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Editor

अखण्डं सहजञ्चैव सच्चिदाकारविग्रहम्।
सर्वशेषितया भान्तं तमानन्दमुपास्महे॥

‘ भो भोः शास्त्रमधीत्य धार्मिकजनव्रातेषु भव्यासने
तिष्ठन्तोऽत्र कथामिषेण च वृषव्याख्यानबद्धादराः ।
युष्माकं किल जीविकैकविषयं शास्त्रं विशुद्धं मनो-
रुष्टं भूरि कदर्थन्ति वसुधाक्रोडे हसन्तो मुहुः ।। इति ।

लालिबा कविभास्ती

‘भगवन्! सर्ववर्णानां यथावदनुपूर्वशः।
अन्तरप्रभवाणां च धर्मान् नो वक्तुमर्हसि’॥

(मनुस्मृति-९/२)

‘ऐश्वर्यस्य समग्रस्य वीर्यस्य यशसःश्रियः।
ज्ञानवैराग्ययोश्चैव षण्णां भग इतीरणा॥’

(विष्णुपुराण- ६/५/७४)

इति श्री विष्णुपुराणवचनेन निश्चीयते समग्रषड्विधैश्वर्यशाली पुरुषोत्तमश्रीनारायणो भगवच्छब्दे मुख्यो गौणवृत्त्या च तच्छब्देन श्रीमनुं संबोधयन्तः सकलमहर्षयः श्रीनारायणसध्रीचीनमेव मनुं विलोकयति। श्रीवैष्णवा एतत् तत्त्वं दरमुकुलितलोचनं विभायन्तुस्वकीयं श्रीमुखञ्चोद्घाटयन्तु च। अस्माकमेव धर्मान् धर्मशास्त्रं च भारते दुष्टा कदर्थयन्तु नान्येषामिति सनातनधर्मानुरागिणां दुर्दशां च राजनीतिपुरोहिताः पश्यन्त्वित्यलम्।

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पूर्वत्रासिद्धमिति अधिकारशास्त्रविहितासिद्धस्थले विधिशास्त्रप्रवृत्तिनिरूपणपुरःसरं तदधिकारसूत्रार्थवैकल्पिकत्वनिरुक्तिः

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गाँव-बरुल, पोस्ट ऑफिस-रोल, जिला-बाँकुड़ा, राज्य-पश्चिम बंगाल

सारसंक्षेपः “पूर्वत्रासिद्धमि”^१ति शास्त्रम् अष्टाध्याय्या अष्टमाध्यायगतद्वितीयपादस्य प्रथमं सूत्रम्। “पूर्वत्रासिद्धमि”^२ति सूत्रार्थं व्यवस्थापयितुं द्वात्रिंशत्पादविशिष्टा अष्टाध्यायी सपादसप्ताध्यायी तथा त्रिपादी इत्थं द्वेधा विभज्यते। अष्टाध्याय्यां सप्ताध्यायान् तथा अष्टमाध्यायस्य प्रथमपादं मिथो सपादसप्ताध्यायी इति उच्यते। अष्टाध्याय्या अन्तिमपादत्रयं त्रिपादीति संज्ञयाभिधीयते। प्रस्तुतमिदं सूत्रम् अष्टाध्याय्या अष्टमाध्यायस्य द्वितीयपादस्य प्रथमसूत्रत्वेन तथा अधिकारसूत्ररूपेण च समुपन्यस्तम्। अतः सूत्रमिदमधिकारसूत्रम्। अधिकारोऽयम् प्रस्तुतसूत्राद् अष्टाध्याय्या अन्तिमसूत्रं यावत् प्रचलति। अतः सूत्रस्य अस्य सरलार्थो हि-सपादसप्ताध्यायं प्रति त्रिपाद्यां पठितानि सूत्राणि असिद्धानि भवन्ति। पुनश्च त्रिपाद्यामपि विलसितानि सूत्राणि पूर्वं प्रति परम् असिद्धानि भवन्तीति।

यद्यपि परिभाषासूत्राणां वैकल्पिकत्वसिद्धिः न स्याद्विधिसूत्रवत् तथापि अनेन शास्त्रेण यत्स्थलमसिद्धत्वेन निर्णीतं तत्रापि विधिशास्त्राणां प्रवृत्तिः परिलक्ष्यते। तथात्वे तु शास्त्रस्यास्य वैकल्पिकत्वमेव प्रतिभातीति। एतत्सर्वं सोदाहरणं प्रदर्श्य सूत्रस्यास्य वैकल्पिकत्वव्यवस्थापनमेव मदीयप्रबन्धस्य लक्ष्यम्।

पूर्वत्रासिद्धमि^३ ति अष्टाध्यायीगताष्टमाध्यायस्य द्वितीयपादगतं प्रारम्भिकसूत्रम्। एतच्च अधिकारशास्त्रत्वेन प्रसिद्धम्। अनेनाधिकारेण विहितम् असिद्धस्थलम्, तस्मिन् अधिकारशास्त्रविहितासिद्धस्थले, विधिशास्त्राणां विधिसूत्राणां प्रवृत्तिः गमनम्, विधिशास्त्रप्रवृत्तिः, तस्य निरूपणं विधिशास्त्रप्रवृत्तिनिरूपणम्, तत्पुरःसरम् तच्छास्त्रस्य पूर्वत्रासिद्धमिति अधिकारशास्त्रस्य सूत्रार्थस्य वा वैकल्पिकत्वनिरुक्तिः कार्यस्थले तदीयार्थस्य वैकल्पिकत्वसिद्धिरिति प्रबन्धशीर्षकतात्पर्यम्। वस्तुतोऽसिद्धस्थले न समेषां विधिसूत्राणां जायते, अपि तु केषाञ्चिदेव। तेष्वपि दिङ्मात्रमिहोदाह्रियते।

कुञ्जिकापदानि-विकल्पः, सपादसप्ताध्यायी, त्रिपादी, पूर्वत्रासिद्धम्।

१.१ मूलविषयः

पूर्वत्र असिद्धम् इति पदच्छेदानुसारं पदद्वयात्मकं हि पूर्वत्रासिद्धमि^४ ति सूत्रम्। पूर्वस्मिन् इत्येव विग्रहे पूर्वशब्दात् “सप्तम्यास्त्रल्”^५ इति सूत्रेण त्रल्प्रत्यये पूर्वत्र इति शब्दो निष्पद्यते। अयं त्रल्प्रत्ययो विभक्तिसंज्ञश्चास्ति। न सिद्धम् असिद्धम् इति विग्रहे “नञ्”^६ इति सूत्रेण नञ्त्पुरुषसमासेन असिद्धम् इति शब्दस्य निष्पत्तिः। अविद्यमानवदिति असिद्धशब्दस्यार्थः। सूत्राणाम् आकरग्रन्थ इयम् अष्टाध्यायी द्वेधा विभज्यते इति पूर्वमेव समुपन्यस्तम् सपादसप्ताध्यायी तथा त्रिपादी चेति।

१. प्रकृतसूत्रात् पूर्वं यानि सूत्राणि विद्यन्ते ते हि प्रथमभागे। अस्मिन् भागे आदिस्थाः सप्त अध्यायाः, तथा च अष्टमाध्यायस्य प्रथमपादस्य सर्वाणि सूत्राणि वर्तन्ते। अयं भागः सपादसप्ताध्यायी नाम्ना ज्ञायते। सप्तानाम् अध्यायानां समाहारः सप्ताध्यायी; पादेन सह सप्ताध्यायी सपादसप्ताध्यायी। अस्याः सपादसप्ताध्याय्याः कृते तस्या अनन्तरम्। अष्टमाध्यायस्य प्रथमपादाद् अनन्तरम् अष्टाध्याय्यां किमपि न विद्यते। इत्युक्ते, सपादसप्ताध्याय्याः सूत्राणां कृते अष्टाध्याय्याः अन्तिमानाम् त्रयाणाम् पादानाम् अस्तित्वम् एव न वर्तते।

^१ अष्टाध्यायी ८.२.१.

^२ तदेव

^३ तदेव

^४ अष्टा. ८.२.१.

^५ अष्टा. ५.३.१०

^६ अष्टा. २.२.६

२. प्रकृतसूत्राद् अनन्तरं विद्यमानानि यानि सूत्राणि, तानि द्वितीयभागे अन्तर्भवन्ति। अस्मिन् भागे अष्टमाध्यायस्य अन्तिमानां त्रयाणां पादानां सर्वाणि सूत्राणि वर्तन्ते। अयं भागः त्रिपादी इति नाम्ना ज्ञायते। त्रयाणां पादानां समाहारः त्रिपादी। अस्याः त्रिपाद्याः प्रत्येकं सूत्रस्य कृते तस्माद् अनन्तरम् अष्टाध्याय्यां किमपि न विद्यते इत्येव सूत्रार्थस्य तात्पर्यम्। एतत्सर्वं पर्यालोच्य वृत्तिकृता निरूपितं—“तेन सपादसप्ताध्यायीं प्रति त्रिपाद्यसिद्धा। त्रिपाद्यामपि पूर्वं प्रति परं शास्त्रमसिद्धम्”^१। इति।

