़े हुए हैं।

साहित्य का केंद्र :

बनारस की साहित्यिक परंपरा इसकी सांस्कृतिक धरोहर का एक महत्वपूर्ण स्तंभ है। यह शहर हिंदी

साहित्य के प्रमुख केंद्रों में से एक है, जहाँ कई महान कवियों और लेखकों ने जन्म लिया और अपनी रचनाएँ दीं, जिनमें तुलसीदास, कबीर और भारतेन्दु हरिश्चंद्र प्रमुख हैं। राही मासूम रज़ा (2014) के अनुसार, 'बनारस केवल धार्मिक स्थल नहीं है, बल्कि एक सृजनशील साहित्यिक केंद्र भी है, जहाँ की साहित्यिक गतिविधियाँ सदियों से जीवंत रही हैं।'

शिक्षा का केंद्र :

बनारस शिक्षा और ज्ञान का महत्वपूर्ण केंद्र रहा है। प्राचीन काल से यह शहर विद्या, दर्शन, और विज्ञान की शिक्षा के लिए प्रसिद्ध रहा है। यहाँ के विश्व-प्रसिद्ध विश्वविद्यालय और संस्थान इसे भारत के ज्ञानपीठों में एक प्रमुख स्थान प्रदान करते हैं। बनारस के निवासी शिक्षा के महत्व को गहराई से समझते हैं और ज्ञान की खोज में हमेशा संलग्न रहते हैं।

20वीं सदी में बनारस ने आधुनिक शिक्षा प्रणाली में भी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई। 1921 में स्थापित काशी विद्यापीठ ने भारतीय स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के दौरान राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा के प्रसार में केंद्रीय भूमिका निभाई। काशी हिंदू विश्वविद्यालय (BHU), जिसे 1916 में पंडित मदन मोहन मालवीय द्वारा स्थापित किया गया, आज भारत के प्रमुख विश्वविद्यालयों में शामिल है। BHU न केवल कला, साहित्य और संस्कृति की शिक्षा प्रदान करता है, बल्कि विज्ञान, चिकित्सा और प्रौद्योगिकी के क्षेत्र में भी महत्वपूर्ण योगदान देता है।

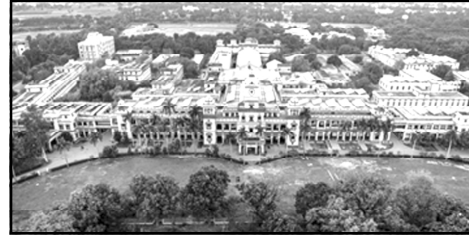
काशी विद्यापीठ और सम्पूर्णानन्द संस्कृत विश्वविद्यालय जैसे संस्थान भी शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में अपनी महत्वपूर्ण पहचान बनाए हुए हैं। इसके अलावा, आधुनिक कला दीर्घाएं, सांस्कृतिक केंद्र, और रचनात्मक स्थल उभर चुके हैं, जो स्थानीय और अंतर्राष्ट्रीय कलाकारों को अपने काम का प्रदर्शन करने और बनारस की कलात्मक विरासत के साथ नए और अभिनव तरीकों से जुड़ने के अवसर प्रदान करते हैं।

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शहर की हस्तकला और शिल्पकला :

विश्वप्रसिद्ध बनारस में कला हिंदू पौराणिक कथाओं और आध्यात्मिकता से लेकर मुगल वास्तुकला और इस्लामी कला तक अपने विविध प्रभावों का प्रतिबिंब है। बनारस अपने उत्तम रेशम बुनाई के लिए विशेष रूप से प्रसिद्ध है। विद्या धार (2016) के अनुसार, "बनारस की शिल्पकला में धार्मिक, सामाजिक और सांस्कृतिक मूल्य जुड़ते हैं, जो इसे एक अद्वितीय कला रूप बनाते हैं।" बनारस की बनारसी साड़ियाँ अन्तराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर प्रसिद्ध हैं। बनारसी साड़ी भारतीय परिधान का एक महत्वपूर्ण और प्रतिष्ठित हिस्सा है। ये साड़ियाँ अपनी बारीक कारीगरी, शानदार डिज़ाइन और विशेष बुनाई के लिए मशहूर हैं। बनारसी साड़ी का इतिहास बहुत पुराना है, और इसका उत्पादन बनारस (वाराणसी) में सदियों से हो रहा है। इसे मुगल का में विशेष पहचान मिली, जब मुगलों ने बुनाई और कढ़ाई की तकनीकों को प्रोत्साहित किया। बनारसी साड़ी सिर्फ एक परिधान नहीं है, यह भारतीय संस्कृति और परंपरा का प्रतीक है। इनकी सुंदरता और उत्कृष्टता हर महिला को अद्वितीय बनाती है।



संगीत और नृत्य का केंद्र :

बनारस अपनी समृद्ध और जीवंत संगीत, नृत्य और प्रदर्शन कलाओं के लिए भी प्रसिद्ध है। शास्त्रीय संगीत की ध्रुपद और ख्याल शैलियाँ शहर के सांस्कृतिक परिदृश्य में प्रमुख स्थान रखती हैं। यहां कई संगीत घरानों का जन्म या विकास हुआ है। कथक, भरतनाट्यम और ओडिसी जैसे नृत्य रूप भी यहां न केवल अभ्यास किए जाते हैं, बल्कि बड़े उत्साह के साथ मंचित भी होते हैं।

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(UGC CARE - Listed Journal)

संगीत के क्षेत्र में वाराणसी की विशिष्ट पहचान रही है। यह शहर लंबे समय से शास्त्रीय संगीत का एक प्रतिष्ठित केंद्र है, जो भारत और दुनियाभर के संगीतकारों, विद्वानों और संगीत प्रेमियों को आकर्षित करता है। ध्रुपद, हिंदुस्तानी शास्त्रीय संगीत की सबसे पुरानी शैलियों में से एक, वाराणसी में गहरी जड़ें रखता है। इसे ध्रुपद परंपरा का गढ़ माना जाता है, जहाँ प्रसिद्ध ध्रुपद गुरु रहते हैं और अपनी शिक्षा का प्रसार करते हैं।

हिंदुस्तानी शास्त्रीय संगीत की एक और प्रमुख शैली, ख्याल, का भी बनारस में अभ्यास और संरक्षण होता है। यहाँ के घरानों ने ख्याल गायन के विकास में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई है, और इन वंशों से कई प्रसिद्ध संगीतकार उभरे हैं। शास्त्रीय संगीत के साथ ही, बनारस जीवंत लोक संगीत परंपराओं और भक्ति संगीत शैलियों का भी केंद्र है। लोक संगीतकार, सड़क कलाकार और भक्ति गायक अक्सर शहर की सड़कों, मंदिरों और घाटों पर प्रदर्शन करते हुए देखे जा सकते हैं, जो स्थानीय निवासियों और पर्यटकों को मंत्रमुग्ध करते हैं।

हिंदुस्तानी शास्त्रीय संगीत, जो भारतीय शास्त्रीय संगीत की दो प्रमुख परंपराओं में से एक है, वाराणसी के संगीत परिदृश्य में विशेष स्थान रखता है। शहर विभिन्न संगीत घरानों से जुड़ा हुआ है, जिनकी विशिष्ट शैलियाँ और वंश इस संगीत धारा को समृद्ध करते हैं।



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अध्यात्म के केंद्र :

वाराणसी की संस्कृति विविध परंपराओं, आध्यात्मिक प्रथाओं, कलात्मक अभिव्यक्तियों और सामाजिक गतिशीलता का बहुरूपदर्शक है। वाराणसी को भारत के सबसे पवित्र शहरों में से एक माना जाता है, जो भगवान शिव के निवास और हिंदुओं के लिए तीर्थयात्रा का केंद्र माना जाता है। शहर के कई मंदिर, तीर्थस्थल और पवित्र स्थल हर साल लाखों भक्तों और तीर्थयात्रियों को आकर्षित करते हैं। गंगा आरती (गंगा की पूजा), पूजा समारोह और यात्राएं (तीर्थयात्रा) जैसे अनुष्ठान वाराणसी की धार्मिक संस्कृति का अभिन्न अंग हैं, जो निवासियों और आगंतुकों के बीच समान रूप से आध्यात्मिकता और भक्ति की गहरी भावना को बढ़ावा देते हैं। बनारस और काशी विश्वनाथ मंदिर भारतीय संस्कृति, धर्म, और परंपराओं के जीवंत प्रतीक हैं। यहाँ की यात्रा एक आध्यात्मिक और सांस्कृतिक अनुभव प्रदान करती है, जो जीवनभर यादगार रहता है।

बनारस की गलियों में छुपे कई रहस्य :

यहाँ की गलियाँ बनारस की आत्मा का एक महत्वपूर्ण हिस्सा हैं। ये गलियाँ संकरी, तंग और ऐतिहासिक महत्व से भरपूर होती हैं। ये गलियाँ अपने आप में एक भूलभुलैया हैं और इनमें घूमना एक रोमांचक अनुभव होता है। बनारस की गलियों में आपको हर कदम पर इतिहास और संस्कृति की झलक मिलेगी। प्राचीन मंदिर, हवन-कुंड, ऐतिहासिक इमारतें और पुराने घर यहाँ के विशेष आकर्षण हैं। बनारस की गलियों में स्थानीय जीवन की एक अलग ही रौनक होती है। लोग यहाँ अपने दैनिक कार्यों में व्यस्त रहते हैं, दुकानें, बाजार और छोटे-छोटे व्यवसाय यहाँ की गलियों को जीवंत बनाए रखते हैं। इन गलियों में विभिन्न प्रकार के स्वादिष्ट व्यंजन मिलते हैं। यहाँ के पान, कचौड़ी, जलेबी और लस्सी प्रसिद्ध हैं।

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अद्भुत वास्तुकला :

शहर की वास्तुकला इसकी कलात्मक विरासत का एक और वसीयतनामा है, इसकी भूलभुलैया गलियाँ, प्राचीन मंदिरों, घाटों (नदी के किनारे की सीढ़ियाँ) और महलों से युक्त हैं। बनारस की हर गलियों में हजारों कहानियाँ देखने और सुनने को मिलती हैं। घाट, विशेष रूप से, न केवल वास्तुशिल्प चमत्कार हैं, बल्कि अनुष्ठान, समारोह और त्योहारों सहित विभिन्न सांस्कृतिक और धार्मिक गतिविधियों के लिए मंच के रूप में भी काम करते हैं।

इसके अलावा, यह समकालीन कलात्मक अभिव्यक्तियों को भी गले लगाता है। बनारस के घाट शहर की समृद्ध ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक छवि का प्रतिबिंब हैं, जो विभिन्न सभ्यताओं और राजवंशों से प्रभावित हैं जिन्होंने इस क्षेत्र पर अपनी छाप छोड़ी है। शहर की हिंदू वास्तुकला की विशेषता में समरूपता, प्रतीकवाद और आभूषण से सज्जित देवी और देवताओं की नककशियाँ हैं, जो अक्सर हिन्दू धार्मिक संरचनाओं से जुड़ा होता है। बनारस के कई घाटों में हिंदू मंदिर वास्तुकला के तत्व हैं, जैसे अलंकृत शिखर (शिखर), गुंबद आदि। घाटों का वास्तुशिल्प लेआउट अक्सर विभिन्न हिंदू देवी-देवताओं को समर्पित मंदिर परिसरों के आसपास घूमता है, जो धार्मिक गतिविधियों और अनुष्ठानों के लिए केंद्र बिंदु के रूप में कार्य करते हैं। मुगलों ने भी बनारस में अपनी अमिट छाप छोड़ी है और मुगल वास्तुकला की विशेषताएं, जैसे मेहराब, गुंबद और सममित उद्यान, कुछ घाटों की संरचनाओं में देखी जा सकती हैं, खासकर मंडपों और मस्जिदों में। मुगलों ने लाल बलुआ पत्थर और सफेद संगमरमर का उपयोग, कुछ घाटों की इमारतों की निर्माण में किया जो आज भी वर्तमान है।

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पर्यटन का केंद्र :

बनारस एक प्रमुख पर्यटन स्थल है। यहाँ के अन्य प्रमुख आकर्षणों में सारनाथ, रामनगर किला, और विभिन्न घाट शामिल हैं। बनारस की गलियाँ, यहाँ का भोजन, और स्थानीय संस्कृति भी पर्यटकों को आकर्षित करती हैं। बनारस टूरिज़्म के दृश्य से भी एक महत्वपूर्ण जगह है और हर साल देश-विदेशों से करोड़ों की संख्या में लोग यहाँ बनारस को जीने और उसके स्वाद में खोने आते हैं। बनारस की देव दीपावली का उत्सव विश्व प्रसिद्ध है और हर वर्ष इस उत्सव को देखने के लिए विश्व के हर कोने से लोग आते हैं। दीपो की रोशनी से जगमगाते घाट देखने का आनंद जो एक बार देख ले दुबारा फिर जरूर आए। कुछ तो जीवन के अंत समय में बनारस में ही अपना शरीर त्यागना चाहते हैं क्योंकि बनारस को स्वर्ग का द्वार भी कहा जाता है।

बनारस सदियों से अनगिनत कलाकारों, कवियों, लेखकों और फिल्म निर्माताओं के लिए एक संग्रह रहा है, जो इसकी रहस्यमय आभा और कालातीत सुंदरता के लिए तैयार है।

संक्षेप में, बनारस केवल कला का शहर नहीं है; यह एक जीवंत कैनवास है, जहाँ हर गली, हर घाट और हर मंदिर रचनात्मकता, आध्यात्मिकता, एक कहानी कहता है। यह शहर न केवल अपने ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक महत्व के लिए जाना जाता है, बल्कि इसकी कलात्मक परंपराएँ आज भी जीवंत हैं और भविष्य की पीढ़ियों को प्रेरित कर रही हैं। वाराणसी के संगीत, नृत्य, शिल्प और साहित्य ने इसे वैश्विक स्तर पर कला और संस्कृति के केंद्र के रूप में स्थापित किया है। इनकी अनूठी शैली और प्राचीन परंपराओं का संकलन बनारस को एक ऐसा सांस्कृतिक केंद्र बनाता है, जिसकी चमक सदियों से अबाधित रही है और आगे भी बनी रहेगी।

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The Silk Route : A Conduit for Trade and Cultural Interactions in South Asia

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Introduction :

The Silk Road was a complex network of roads that extended thousands of kilometres, crossing various terrains and connecting civilizations from China to the Mediterranean. The Silk Road functioned as a trade route and a channel for disseminating knowledge, art and technology, fostering beyond geographical limitations. Numerous travellers played a significant role in disseminating ideas and information from Europe to Asia along the Silk Road. Marco Polo, Ibn Battuta and Chinese travellers such as *Fa Hein (Faxian)* and *Huiuen Tsang (Xuanzang)* used these ancient roads to reach India from China. Marco Polo witnessed the magnificence of Chinese civilization and India on his journey via the Silk Route. Initially, the Silk Road was a network of caravan routes that actively facilitated the movement of trade products between China in the East and Rome, Italy, in the West from the 2nd century BC to the 15th century AD (Mishra, 2020).

The Silk Road can be broadly categorized into four segments from east to west: the initial segment extended from

Chang'an to the Jade Pass west of Dunhuang, leading into the Western Regions beyond the Han cultural sphere; the second segment traversed from Dunhuang, renowned for the Buddhist-themed Mogao Caves, through Xinjiang to Samarkand in contemporary Uzbekistan, the third segment connected Samarkand to the southern coastline of the Caspian Sea, reaching the eastern Mediterranean Sea, The fourth sector spanned from the eastern side of the Mediterranean, encompassing Istanbul, the Balkans, the Italian Peninsula, the Danube Valley, and the Rhine Valley (Chang, 2023, p.120). In this background, the paper explores the general interaction between the East and West, particularly South Asia's culture, intellectual ideas, innovation, development and modernity through the Silk Route.

Communications between the East and West :

The extended duration between the 2nd century BC to 1400 AD encompassed various events of significant global relevance. The vigorous commerce along the Silk Road persisted until the emergence of commercial capitalism in Europe

around the fourteenth century. Therefore, the Silk Roads connected the East and West in terms of science, art, literature, and modernity. Whitfield characterizes the Silk Road as the movement and exchange throughout Central Asia (Whitfield, 2015, p. 37). The Silk Road facilitated socio-economic growth and modernity by promoting the flow of commerce and ideas, contributing to modernization and technical advancement. Turkish and Arab merchants were introduced to the coastal towns of India. In addition, Turks facilitated the exchange of many commodities and economic endeavors along the Silk Road, while missionary and Sufi activities also contributed to the route's commercial dominance. The Silk Road played a significant role in the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and the Mongolian Empire (Kurin, 2002).

The camel served as the primary mode of transportation along this route. The ringing of camel bells on the Silk Road signifies the commerce of products across the Eurasian continent, the interplay of civilizations and extensive cultural exchanges over an extended duration (Chang, 2023). Consequently, the Silk Road was pivotal in transmitting and disseminating history, ideas, technology and most importantly, economic activities across diverse nations. Historically, this path was the inaugural link between the western and eastern worlds. In other words, it constituted a network of commercial, cultural and technical pathways from Central Asia to China.

Furthermore, domestic and international trade flourished under the Kushan Empire. The Great Silk Road profoundly impacted trade relations. Chinese forces assaulted

Dovan (Fergana) in the late 2nd century B.C. Since trade between Central Asia and China began, silk has infiltrated *Fergana*, *Sogdia*, and *Bactria*. As caravan routes developed, trade also expanded significantly. China supplied raw silk, silk fabrics, gold, leather, and several other commodities to Central Asia, while Central Asia exported gold, gemstones, and jewelry to China (Ubaydullaevna, 2020).

Hence, this path served as a vital conduit for communication between the West and East, facilitating the exchange of knowledge, tools, cultural artifacts, crops, innovative techniques, irrigation systems, advancement in trade, and the idea of modernity

Cultural Exchange and Intellectual Transmission :

The exchange of culture, ideas, and knowledge facilitated the flourishing of globalization through foreign travellers from one place to another. In this regard, a significant innovation by the Chinese was paper, along with their expertise in its production methods, which was disseminated initially from China to Central Asia, then to Baghdad and ultimately worldwide. The dissemination of advancements in science, technology, business, art and literature persisted across Asia. A fro-Eurasia constituted an interconnected realm where the culture, technologies and commodities of different regions influenced the lives of common individuals (Whitfield, 2015).

The Silk Route facilitated the infiltration of Western knowledge into India. Numerous travelers contributed to disseminating ideas and information from Europe to Asia over the Silk Route. Marco Polo, Ibn Battuta, and Chinese adventurers like

Fa Hein (Faxian) and Hiuen Tsang (Xinxiang) used these ancient roads to reach India from China. Marco Polo witnessed the magnificence of Chinese culture and India on his journey along the Silk Route (Whitfield, 2015).

Polo traversed Asia by land and sea for 24 years. The accounts of his journeys, recounted while imprisoned in a Genoa jail cell, ignited widespread European fascination with the Silk Road region. He recounted the Mongols, who had conquered China under Genghis and subsequently, Kublai Khan and extended their empire throughout Asia into Central Asia, India, Iran, and Asia Minor. Polo recounted remarkable narratives of the regions he had explored, the magnificent landmarks he had observed, and the immense riches of Asia (Kurin, 2002).

The networks of the Silk Roads facilitated interactions among many religious groups, ranging from localized faiths to expansive, global religions that traversed continents. The province of Tokharistan, previously known as Bactria, had a resurgence of Buddhism under the influence of the Turks from the Steppe and Tang China throughout the 600s and 700s AD. Sculptures from this period exhibit links to India and the heritage of Gandharan art, originating in contemporary northwest Pakistan, which evolved via encounters with ancient Greek and Roman civilizations¹ (The British Museum).

Additionally, Buddhism spread throughout the Silk Road, encompassing music, art and architecture. The stupa, a mound-like edifice housing relics, is an Indian architectural form transmitted to China through Buddhism; the term 'stupa,'

meaning 'heap' is derived from Sanskrit. Buddha's paintings and sculptures were also significant (Chang, 2023, pp.129-130).

Traders on the Silk Road diligently transported caravans to remote regions, bearing crafts, artworks and subterranean riches. Accompanying them were artists, priests and pilgrims, disseminating religious doctrines and technical concepts. In many instances, individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds were compelled to relocate by a formidable adversary in pursuit of more secure and bountiful territory. Military expeditions were arranged along the same paths. The Chinese chronicle records a military campaign commissioned by the Han dynasty emperor for the 'heavenly horses' of *Dayuan* (Fergana). Numerous writings exist on the Sogdian trading ports of the early Middle Ages and remarkable findings by Chinese archaeologists validate cultural influences and exchanges (Abdullaev, 2022, p. 77).

Further, Gandhara art was transmitted to China via Central Asia and gained widespread acceptance. The Silk Road influenced Gandhara and its cultural exchanges with ancient civilizations. The importance of Gandhara as a confluence of civilizations and faiths along the Silk Road, shaped by Greek, Persian, Indian, Central Asian, South Asia, and Chinese cultures (Kermani & Siddiqui, 2017).

The influence of cultural contacts on Gandhara, especially the dissemination of Buddhism, Christianity and other religions and their effects on commerce, economy, politics, and society. The early Buddhist carvings in Central Asia, their significance in Silk Road networks and their stylistic

and iconographic characteristics compared to the present creative traditions of Gandhara (Sardar & Saeed, 2020). Therefore, the ancient trading network known as the Silk Road facilitated the movement of items, ideas, culture, and knowledge between the East and the West.

The Silk Road is typically perceived as a conduit for exchanging opulent artifacts and goods over vast distances. Looking at the cultural and historical aspects represented in the ruins and their artifacts recreates a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the dynamic urbanization that characterized the urban centers of that era. During both periods of peace and conflict, commodities and concepts traversed simultaneously eastward and westward via the Silk Road. Migrating groups, such as the Sogdians and Gandharans, introduced their resources, technology and the intangible legacy of arts, beliefs and identities, serving as the threads of social networks and facilitators of cross cultural interactions (Lin, 2019).

The engagement of items with the civilizations they encountered, those who produced, traded, received and consumed them, offers new insights into the pattern of a Silk Road urban paradigm characterized by diversity and cosmopolitanism. Various faiths coexisted and flourished, being conveyed, translated, and adapted by peoples along the Silk Road as they transitioned from one culture to another (Lin, 2019). The paramount legacy of the Silk Road is the culture of tolerance cultivated by the rulers of the minor oasis kingdoms in the northern and southern Taklamakan. Throughout the years, these kings embraced migrants from elsewhere,

allowing them to follow their religions. Buddhism, Manicheism, Zoroastrianism, and Eastern Christianity were introduced to China. Archaeological sites and the conserved artifacts provide insight into this formerly tolerant society (Hansen, 2015).

The dissemination of Islamic doctrines through contact and travel establishes communities throughout the Silk Road region. Numerous other religions and belief systems, including Manichaeism, Nestorianism and Zoroastrianism, disseminated along the Silk Roads and significantly influenced the evolution of the cultures along its pathways. The Silk Roads served as conduits for the transmission of technology (e.g., cast iron), innovations (e.g., magnetic compass), engineering (e.g., bridge construction), sciences (e.g., medical knowledge), and agricultural practices (e.g., vine cultivation) (Williams, 2015, p.31). Additionally, the trade of commodities between China and the Roman Empire enhanced both areas' economies and promoted cultural interchange. Chinese silk, greatly prized in Rome, was traded for Roman glassware, gold, and silver. This symbiotic relationship established a basis for cultural exchange that impacted art, religion, philosophy and scientific knowledge.

Furthermore, the Silk Road catalysed the dissemination of information and ideas. Academics, adventurers, and diplomats accompanied the caravans, which were burdened with silk and spices.

Eurasian Trade and Commercial Routes :

The Silk Road routes extended from China to India, Asia Minor, Mesopotamia,

Egypt, Africa, Greece, Rome and Britain. The northern Mesopotamian area (modern-day Iran) emerged as China's primary commercial partner inside the Parthian Empire, facilitating significant cultural contacts. Chinese innovations, like paper and gunpowder from the Han Dynasty, significantly influenced the globe. Additionally, Eastern spices facilitated commerce between the East and the West, fostering the development of communities, agriculture, private farming, and silk manufacture while establishing land and maritime transit routes. This was a distinctive economic phenomenon in the annals of Eurasian culture (Mishra, 2020, p. 7).

The spice trade initiated the first significant European engagement in Southeast Asia. The trade of spices, especially cloves, surged in several nations along the routes from the Indies to the Mediterranean. Food crops, gemstones, pearls, silk, horses, tortoiseshells, and dyes were significant commodities along the Silk Route. Trade was the fundamental force on the Silk Road, linking the East and West (Elisseeff, 2000).