दृष्टान्तोपस्थापनम्

१.२ त्रिपादीगतसूत्रापेक्षया सपादसप्ताध्यायीगतसूत्रबलीयस्त्वोपस्थापनम्

वस्तुतः एकस्यैव कार्यस्य सिद्ध्यर्थं यत्र त्रिपादीगतसूत्रस्य तथा सपादसप्ताध्यायीगतसूत्रस्य युगपत् प्राप्तिर्भवति तत्रैव सपादसप्ताध्याय्याः बलवत्त्वमङ्गीकर्तव्यम्। वस्तुतः अनयोः युगपत्प्राप्तौ सत्यामपि त्रिपादीगतसूत्रैः कृतकार्यमसिद्धं निरूपितं भवति सपादसप्ताध्यायीगतसूत्रदिशा एतदेव तात्पर्यम्। सोदाहरणं प्रतिपाद्यते चेत् स्पष्टीभवति। तत्र अदस् इति सर्वनामशब्दस्य चतुर्थ्यैकवचने डेप्रत्यये सर्वं डे इत्यवस्थायां सपादसप्ताध्यायीगतेन “सर्वनाम्नः स्मै”^२ इति सूत्रेण सर्वनामशब्दादनन्तरं डेप्रत्ययस्य स्थाने स्मै इत्यस्यादेशो जायेत, अपि च त्रिपादीगतसूत्रेण “अदसोऽसेर्दादुदो मः”^३ इत्यनेन सूत्रेण अदशब्दस्य अमु इत्यादेशः सम्भवति। अत एव अत्र त्रिपादीसूत्रसपादसप्ताध्यायीसूत्रयोः युगपत्प्राप्तिर्दृश्यते। वस्तुतः “अदसोऽसेर्दादुदो मः”^४ इतीदं सूत्रमेव परसूत्रं तथा नित्यसूत्रञ्चेति। अतो विप्रतिषेधे परं कार्यम् इति शास्त्रेण “अदसोऽसेर्दादुदो मः”^५ इति सूत्रस्यैव प्राप्तिर्यद्यपि अस्ति तथापि “अदसोऽसेर्दादुदो मः”^६ इति सूत्रस्य त्रिपादीगतत्वात् तदपेक्षया सपादसप्ताध्यायीगतसूत्रस्य “सर्वनाम्नः स्मै”^७ इति सूत्रस्य बलवत्त्वादत्र प्रस्तुतसूत्रेण स्मै इत्यादेशो सर्वस्मै इति रूपं सिद्धम्।

१.३ त्रिपादीगतसूत्रेष्वेव परसूत्रापेक्षया पूर्वसूत्राणां बलीयस्त्वोपस्थापनम्

क्वचित् प्रक्रियाकाले द्विपादीगतसूत्रयोरेव युगपत् प्राप्यते चेत् तत्र खलु पूर्वसूत्राणामपेक्षया परसूत्रमसिद्धं स्यात्। अत एव यत्र एवं त्रिपादीगतसूत्रयोः युगपत् प्राप्तिर्भवति चेत् तत्र परत्रिपादीगतसूत्रापेक्षया पूर्वत्रिपादीगतसूत्राणामेव बलवत्त्वं सिद्धं भवतीति तात्पर्यम्। सोदाहरणं स्पष्टीक्रियते—रुधादिगणीयात् विदारणार्थकात् भिदिर् इति धातोः “निष्ठा”^८ इति सूत्रेण क्तप्रत्यये भिद् क्त इति जाते क्तप्रत्ययस्य अनुबन्धलोपे भिद् त इत्यवस्थायां त्रिपादीगतपूर्वसूत्रेण “रदाभ्यां निष्ठातो नः पूर्वस्य च दः”^९ इति सूत्रेण दकारस्य स्थाने नकारादेशः पुनश्च “खरि च”^{१०} इति त्रिपादीगतपरसूत्रेण दकारस्य तकारादेश इति युगपत्प्राप्तिर्भवतीति। अत एव अत्र पूर्वसूत्रदिशा परसूत्रस्यासिद्धत्वादत्र “रदाभ्यां निष्ठातो नः पूर्वस्य च दः”^{११} इत्यनेन भिद्यतेः अन्त्यस्य दकारस्य स्थाने नकारादेशे प्रक्रियाकार्ये भिन्न इति रूपं सिद्धम्।

वस्तुतः एतावत्पर्यन्तं सदृष्टान्तं सूत्रार्थस्य सङ्गतिकरणं प्रादर्शितम्। सूत्रं वृत्तिश्च पर्यालोचनेन कुतश्चिदपि न ज्ञायते यदिदं सूत्रं वैकल्पिकत्वेन क्वापि प्रयुज्यते। तदनुल्लेखात् सूत्रस्यास्य सर्वत्र नैत्येनैव प्राप्तिरिति समेषां विचारः। किन्तु सूत्रे यद्यपि नोल्लिखितं तथापि सूत्रमिदं बहुत्रैव विकल्पेन प्रवर्तते। तदेव इदानीं सोदाहरणं प्रतिपद्ये।

^१ पूर्वत्रासिद्धम् ८.२.१ इति सूत्रगतवृत्तिः

^२ अष्टा. ७.१.१४

^३ अष्टा. ८.२.८०

^४ तदेव

^५ तदेव

^६ तदेव

^७ अष्टा. ७.१.१४

^८ अष्टा. ३.१.१०२

^९ अष्टा. ८.२.२४

^{१०} अष्टा. ८.४.५५

^{११} अष्टा. ८.२.२४

१.३ सूत्रार्थवैकल्पिकत्वप्रतिपादनम्

सूत्रार्थं पर्यालोच्य त्रिपादीगतसूत्राणि असिद्धानि सपादसप्ताध्यायीसूत्रदिशा, पुनश्च त्रिपाद्यामपि पूर्वसूत्रदिशा परसूत्राणि खलु असिद्धानीति सूत्रसिद्धान्तः। परन्तु केषुचित् स्थलेषु सूत्रस्यास्य वैकल्पिकत्वमपि परिलक्ष्यते। तदेव इदानीं प्रदर्श्यते।

१.३.१ प्रथमस्थलम्

मनसः रथः इति लौकिकविग्रहे “षष्ठी”^१ इति सूत्रेण षष्ठीतत्पुरुषसमासे मनस् डस् रथ सु इत्यलौकिकविग्रहे समासत्वात् प्रातिपदिकसंज्ञायां “सुपो धातुप्रातिपदिकयोः”^२ इत्यनेन सुपां लोपे मनस् रथ इत्यवस्थायां त्रिपादिगतेन “ससजुषो रुः”^३ इत्यनेन पदान्तस्य सस्य स्थाने रु इत्यादेशे मनरु रथ इति जाते सपादसप्ताध्यायीगतेन “हशि च”^४ इत्यनेन रोः स्थाने उकारादेशे मन उ रथ इत्यवस्थायाम् “आट्टुणः”^५ इत्यनेन मन उ इत्यत्र अकारोकारयोः गुणे प्रक्रियाकार्ये मनोरथः इति रूपं निष्पद्यते।

वस्तुतः अत्रैव विचार्यते यत्-^६ “आट्टुणः” इति सूत्रं सपादसप्ताध्यायीस्थसूत्रम्। तद्वृष्ट्या “ससजुषो रुः”^७ इति त्रिपादीगतसूत्रम् असिद्धं किल। असिद्धम् इत्यस्य तात्पर्यं हि त्रिपादीगतसूत्रेण यत् कार्यं क्रियते तत्कार्यं खलु सपादसप्ताध्यायीगतसूत्रेण न दृश्यते। अत एव अत्रापि “हशि च”^८ इति सपादसप्ताध्यायीगतेन सूत्रेण त्रिपादीगतेन “ससजुषो रुः”^९ इति सूत्रेण विहितं सकारस्य स्थाने रु इत्यादेशरूपं कार्यं न दृश्यते। अर्थात् “ससजुषो रुः”^{१०} इति सूत्रेण विहितं रु इत्यादेशरूपं कार्यं न सिद्धं “हशि च”^{११} इति सूत्रदिशा। वस्तुतः “हशि च”^{१२} इति सूत्रं मनस् रथ इत्यवस्थामेव अङ्गीकरोति। “हशि च”^{१३} इत्यनेन सस्य स्थाने यादेशाविधानात् तस्य च सूत्रस्य कार्यावसर एव न स्यात्। “ससजुषो रुः”^{१४} इत्यनेन रु-आदेशरूपं विहितकार्यम् “हशि च”^{१५} इति सूत्रदृष्ट्या असिद्धं सत् अपि तस्मिन्नेव स्थाने “हशि च”^{१६} इत्यनेन रोः स्थाने उ इत्यादेशो विधीयते। अतः पर्यालोचनेन परिदृष्टं यत् क्वचित् त्रिपादीगतेन सूत्रेण कृतं कार्यमसिद्धं भवति क्वचिच्च नेति। एतदेव सूत्रार्थस्य वैकल्पिकत्वसिद्धिरिति।

१.३.२ द्वितीयस्थलम्

प्रस्तुतसूत्रानुसारं त्रिपाद्यामपि सूत्रेषु परसूत्रम् असिद्धं स्यात् पूर्वसूत्रदृष्ट्या। परन्तु क्वचिदस्य वैकल्पिकत्वमपि घटते। तदेव इदानीं सोदाहरणं स्पष्टीक्रियते-

अदादिगणीयात् “लिहँ आस्वादने”^{१७} इति धातोः क्तप्रत्यये लीढ इति रूपं निष्पद्यते। तत्र लिह् धातोः निष्ठा इति सूत्रेण क्तप्रत्यये अनुबन्धलोपे च लिह् त इति स्थिते “हो ढः”^{१८} इत्यनेन च धातोः हकारस्य ढकारे, ततश्च “झषस्तथोर्धोऽधः”^{१९} इत्यनेन प्रत्ययस्थतकारस्य धत्वे लिढ् ध इति स्थिते त्रिपादीगतेन परसूत्रेण “ष्टुना षुः”^{२०} इत्यनेन च धकारस्य ढकारे लिढ् ढ

- १ अष्टा. २.२.८
- २ अष्टा. २.४.७१
- ३ अष्टा. ८.२.६६
- ४ अष्टा. ६.१.८७
- ५ अष्टा. ६.१.११४
- ६ अष्टा. ६.१.८७
- ७ अष्टा. ६.१.११४
- ८ अष्टा. ८.२.६६
- ९ ६.१.११४
- १० अष्टा. ८.२.६६
- ११ तदेव
- १२ अष्टा. ६.१.११४
- १३ तदेव
- १४ तदेव
- १५ अष्टा. ८.२.३१
- १६ अष्टा. ८.२.४०
- १७ अष्टा. ८.४.४१
- १८ अष्टा. ८.३.१३
- १९ अष्टा. ८.४.४१
- २० अष्टा. ८.३.१३