The interconnection of these channels facilitated the development of cosmopolitan cities and trading centers, where merchants from many cultures gathered to conduct trade and cultural interaction. The Silk Road trade routes significantly influenced the economic, social and cultural dynamics of the places they connected, creating a legacy that persists in contemporary society (Tapalaga, 2023).

Further, the coalition of traders from Europe and Asia traversed intersecting caravan routes to exchange ideas. In the

western markets of Cairo and Constantinople, Greek and Babylonian traders converged with their Han and Indian counterparts. Two potential land routes were established between these commercial centers: one via the northeastern terrain by crossing the Hindukush and the gorges of the *Tsangpo River* and the other through the *Irrawaddy-Mekong valley connecting Kamrup, Arakan and Nanking*. However, the prior method was predominantly favored by the merchants. The extensive continent of Central Asia, extending from eastern Iran to Dunhuang and accessible by the Hindukush and Karakoram mountains, was inhabited by several ethnic groups, including the Scythians, Bactrians, Sogdians, Han and subsequently the Persians and Arabs. The oasis cities of *Kashgar, Turpan, Hami, Xian, Keriya, and Urumqi* emerged as the economic and commodities trading centers of the Central Asian Silk Route (Roy & Bhattacharya, 2017).

Additionally, the Route began in Xian, now Changan. Travelers traveled from *Xian to Dunhuang and Lan Zhou*, the intersection points of the Northern and Southern Silk Routes. Merchants and traders may take the Northern Silk Route through *Hami, Turfan, Karashahr, Kucha, Tumchuk, and Kashgarh*. The diverse people stocked along the route gave rise to rich, inter-exchanging cultural practices like 'Gandhara art' or Greko-Indian art and 'Karez' deep irrigation. Buddhism spread from India to China via these central Asian caravans stops on the Silk Road. The renowned monk *Xuangzang* visited these significant towns and saw the glory of these commercial towns and the impact of the monarchs and noble merchant class promoting Buddhism in

these places (Roy & Bhattacharya, 2017).

Merchant Category	Specific Characteristic
Mandisārtha	Who used to carry their goods on their own
Bahalika	Those who used camels, ponies, bulls to carry loads
Bharvaha	Who used to carry other's load
Audorika	Who were the managers on merchants of labours
Karpathika Sartha	Includes businessman and Monks

Table 1: Diversity of Indian traders along the Silk Route
Source: Srivastava, 2010, p. 271

Several routes throughout India connected the northern and southern landlocked 'Silk Road' with portions of the Maritime Silk Road from *Kaliyadwipa* (Eastern coast of Africa) to Champa. North of the Black Sea to the Caspian, a route spanned central Asia's mountain ranges from *Kashgar* to Iran via *Kaushambi*, Mathura, Pamir, Hindukush, and Persia (Srivastava, 2010, p. 270). Five types of merchants were discovered along these routes:

Thus, the Silk Road served as a vital conduit for a network of trade routes essential for commercial exchanges throughout Asia and the Mediterranean Sea. Further, a trade and cultural history of South and Central Asia elucidates the social lives of ancient traders and characterizes their society as a cosmopolitan social group. The connection between historical narratives and contemporary cultural contexts demonstrates the correlation between social difficulties in present

societies and those of the past.

Conclusion :

The Silk Road's cultural diversity and hybridization stimulated significant cultural, technological and economic advancement. It functioned as a medium for cultural influence, molding societies through common knowledge, principles, and practices. In this regard, refugees, artists, artisans, missionaries, thieves, and envoys used these roads throughout Central Asia, particularly South Asia. The most impactful individuals traversing the Silk Road were refugees. Immigrant waves introduced innovations from their native countries, using those abilities or incorporating themes in their new environments. The cultural transfer occurred when the Chinese assimilated knowledge from foreign civilizations, particularly India, the origin of Buddhism. Buddhist missionaries served as essential translators and developed a technique for transcribing unknown terminology from foreign languages, such

as Sanskrit, into Chinese, which is being utilized today. Chinese included over 35,000 new lexemes, encompassing specialized Buddhist terminology and quotidian vocabulary (Hansen, 2015). Individuals conversing in many languages frequently encountered one other along the Silk Road.

The contemporary Silk Road is much detached from the heritage of the historical network. The ancient Silk Road is re-emerging under a novel geopolitical framework, presenting opportunities for mutual development among the nations linked by this path. The 21st-century Silk Road encompasses nearly all communication infrastructure and transportation forms, including road networks, railways, and gas pipelines (Mishra, 2020). Consequently, the Silk Road's influence is profound and still shapes connections between West and South Asia in contemporary times. A significant legacy is the cultural exchange that occurred along the trade routes. The Silk Road served as a conduit for transmitting ideas and information, enabling the exchange of scientific, technological, and philosophical concepts between the East and the West. The connection relies on historical evidence from the past shaped by current social situations and the legacies of previous impacts on present social interactions.

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The Ordinary and the Other in 'The Great Indian Kitchen'

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Introduction :

Indian Cinema has undergone multiple changes when it comes to the representation of women on the big screen. From traditional representations of men and women in the film industry, a sea change is found in the production and direction of movies. Men and women as directors and producers are seen bringing to light the multiple facets of womanhood, focussing on the fundamental issues ignored or misrepresented so far. Movies like 'Pink' (2016), 'Thappad' (2020), 'English Vinglish' (2012), 'Lipstick Under My Burkha' (2016), 'Queen' (2013) and 'Kahani' (2012) showcase the bold and unspoken aspects of femineity that are often side-lined or marginalised under the garb of tradition and 'civilised' culture in general. Contemporary Cinema has achieved more significant strides in depicting the humdrum existence of both men and women, often puncturing the established notions of civility and cultural stereotypes

in all walks of life. The patriarchal system prevalent in the Indian Subcontinent has been voiced and pictured across different forums, bringing to life its dynamics and complexities. Writers and directors have focussed on highlighting the sensitive issues associated with women's spaces and bodies. Be it the Indian film or television industry, debatable issues like purity, menstruation, religious and cultural taboos, and norms have been highlighted to voice the unspoken inherent oppressive norms prevalent in Indian societies. From the traditional objectification of women (damsels in distress, dependent on the male fraternity), the Indian Cinema has evolved by leaps and bounds. Young women, independent, ready to break all the bonds and shackles that have always existed, are presented as female champions, solely battling all odds and doing the unconventional. The dual portrayal of women as angels or monsters has been

replaced by new roles and characteristics, not given vehemence so far.

Nevertheless, the male prejudice fed to society via films and media (a powerful platform of communication and representation) has changed significantly. The writers and the audience have started questioning the age-old customs and principles. The cliched 'sas-bahu' relationship has been replaced by the issues like marital rape, abduction and menstruation. The study aims to analyse the roles of men and women in a society founded on patriarchal lines.

Discussion :

The '*Great Indian Kitchen*,' written and directed by Jeo Baby, has a lot to offer and portrays while investigating and questioning the inherent and unseen patriarchal models and paradigms. This movie created much hype due to various reasons. The scant use of dialogue and the naked portrayal of the deeply rooted patriarchy sets the movie apart from other productions. However, it does not show the explicit domestic abuse present in society but the 'normal' and the traditional roles defined for men and women. The characters shown in the movie exemplify how women are made to step into the shoes, traditionally designed, with soft words and overtly pleasing smiles. The movie implies that patriarchy and the resultant consequences need not embody aggression or physical assault but also unspoken and silent oppression by mere words and expressions.

Furthermore, it shows different generations of men and women and the varying attitudes and beliefs that set them apart and yoke them together as a system

or an institution. The study aims to present the wretched state of Indian women as the 'other,' marginalised and suppressed by the patriarchal wheels of society. The movie is an amalgam of the 'ordinary' (men who lie outside the circle of norms) and the 'other' (women who are supposed to follow the recognised rules and traditions).

Otherness as a concept or a phenomenon in feminism is associated with the pioneering work of Simone de Beauvoir. According to Beauvoir (2011), 'alterity is a fundamental category of human thought' (p. 26). For every Subject to exist, there must be an object in relation to it so that domination and discrimination can be asserted by one group over the other. The traditional belief about the status of women to men rests on the foundation of the dependency complex. Man exists on his own, but the same is not true of a woman; her identity and existence are acknowledged with respect to a man (p. 26).

The movie showcases the male as a subject, the supreme and the woman as the 'other.' The existence of the 'other' is constantly analysed and studied from the dominant group's point of view. In a similar vein, man-woman relationships and their co-existence are analysed and charted out by the dominant male fraternity. According to Beauvoir (2011), a woman is "determined and differentiated in relation to man, while he is not in relation to her; she is the inessential in front of the essential. He is the Subject; he is the Absolute. She is the Other" (p. 26). The responsibility of acknowledgement depends on an individual's perception. If a woman considers herself inessential, it stems from the inferiority complex harboured and nurtured from the beginning. The otherness is not

constructed in isolation; its growth and breeding require a relative factor.

A sex-based division of society is impossible since a pair is a basic unit, with the two halves glued to one another. The essential quality of a woman is that she is the Other at the center of anything whose two halves are dependent upon one another (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 29). Society rests on the shoulders of both men and women. Family, as an essential constituent of a society, requires the efforts of every member to flourish and exist. The traditional dichotomy vests the responsibility of nurturing and nourishing on the shoulders of women. The essence of family and its values and traditions is fed to the girls only, signifying the conventional norms and traditions evident in the movie (46:13).

As far as female characterisation is concerned, the movie presents three different generations engulfed by the patriarchal whirlpool. The lead role played by Nimisha Sajayan is a fusion of the different roles of a woman in a patriarchal society. The movie is rich symbolically and figuratively. Nimisha steps into the shoes of a daughter-in-law at the beginning of the film, wearing a sari, which is quite symbolic. The sari symbolises the perpetual cycle of roles of women (wife, daughter-in-law, mother), which is shared by others. Nimisha is a modern woman with dreams and aspirations, alien to the conservative and orthodox ideology. Like a marionette, she is uprooted from an environment of growth and free will that stands in stark contrast with the one at her in-laws.

Brought up by parents outside India in a modern environment, she lands in a conventional family and society. She is

supposed to pander to her husband's (Suraj Venjaramoodu) whims and pleasures and maintain decorum and dignity. Her in-laws, having a name in the community, resort to simple modes of nurturing and managing the household. The kitchen becomes her domestic space, where she is seen running daily errands to bring food to the table to feed hungry stomachs. The kitchen in the Indian context is imbued with myriad meanings and implications. It is not only a place to cook but a space to be governed solely by women and passed down as a legacy. As a daughter-in-law, Nimisha is forced to resort to primal modes of cooking and washing, even though having the basic amenities and facilities at her disposal. The traditional versus the modern ideology strangles her existence and individuality. Her mother-in-law, belonging to another generation, is used to managing the household's challenging and exhausting job. Although having a post-graduate degree, as her husband claims, she is not allowed to work outside as the onus of taking care of her children and their proper upbringing lies on her shoulders (1:03:57). She does not show resistance or speak a word against the set norm as she is seen grinding chutneys on the stone and cooking rice on the hearth as preferred by her husband.

In contrast to these characters, other women are lucky enough to live a life of free will and choice. Nimisha's friend and sister-in-law are shown in an entirely different light, free from the customs. Her friend lives a happy and carefree life, where the men also partake in the household chores and support the wives. Similarly, Nimisha's sister-in-law is shown in a much better state, not controlled by her husband.

A young schoolgirl, clad in uniform, is presented multiple times, signalling a ray of hope in a dark and dismal atmosphere. The movie shows the contrasting lifestyles of women who are placed in different environments and situations. While her friend has a right to make suggestions about the food to be cooked, backed by her husband's support and care, Nimisha has no choice but to abide by decisions made by others. She must follow the set protocol of her husband and his father.

The man-woman relationship is like that of master-slave where the master, though dependent on the slave, 'does not posit his need' but fulfils his necessity by the power he holds on the other (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 29). The 'ordinary' (men) are shown living a comfortable and cosy life. Suraj is always shown doing exercises, performing professional chores, or enjoying the pleasures of marital life. He does not help his wife with the specific tasks of running and managing the household. Similarly, her father-in-law is also seen dallying in the mundane pleasures of life, lying on the bed, reading newspapers, and surfing the phone. He is entirely dependent on his wife to do the basic personal chores, fetching toothbrushes as her morning ritual and getting him sandals when he desires to go out. When his wife is not around, he reluctantly brings his own sandals and attempts to follow his usual routine. Albeit not helping the women in the household affairs, they burden them with constant interference and demands like washing clothes manually instead of using a washing machine making chutneys regularly to enjoy the food. Apart from living a princely life, men are lethargic and free from

mundane anxieties and apprehensions. As much as they emphasise sticking to culture and traditions religiously, they do not care about the basic notions of right and wrong. Their reckless eating mannerisms and indifference to domestic problems portray them in a negative light.

Some characters, like Suraj's cousin, claim to help the women and share the burden of the kitchen chores. He stands for the faux feminism that is prevalent in society. Claiming to be a fantastic cook and a helper, he makes a mess of the kitchen while cooking a meal. As Nimisha makes efforts to set things in order and clean the mess, he taunts her for doing the 'work' that has already been done according to him (1:02:43). Among the abundant usage of symbols, the leaking kitchen sink and the drainage problem carry profound and multifaced meanings. The kitchen sink is an asset to one's kitchen, which is properly managed and taken care of and given to its function and usage. In Nimisha's case, the sink gets clogged often, and the drainage pipe leaks, creating havoc for her. Both Nimisha and her domestic space (kitchen) bear the burden of patriarchy. Both lie outside the care of 'caretakers.' The movie draws parallels between the clogged sink and the overtly burdened Nimisha, both crushed under the weight of patriarchal filth and dirt. According to Beauvoir (2011), "a woman is shut up in a kitchen or a boudoir, and one is surprised her horizon is limited; her wings are cut, and then she is blamed for not knowing how to fly" (p. 731).

The movie also highlights the hypocrisy prevalent in society and its established standards and values. On the one hand, the men are concerned about

cleanliness and purity regarding food and religious rituals, while on the other, they do not follow the rules when it comes to a normal lifestyle. At home, they enjoy food while throwing over the remains helter-skelter on the tablecloth but maintain a façade of decorum outside. The kitchen, which bears the brunt of cooking, grinding, and washing, is ignored and not fixed up by the so-called guardians of purity and nobility. Nimisha keeps reminding Suraj about the broken sink, but he pays no heed to her requests and makes excuses.

The noble and religious family prefers confining women to the house, as it is their responsibility to 'manage' husbands, kids, and the home. The head of the family very conveniently ordains Nimisha not to think about venturing into the outside world as it does not suit them. The hypocrisy is prominent as the 'us' factor only applies when women demand space, not when burdened with household work. Even her mother, who is comparatively modern, advises her to stick to the norms and consider herself lucky to be part of such a noble family. Through other characters it is reiterated that "having a woman at home is very auspicious for the family" (1:04:02) and what women "do is much greater than bureaucrats and ministers" (1:04:06).

While some men and women chain and cage the women's lives, others support them and share their pain. Nimisha's mother-in-law supports her in pursuing her dream of becoming a dance teacher, unlike her husband and father-in-law. The dignity, according to the dominant ideology, rests on the shoulders of the women. Men are supposed to follow in the footsteps of their

fathers and ancestors to maintain decorum. Any unconventional action or remark from the women would degrade them in the eyes of their elders. When Nimisha decides to apply for the interview and receives the call letter, her husband gives her the cold shoulder by talking about the traditions and customs. He is more concerned about his father's beliefs rather than his wife's dreams as he exclaims that he has lost face in front of his father (1:04:49).

The cultural songs are also imbued with the objectification of femininity, glorifying the female body and domestic qualities. Moreover, they exemplify the inherent sexism and the 'othering' of the female sect by the traditions and cultures devised by the male fraternity. Rather than highlighting the other aspects of a female, the physical beauty and the domestic roles are cherished and passed down to generations via songs.

The girl is so beautiful,
Her breasts so ravishing...
Her hair so long,
Lovely eyes like a deer...
Of the "Paraya" community,
From the "Velliyam" clan...
She cooks tapioca well,
And delicious fish too... (1:08:47)

The cinematic production also portrays the sensitive issue of menstruation and the rules and regulations established by society. According to Chithra and Arul (2024), menstruation is often viewed through a lens of patriarchal oppression, where it is considered impure and women are subjected to confinement, restrictions and isolation in their daily routines and religious prac-

tices. Women within a patriarchal family are expected to adhere to societal norms and traditions. Deviating from these expectations can result in punishment or exclusion, as depicted in the movie where the protagonist faces shame for her actions and ultimately decides to leave (p. 268). By presenting the subject matter, the movie aims to show how the 'othering' is manifested in the faux religious ideology exhibited by the men. This issue has been highlighted in various movies as what women go through during these excruciating days. The superstitions and the taboos drenched in religious colours alienate the female sect from everything considered normal or acceptable. In the movie, Nimisha is forbidden to enter the kitchen and ordered to isolate herself for seven days, followed by the purification ritual. She is barred from meeting the family members, especially her husband, who is set to go on a pilgrimage, demanding that he remain pure and follow the rituals conscientiously. If accidentally, he gets impure by the touch of a menstruating lady, he is to swallow fresh cow dung or purify himself by drinking cow dung water. While some suffer miserably, others figure out ways to survive in the male-dominated society, like Nimisha's maid. She continues her professional chores even while on periods, which is a sin in the eyes of society. She boldly claims that she does not stay home while on menses as she has mouths to feed. Unlike her mother, who would not enter the house and indulge in outside work, she does the routine work without any breaks. Nimisha is not allowed to enter the kitchen or touch the basil plant during this time of the month. She is considered impure and unworthy to do the basic chores burdened

on her the other days. When her husband decides to go on a pilgrimage to the Sabarimala temple, he treats her like an untouchable and maintains a distance. Not only do men enforce rules and norms, but women also do the same. Though a woman herself, Suraj's aunt steps into the shoes of patriarchy and confines Nimisha to the four walls of a room, untidy and unsuitable for living. She even orders her to sleep on the floor and not saunter out of the room until she is 'pure.'

Women, as mute spectators, at times, are party to the system that is administered against them. They willingly or unwillingly carry out the decrees passed down to the generations conceived by men. If not a slave but as a man's accomplice, the woman has handicapped herself or others by not building a world on equal lines (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 29). According to Balraj (2023), although the scenes depicting women cooking and cleaning for their husbands may appear harmless, they inadvertently convey an image of women being submissive. These kitchen acts create power dynamics between genders both inside and outside the home, resulting from the gendered division of labor. Women find it difficult to challenge this unless the practice of patriarchy is abolished and both genders are provided with equal opportunities for intellectual and emotional growth. The movie also highlights the capacity of women to challenge the system and take control of their own lives, rather than solely attributing their treatment to society. A change can only occur if society recognizes women as equals rather than doormats (p. 136). At the end of the movie, as Nimisha is shown marching towards liberation and freedom, other members of

her sect are seen holding placards and standing like mannequins in support of the masculine ideology, chanted by a man on their behalf. A woman's successes are contradicted by her very being (femineity) since the "real woman" is required to make herself object, to be the Other" (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 323).

According to Shalini and C (2022), the movie captures the experiences and struggles of women, giving voice to their untold stories and the challenges they face in the kitchen. It sheds light on the never-ending cycle that women endure throughout their lives. Many viewers connect with the film and empathize with the women's struggle in a society dominated by traditional gender roles. Eventually, the protagonist decides to leave as she can no longer endure the family's patriarchal and traditional aspects. She exercises her freedom by choosing not to express her pain verbally, but rather by demonstrating it through her decision to leave. The film sheds light on the experiences of women who continue to face judgment based on their cooking abilities. It explores the perspectives of a new generation of women who challenge the notion of being confined to the role of an unsung servant, while also paying homage to the countless women who have silently shouldered this responsibility within their homes for years. This movie serves as a testament to the power of individual freedom, as the protagonist confidently embraces her independence and revels in the exhilaration it brings (p. 705).

According to Koradkar (2024), the film highlights the oppression of women within a patriarchal society. The protagonist is constantly faced with rejection and

denial. Once she enters her husband's house, she is expected to fulfill the role of a devoted and responsible wife, taking care of the family's needs and ensuring their well-being in every way. She has been educated to adhere to the guidelines set by the traditional household for the women in the family (p.59).

The male who presents the woman as an Other will discover a profound complicity within her. Therefore, women do not assert themselves as individuals since they lack the tangible resources, understand the inherent connection to men without expecting it in return, and frequently find fulfillment in their status as the "Other" (Beauvoir, 2011, p. 30). In the movie, the complicity is manifested by Nimisha's mother-in-law throughout as she is shown doing her husband's bidding without displaying an iota of resistance or resilience.

The movie also shows resilience in women who raise a voice or act against patriarchal traditions, as seen in the case of a female news reporter. Towards the end, Nimisha rebuffs the norms by leaving behind a miserable and suffocating life when she rids herself of the garment designed and conceived according to masculine perceptions. As such, the resilience of a silenced woman is displayed, challenging the foundation of patriarchy. Although she makes a decision for herself and breaks the cycle, the same is not true for other women who are seen carrying out the set roles demanded by the conventions.

According to Thamanna and Subramani (2024), the film's background music seamlessly intertwines with viral social media articles and news commentary, highlighting the unfortunate exploitation of a woman's menstrual cycle to body-

shame her and restrict her access to temples like the Ayyappa temple in Sabarimala. Despite its seemingly straightforward narrative, “The Great Indian Kitchen” conveys a powerful commentary on the issue of gender inequality. Gender bias, regressive behavior and other societal injustices have endured for centuries, and each successive generation contributes to their perpetuation. Ultimately, it dismantles the outdated stereotypes to liberate itself from that constraint. Not only does the movie adeptly address these issues, it also presents a daring proposal for breaking the cycle of intolerance and embracing a new one that values a woman’s independence and self-worth (p. 36).

Conclusion :

The notion of ‘otherness’ is fashioned to justify and satisfy one’s interests. The movie delves deep into the power hierarchies conceived by the patriarchal dogma. The relative status of women to men is highlighted to show the binaries inherent in the system. Society constitutes different people, set apart by situations or ages, wallowing in diverse ideologies and perceptions. While some are lucky to thrive in a congenial environment, others succumb to the dominant ideology or show resilience and resistance. Women across the ages have shared the angst and pain of subjugation since times immemorial. The colonisation of minds and bodies has resulted in the dominance of one group over another. Generally, ordinary men have thrived on the sacrifices and compromises of their female counterparts, thus fostering a sense of inferiority and ‘otherness’ in them. History is testimony to the subjugation, repression, and the

resultant rebellion of ordinary men and women. Patriarchy has flourished at the behest of domination coupled with superstition and myths across different cultures and traditions.

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भारतीय संस्कृति की द्योतक लोकोक्तियां : जीव जन्तुओं के सन्दर्भ में

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लोकोक्ति विधा की परम्परा अत्यन्त पुरातन है। ये पुरातन ग्रन्थों से भी पुरातन मानी गई है। विद्वानों का मानना है कि जब लिपि की खोज भी नहीं हुई थी, उससे भी पूर्व ये प्रचलित हो चुकी थी और लोग परस्पर संवाद के रूप में इसका प्रयोग करते थे। तमाम लोकोक्तियां कृषकों, कारीगरों, निरक्षर लोगों, ग्रामीणों और अन्य समुदायों के क्रिया कलापों व उनके अनुभवों पर आधारित है। जैसे 'धोबी का कुत्ता, न घर का न घाट का' या 'गये थे हरि भजन को, ओटन लगी कपास' भले ही लोकोक्ति का प्रयोग किसी व्यक्ति के लिए होता है, उसके बावजूद भी ये व्यक्ति विशेष की सम्पत्ति न होकर समष्टिगत है। वर्तमान परिप्रेक्ष्य में हम लोक साहित्य की दशा को लेकर आशंकित हैं और हमें ये चिन्ता सताती रहती है कि भौतिकवादी युग में लोक साहित्य के अस्तित्व पर खतरा है। ऐसे में तुलनात्मक साहित्य या बहुभाषिक चर्चा लोक साहित्य की अपार संभावनाओं को टटोलने का कार्य करता है। वास्तव में लोक साहित्य का भविष्य नूतन नस्लों पर निर्भर है कि वो इसे कितना महत्व दे पाती है। प्रस्तुत शोधालेख इसी पर आधारित है। लोकोक्तियां अमूमन मनुष्य जाति के अनुभव का जीवन्त दस्तावेज है। ये मनुष्य जीवन के अनुभवों की सुन्दर अभिव्यक्ति है। लोक मानस की चिर संचित अनुभूतियों को अभिव्यक्त करने वाला

माध्यम लोकोक्तियां ही है। ये पीढ़ी दर पीढ़ी चलती रहती है या यूँ कहें कि नूतन पीढ़ियों को ये उत्तराधिकार के रूप में प्राप्त होती है। ये व्यावहारिक जीवन में काम आने वाली महत्वपूर्ण विधा है और ग्रामीण और शहर दोनों जगह इनका प्रयोग होता है। फिर भी शहरों की तुलना में ग्रामीण जीवन में इसका बहुत ज्यादा प्रचलन होता है।¹