इत्यवस्थायां त्रिपादीगतेन पूर्वसूत्रेण “ढो ढे लोपः”^{२१} इत्यनेन ढकारे परे सति पूर्वढकारस्य लोपे प्रक्रियाकार्ये लीढ इति रूपं सिद्धम्।

अत्रैवविचार्यते यत्-“ष्टुना षुः”^{२२} इति त्रिपादीगतं परसूत्रम्, पुनश्च “ढो ढे लोपः”^{२३} इति च त्रिपादीगतमेव पूर्वसूत्रम्। तथात्वे तु “ढो ढे लोपः”^{२४} इति सूत्रदृष्ट्या “ष्टुना षुः”^{२५} इति सूत्रम् असिद्धं स्यात्। तथात्वे “ष्टुना षुः”^{२६} इति सूत्रेण विहितं धकारस्य स्थाने ढत्वरूपं कार्यमपि असिद्धं स्यात्। तथात्वे “ढो ढे लोपः”^{२७} इति सूत्रदृष्ट्या लिढ् इत्यस्मात्परं ढकार एव नास्ति। अतो लिढ् इत्यस्मात् परं ढकाराभावे “ढो ढे लोपः”^{२८} इत्यनेन पूर्वढकारस्य लोप एव न स्यात्।

अत एव “ढो ढे लोपः”^{२९} इति सूत्रदृष्ट्या लिढ् इत्यस्मात्परं ढकाराभावेऽपि “ढो ढे लोपः”^{३०} इति सूत्रेण पूर्वढकारस्य लोपो जायते। यद्यपि प्रस्तुतसूत्रानुसारमत्र लोपो न जायेत, परन्तु तथापि अत्र लोपो भवति। अत एव सूत्रानुसारं यद्यपि वैकल्पिकत्वेन कार्यस्य विधानं विधीयते तथापि केषुचित् स्थलेषु रूपसाधुत्वप्रतिपादनाय प्रस्तुतसूत्रेऽपि कार्यवैकल्पिकत्वमाश्रयते। अत एतदेव सूत्रस्य वैकल्पिकत्वसिद्धिरिति भावः।

१.४ शाब्दिकपरिसरेऽसिद्धत्वप्रयोजनम्

वस्तुतः सूत्रार्थं तात्पर्यञ्च पर्यालोच्य एतदेव सिद्धान्तितं यत् शाब्दिकानां राद्धानुसारं शब्दानां साधुत्वं प्रतिपादयितुं हि असिद्धत्वस्य चत्वारि प्रयोजनानि अङ्गीकर्तव्यानि। तानि प्रयोजनानि यथाक्रममधः समुपस्थाप्यते-

१. त्रिपाद्याः अपेक्षया सपादसप्ताध्याय्याः सूत्राणां बलीयस्त्वम्।
२. त्रिपादीगतपरसूत्राणाम् अपेक्षया पूर्वसूत्राणां बलीयस्त्वम्।
३. सपादसप्ताध्याय्याः सूत्रैः त्रिपादीगतसूत्राणाम् अदर्शनम्।
४. त्रिपाद्याः पूर्वसूत्रैः त्रिपाद्याः परसूत्राणाम् अदर्शनम्।

१.५ त्रिपाद्या अपेक्षया सपादसप्ताध्याय्याः सूत्राणां बलीयस्त्वम्।

वस्तुतः शाब्दिकप्रक्रियाकार्ये बहुत्रैव सममेव कार्यं विधातुं युगपत् द्वयोः सूत्रयोः प्राप्तिः दरीदृश्यते। अत एव यत्र युगपत् सूत्रयोः सम्प्राप्तिः दरीदृश्यते तत्र तु विप्रतिषेधे परं कार्यम् इति शास्त्रेण परसूत्रानुसारमेव कार्यं साधनीयम् इत्यस्मिन् मते एव शाब्दिकानां सरसः। परन्तु कुत्रचित् यदि सपादसप्ताध्याय्याः सूत्रेण साकं त्रिपादीगतसूत्रस्य युगपत्प्राप्तिः परिलक्ष्यते तत्र तु सपादसप्ताध्याय्याः सूत्रस्यैव बलवत्त्वम् अङ्गीक्रियते शाब्दिकैः इति।

१.५.१ दृष्टान्तोपस्थापनम्

अमुष्मै इति रूपं अदस् इति सकारान्तस्य सर्वनाम्नः पुंलिङ्गे चतुर्थ्यैकवचने रूपम्। अदस् ङे इति स्थिते “सर्वनाम्नः स्मै”^{३१} इति सपादसप्ताध्यायीगतेन प्रस्तुतसूत्रेण स्मै इत्यादेशो यथा प्राप्नोति तथैव “अदसोऽसेर्दादुदो मः”^{३२} त्रिपादीगतेन सूत्रेण दकारात् उकारः तथा दकारस्य स्थाने मकारादेशो विधीयते। वस्तुतः “विप्रतिषेधे परं कार्यम्”^{३३} इति शास्त्रानुसारं कार्यं प्रतिपाद्यते चेत् अत्र “अदसोऽसेर्दादु दो मः”^{३४} इत्यनेनैव सूत्रेण कार्यं साध्येत, परन्तु अत्र ययोः सूत्रयोः युगपत्प्राप्तिः परिलक्ष्यते, तयोः एकं हि सपादसप्ताध्यायीगतम्, अपरञ्च त्रिपादीगतमिति। अतोऽत्र यद्यपि पूर्वोक्तशास्त्रानुसारं परसूत्रानुसारमेव कार्यस्य प्राप्तिः तथापि प्रस्तुताधिकारशास्त्रानुसारं त्रिपादीगतस्य पूर्वसूत्रस्यैव प्राप्तिः, तेनैव सूत्रेण कार्यस्य साधनम् इति। तेन “सर्वनाम्नः स्मै”^{३५} इत्यनेन सूत्रेण ङे इत्यस्य स्थाने स्मै इत्यादेशे प्रक्रियाकार्ये अमुष्मै इति रूपं सिद्धं

- २१ तदेव
- २२ अष्टा. ८.३.१३
- २३ तदेव
- २४ तदेव
- २५ तदेव
- २६ अष्टा. ७.१.१४
- २७ अष्टा. ८.२.८०
- २८ अष्टा. १.४.२
- २९ अष्टा. ८.२.८०
- ३० अष्टा. ७.१.१४
- ३१ पाणिनीयधातुपाठः
- ३२ अष्टा. ८.२.४२
- ३३ अष्टा. ८.४.५५
- ३४ अष्टा. १.४.२
- ३५ तदेव

भवतीति। अत एव यद्यत्र असिद्धत्वाधिकारो न स्यात् तर्हि विप्रतिषेधे परं कार्यम् इति शास्त्रेण त्रिपादीगतेन परसूत्रेण कार्यं विधाय अनिष्टरूपं प्रतिपाद्यते। परन्तु असिद्धाधिकारवशादेव अनिष्टरूपप्रसङ्गस्य वारणं जायते इति धिया पाणिनीयशब्दशास्त्रे असिद्धाधिकारस्य महत् प्रयोजनम् इति।

१.६ त्रिपादीगतपरसूत्राणाम् अपेक्षया पूर्वसूत्राणां बलीयस्त्वम्

शाब्दिकजगति द्विविधा शैली परिलक्ष्यते-दार्शनिकशैली प्रक्रियाशैली चेति। प्रक्रियाशैल्यां तु शब्दानां साधुत्वं साध्यते पाणिनीयशास्त्रेण। किञ्च पूर्वत्रासिद्धम् इति शास्त्रेण अष्टाध्यायी द्वेधा विभज्यते-प्रथमभागो वै सपादसप्ताध्यायी तथा अपरश्च त्रिपादी। त्रिपाद्यां खलु यानि सूत्राणि विलसन्ति तेषु परसूत्राणि असिद्धानि स्युः त्रिपाद्यामेव पूर्वसूत्राणां दृष्ट्या। अत एव प्रक्रियायां यदि कुत्रचित् द्वयोः त्रिपादीसूत्रयोः युगपत् प्राप्तिः सम्भवति, तदा पूर्वसूत्रस्य अपेक्षया परसूत्रम् असिद्धं स्यात्। एतेन सिद्धान्तितं यत् तादृशस्थले पूर्वसूत्रस्यैव प्रयोगः विधातव्यः।

१.६.१ दृष्टान्तोपस्थापनम्

वस्तुतः त्रिपाद्यां पठितेषु सूत्रेषु पूर्वसूत्राणि सिद्धान्ति भवेयुर्न तु परसूत्राणि युगपत्प्राप्तौ। यथा भिन्न इति पदं विदारणार्थकात् “भिदिर् विदारणे”^{३६} इत्यस्मात् धातोः क्तवतु निष्ठा इति सूत्रेण क्तप्रत्यये भिदिर् क्त इत्यवस्थायाम् अनुबन्धलोपे भिद् त इति स्थिते, अत्रैव त्रिपादीगतेन “रदाभ्यां निष्ठातो नः पूर्वस्य च दः”^{३७} इति सूत्रेण दकारस्य नकारादेशस्य प्राप्तिर्जायते तथैव खरि च इत्यनेन दकारस्य तकारादेशो प्राप्यते। “खरि चे”^{३८} ति शास्त्रं तु त्रिपादीगतम्। वस्तुतः पाणिनीयशास्त्रे यत्र एकत्रैव सूत्रद्वयस्य प्राप्तिर्जायते तत्र तु “विप्रतिषेधे परं कार्यम्”^{३९} ति न्यायेन परसूत्रस्यैव प्राप्तिः परिदृश्यते। अत्रापि यदि परसूत्राणां बलवत्त्वम् “विप्रतिषेधे परं कार्यम्”^{४०} इति न्यायेन अङ्गीक्रियते, तर्हि अनिष्टं स्यात्। तस्मादेव “पूर्वत्रासिद्धम्” इति शास्त्रानुसारं त्रिपाद्यां पठितयोः सूत्रयोः “खरि च”^{४१} इति परसूत्रस्य “रदाभ्यां निष्ठातो नः पूर्वस्य च दः”^{४२} इति सूत्रानुसारम् असिद्धत्वम् अङ्गीकृत्य रदाभ्यामिति शास्त्रेणैव भिन्न इति साधुरूपं सिद्धति। अन्यथा अनिष्टं स्यात्। अत एव असिद्धाधिकारात् ऋते विप्रतिषेधेन परं कार्यम् इति पाणिनीयशास्त्रानुसारं परसूत्रेण कार्यं साधनीयम् आसीत्। तथात्वे तु अनिष्टापत्तेः वारणम् असम्भवं जायते इति धिया असिद्धाधिकारो महत्प्रयोजनम् आवहति इत्यत्र नास्ति संशीतिः इति।