लोकोक्तियां दोनों (गद्य और पद्य) विधा में होती है। इनका सामान्य अर्थ नहीं बल्कि विशिष्ट अर्थ ही ग्रहण किया जाता है। जैसे- 'आ बैल मुझे मार' तो इसका सामान्य अर्थ यह होगा कि आप बेजुबान बैल को बुला रहे हैं कि मुझे मारिए, लेकिन हम इसके विशिष्ट अर्थ को ही ग्रहण करते हैं तो इसका मतलब होगा कि स्वयं मुसीबत को बुलाना।

आम तौर पर लोकोक्तियां लघु वाक्यों में तथा सामाजिक रूप में होती है। सामाजिक जीवन में ही इनका प्रयोग होता है। इनकी विशेषता है गागर में सागर भरना अर्थात् या घड़े में समुद्र भर देना, ये क्षमता केवल लोकोक्तियों में ही दिखाई देती है। दीर्घ व व्यापक विषयों, जटिल समस्याएं और गम्भीर प्रश्न सूत्रवत् छोटे, नुकीले औजार चटपटे वाक्य बनाकर लोकोक्तियां बन जाती है। किसी मनुष्य विशेष के जीवन का खास अनुभव जब सामुदायिक बनने लगता है व सभी के मन और बुद्धि पर गहरा व सीधा असर

दिखाई देता है, तब वो लोकोक्ति बनकर समाज में प्रचलित होने लगती है।

लोकोक्तियां प्राचीन काल से अनवरत चल रही हैं और वर्तमान परिप्रेक्ष्य में भी प्रसांगिक हैं और भविष्य में भी रहेगी। लोकोक्तियों की अपनी अस्मिता है कि प्राचीन होते हुए नवीनता धारण किये हैं। ऐसे में वर्तमान में भी उनमें वही लोकप्रियता व रोचकता है जो हजारों वर्षों पूर्व थी।

समाज में प्रचलित हर लोकोक्ति किसी महत्वपूर्ण घटना या अनुभव के सिद्धांतों को प्रकट करती है। हर लोकोक्ति का अपना इतिहास है अर्थात् इसके पीछे कोई न कोई कहानी या अनुभव अवश्य छुपा होता है और वो सार लोकोक्ति में समाहित होता है। जब भी किसी घटना से जुड़ी कहानी या अनुभव का प्रसंग आता है, तो उस वक्त लोकोक्ति का प्रयोग किया जाता है। इससे जहां एक ओर कथन में दृढ़ता उत्पन्न होती है तो दूसरी ओर अर्थबोध में भी स्पष्टता झलकती है। साधारणतः तुलना करने में लोकोक्तियों का व्यवहार होता है। दूसरे गूढार्थ निकालने के प्रयोजन से कभी-कभी इनमें अनावश्यक शब्द या वाक्यांश का व्यवहार होता है।²

हर लोकोक्ति के पीछे कोई न कोई व्यक्ति अवश्य जुड़ा होता है। यह बात भी निर्विवाद सत्य है कि जिन्होंने भी लोकोक्तियों की रचना की होगी वे बड़े प्रज्ञावान व अनुभवी थे। चूंकि अनुभवहीन व्यक्ति सर्वप्रथम सामाजिक चिन्तन को नहीं समझ सकता है और उसे अवगत हुए बिना इन अखंड व दैवीय लोकोक्तियों की सृष्टि असम्भव प्रतीत होता है। कुछ लोकोक्तियां मनीषियों, साहित्यकारों व बुजुर्गों द्वारा निर्मित हैं, जो अपनी शब्द योजना के सौन्दर्य, अभिव्यंजना-पटुता या अर्थ गम्भीरता के कारण लोगों में प्रचलित हैं। ऐसे तमाम लोकोक्ति के विद्वान हैं कबीर, सूर, तुलसी, मीरा, रहीम व नरोत्तम दास जी। जैसे कुछ लोकोक्तियां इनसे सम्बन्धित हैं 'हमहुं कहब अब ठकुर सोहाती नाहित मौन रहब, दिन-

राति, हानि-लाभ, जीवन-मरण, जश-अपजश, विधि हाथ, सूरदास खलकारी कामिरी चढ़ै न दूजो रंग, सबै सहायक सबल के कोई न निर्बल सहाय, चंदन विष व्यापै नहीं लपटे रहत भुजंग इत्यादि। बादशाह अकबर के खासमखास बीरबल भी लोकोक्तियों के लिए प्रसिद्ध रहे हैं और उनके अलावा अकबर के समकालीन दुबे ब्राह्मण की भी काफी लोकोक्तियां प्रचलित हैं। उत्तर प्रदेश के फर्रुखाबाद जनपद के लाल नामक विद्वान की भी तमाम लोकोक्तियां आज प्रचलित हैं। हरदयाल, हृदयराम और माधोदास ने तमाम नीतिपरक लोकोक्तियों की रचना की, लेकिन इनके आत्म विवरण पर कोई लिपिबद्ध ग्रन्थ उपलब्ध नहीं है।³

भाषाएं परस्पर एक-दूसरे के सम्पर्क में आती हैं। संस्कृत भाषा हिन्दी की जननी है। वेद, उपनिषद, गीता एवं कालिदास की रचनाओं से लेकर समस्त संस्कृत साहित्य लोकोक्तियों का अक्षय सागर है। संस्कृत से लोकोक्तियां हिन्दी में प्रयुक्त होने लगी हैं। हिन्दी ने एक वृहद संख्यक लोकोक्तियां अपने मौलिक रूप में संस्कृत से ग्रहण की हैं और कुछेक दूसरी भाषाओं जिनमें उर्दू और फारसी शामिल हैं से भी ग्रहण की हैं। जैसे 'बुद्धिमान के लिए इशारा ही काफी', 'एक अनार सौ बीमार' 'थोथा चना बाजे घना', 'खाली दिमाग शैतान का', 'गरीबी में चने भी बादाम' इन लोकोक्तियों का तात्पर्य यह नहीं कि इनका कोई वजूद नहीं है या ये प्रयोजनहीन हैं। इनकी ताकत का पता तब चलता है जब कई बार हम अपनी बात को समझाने में असमर्थ हो जाते हैं तो लोकोक्तियों के प्रयोग से उसे एक क्षण में समझा सकते हैं।⁴

हिन्दी भाषा में स्थान, जाति, प्रकृति व कृषि सम्बन्धी, जीव जन्तुओं से सम्बन्धित, नीति व ज्ञान सम्बन्धी लोकोक्तियां प्रचलित हैं। इनमें भारतीय जनमानस व उनके सभी पहलुओं का प्रतिफलन होता है।

भारतवर्ष गांव में बसता है। प्रकृति के सुकुमार कवि सुमित्रानंदन पंत जी ने कविता भी लिखी है कि 'भारत माता ग्रामवासिनी, खेतों में फैला है श्यामल, धूल भरा मैला सा आंचल।'

अपने खेती-बाड़ी में व्यस्त रहने वाले अन्नदाता (किसानों) का सीधा सम्बन्ध अपनी फसलों और पशु-पक्षियों से होता है चूंकि ये भी परोक्षरूप से किसानों के संग जुड़े होते हैं और अपना महत्वपूर्ण अभिदान देते हैं। जैसे बैल खेतों में हल जोतते हैं, कुत्ते खेतों की रखवाली करते हैं। हाथी और घोड़े फसलें ढोते हैं। पशुओं का गोबर खाद के रूप में प्रयोग किया जाता है। भारत एक देव भूमि है और यहां पर तैंतीस कोटि देवी- देवताओं का वास माना जाता है ये बात शास्त्र सम्मत है। उन तमाम देवी- देवताओं के वाहन के रूप में पशु-पक्षी तथा जानवर भी पूजनीय है। भगवान शंकर की जटाओं में सांप लिपटे रहते हैं और नंदी बैल उनके साथ रहते हैं। वहीं मां शेरवाली नाम से ही स्पष्ट है कि मां काली का वाहन शेर है तो शेरवाली नाम से ही जानी जाती है। गणेश जी का वाहन चूहा है ऐसे में चूहा भी पूजनीय है और पूजा की जाती है। लक्ष्मी का वाहन उल्लू है जो पूजनीय है। भारतवर्ष में स्वतंत्र रूप में गौ पूजा, गणेश पूजा, नाग पूजा की परम्परा है। मनुष्य के पशु-पक्षियों व जानवरों के साथ कितने घनिष्ठ सम्बन्ध रहे हैं इस पर दृष्टिपात करें तो आज से चार- पांच दशक पहले कबुतर चिट्ठी पहुंचाते थे जो काम अब डाकिया कर रहा है। कुत्ते घर की रखवाली करते हैं। बिल्ली चूहे पकड़ती है। गाय- बकरी और भैंस दूध देती है। भेड़ों से ऊन मिलती है जिसके गर्म वस्त्र बनते हैं। बकरियों से मांस, सांप का जहर दवाई बनाने के काम आता है। पशुओं की खालों से कपड़े इत्यादि बनते हैं। ये तमाम जीव- जन्तु कभी न कभी किसी विशेषता के कारण प्रतीक बन जाते हैं जैसे कुत्ते को नीच प्रवृत्ति का माना जाता है। गधे को मूर्ख व शरीफ मानते हैं, हाथी शक्ति, सांप दुष्ट व्यक्ति का, तोता, मोर व कबुतर इत्यादि सुन्दर माने जाते हैं। लोमड़ी धूर्तता का तो घोड़ा

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बुद्धिमान का प्रतीक है। लोकोक्तियों में ऐसी ही प्रतीकात्मकता का हू-ब-हू रूप दृष्टिगोचर होता है। हर प्रकार के जीव-जन्तुओं की आकृति, रंग रूप, प्रकृति, गुण इत्यादि भिन्न-भिन्न होते हैं। जीवन का तात्पर्य यहां चेतन जगत को लिया गया है। स्थलचर, जलचर, वायुचर एवं उभयचर सभी प्राणी जीव शब्द में समाहित है। जंतु शब्द चार टांगों वाले प्राणी के लिए प्रचलित है। हाथी से लेकर चींटी तक छोटे-छोटे प्राणियों को भी लोकोक्तियों ने समेट लिया है। गाय-बैल, कुत्ता, घोड़ा, हाथी, गधा, बिल्ली, शेर, ऊंट, बन्दर-बन्दरी, बकरा-बकरी, चूहा- चुहिया, भैंस, भेड़, हिरण जैसे जानवर, नाग-नागिन, मेंढक- मेंढकी, मगरमच्छ जैसे उभयचर, मछली जैसे जलचर, चिड़िया जैसी अंडा देने वाली, जीव-जन्तुओं के अंग- प्रत्यंग के नाम तथा उनकी बोलियों से सम्बन्धित तमाम लोकोक्तियों से हिन्दी साहित्य भण्डार अनंत बना है। भारतीय समाज में प्रचलित लोकोक्तियां इस प्रकार से हैं जो कि मौखिक एवं कुछ महत्वपूर्ण पुस्तकों से ली गई है।

जैसे गाय-बैलों से सम्बन्धित लोकोक्तियां हैं :

1. गाय न बच्छी, नींद आवे अच्छी
2. आ बैल मुझे मार
3. जिस घर में गाय नहीं, वो हैं पिशाच घर
4. ऐसे बूढ़े बैल को कौन बांध भुस देय।
5. घर का ब्राह्मण बैल बराबर
6. जाके घर में नौ सौ गाय, यो क्या छाछ पराई खाय।
7. दुध देने वाली गाय की लात सही जाती है।
8. बछड़ा खूटे ही के बल कूदता है।⁵

भैंस से सम्बन्धित लोकोक्तियां काफी प्रचलित है:

1. अक्ल बड़ी की भैंस
2. काला अक्षर भैंस बराबर।
3. भैंस के आगे बिन बजाने से क्या फायदा।
4. भैंस को अपने सिंग भारी नहीं होते।

साहित्यिकी (वर्ष- 10, 2024)

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5. भैंस से रंग नहीं पूछते कि रंग काला है।

ऊंट से सम्बन्धित लोकोक्तियां :

1. ऊंट के मुंह में जीरा।
2. ऊंट के गले में बिल्ली।
3. ऊंट रे ऊंट तेरी कौन सी कल सीधी
4. ऊंट जब तक पहाड़ के नीचे नहीं जाता तब तक जानता है कि मुझसे ऊंचा कोई नहीं।⁶