१.७ सपादसप्ताध्याय्याः सूत्रदृष्ट्या त्रिपादीगतसूत्राणाम् अदर्शनम्

त्रिपादीगतसूत्राणि खलु असिद्धानि स्युः सपादसप्ताध्यायीगतसूत्रदिशा। अत एव त्रिपाद्यां विलसितेषु सूत्रेषु परसूत्रैः कृतानि कार्याणि खलु त्रिपादीगतपूर्वसूत्रदृष्ट्या असिद्धानि भवेयुः इति। अत एव त्रिपादीसूत्रैः यः आदेशः, आगमः, लोपः विधीयते एतेषां सर्वेषाम् अदर्शनात्, तस्य आधारेण पुनः सपादसप्ताध्याय्याः किमपि सूत्रं न प्रवर्तते।

१.७.१ दृष्टान्तोपस्थापनम्

भीष्म उवाच इति वाक्यसंस्कारदशायां भीष्म सु उवाच इत्यवस्थायाम् अनुबन्धलोपे भीष्मस् उवाच इत्यवस्थायां “ससजुषो रुः”^{४३} इति त्रिपादीगतसूत्रेण सकारस्य स्थाने रु इत्यादेशे, ततश्च “भोभगोअघोअपूर्वस्य योऽशि”^{४४} इति त्रिपादीगतसूत्रेण रु इत्यस्य स्थाने यादेशे भीष्मय् उवाच इत्यवस्थायां, ततश्च “लोपः शाकल्यस्य”^{४५} इति त्रिपादीसूत्रेण यकारस्य लोपे भीष्म उवाच इति स्थिते साधारणदृष्ट्या अकारात् परम् उकाररूपस्य अचः विद्यमानत्वात् अत्र “आद्गुणः”^{४६} इति सूत्रस्य प्रवृत्त्याशङ्कायां सत्यामपि नैव प्रवर्तते। यतो हि “आद्गुणः”^{४७} इति सूत्रं सपादसप्ताध्यायीसूत्रं वर्तते। तद्वृष्ट्या त्रिपादीगतसूत्रं तथा तत्कृतं कार्यमपि असिद्धं भवति। अत्र असिद्धम् इत्यस्य तात्पर्यं हि-त्रिपादीगतसूत्रेण यत् कार्यं कृतं, तत्कार्यं सपादसप्ताध्यायीसूत्रेण न दृश्यते। अत एव “आद्गुणः”^{४८} इति सूत्रेण भीष्मपदोत्तरं यकारलोपरूपं कार्यं न दृश्यते। अत एव

^{३६} अष्टा. ८.४.४५

^{३७} अष्टा. ८.२.४२

^{३८} अष्टा. ८.२.६६

^{३९} अष्टा. ८.३.१७

^{४०} अष्टा. ८.३.१९

^{४१} अष्टा. ६.१.८७

^{४२} तदेव

^{४३} तदेव

^{४४} तदेव

^{४५} पाणिनीयधातुपाठः

^{४६} अष्टा. ३.२.१२३

^{४७} अष्टा. ३.४.१२३

^{४८} अष्टा. ३.१.६८

“आद्गुणः”^{४९} इति सूत्रदृष्ट्या भीष्मपदोत्तरं यकारः अस्त्येव, लोप एव न जातः। तथात्वे तु गुणकार्यं न स्यात्। अन्यथा कृतसन्धिस्थले पुनः सन्धिप्राप्तिस्तु बहुत्रैव स्यात्। तेन बहुत्र अनिष्टापत्तिः आपद्येत इति धिया अत्रापि असिद्धाधिकारस्य प्रयोजनम् अनस्वीकार्यम् इति।

१.८ त्रिपाद्यां सूत्रेषु पूर्वसूत्रदिशा परसूत्राणाम् असिद्धत्वम्

पूर्वत्रासिद्धम् इति पाणिनीयशास्त्रानुसारं त्रिपाद्यां पठितेषु सूत्रेषु परसूत्राणि खलु पूर्वसूत्रदृष्ट्या असिद्धभूतानि स्युः इति। अत एव परत्रिपादीसूत्रैः यः खलु आदेशः आगमः लोपादिकं कार्यं विहितं तत्सर्वम् असिद्धम् इति। एतत् असिद्धत्वन्तु पूर्वत्रासिद्धम् इति नियमेनैव जायते।

१.८.१ दृष्टान्तोपस्थापनम्

तत्र “चरँ गतौ भक्षणे” च इति पाणिनीयधातुपाठात् भ्वादिगणीयात् चर् इति धातोः “वर्तमाने लट्” इत्यनेन लट् लकारे, तस्य अनुबन्धलोपे चर् ल इति जाते, ततश्च प्रथमाबहुवचने झिप्रत्यये, “तिङ्शित्सार्वधातुकम्”^{५०} इत्यनेन झिप्रत्ययस्य सार्वधातुकत्वात्, “कर्तरि शप्”^{५१} इत्यनेन शपि, तस्य अनुबन्धलोपे चर् अ झि इति जाते, “झोऽन्तः”^{५२} इत्यनेन झिप्रत्ययस्य शुद्धझकारस्य स्थाने अन्तादेशे चर् अ अन्ति इति जाते, अत्र तु “नश्चापदान्तस्य झलि”^{५३} इत्यनेन झलि परे सति प्रस्तुतसूत्रेण अपदान्तस्य नकारस्य स्थाने अनुस्वारादेशे चरन्ति इति स्थिते, पुनः अत्र “अनुस्वारस्य ययि परसवर्णः”^{५४} इत्यनेन परसवर्णे चरन्ति इति रूपं सिध्यति। वस्तुतः चरन्ति इत्यत्र नकारस्य णत्वप्राप्तिर्जायते “अट्कुप्वाङ्नुम्व्यवायेऽपि”^{५५} इति सूत्रेण। परन्तु पूर्वत्रासिद्धम् इति नियमानुसारं तन्निषेधो भवति। कथमिति चेत्—“अट्कुप्वाङ्नुम्व्यवायेऽपि”^{५६} इति सूत्रं वै त्रिपादीगतं पूर्वसूत्रम्। परन्तु “अनुस्वारस्य ययि परसवर्णः” इति सूत्रं हि त्रिपादीगतं परसूत्रम्। अत एव त्रिपादीगतेन परसूत्रेण यत् कार्यं विहितं त्रिपादीगतेन पूर्वसूत्रेण न द्रष्टुं शक्यते। अतः “अट्कुप्वाङ्नुम्व्यवायेऽपि”^{५७} इति सूत्रं चरन्ति इत्यत्र अनुस्वारसहितं रूपमेव पश्यति। तथात्वे तु णत्वप्रसङ्ग एव न स्यादिति धिया “पूर्वत्रासिद्धम्”^{५८} इति शास्त्रविहितस्य असिद्धाधिकारस्य महत् प्रयोजनं विद्यते इति दिक्।

१.९ त्रिपादीगतसूत्रेषु उत्सर्गापवादविधेः गतिः

उत्सर्गविधिः हि सामान्यविधिः। अपवादस्तु विशेष इति शेषः। वस्तुतः विशेषकार्यं साधयितुं स्थले स्थले अपवादशास्त्राणि उत्सर्गशास्त्राणि बाधित्वा प्रवर्तन्ते। अत एव यत्र प्रयोगे अपवादसूत्रस्य प्राप्तिः परिलक्ष्यते तत्र सामान्यतया उत्सर्गसूत्रस्य नित्यरूपेण बाधो भवति। वस्तुतः एतादृश उत्सर्गापवादविधिः त्रिपाद्याम् अपि प्रयुज्यते इत्यत्र नास्ति संशीतिः। एवं सूत्रार्थं पर्यालोच्य एतत् चिन्तयति यत्—असिद्धाधिकारे किं उत्सर्गापवादविधयः स्वस्वनियमेनैव कार्यं साधयन्ति अथवा न इति। सर्वं विविच्य एतदेव वक्तुं शक्यते यत् त्रिपाद्याम् अपि अपवादसूत्रम् उत्सर्गसूत्रस्य कृते सिद्धम् एव। अत एव यत्र अपवादसूत्रस्य प्रयोगो भवति, तत्र उत्सर्गसूत्रस्य वारणं भवति। अपि च एतदपि वक्तुं शक्यते यत् अपवादसूत्रं तु प्रवर्तते उत्सर्गसूत्रं बाधित्वा एव इति।

१.९.१ दृष्टान्तोपस्थापनम्

“संयोगान्तस्य लोपः”^{५९} इत्येकं पाणिनीयं शास्त्रम् अतिप्रसिद्धं विद्यते। तच्च संयुक्तपदस्य अन्तिमवर्णस्य लोपं विधत्ते। परन्तु एतस्यैव सूत्रस्य अपवादत्वेन प्रवर्तते “स्कोः संयोगाद्योरन्ते च”^{६०} इति सूत्रम्। यतो हि पूर्वसूत्रेण संयुक्तपदस्य अन्तिमवर्णस्य लोपो विधीयते। परन्तु अनेन तु संयुक्तवर्णस्य आदिवर्णस्य लोपो विधीयते। परन्तु कुत्र संयुक्तस्य आदिवर्णस्य लोपो विधीयत इति चेत् यत्र पदान्ते विद्यमानस्य संयोगस्य, तथा च यस्मात् संयोगात् अनन्तरम् अव्यवहितरूपेण झल्-प्रत्याहारस्य वर्णः