सिंह से सम्बन्धित लोकोक्तियां :

1. शेर का बच्चा घास नहीं मांस खाता है।
2. शेर भूखा मरेगा लेकिन घास नहीं खायेगा।
3. सिंह के वंश में उपजा सियार।
4. शेर का बच्चा कभी डरता नहीं।

सांप से सम्बन्धित लोकोक्तियां :

1. जैसे सांपनाथ वैसे नागनाथ।
2. आस्तिन का सांप
3. सांप को दूध पिलाने से वो अमृत नहीं जहर ही उगलेगा।
4. सर्प का सपेरा ही होता है।
5. सांप की तो भाप बुरी।
6. सांप का सिर ही कुचलते हैं।
7. एक नागिन अस पंख लगाई।
8. घर आये नाग न पूछिए, बामी पूजन जाय।
9. चिड़िया से सम्बन्धित लोकोक्तियां

1. अब पछतावे होत है क्या जब चिड़िया चुग गई खेत।
2. कै हंसा मोती चुगै कै फाके
3. कौवा चला हंस की चाल, अपनी भी भूल गया।
4. खग ही जाने खग की भाषा।
5. गंजी कबूतरी और महल में डेरा।
6. घर की मुर्गी दाल बराबर।

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7. जानवरों में कौवा मनुष्य में नौआ।

8. चील के घोंसले में मांस कहां।

9. जिस वन में सुआ न सांवरा, वहां कागा खाय कपूर।

10. भोर का मुर्गा बोला, पक्षी ने मुंह खोला।

11. रंग कौवे का नाम महताब कुंवर

मछली से सम्बन्धित लोकोक्तियां :

1. एक मछली सारे तालाब को गन्दा कर देती है।
2. जल की मछली जल में ही भली।
3. मछली के बच्चों को तैरना कौन सिखावे
4. राजा नल पर विपत्ति पड़ी भूंजी मछली जल में पड़ी।
5. मछली को नहलाने से क्या लाभ

मेंढक से सम्बन्धित लोकोक्तियां :

1. चूल्हे में मेंढकी सुई
2. कुएं में की मेंढकी, करे सिंधु की बात।

कुत्ते से सम्बन्धित प्रचलित लोकोक्तियां :

1. कुत्ते को घी हजम नहीं होता।
2. कुत्ते की दुम कभी सीधी नहीं हो सकती।
3. अपनी गली में तो कुत्ते भी शेर बनते हैं।
4. घर आये कुत्ते को भी नहीं निकालते।
5. आया कुत्ता खा गया, तू बैठी ढोल बजा।
6. कुत्ते को हड्डी भली नहीं लगती।
7. चमड़े की चलनी, कुत्ता रखवार
8. छः महीने का कुत्ता, बारह बरस का पुता।
9. कुत्ते इंसान से भी वफादार हैं।

अब हाथी से सम्बन्धित कुछ लोकोक्तियां हैं :

1. हाथी का दांत निकला जहां निकला
2. तालाब में पानी नहीं हाथी को नेवता
3. मरा हाथी तो नौ लाखी
4. हाथी को गली के कुत्तों का फर्क नहीं पड़ता।

5. हाथी की सूंड हाथी को भारी नहीं लगती।
6. हाथी का बोझ हाथी ही उठाता है।
7. कितने मजे हैं जिन्दगी के हाथी से पूछें।
8. चल्लू-चल्लू साधेगा, दरवाजे हाथी बांधेगा।
9. हाथी के दांत खाने के और दिखाने के और।

गधे से सम्बन्धित लोकोक्तियां :

1. काबुल में क्या गधे नहीं होते।
2. गधे को हलवे में मीठा नहीं लगता।
3. गधा मरा कुम्हार का, धोबिन सती जाय।
4. श्रावण के गधे को हरा ही हरा दिखाई देता है।
5. खेत खाय गधा, मारा जाय जुलाहा।
6. गधे के खिलाय न पुण्य न पाप
7. अपने काम करवाने के लिए गधे को भी मामा बोलना पड़ता है।
8. गधे की हंसी मालिक से सही नहीं जाती।
9. गधे को गुलकंद हलुवा पूरी।

घोड़े से सम्बन्धित लोकोक्तियां :

1. घोड़ा घास से यारी करे तो खायेगा क्या ?
2. घोड़े की लात घोड़ा ही सह सकता है।
3. खेती बाड़ी और घोड़े की तंग, अपने हाथ संवारिए तब जी होय आनन्द।
4. घोड़े से गिरा सम्भल सकता है लेकिन नजरों का गिरा नहीं सम्भलता।
5. घोड़े को घर कितनी दूर फर्क नहीं पड़ता।

बन्दर से सम्बन्धित लोकोक्तियां :

1. बन्दर को चुड़िया पहनाने से कोई लाभ नहीं।
2. बन्दर क्या जाने अदरक का स्वाद।
3. बन्दर के हाथ आइना
4. बन्दर बांट करने से फायदा नहीं।
5. बन्दर के गले में मोतियों की माला।

6. बन्दर की आशनाई, घर पर आग लगाई।
7. जिसकी बन्दरी, वही नचावे और नचावे तो काटन धावे।

बिल्ली से सम्बन्धित लोकोक्तियां :

1. नौ सौ चूहे खाकर बिल्ली हज को चली।
2. बिल्ली ने रास्ता काटा, न बाबा नहीं जाना।
3. ब्राह्मण और बिल्ली को ठंड बहुत लगती है।
4. बाघ की मौसी बिल्ली ने उसे पेड़ पर चढ़ना नहीं सिखाया।
5. बिल्ली के भागों छींका टूटा।
6. मेरी ही बिल्ली मुझे ही म्याऊं।
7. बिल्ली के भागों छींका टूटा।
8. म्याऊं की ठौर कौन पकड़े।
9. पंच कहे बिल्ली तो बिल्ली ही सही।

बकरी से सम्बन्धित लोकोक्तियां :

1. खाये बकरी की तरह, सूखे लकड़ी की तरह
2. बकरे की मां कब तक खैर मनाएगी।
3. लो जी बकरा जी से गया, खाने वाले को स्वाद ही नहीं आया।

सभी जीव जन्तुओं से सम्बन्धित लोकोक्तियां :

1. ऊंट बना दूल्हा, गधा पुरोहित
2. ऊंट- घोड़ा बहे जाय, गधा कहे कितना पानी।
3. कागा चले हंस की चाल।
4. भेड़ की खाल में भेड़िया।
5. मंगनी के बैल के दांत नहीं देखते।
6. हाथी निकल गया, दुम रह गई।
7. बगला मारे पंख हाथ।
8. भेड़ को थोड़े पूछना कि ऊन निकालनी है या नहीं।
9. हाथी का सूंड हाथी को भारी नहीं लगता।
10. कुत्तों के भौंकने से हाथी रास्ता नहीं छोड़ते।

11. लोमड़ी की जब मौत आती है तो शहर की तरफ दौड़ती है।
12. चींटी में पंख मरने को लगते हैं।
13. बातें करे मैना सी, आंखें बदले तोते की सी।
14. हाथी चले बाजार, कुत्ते भूकै हजार।
15. गाय ने बच्छी नींद आओ अच्छी।

इनके अलावा व्यावहारिक जीवन में प्रयोग होने वाली तमाम लोकोक्तियां हैं :

जैसे-

1. मामा जी के चावल, मौंसी करे श्राद्ध।
2. जो जैसा पानी पीता है, उसकी वाणी ऐसी होती है।
3. टौणी है देवी, नकटा पूजारी।
4. कुत्ते का कुत्ता बैरी।
5. अपना सिक्का खोटा तो क्या बोले दूसरे को।
6. उजड़े गांव में अरण्ड ही पेड़।
7. बाप भिखारी तू भण्डारी
8. बाप एक नंबरी बेटा दस नंबरी।
9. बाप को पादन न आवे, बेटा शंख बजावे।
10. बाप न मारी मेंढकी, बेटा तीरंदाज।
11. मन चंगा तो कठौती में गंगा।
12. गुरु गुड़ ही रह गये और चेले शक्कर हो गये।
13. धोबी का कुत्ता घर का न घाट का
14. भेड़ से गाडियां नहीं खींची जाती।
15. सुबह से बेहतर शाम, ब्राह्मण से अच्छी लोमड़ी ऐसी तमाम लोकोक्तियां हमारे समाज में प्रचलित है।

अतः हम कह सकते हैं कि लोकोक्तियां भारतीय सामाजिक जीवन से सम्बन्धित है और इनकी अपनी अस्मिता है। वर्तमान परिप्रेक्ष्य में वैश्वीकरण का प्रभाव इतनी तीव्रता से बढ़ रहा है कि कहीं न कहीं हमारा लोक साहित्य व संस्कृति भी इससे प्रभावित हुई है। पाश्चात्य संस्कृति के प्रभाव में भारतीय तरुण समाज रंग रहा है जो कि एक बड़ी समस्या है। आज के साहित्यकारों को चाहिए कि वो शिष्ट साहित्य के साथ-साथ लोक साहित्य पर भी अपनी कलम चलायें। लोक साहित्य ही भारतीय संस्कृति को समझने व आत्मसात करने का सबसे बेहतर विकल्प है। यदि तरुण पीढ़ियों को संस्कृति व संस्कारों से रूबरू करवाना है तो उनके लिए लोक साहित्य का अध्ययन अपरिहार्य है। लोकोक्तियां भी लोक साहित्य की विधाओं में से एक है। ऐसे में लोकोक्तियों का संरक्षण व संवर्धन भी आवश्यक है।

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The portrayal of Indian women and culture in Hindi web series: Demystifying the idea behind “PAURASHPUR”

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India is witnessing a significant rise in Subscription Based Video on Demand (SVOD) popularly known as OTT platforms with a growing audience that relies on its primary entertainment through web series available on these platforms, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. These web series are available for viewers to view content at an affordable subscription fee, and they can choose to watch from various genres of visual entertainment. A study suggests that there are various reasons for increased screen timing during the pandemic i.e. growing content on OTT, lack of entertainment options, work-from-home options resulting in increased flexibility and choice, and audience becoming more technology savvy during the pandemic (Nijhawan & Dahiya, 2020)¹.

Due to this rise in content, OTT platforms are releasing more web series that are exclusive to their platforms to increase viewership and provide their audiences with several options to choose from. In the process, OTT platforms are resorting to creating content that focuses on quantity

instead of quality. Therefore, entertainment is being delivered to create instant sensation and interest of the viewer by compromising on various factors such as the portrayal of women, depiction of culture and traditional values and showcasing of region, religion and history amongst various other parameters. This study examines the misrepresentations of the aforementioned factors deeply and how and why can it impact the perception of Indian women by analyzing the episodes of the web series “Paurashpur”. Paurashpur is a Rajput kingdom based in 16th-century India which begins with women being heavily ostracised in the kingdom, denied of their basic rights while men in power control women. The entire series has a weak storyline where some story is simply added in the middle of scenes which can easily be categorized as soft porn.

Objectives of the Study :

1. To study the portrayal and depiction of Indian women and culture in OTT platforms.

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2. To study the impact of such depictions on Indian women and culture in the society.
3. To suggest solutions to combat this rampant problem of misrepresentation of Indian women and culture through OTT platforms.

Research Methodology :

1. **Critical Analysis :** The study shall analyze various issues about the subject and present an unbiased methodical criticism that shall be based on comprehending the existing data and provide arguments to support the study. The study shall also elucidate the consequences of this visual misrepresentation and provide solutions to combat this issue by understanding it more deeply.
2. **Intertextual Analysis :** The study shall decode and interpret Paurashpur, a web series trending on the OTT platform AltT based on the use of language, character analysis, and a storyline that categorizes within the paradigms of culture. The study shall also assess the visual text based on the 'creative' motive and intent of content creators behind showcasing this content.