^{४९} अष्टा. ७.१.३

^{५०} अष्टा. ८.४.२

^{५१} तदेव

^{५२} अष्टा. ८.४.५८

^{५३} अष्टा. ८.४.२

^{५४} अष्टा. ८.२.१

^{५५} अष्टा. ८.२.२३

^{५६} तदेव

^{५७} अष्टा. १.३.२

^{५८} अष्टा. १.३.९

^{५९} अष्टा. ६.१.६८

^{६०} अष्टा. ८.२.२३

विद्यते तादृशस्य संयोगस्य प्रथमवर्णः सकारः अथवा ककारो विद्यते, तादृशस्य सकारस्य ककारस्य च लोपो भवति इति। अत एव द्वयोः सूत्रयोः युगपत् प्राप्तिः विद्यते तत्र अपवादसूत्रेणैव कार्यं साधनीयम् इति भावः

१.१० प्रयोगस्थप्रदर्शनम्

तक्ष-शब्दस्य प्रथमैकवचने तट् इति रूपं समुपलभ्यते। तत्र तक्ष-शब्दात् प्रथमैकवचने सुप्रत्यये तक्ष् सुँ इति जाते “उपदेशेऽजनुनासिक इत्”^{६१} इत्यनेन सूत्रेण इत्संज्ञायाः तथा “तस्य लोपः”^{६२} इत्यनेन च लोपे, तक्ष् स् इति जाते, “हल्-ङ्याभ्यो दीर्घात् सुतिस्त्वृत्तं हल्”^{६३} इत्यनेन सूत्रेण अपृक्तस्य हलः सकारस्य लोपे सति तक्ष् इति जाते तक् ष् इत्यवस्थायां त्रिपादीगतेन उत्सर्गसूत्रेण “संयोगान्तस्य लोपः”^{६४} इत्यनेन षकारस्य लोपे प्राप्ते सति, “स्कोः संयोगाद्योरन्ते च”^{६५} इति त्रिपादीगतेन अपवादसूत्रेण उत्सर्गरूपं पूर्वसूत्रं बाधित्वा अपवादसूत्रेण च संयोगे आदिस्थितस्य क्-कारस्य लोपे सति तष् इति जाते ततश्च प्रक्रियाकार्यं तड् तट् इति रूपं सिध्यति। वस्तुतः “संयोगान्तस्य लोपः”^{६६} तथा “स्कोः संयोगाद्योरन्ते च”^{६७} इति सूत्रद्वयमेव त्रिपादीगतम्। तयोः “संयोगान्तस्य लोपः”^{६८} इति पूर्वसूत्रम्, “स्कोः संयोगाद्योरन्ते च”^{६९} इति सूत्रं हि परसूत्रम्। किञ्च एतदतिरिच्यपि उभयोः उत्सर्गापवादभावः सिद्धो वर्तते। यच्चाश्रित्य अत्र कार्यं सिद्धम् इति। अनेन एव सिध्यति यत् त्रिपाद्यां खलु उत्सर्गापवादविधेः गतिस्तु स्वाभाविकी एव अन्यप्रयोगस्थलवदिति।

१.११ पूर्वत्रासिद्धम् इति शास्त्रानुसारं शास्त्रासिद्धत्वं कार्यासिद्धत्वं वा

सिद्धान्तकौमुद्याम् प्रकृतसूत्रस्य व्याख्याने दीक्षितः वदति-“त्रिपाद्यामपि पूर्वं प्रति परं शास्त्रम् असिद्धम्”^{७०}। अस्य वाक्यस्य स्पष्टीकरणार्थम् बालमनोरमाकारः वदति-“परम् शास्त्रम् इत्यनेन प्रक्रियाकौमुद्यादिग्रन्थोक्तं कार्यासिद्धत्वं अप्रामाणिकम् इति ध्वनितम्”^{७१}। इत्युक्ते, “पूर्वत्रासिद्धम्”^{७२} इत्यनेन केवलम् ‘परकार्याणि पूर्वकार्याणाम् अपेक्षया असिद्धानि भवन्ति’-इति सिद्धान्तः न दीयते, अपितु परसूत्राणि एव पूर्वसूत्राणाम् अपेक्षया असिद्धानि प्रतिपाद्यन्ते। यदि केवलम् कार्याणि एव असिद्धानि भवेयुः (सूत्राणि सिद्धानि एव भवेयुः) तर्हि ‘मनोरथ’ इति शब्दस्य प्रक्रियायाम् दोषः उत्पद्येत-इति दीक्षितः प्रौढमनोरमायाम् विवृणोति।

तदित्यम्-‘मनस्+ रथ’ इत्यत्र “ससजुषो रूँ” इत्यनेन रुत्वे कृते ‘मनर्+रथ’ इति स्थिते अत्र (आश्रयसिद्धत्वात्) “हशि च” तथा च (परत्वात्) “रो रि” एतयोः द्वयोः अपि सूत्रयोः युगपत् प्राप्तिः भवति। अस्यां स्थितौ ‘कार्यासिद्धत्वं’ पक्षे हशि च इत्यस्य कृते “रो रि” इति सूत्रम् तु सिद्धम् एव भवेत्, केवलम् “रो रि” इत्यनेन कृतम् कार्यम् एव असिद्धं भवेत्। तथा भवति चेत्, “हशि च” तथा च “रो रि” एतयोः युगपत् प्राप्तौ सत्याम्, परत्वात् “रो रि” इत्यनेन आदौ रेफस्य लोपः प्रसज्येत। अस्मिन् लोपे कृते, यद्यपि तस्य असिद्धत्वात् हशि च इत्यनेन ‘मनर्+रथ’ इत्येव दृश्यते; तथापि वस्तुतः प्रक्रियायां लोपः जात एव अस्ति, अतः तत्र अविद्यमानस्य रेफस्य स्थाने उकारप्राप्तिः नैव सम्भवति। यथा, देवदत्तस्य हन्तरि हते देवदत्तः न पुनः जीवति, तथैव, एकवारं रेफस्य लोपे कृते, तत् कार्यम् असिद्धम् मन्यते चेदपि लुप्तः रेफः (कस्मिन्नपि स्वरूपे) न पुनः उपस्थातुम् शक्नोति। अतः प्रक्रियायाम् अग्रे हशि च इत्यस्य प्रसक्तिः नैव सम्भवेत्। न हि केवलं तत्, अपितु रेफस्य लोपात् अनन्तरम् ‘मन रथ’ इति स्थिते अग्रे “द्वलोपे पूर्वस्य दीर्घोऽन्तः” इत्यनेन दीर्घादेशः अपि भवेत्, येन ‘मनारथ’ इति अनिष्टं रूपं प्रसज्येत। एतादृशम् मा भूत्, इति हेतुना दीक्षितः अत्र ‘शास्त्रस्य’ असिद्धत्वं प्रतिपादयति। अस्मिन् विषये अधिकं पिपठिष्वः प्रौढमनोरमायां शब्देन्दुशेखरे च विस्तरं पश्येयुः।

१.१२ उपसंहृतिः

६१ अष्टा. ८.२२३

६२ तदेव

६३ अष्टा. ८.२.२९

६४ अष्टा. ८.२.२३

६५ अष्टा. ८.२.२९

६६ अष्टा. ८.२.१ (पूर्वत्रासिद्धम् इति सूत्रस्य वृत्तिः)

६७ अष्टा. ८.२.१ (पूर्वत्रासिद्धम् इति सूत्रस्य बालमनोरमा)

६८ अष्टा. ८.२.१

६९ अष्टा. ८.२.६६

७० अष्टा. ६.१.११४

७१ अष्टा. ८.३.१४

७२ अष्टा. ६.१.११४

वस्तुतः पूर्वत्रासिद्धमिति शास्त्रस्य सार्वत्रिकं व्याख्यानं पर्यालोच्य सूत्रार्थे कुत्रापि वैकल्पिकत्वविधानं नोपलभ्यते। परन्तु पूर्वत्रासिद्धम् इति शास्त्रेण कार्यविधानकाले यथासूत्रं यथा दृष्टान्तसङ्गतिर्जायते तथैव क्वचित् सूत्रार्थमुल्लङ्घ्यापि कार्यविधानं परिलक्ष्यते। वस्तुतः सूत्रार्थमुल्लङ्घ्य कार्यविधानं परिलक्ष्यते एतदपेक्षया सूत्रस्यार्थस्य वैकल्पिकत्वविधानमेव अङ्गीकरणं वरमिति मदीया मतिरिति। अत एव दृष्टान्तसाधुत्वविधानानुरोधात् प्रस्तुतसूत्रार्थस्य वैकल्पिकत्वमङ्गीकर्तव्यमेव अन्यथा मनोरथ इत्यादिरूपाणां साधुत्वप्रतिपादनमेवासम्भवमिति दिक्।

संदर्भ ग्रन्थ सूची-

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नयी कहानी आन्दोलन का ऐतिहासिक परिप्रेक्ष्य

रत्नाकर दुबे

शोधार्थी एवं असिस्टेंट प्रोफेसर हिन्दी
राजेंद्र प्रसाद डिग्री कॉलेज मीरगंज बरेली

प्रो. परमजीत कौर

शोध निर्देशिका

बरेली कॉलेज, बरेली

म. ज्यो. फु. रुहेलखण्ड विश्वविद्यालय बरेली

सारांश- भारत की आजादी एक ऐसा मानक है जो समाज, साहित्य और कलाओं को परखने के सम्पूर्ण परंपरागत दृष्टिकोण को बदल देता है। समाज, साहित्य और कला में स्वाधीनता सामूहिक चेतना और परिवर्तन की नव्यता को रेखांकित करता है। विकास, विज्ञान व शिक्षा के प्रसार ने समाज की आधारभूत संरचना को बदलकर रख दिया। आजादी के बाद व्यवस्था के इस क्रांतिकारी बदलाव से व्यक्ति सर्वथा अपरचित था। जिसके परिणामस्वरूप तत्कालीन कहानी में विभिन्न कोणों पर अपरिचय और अजनबीपन की अभिव्यक्ति हुई। कहानी में कथानक का स्वरूप बदल जाता है। यह बदली हुई व्यवस्था कहानी के कथानकों में प्रतिनायक के रूप में उभरती है। कुछ वर्षों बाद व्यवस्थाजन्य उभरी विषमता से नए भारत का उत्साह जो आमजन में था वह मद्धिम पड़ने लगा। जिसके प्रति मोहभंग जनमानस में ही नहीं वरन तत्कालीन हिन्दी कहानी में भी परिलक्षित होता है। स्थितियों से निर्मित नयी प्रवृत्तियाँ कहानी में अपना नया संसार रच रही थी। कहानी परिलक्षित होती है। स्थितियों से निर्मित नयी प्रवृत्तियाँ कहानी में अपना नया संसार रच रही थी। कहानी किसी सामान्य घटना, सामान्य जीवन प्रसंग, किसी विशिष्ट अनुभव व मनः स्थिति को ही विषय बना रही थी। १९५४ से १९६३ तक कहानी के पूरे कालखंड को नई कहानी कहकर संबोधित किया गया। इसके रचे संसार में अस्मिता का संघर्ष, स्वार्थों का टकराव, विस्थापन की पीड़ा और मोहभंग की विभिन्न स्थितियाँ थी। प्रवृत्तियों के इस पूरे सगुम्फन को नई कहानी आंदोलन की संज्ञा दी गई। नई कहानी आंदोलन की यह प्रवृत्तियाँ विभिन्न ऐतिहासिक परिस्थितियों, आंदोलनों और घटनाओं का परिणाम है। इतिहास के इस परिप्रेक्ष्य से विमुख नहीं हो सकते। इस लेख में नई कहानी के नयेपन, आंदोलन के स्वरूप और ऐतिहासिकता को क्रमबद्ध विमुख नहीं हो सकते। इस लेख में नई कहानी के नयेपन, आंदोलन के स्वरूप और ऐतिहासिकता को क्रमबद्ध समझने की कोशिश करेंगे।

शब्द कुंजी- नई कहानी, प्रवृत्तियाँ, आंदोलन, ऐतिहासिकता, विचारधारा, कथा साहित्य।

यह एक अकाट्य सत्य है कि साहित्य अपने समकालीन सन्दर्भों से गहरे रूप से जुड़ा होता है। साहित्य की विभिन्न विधाओं की तरह हिन्दी कहानी अपने समय, समाज और युगबोध को प्रतिबिंबित करती रही है। समय और समाज की अवस्था के अनुरूप ही अधिकतर उसका रूप और कथ्य निर्धारित होता आया है। इस दृष्टिकोण से चिंतन करें तो स्वतंत्रता भारतीय इतिहास की उल्लेखनीय महत्वपूर्ण घटना है। यह एक ऐसी घटना है जिसका वृहद् प्रभाव साहित्य के साथ ही ज्ञान के विभिन्न अनुशासनों पर स्पष्ट परिलक्षित होता है। हिन्दी साहित्य की समस्त विधाएं इस असर से अछूती नहीं हैं। इसमें कोई दो राय नहीं है कि स्वतंत्रता और उसके बाद की परिस्थितियों ने हिन्दी कथा साहित्य पर बहुत व्यापक प्रभाव डाला है। साहित्य की अन्य विधाओं की तरह हिन्दी कहानी का रूप और प्रकृति भी इस युग में तीव्र गति से परिवर्तित होता है। कथ्य और शिल्प की दृष्टि से हिन्दी कहानी युग के अनुरूप बदलाव करती है। इस परिवर्तन के कारण पहले की तुलना में हिन्दी कहानी का 'स्ट्रक्चर' और 'टेक्सचर' नवीन हो जाता है। हिन्दी कहानी के इस ऐतिहासिक नवीनता के स्वरूप को नई कहानी के नाम से अभिहित किया गया।

सामान्यतः हिन्दी नई कहानी का समय १९५४ से लेकर १९६३ तक माना जाता है। निश्चित रूप से हिन्दी कहानी के प्रवर्धन और प्रतिष्ठा की दृष्टि से यह युग सार्वकालिक अविस्मरणीय रहेगा। इस युग में कहानी लेखन के अतिरिक्त कहानी पर समग्रता के साथ विचार और विमर्श की शुरुआत हुई। इसका श्रेय नयी कहानी पत्रिका और उसके यशस्वी संपादक भैरव प्रसाद गुप्त को जाता है। इस पत्रिका में उन्होंने कहानी-विशेषांक निकालने के साथ ही कहानी पर सुव्यवस्थित ढंग से विचार विमर्श के लिए 'हाशिफ पर' जैसा साहित्य जगत का ध्यान आकर्षित करने वाला स्तम्भ लिखवाया। इसका प्रभाव यह हुआ कि हिन्दी की अन्य पत्रिकाओं ने भी कहानी को केन्द्रीय महत्व देना प्रारंभ किया। भैरव जी ने कहानी लेखन को प्रोत्साहित करने के लिए गोष्ठियों व परिचर्चाओं का भी आयोजन किया। इससे हिन्दी कहानी को अप्रतिम प्रतिष्ठा प्राप्त हुई। साहित्य की गम्भीर विधा के रूप में हिन्दी कहानी सर्वमान्य रूप से चर्चित होने लगी।

मोहन राकेश, राजेंद्र यादव और कमलेश्वर जैसे कहानीकारों की त्रयी को हिन्दी में नई कहानी आन्दोलन प्रारंभ करने का श्रेय दिया जाता है। यद्यपि बाद में बहुत सारे लेखक स्वतः सम्मिलित होते चले गये। जिससे इसका स्वरूप बहुत विस्तृत और वैविध्यपूर्ण हो गया। नयी कहानी का क्षेत्र विस्तार और विविधतापूर्ण स्वरूप विस्मित करने वाला है। मधुरेश का कहना है कि: “...लेकिन नई कहानी के लेखकों की संख्या और परिधि के कारण उसका रचना-संसार बहुत व्यापक और वैविध्यपूर्ण था। पंजाब से लेकर बिहार तक और मध्य प्रदेश के आदिवासी क्षेत्रों से लेकर कुमाऊँ के पहाड़ी जीवन तक अनेक लेखक थे जो इस कहानी को कथ्य और संवेदना के स्तर पर अभूतपूर्व विस्तार देते दिखाई देते हैं।”¹ सामान्यतः असहमति और विवाद की सम्भावनाएँ वहीं अधिक होती हैं जहाँ विविधता और विस्तार होता है। इस बात में कोई संशय नहीं है कि तमाम असहमतियों और विवादों के बाद भी इसके अनेक सकारात्मक पक्ष भी हैं।

नई कहानी के पक्षधरों ने इसके पक्ष में बड़े-बड़े अभिकथन कहे हैं और उसी अनुपात में उन अभिकथनों का विरोध भी हुआ है। इस जटिल परिस्थितियों में नई कहानी को सटीक परिभाषित करना बहुत कठिन है। निःसंदेह इस जटिलता के बाद भी कुछ लक्षणों और प्रवृत्तियों के आधार पर नई कहानी की पहचान सुनिश्चित की जा सकती है।

नई कहानी में अभिहित ‘नई’ शब्द विशेषण मात्र का बोध कराता है; या इसमें कुछ नयापन भी है? इस बिंदु पर आलोचकों की राय भिन्न-भिन्न है। कुछ आलोचक मानते हैं कि नई कहानी का नयापन एक प्रक्रिया है। पुराने को परित्याज्य जानकर अग्रसर होना ही नया होने का द्योतक है। हिन्दी लेखकों और आलोचकों में नई कहानी के नयेपन को लेकर विपुल विमर्श हुए हैं। इस प्रसंग में नई कहानी के त्रयी में से एक कमलेश्वर जी का मंतव्य इस प्रकार है-“झूठा, विलगित और व्यर्थ का जो भी अंश रचना में आ जाता है, उसे बार-बार और हर बार अस्वीकार करते जाना ही ‘नये’ होने का द्योतक है। नयी कहानी इसीलिए किसी स्थिर तत्त्व की पोषक नहीं है, अपने प्रतिमानों पर भी वह आश्रित नहीं है। इसलिए नया शब्द न विशेषण है और न संज्ञा, वह एकमात्र प्रक्रिया का द्योतक है, जो सतत प्रवहमान है और हर बार नई होती चलती है।”² कमलेश्वर के इस विचार से यह प्रश्न उठना स्वाभाविक है कि क्या इसके पहले के लेखकों ने झूठा, विलगित और व्यर्थ को अस्वीकार नहीं किया है? लेखक यह कार्य पहले से ही करता चला आ रहा है। जरूरी नहीं कि जो हमारे लिए झूठ विलगित और व्यर्थ हो दूसरे के लिए भी वैसा ही हो। हमारा सत्य सबका सत्य नहीं होता। वस्तुतः यह विचार प्रकृति से ही व्यक्तिगत है इसलिए इसका स्वरूप सबके लिए एक जैसा नहीं हो सकता। ऐसा नहीं है कि नई कहानी में जिन विषयों, क्षेत्रों, संकेतों, प्रतिमानों, मूल्यों आदि के नयेपन का दावा किया जा रहा था उससे प्रेमचंद, अज्ञेय और जैनेन्द्र जैसे कथाकार अनभिज्ञ थे।