Objectification of Indian Women :

In the series, women of Paurashpur are made to wear locks by men around their private parts called "Yoni Bandhak" which prevents women from having extra-marital affairs with other men in the kingdom. Despite this, women are shown indulging with other men and are also reprimanded or banished as punishment by other women vigilantes. This problematic depiction reinforces the idea that since women are capable of engaging in

sexual intercourse outside of marriage, men must resort to such tactics and that they are right to do so. Throughout the web series women, inconsequential to their stature in society are indulging in promiscuous behavior both with men and women. A scene where a Queen willingly presents the King with women to have sex with while she has sex with a palace worker because now she feels empowered to have done that to her husband as he engaged in sex outside of the marriage, is truly shocking. This vile depiction of women in the series completely takes away the focus from the issue of women in society at the time and emphasizes her sexual freedom by discrediting the institution of marriage and putting the blame on men for the deplorable condition of women that is portrayed as a blessing in disguise for them. Men being showcased as drunkards, rapists, murderers and cheaters, has liberated women from all the evils of society that are designed to keep 'women in their place', thereby exonerating them from everything immoral and inappropriate. Women of Paurashpur are shown to wear extremely revealing clothing, uncanny for the time the web series is said to have been based in. Queens are indulging in voluntary prostitution which arises from their wanting to feel liberated from the tyranny of the King. In the process of achieving this perceived empowerment and feeding their carnal needs, women start to objectify men by treating them as animals, throwing things at them, and forcing themselves on them to engage in sex. Women are also shown to be using sexually explicit language with the palace guards, soldiers, chefs, and kingsmen. Queens also indulge in making lives miserable for other queens and want

to become “Maharani” through tricks and tactics. Though the series has not received excellent reviews despite a star-studded cast, a report states that the script is appalling, and the dialogues are just unforgivably boring. (Agarwal, 2021)².

Misrepresentation of culture and its impact :

The web series has many wrong depictions of culture, language, traditions, and religion that can impact the viewer in an extremely negative manner. There are many such examples in the series where Queens are dressed in despicable clothing that highlights their body parts purely to attract men. Instead of Queens of the Rajput kingdom dressing modestly, like royalty, they comfortably walk around the palace in deep cleavage, sometimes with negligible clothing such as capes. Kingsmen are dressed in premium-fitted clothes that resemble a designer outfit of the 20th century more than the 16th-century period depicted in the series. Queens are also shown indulging in drinking, partying, and smoking hookah. Queens are also merely objects of sexual gratification for the king who regularly indulges in domestic violence and engages in unnatural sex. The series also presents our culture in such a manner that it endorses prostitution in the name of freedom and empowerment. All women, royalty or commoners, go to brothels and sell their bodies for pleasure and empowerment. A dialogue in the series sums up the atrocious nature of the content being displayed on OTT platforms that want women to believe that empowerment can be achieved through sexual freedom and that women can resort to promiscuity inconsequential to the treatment of men. One of the women happily working in a

brothel explains “*aurat yahan samaan nahi samman hai, uski khushiyan uske sapne kisi aur ke kabze mein nahi hain*”. The creators of the series thought to present a picture of women that showcases women as liberating themselves from the shackles of misogyny through sex and in the process have created such mindless stereotypes and perceptions about women that blurs the lines of societal order and morality. Many feminist social media portals have criticized the series stating that if women empowerment and gender equality were the purpose of the show, then it ends up defeating that very purpose by dramatizing the exploitation of its women characters (Gupta, 2020)³. Another problematic misrepresentation is the use of Urdu language. Where the series is based on the mysteries of the Rajput Kingdom of Paurashpur, the writers did not bother to pay attention to dialogues and the script keeping in mind the language spoken by Rajputs of the time. Random Urdu words are mixed with Hindi which makes the script even more sloppy and unreal. The weak and abusive portrayal of the Rajput king in the series tries to enforce the idea that Rajput kings were drunken womanizers who were beating and burning queens, having sex slaves, and taking pleasure in hurting others. Their prime agenda was to remain in power and enjoy a twisted sexual control over women. The portrayal of the transgender community is also extremely dangerous. Milind Soman who played the role of a transgender is shown to run brothels and murder royalty in the name of liberating the kingdom from the Rajput tyranny. The depiction of the transgender community in the series impacts society’s perception in a manner that transgenders

are the way they are, indulging in immoral practices because they haven't had a dignified life for themselves and therefore their actions are justified. Ironically, the transgender character is also then murdered by a queen, reiterating that idea. The entire premise of the series revolves around sex, vendetta, greed and power politics of the Rajput Kingdom who are showcased as rulers worse than the Mlechha who can go to any extent to remain in power. Such series deliberately misconstrued our culture to create sensation and entertainment for the viewer. The rampant problem of showcasing such content on OTT platforms without any repercussions establishes the idea and perception in the minds of the viewer that since the content is available to watch, it means there is full or some truth to it. This belief is dangerous and highly toxic to society.

Solutions to combat the problem :

Despite the controversial episodes and scenes that can easily be categorized as soft porn, Alt continues to gain more traction on the internet amongst youngsters who use these OTT platforms the most. The government bodies have failed to control or even address this problem. Currently, OTT platforms do not come under the Central Board of Film and Certification i.e. CBFC or even the Broadcasting Content Complaints Council i.e. BCCC which is a governing body that sets rules and regulations along with other guidelines for releasing content on television. The old IT Act (2000) has some provisions in the form of restrictions that are strangely enforced on internet service providers. In return, they are expected to suspend or block these OTT platforms. It is pertinent to ask why the government is

relying on internet service providers to take punitive actions rather than setting up rules and regulations for regulating content on OTT platforms. In 2022, the government has indeed proposed a Digital India Bill that will replace the IT Act (2000) and will govern the entire censor board. On these grounds, this bill allows the government to request the taking down of content that will violate the preordained guidelines. This bill also has guidelines that ensure the safety of women and children and safeguard their interests by establishing legal provisions to impose penalties of 500 crore on companies and entities for breach of those guidelines. Another way in which the government can ensure that OTT platforms do not function without proper checks and balances is by exercising the various powers vested in them by the constitution under 19(2) which also elaborates on the fact that the right to free speech and expression is not absolute and is subject to reasonable restrictions. Many may argue that the government may misuse this law to attack certain individuals who are exercising their creative freedom, however, the facts are completely different. This alarming situation of the rise of adult content downplayed as erotic content more so than soft porn is rising because of the inability of the government and the justice system to take down this kind of content which they too feel is ruining society morally and socially. (Sharma, 2022)⁴.

Conclusion :

The rampant problem of misrepresentation of women and culture in various web series on OTT platforms must be curbed to protect society from perceiving this content as the ultimate reality. The impact that this explicit content shall have

on the minds of the young and impressionable will be beyond any control if proper measures are not taken by the concerned authorities in this regard. Therefore, as a viewer, one must be extremely cautious in viewing this content and also ensure that it is not publicized in the name of creative freedom and art. Extending support to such content will have a long-lasting impact on the deformation of society and perpetrate dangerous vices. The magnitude of wrong depiction in visual representation against different communities and sections of people will only damage their peaceful existence in society.

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आमिर ख़ान केंद्रित हिन्दी सिनेमा में दिव्यांग किरदारों का सूक्ष्म विश्लेषण

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शोध अध्येत्री

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शोध शारांश :

समकालीन समय विविध विमर्शों के शिखर का समय है, यथा- दलित-विमर्श, स्त्री-विमर्श, आदिवासी-विमर्श, एवं अल्पसंख्यक-विमर्श इत्यादि। इसी कड़ी के 21वीं सदी के प्रथम दशक में एक नया विमर्श 'दिव्यांग-विमर्श' केंद्र में आया जो समाज की महती आवश्यकता भी है। चूँकि विश्व में दिव्यांगता की संख्या में दिन प्रतिदिन बढ़ोतरी देखने को मिल रही है, अतः यह आवश्यक है कि हम दिव्यांगों के जीवन के बारे में जानें, समझें तथा उनकी समस्याओं पर चिंतन मनन करें। चिंतन की इसी कड़ी में प्रस्तुत लेख का केंद्रीय विषय है 'आमिर ख़ान केंद्रित हिन्दी सिनेमा में दिव्यांग किरदारों का सूक्ष्म विश्लेषण'। हिन्दी सिनेमा में शारीरिक और मानसिक दोनों ही दिव्यांगता का चित्रण देखने को मिलता है। विभिन्न किरदारों के माध्यम से दिव्यांग जीवन के सबल एवं निर्बल दोनों पक्षों को दिखाया गया है। अतः यह लेख समाज में दिव्यांगता को समझने में मदद करेगा तथा दिव्यांगजनों के प्रति समाज में व्याप्त नकारात्मक अवधारणा को तोड़ने में सफल होगा।

बीज शब्द :

हिन्दी सिनेमा, आमिर ख़ान, दिव्यांग, संघर्ष, समाज, स्वजन, प्रेम, प्रेरणा, शिक्षा।

साहित्य, पत्रकारिता और मीडिया के साथ-साथ फ़िल्मों में भी दिव्यांग चेतना का विश्लेषण होता है। हिन्दी को लोकप्रिय बनाने में सिनेमा का महत्व योगदान रहा है। इन फ़िल्मों के द्वारा कथा, कविताओं, गीतों आदि की दृश्य-श्रव्य सामग्री जन जन तक पहुंच सुलभ हुआ है। दिव्यांगता से जुड़ी फ़िल्मों में दिव्यांग जीवन के सभी वास्तविकताओं, सहानुभूति, दया, घृणा, जिजीविषा, लगन इत्यादि का फ़िल्मांकन किया गया है। 'साहित्य, पत्रकारिता, मीडिया के

साथ-साथ फ़िल्मों में भी विकलांग चेतना का दर्शन होता है। हमारे भारतीय सिनेमा जगत में फ़िल्मों के माध्यम से इस विषय को काफी सलीके से दर्शाया गया। विकलांगता पर अनेक फ़िल्में बनी हैं और ऐसी फ़िल्मों के माध्यम से वास्तविक जीवन को प्रेरणा मिली है।' अतः ये फ़िल्में समाज में समग्र एवं तीव्र प्रभाव छोड़ने में सफल हो पाती हैं।

आमिर ख़ान भारतीय हिन्दी फ़िल्म के अभिनेता, निर्माता, निर्देशक और पटकथा लेखक हैं। इनके

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फ़िल्मों विषय विविधता देखने को मिलती हैं। 'मन', 'तारे ज़मीन पर', 'लगान', 'फ़ना', 'लाल सिंह चड्ढा', 'गजनी' आदि दिव्यांग किरदारों पर केंद्रित फ़िल्में हैं। 2007 में रिलीज हुई फ़िल्म 'तारे ज़मीन पर' के लिए इन्हें सर्वश्रेष्ठ फ़िल्म और सर्वश्रेष्ठ निर्देशक का पुरस्कार मिला। इनकी फ़िल्में दिव्यांगता पर आधारित मानवीय संवेदना को उजागर करती हैं। इन पर विजय पाकर सफलता की नई परिभाषा गढ़ते हुए नज़र आती हैं। इन फ़िल्मों के माध्यम से हम दिव्यांगजनों के जीवन की कई सच्चाइयों से रू-ब-रू होते हैं। सूक्ष्म विश्लेषण के उपरान्त इनमें दिव्यांगता से संबंधित विभिन्न आयाम देखने को मिलते हैं।

प्रथम और सबसे महत्वपूर्ण आयाम जुझारू व्यक्तित्व के रूप में देखने को मिलता है। प्रस्तुत फ़िल्मों के अधिकांशतः किरदार दिव्यांगता को ईश्वर की अनुकृति मानकर स्वीकार नहीं करते हैं बल्कि किन्हीं भी परिस्थितियों का सामना डटकर करते हुए नज़र आते हैं। फ़िल्म 'गजनी' का आमिर ख़ान एक ऐसा दिव्यांग व्यक्ति का किरदार निभाते हैं जो स्मृति लोप की बीमारी की चपेट में आ जाता है। भले ही वह किसी भी घटना को पन्द्रह मिनट तक ही याद रख पाता है किन्तु वह इसके सामने घुटने नहीं टेकता, पहले से भी ज्यादा सजग और लगन से काम करता है। वह प्रत्येक घटना को कभी टैटू के रूप में तो कभी चित्र के रूप में और कभी डायरी के रूप में अंकित करता है। जीवन के किन्हीं भी परिस्थितियों में जब भी उसे संदेह होता है तो वह चित्र, टैटू या डायरी निकालकर घटना से मिलान कर के ही किसी निष्कर्ष पर पहुंचता है। चित्र से मिलान करके ही वह अपनी मंगेतर की कातिल को ढूंढ निकालने में सफल होता है। फ़िल्म 'लाल सिंह चड्ढा' में बालक लाल (आमिर ख़ान) भी कक्षा में सहपाठियों की उपेक्षा की परवाह किए बिना चलने दौड़ने की कोशिश करता और सफल भी होता है। इस प्रकार बैशाखी से उसे छुटकारा मिलता है। किन्तु समाज उसकी बुद्धि पर

हंसता है फिर भी बड़ा होकर वह सेना में गर्व पूर्वक नौकरी करता है। वहाँ भी हार नहीं मानने वाले सिपाहियों में से एक है। कारगिल की लड़ाई में बम बारूद से लड़ते हुए वह अपने कई घायल साथियों का जान बचाता है।