यह कहना उचित होगा कि नई कहानी का नयापन प्रक्रिया और विशेषण तक सीमित नहीं है। नए कहानीकारों को पूर्व के कहानीकारों से विलग होने की क्या आवश्यकता थी? जीर्ण और रूढ़ मान्यताओं को प्रेमचंद और जैनेन्द्र ने भी नकारा था। इस दृष्टि से तो उन्हें भी नए कहानीकारों की श्रेणी में रखना चाहिए। नए कहानी आन्दोलन के स्तम्भ मोहन राकेश ने इस नयेपन पर टिप्पणी करते हुए स्पष्ट किया है कि “ऐसा कोई भी विषय या क्षेत्र नहीं है, जिसे लेकर पहले कहानियाँ नहीं लिखी जा चुकीं। इसलिए इस या उस क्षेत्र के जीवन को लेकर कहानियाँ लिखने वाले लोग जब अपनी नयी दृष्टि, नयी चेतना और नयी भावभूमि की बात कहते हैं तो ऐसा लगता है, जैसे वे अपने को किसी ऐसी चीज का विश्वास दिलाना चाहते हों, जिस पर उनका भी मन विश्वास नहीं करता। निःसंदेह कहानी की सार्थकता इस बात में नहीं है कि वह किस नये अजायबघर से कौन-सा अजूबा लाकर हमारे सामने पेश करती है। नये तरह के व्यक्ति या नये तरह के वातावरण का चित्रण कर देने से एक नयी कहानी की सृष्टि नहीं हो जाती।”³ असल में “नयी कहानी के साथ जुड़ा ‘नयी’ शब्द पहले की कहानी से मात्र पार्थक्य स्पष्ट करने के लिए नहीं प्रयुक्त हुआ, बल्कि उसके पीछे कहानी की नयी संवेदना, नयी दृष्टि और नये रूपबंध को रेखांकित करने की भावना थी।”⁴

नई कहानी से अभिप्राय आजादी के बाद की उन कहानियों से है जिसमें कथ्य और शिल्प का नयापन है। ऐसी कहानी जो अनुभव पर आधारित यथार्थ की अभिव्यक्ति की मांग करती है। जो खण्डित परम्परा में अपना अस्तित्व तलाशती है। यह कहना समीचीन होगा कि जैनेन्द्र, अज्ञेय आदि पुरानी पीढ़ी के कहानीकारों के विरुद्ध नए कहानीकारों ने व्यापक विरोध किया था। यथार्थतः नई कहानी के दावों के बावजूद इस आन्दोलन ने हिन्दी कहानी को व्यापक आधार दिया। सर्वस्वीकृत है कि कहानी को केन्द्रीय विधा बनाने में नई कहानी आन्दोलन का ऐतिहासिक महत्त्व है। नई कहानी आन्दोलन का ही

¹ अमरनाथ. नयी कहानी और यथार्थवाद. साहित्य भवन, नई दिल्ली, १९८३.

² अश्व, उपेन्द्रनाथ. हिन्दी कहानियाँ और फैशन. नीलाभ प्रकाशन, इलाहाबाद, १९७१.

³ अश्व, उपेन्द्रनाथ. हिन्दी कहानी: एक अन्तरंग परिचय. नीलाभ प्रकाशन, इलाहाबाद, १९७३.

⁴ अवस्थी, देवीशंकर. नई कहानी सन्दर्भ और प्रकृति. वज्रकमल प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली, १९७३.

प्रभाव है कि हिन्दी कहानी एक गम्भीर विधा के रूप में स्वीकृति प्राप्त करने के साथ ही साहित्य का मूल्य व मान विधारित करने में अपनी एक बड़ी भूमिका निभा रही है।

साहित्य के इतिहास में स्वतन्त्र्योत्तर हिन्दी कहानी का एक विशिष्ट महत्व है। सन् १९५४ से लेकर १९६३ तक का काल हिन्दी कहानी के अद्वितीय विस्तार का काल है। इस काल खंड में पहली बार कहानी ने अपनी योग्यतानुरूप वह गौरव प्राप्त किया जिसकी वह अधिकारिणी थी। कहानी इस प्रकार केंद्र में आती है कि तत्कालीन विभिन्न पत्रिकाएं इस पर विशेषांक निकालती हैं। इस सन्दर्भ में नामवर जी का एक कथन उल्लेखनीय है, जो इस कालखंड के पूरे परिदृश्य को रेखांकित करता है: “बहरहाल, हिन्दी में उत्तरशती का पहला दशक निश्चय ही एक नये कहानी उत्थान के लिए याद किया जाएगा। कुछ तो इस बात के लिए कि देखते-देखते एक दशक के अन्दर दर्जनों व्यावसायिक-साहित्यिक पत्रिकाएँ निकल गईं और उनके साथ नये कहानीकारों की एक पूरी फौज खड़ी हो गई, और कुछ इस बात के लिए भी कि हिन्दी में कहानी सर्जना की एक नई संभावना दिखाई पड़ी।”⁵ जाहिर है इस नयी रचनाशीलता से कहानियों के सन्दर्भ में अर्थपूर्ण बहसों व गोष्ठियों का आयोजन प्रारम्भ होता है। कहानी के इस प्रभाव से उस कालखंड का शायद ही कोई आलोचक या लेखक प्रभावित हुए बिना बचता है। यह अतिशयोक्ति नहीं है कि कहानी उस दौर में केन्द्रीय विधा बनकर उभरने के साथ ही कविता, उपन्यास, नाटक आदि अन्य विधाओं की तुलना में बहुत चर्चित रही। इस परिवर्तनकारी घटना को आलोचक हिन्दी साहित्य में समकालीन परिवेश से जोड़कर देखते हैं। हिन्दी कहानी का मूल्याङ्कन स्वतन्त्र्योत्तर सामाजिक और साहित्यिक परिवेश से अलग करके नहीं किया जा सकता। इस प्रसंग में डा नामवर सिंह ने विचार व्यक्त करते हुए लिखा है—“आजादी के साथ भारत में वह शिक्षित मध्य वर्ग स्थापित, विकसित और संवर्धित हुआ जो साहित्य के इतिहास में कहानी का जन्मदाता है। शुरू के तीन-चार वर्षों की संक्रमणकालीन अराजकता की स्थिति जैसे ही समाप्त हुई और संविधान निर्माण के द्वारा देश में जनतंत्र कायम हो गया तो साहित्य-सृष्टि के लिए एक नया वातावरण मिला। राष्ट्र-भाषा हिन्दी ने राजकीय स्वीकृति प्राप्त करके भारतीय साहित्य में एक ऐतिहासिक भूमिका शुरू की और लोकप्रिय साहित्य रूप कहानी को स्वभावतः सबसे अनुकूल वातावरण मिला।”⁶

कहानी नामक पत्रिका जिसका प्रकाशन १९३८ में हुआ था। जो प्रकाशित होने के कुछ ही समय बाद बंद हो गई। सकारण इस पत्रिका का पुनर्प्रकाशन १९५४ में प्रारंभ हुआ। यह एक सर्वमान्य तथ्य है कि सरस्वती प्रेस से प्रकाशित होने वाली इस पत्रिका ने हिन्दी कहानी को एक आन्दोलन का स्वरूप प्रदान किया। ऐसा नहीं है कि ‘कहानी’ पत्रिका से ही कहानी प्रकाशित होना शुरू हुई। इसके पूर्व हंस, प्रतीक, कल्पना जैसी पत्रिकाएं कहानी प्रकाशित करती आ रही थी। लेकिन १९५४ तक कल्पना को छोड़कर शेष सभी पत्रिकाओं का प्रकाशन बंद हो गया। कहानी पत्रिका की सबसे बड़ी विशेषता थी कि यह केवल कहानियों की पत्रिका थी। इस पत्रिका ने नये लेखकों को हिन्दी कहानी लेखन से जोड़ा। नये लेखकों के साथ ही उनको भी जोड़ा जो अन्य विधाओं में लेखन कर रहे थे। इस तथ्य को रेखांकित करते हुए नामवर सिंह ने लिखा है: “नई प्रतिभाएँ मुख्य रूप से अन्य विधाओं की ओर उन्मुख थीं। इसलिए जब ‘कहानी’ पत्रिका निकली तो आभास हुआ कि कहानी के क्षेत्र में भी कुछ प्रतिभाएँ आने लगी हैं और शायद इसीलिए पूरी एक पत्रिका की आवश्यकता महसूस हो रही है। महसूस तो इस बात को संभवतः और लोग भी करते रहे होंगे किन्तु इस समय इसको पहली बार वाणी दी अप्रैल ५४ की ‘कल्पना’ में ‘साहित्य धारा के अन्तर्गत चक्रधर’ नाम से लिखने वाले एक नये लेखक ने! वक्तव्य इस रूप में आया कि ‘एक लम्बे समय के बाद छोटी कहानियाँ फिर से अपनी ओर पाठकों का ध्यान आकृष्ट करने लगी हैं।’”⁷ उक्त सन्दर्भ में उल्लेखनीय है कि मार्कडेय कल्पना पत्रिका में साहित्यधारा नामक स्तम्भ में ‘चक्रधर’ नाम से लिखा करते थे। यह उनका छद्म नाम था। जिस प्रकार सरस्वती पत्रिका ने हिन्दी कहानी के प्रारंभिक विकास में अद्वितीय भूमिका निभाई उसी प्रकार कहानी पत्रिका ने तत्कालीन कहानी को आन्दोलन का रूप दिया।

कहानी पत्रिका ने ‘कहानी नववर्षांक’ निकाले। परिणामस्वरूप कहानी पर सार्थक विमर्श का सूत्रपात हुआ। ‘कहानी नववर्षांक’ १९५६ का इस दृष्टिकोण से एक ऐतिहासिक महत्त्व है। नए कहानीकारों की संख्या इस अंक में काफी बढ़ जाती है। इसके साथ ही कहानी का नयापन साफ परिलक्षित होता है। पहले ‘नववर्षांक’ के महत्त्व का प्रतिपादन डॉ नामवर सिंह इस प्रकार करते हैं: “विशेषांक में नई पीढ़ी का कृतित्व स्पष्टतः श्रेष्ठतर है। इस दृष्टि से कहानी नववर्षांक-१९५६ का ऐतिहासिक महत्त्व है और इसका अधिकांश श्रेय कृती संपादक भैरव प्रसाद गुप्त को है। हिन्दी जगत् में इस विशेषांक की

⁵ कमलेश्वर. नई कहानी की भूमिका. राजकमल प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली, १९७४.

⁶ कमलेश्वर. संस्मरण: कहानी और समाज. राजकमल प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली, १९८२.

⁷ कुमार, रजनीश. हिन्दी कहानी के आन्दोलन: उपलब्धियाँ और सीमाएँ. नेशनल पब्लिशिंग हॉउस, दिल्ली, १९८६.