इन फ़िल्मों में दूसरी महत्वपूर्ण बात 'परिवार या स्वजनों के महत्व' के बारे में ज्ञात होता है। व्यक्ति चाहे सकलांग हो या दिव्यांग उसके उत्थान और पतन में परिवार और स्वजनों की भूमिका अत्यंत निर्णायक होती है। 'लाल सिंह चड्ढा' फ़िल्म में लाल की माँ उसके साथ हमेशा दीवार की तरह खड़ी रहती है। वह न तो समाज के अराजक तत्वों को उस तक पहुंचने देती है और न ही कभी उसका मनोबल टूटने देती है। बेटे को स्कूल में दाखिला दिलवाने का बार बार प्रयास करती है। यही विद्यालय उसके जीवन के उत्थान में निर्णायक सिद्ध होता है। 'तारे ज़मीन पर' में भी डिस्लेक्सिक ईशान (आमिर ख़ान) के पिता की इच्छा है कि उसका पुत्र जीवन में उससे अधिक सफल हो। लाख प्रयत्न करने पर भी ईशान के शैक्षिक परिणाम ठीक नहीं आते। अतः निराश होकर उसका प्रवेश बोर्डिंग स्कूल में करता है। परिवार से दूर रहकर और समाज के दुर्व्यवहारों से आहत होकर वह अवसाद ग्रस्त हो जाता है। चूँकि यहीं रहते हुए प्रथम दृष्टया उसके बीमारी के बारे में पता लगता है। यहाँ से वह पूर्णतः स्वस्थ होकर घर जाता है। माँ-बाप द्वारा एक बोर्डिंग स्कूल में दाखिला निर्णायक सिद्ध होता है किन्तु यहाँ एक बात विशेष ध्यान देने वाली है कि ईशान के माता-पिता इसे ऐसी बीमारी मानते हैं जिसका इलाज संभव नहीं। माँ-बाप द्वारा इसे लाइलाज बीमारी के रूप में देखना बहुत गलत है। बाद में डिक्सलेरिया का सामने आना किसी भी परिवार या अभिभावक को यह संदेश देता है कि दिव्यांगता को नियति न मानकर उपचार की आवश्यकता होती है। इस प्रकार परिवार का कर्तव्य बनता है कि

वह चिकित्सकों से अवश्य ही संपर्क करें। दिव्यांग विमर्श के जनक डॉ. विनय कुमार पाठक लिखते हैं- 'विकलांगों के अभिभावकों व उनसे संबद्ध पारिवारिक सदस्यों को शासकीय योजनाओं से संबद्ध समग्र सूचनाओं को संप्रेषित का अवरोध रहित चेतन की जागृति का प्रयास करना तथा उन्हें समान अवसर के तहत सतत् सक्रिय सहभागिता हेतु प्रेरित करके शिक्षण-प्रशिक्षण एवं समयक उपचार द्वारा स्वाभिमान पूर्वक जीवन-यापन के लिए वातावरण बनाना उनकी प्राथमिकताओं में सम्मिलित है।

तीसरी महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य यह देखने को मिलती है कि समाज में सकलांगों द्वारा दिव्यांगों को विकल समझने की भूल की जाती है, जो कोई नई बात नहीं है। यह बहुत पहले से ही चली आ रही है। सकलांग इन्सान सदा से ही उन्हें कमतर आंकता ही रहा है। भले ही विश्व में हेलेन केलर, स्टीफन हॉकिंग, जॉन मिल्टन, सूरदास जायसी और एलन मस्क जैसे व्यक्तियों ने अपने काम के द्वारा एक मिसाल स्थापित किया है। फिर भी दुःख की बात यह है कि समाज अपनी हरकतों से बाज नहीं आता है। कदम कदम पर उन्हें हेय मानता है। 'लाल सिंह चड्ढा' फ़िल्म में भी यही देखने को मिलता है। परेड के समय उसके साथी सिपाही उसकी बुद्धि पर हँसते हैं और सेना में चयन हो जाने पर आश्चर्यचकित हो जाते हैं। यही नहीं हँसने वालों में से तो कईयों को वह युद्ध के दौरान नई जिंदगी देता है क्योंकि उसके जितना तेज धावक उस बटालियन में कोई था ही नहीं। रिटायरमेंट के बाद जब वह कच्छा-बनियान की फ़ैक्ट्री खोलने की बात अपने एक सहकर्मी को बताता है तो वह उसपर ठहाके लगाकर हँसता है। कुछ महीने बाद यह सुनने में आता है कि उसका बिजनेस खूब फल फूल रहा है। अंततः वह एक सफल व्यावसायिक बन जाता है। गजनी फ़िल्म का गजनी भी आमिर ख़ान को, जो एक स्मृतिलोप नामक बीमारी से ग्रसित है, को हल्के

में लेता है। हँसते हुए कहता है कि मुझे क्या मारेगा वह तो कुछ ही मिनट बाद ही पूरी घटना भूल जाता है। फ़िल्म के अंत में उसके द्वारा गजनी को ढूँढ निकालना यह संदेश देता है कि हमें किसी भी दिव्यांग की हँसी नहीं उड़ानी चाहिए और न ही तुच्छ ही समझना चाहिए। 'विकलांगता कमजोरी नहीं बल्कि पराक्रम की परीक्षा है जिसे ऊर्जस्वित शक्ति और यथोचित युक्ति से दूर की जा सकती है। यदि उसके मन में इस तरह की सकारात्मकता सुदृढ़ होगी तो वह न किसी से सहानुभूति या दया की अपेक्षा करेगा और न ही किसी तरह की अल्पता का अनुभव करेगा। यही उसकी आत्मनिर्भरता की ओर अग्रसित जीवनोद्देश्य प्रमाणित होगा जो किसी भी स्थिति में उसे कमतर या कमजोर नहीं बनायेगा।' 'लगान' फ़िल्म में किरदार कचरा (दिव्यांग) को साथी खिलाड़ियों द्वारा लूला समझने की भूल और उपहास को फिल्मांकित किया गया है। वही दूसरी ओर भूवन (आमिर ख़ान) ऐसा करने से मना करता है। वह उसके हुनर को पहचानता है और कचरा भी इस पर बखूबी खरा करता है। उसके सामने अंग्रेज़ खिलाड़ी घुटने टेकते नज़र आते हैं। इस प्रकार अपने गांव को फिरंगियों के खिलाफ़ मैच जीता कर लगान से मुक्ति दिलाता है। वे साथी खिलाड़ी जो प्रारंभ में उस पर हँस रहे थे, वे ही पीठ थपथपाते नज़र आते हैं। यहाँ यह परिलक्षित होता है कि किसी कार्य में सफलता के लिए दिव्यांगता मायने नहीं रखती। प्रत्येक व्यक्ति विशिष्ट होता है और वह कोई भी कार्य कर सकता है। 'विकलांग अंतहीन हो सकते हैं किन्तु कर्महीन नहीं।'

पूर्व कथित तथ्यों के अतिरिक्त एक और महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य इन फ़िल्मों में देखने को मिलती है कि दिव्यांगों के प्रति शिक्षक और सहपाठियों का दायित्व कैसा होना चाहिए? इनके व्यवहार का उन पर क्या प्रभाव पड़ता है? शिक्षा ही वह अमृत है जो हाशिये के समाज को अमर बना सकता है। वह व्यक्ति को

समाज की मुख्य धारा में प्रतिष्ठित कर सकता है। बाल्यकाल में उत्पन्न दिव्यगता भी इसी कड़ी का हिस्सा है। अतः ऐसे बालकों को सुयोग्य एवं प्रशिक्षित अध्यापक की आवश्यकता होती है जो उनके प्रति सजग, संवेद और भावात्मक रह सके। बोर्डिंग स्कूल में शैक्षिक पुनर्वासित एवं डिस्लेक्सिक बालक ईशान अपने सहपाठियों द्वारा किए गए अपमान और शिक्षकों की अनदेखी को सहन नहीं कर पाता है। परिणामस्वरूप वह अवसाद ग्रस्त हो जाता है तो वहीं दूसरी ओर आमिर खान जैसे संवेदी अध्यापक के प्रयास के द्वारा सर्वप्रथम यह ज्ञात होता है कि वह पागल नहीं है बल्कि जिस बीमारी से ग्रस्त है उसका उपचार संभव है। उपचार के उपरांत न केवल अवसाद से बाहर आता है बल्कि उसमें एक नए आत्मविश्वास का संचार होता है। वह चीजों को समझने में सफल होता है। उसके प्रयास असफल नहीं जाते। अध्यापक द्वारा बताए गए अन्य महत्वपूर्ण डिस्लेक्सिक व्यक्तियों से रू-बरू होकर आगे बढ़ाने को तैयार है। इससे पता चलता है कि छात्रों के संपूर्ण विकास के लिए सही मार्गदर्शन महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका अदा करते हैं। इससे छात्रों को और प्रयास करने की प्रेरणा मिलती है और विद्यार्थी सजग रहता है। शिक्षण में सिर्फ ज्ञान प्राप्ति की प्रक्रिया की महत्वपूर्ण नहीं होती है बल्कि मानोदृष्टि, कौशल, आदतें और क्षमताएं भी उतनी ही महत्वपूर्ण हैं। अतः शिक्षक को यह विशेष ध्यान रखना चाहिए कि शिक्षार्थियों की भावनाएं आहत न हों। 'आज शिक्षा के प्रसार और मानवतावाद के प्रचार के कारण विकलांगों के संदर्भ में लोगों की दृष्टि में परिवर्तन आने लगे हैं। यह अब विकलांगों को भी सामान्य संतान-सदृश स्वीकारने लगे हैं। इतना ही नहीं, कमजोर या दुर्बल समझकर अभिभावक उसे अन्य बच्चों की तुलना में अधिक ध्यान देने लगे हैं, यह भी देखा गया है, जो शुभ लक्षण कहा जा सकता है। जहां तक सहपाठियों की बात है तो 'तारे ज़मीन पर' फ़िल्म में सहपाठी के कारण ईशान अवसाद में जाता

है तो वहीं दूसरी ओर 'लाल सिंह चड्ढा' फ़िल्म में लाल (आमिर खान) सहपाठी 'रूपा' की आत्मीयता से प्रभावित होकर वह बहुत बड़ा धावक बनता है। जीवन के हर कदम पर इसी प्यार के कारण सफल हुआ है। बचपन के दिनों में स्कूल से वापस आते समय सहपाठी रूपा के वाक्य 'भाग लाल भागल' भारत-पाकिस्तान के कारगिल युद्ध में भी जीवनदायक साबित होता है।

उपरोक्त सभी तथ्यों के अतिरिक्त एक भावात्मक तथ्य प्रेम के रूप में भी सामने आता है। 'मन' फ़िल्म में आमिर खान अपाहिज मनीषा कोइराला के लिए जीवनसाथी का पथ चुनता है तो वहीं आमिर अपनी एक अन्य फ़िल्म 'फ़ना' में अपनी नेत्रहीन प्रेमिका की आंखों का उपचार करवा कर उसे नया जीवन प्रदान करता है और आखिरी में उससे निकाह भी करता है। इन दोनों ही फ़िल्मों में दिव्यांगों को जीवन साथी के रूप में स्वीकार्यता दिव्यांगजन के सामाजिक पुनर्वास की समस्या को सुलझाने जैसा है। 'सामाजिक पुनर्वास की सफलता विकलांगों के परिवार बसाने अर्थात विवाह करने से है। यह एक जटिल कार्य है लेकिन असंभव कदापि नहीं।'।

निष्कर्ष :

समग्र रूप से इस निष्कर्ष पर पहुंचा जा सकता है कि दिव्यांग किरदारों से युक्त आमिर खान का हिन्दी सिनेमा समाज में मानवीय संवेदना संस्फुरित करने में साफल्य प्राप्त किया है। इन फ़िल्मों के सूक्ष्म विश्लेषण करने पर यह स्पष्ट होता है कि दिव्यांगजन के प्रति सम्यक् सदभाव, सहानुभूति, सहयोग, उचित मार्गदर्शन, प्रेम इत्यादि की आवश्यकता है। दिव्यांगों के प्रति उपेक्षा का भाव या हेय दृष्टि की जगह अपेक्षाकृत सम्मानजनक स्थान प्रदान किया जाना चाहिए जो एक सभ्य समाज का दायित्व भी है। यह सदैव बनी रहने वाली स्थिति नहीं है। उचार के द्वारा इस पर विजय प्राप्त किया जा सकता है।

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