जितनी व्यापक चर्चा हुई और जैसा सहर्ष स्वागत हुआ, उससे कहानी के नवजागरण की नींव पड़ गई। निस्सन्देह इस विशेषांक की नई कहानियाँ परम्परागत कहानी के दायरे से सर्वथा मुक्त नहीं हैं किन्तु इनसे एक नये समारम्भ का आत्म-सजग आभास अवश्य मिलता है। नये ढंग की कहानियाँ लिखी गई, नये कहानीकारों को इसका भी अहसास था कि वे नया लिख रहे हैं।”^८ इस विशेषांक की ऐतिहासिकता इसलिए भी है कि इसमें पहली बार ‘नई कहानी’ पर जोरदार चर्चा हुई।

नामवर सिंह जी ने इस विशेषांक में ‘आज की हिन्दी कहानी’ नामक लेख लिखा था। जिसमें उन्होंने प्रश्न किया था कि “नयी कविता” की तरह ‘नई कहानी’ नाम की भी कोई चीज है क्या?”^९ स्पष्ट है कि यहीं से ‘नई कहानी’ की उपस्थिति को लेकर चर्चा शुरू हुई। यहाँ एक बात स्पष्ट कर देना उचित होगा कि ‘कहानी: नई कहानी’ में नामवर जी के उक्त लेख का प्रकाशन वर्ष १९५७ उल्लिखित है। जबकि यह सत्य नहीं है। इस प्रश्न पर उपेन्द्रनाथ अशक ने विचार व्यक्त करते हुए लिखा है कि: ‘नामवर जी ने इस लेख का सन् अपनी पुस्तक ‘कहानी: नयी कहानी’ में १९५७ दिया है, पर वास्तव में यह जनवरी १९५६ के ‘कहानी नववर्षांक’ में ही छपा है।”^{१०} इसमें कोई दो राय नहीं है कि हिन्दी कहानी में एक नए युग का सूत्रपात इस अंक से हुआ। इसका प्रभाव यह हुआ कि हिन्दी की अन्य पत्रिकाएं यथा ‘संकेत’, ‘निकष’, ‘कल्पना’, ‘ज्ञानोदय’, ‘लहर’, ‘माया’, ‘नई कहानियाँ’, ‘सारिका’, ‘नई धारा’ आदि ने कहानी लेखन व उस पर चर्चा परिचर्चा को प्रमुखता दी। साहित्य की अन्य विधाओं के साथ कहानी का भी उल्लेख होने लगा। विद्वानों व आलोचकों का ध्यान कहानी ने अपनी ओर खींचा। कहानी के लिए पूर्व निर्धारित दृष्टिकोण में व्यापक बदलाव हुआ। इस क्रान्तिकारी बदलाव की ओर संकेत करते हुए नामवर सिंह ने लिखा है कि: “यह वही समय है। जब हिन्दी में निकष, संकेत, हंस-अर्धवार्षिक जैसे बड़े-बड़े साहित्य-संकलन निकाले गये, जिनमें नवलेखन की सभी विधाएँ दृष्टि, वस्तु और शिल्पगत विविधताओं सहित एक साथ प्रकाश में आईं। नयी पीढ़ी की कहानियाँ यहाँ नई कविता के साथ-साथ छपीं। ‘हंस’ अर्धवार्षिक संकलन में जहाँ मोहन राकेश, मार्कण्डेय, शेखर जोशी, हरिशंकर परसाई की कहानियाँ छपीं, वहीं निर्मल वर्मा की कहानी ‘परिन्दे’ और मुक्तिबोध, केदार नाथ सिंह, श्रीकांत वर्मा आदि की ‘नयी कविता’ भी साथ-साथ पढ़ने को मिलीं। इसी प्रकार ‘संकेत’ में अमरकांत, राजेन्द्र यादव, मोहन राकेश की कहानियों के साथ रघुवीर सहाय की ‘खेल’ कहानी भी प्रकाशित हुई। सभी जानते हैं कि ‘निकष’ के संपादक ‘नयी कविता’ के पक्षधर रहे हैं, फिर भी उसमें मोहन राकेश, शेखर जोशी, कमलेश्वर, राजेन्द्र यादव, रेणु आदि ने सहर्ष अपनी कहानियाँ दी।”^{११}

स्पष्ट है कि कहानी के प्रति रूढ़िवादी मान्यताओं में इस परिवर्तन का गहरा असर हुआ। पाठकों के बीच कहानी की लोकप्रियता पहले से थी। सबसे बड़ी बात यह हुई कि जो आलोचक दूसरी विधाओं की तुलना में इसे ‘तुच्छ’ समझते थे; वे सभी इसकी शक्ति का लोहा मानने लगे।

नई कहानी के विषय में कई बिंदु ऐसे हैं जिन पर आलोचक आज भी एकमत नहीं हैं। ऐसा ही एक बिंदु नई कहानी के नामकरण को लेकर है। विद्वानों के बीच इस पर सर्वसहमति नहीं है। बहरहाल अधिकतर विद्वान् पहली बार इस नाम के प्रयोग का श्रेय प्रायः नामवर जीको देते हैं; परन्तु कमलेश्वर इस तथ्य पर अपना विचार व्यक्त करते हुए लिखते हैं कि-“इस रचना को ‘नई कहानी’ नाम से अभिहित किया था, सबसे पहले कवि दुष्यन्त कुमार ने एक लेख में जो ‘कल्पना’ में छपा था।”^{१२} चूँकि आलोचक नामवर सिंह से नई कहानी के प्रस्तोतात्रयी मोहन राकेश, राजेंद्र यादव और कमलेश्वर गहरा मतभेद रखते थे। इस आधार पर कमलेश्वर का अपने मित्र दुष्यन्त कुमार को नई कहानी के नामकरण का श्रेय देना स्वाभाविक है। जो भी हो यह एक निर्विवाद सत्य है कि नई कहानी को परिभाषित करने व पहचानपुष्टा करने के लिए जितना भागीरथ प्रयास नामवर जी ने किया उतना किसी अन्य आलोचक ने नहीं। अकारण नहीं है कि नई कहानी नाम देने का श्रेय अधिकांश विद्वान् नामवर सिंह को ही देते हैं। हालाँकि इस सन्दर्भ में नामवर सिंह विनम्रतावश कुछ और ही बात कहते हैं-“कहानी की चर्चा में अनायास ही ‘नई कहानी’ शब्द चल पड़ा है और सुविधानुसार इसका प्रयोग कहानीकारों ने भी किया है और आलोचकों ने भी।”^{१३} तमाम मतभेदों के बाद भी एक बात स्पष्ट है कि उस कालखंड की कहानियों के लिए ‘नई कहानी’ शब्द रूढ़ हो गया। नई कहानी में प्रयुक्त नई शब्द महज विशेषण नहीं रह गया। नई कहानी नाम सन् १९५७ के

^८ गुप्त, भैरव प्रसाद. कहानी: नववर्षांक १९५६. सरस्वती प्रेस, १९५६.

^९ चौहान, शिवदान सिंह. नई कहानी और समकालीनता. आलोचना प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली, १९६३.

^{१०} जैन, गंगा प्रसाद. हिन्दी की नयी कहानी. प्रकाशन संस्थान, नई दिल्ली, १९७४.

^{११} ठाकुर, मधुरेश. नई कहानी: पुनर्विचार, वाणी प्रकाशन, नेशनल पब्लिशिंग हॉउस, दिल्ली, १९९२.

^{१२} ठाकुर, मधुरेश. नई कहानी का सामाजिक सरोकार, भारतीय ज्ञानपीठ, नई दिल्ली, २०००.

^{१३} परसाई, हरिशंकर. साहित्य का प्रयोजन. लोकभारती प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली, १९८१.

प्रयाग साहित्य सम्मलेन में स्वीकार कर लिया गया था। इस तथ्य की पुष्टि करते हुए देवीशंकर अवस्थी ने लिखा है कि- 'नयी कहानी' के अस्तित्व का प्रश्न यदि १९५६ में उठाया गया था तो दिसम्बर १९५७ में प्रयाग में होने वाले 'साहित्य सम्मलेन' तक 'नयी कहानी' अभिधान को लगभग स्वीकार कर लिया गया था। इस सम्मलेन में पठित तीनों निबंधों (शिवप्रसाद सिंह, हरिशंकर परसाई और मोहन राकेश लिखित) के पहले के वाक्यों में 'नयी कहानी' का प्रयोग किया गया है।^{१४}

वर्ष १९५७ का महत्व नई कहानी के प्रसंग में इसलिए भी है कि इसी वर्ष मोहन राकेश का 'नए बदल' और राजेंद्र यादव का 'जहाँ लक्ष्मी कैद है' कथा संग्रह का प्रकाशन हुआ था। इन संग्रहों में संकलित कहानियाँ अपने रंग-रूप, मिजाज और अंदाज में एक नयापन लेकर आई थीं। इस तथ्य से मतभेद नहीं हो सकता।

'नई कहानी आन्दोलन' की पृष्ठभूमि पर कथा आलोचना में बहुत गंभीर और व्यापक परिचर्चा हुई है। यह एक कटु सत्य है कि यह चर्चा अनेक बार दिग्भ्रमित होती नजर आती है। नई कहानी आन्दोलन के प्रादुर्भाव के विभिन्न कारण बताये गये हैं। जिनमें से कुछ कारण तो पूर्वाग्रह से प्रेरित हैं। 'नई कविता आन्दोलन' नई कहानी से पूर्व ही मुखर हो चुका था। इस कारण नई कहानी आन्दोलन परिसीमित अर्थों में ही सही-प्रभाव ग्रहण करता है।

अनायास नहीं है कि तमाम समालोचक 'नई कविता' की अनुक्रिया या प्रतिक्रिया के रूप में 'नई कहानी आन्दोलन' का मूल्यांकन करते हैं। नई कहानी का सम्बन्ध निरूपण नई कविता से समझा जा सकता है; परन्तु समस्या तब होती है जब नई कहानी को यूरोपीय साहित्यिक आंदोलनों की नकल व 'आइडेंटिटी क्राइसिस' की अभिव्यक्ति तक संकुचित कर दिया जाता है। 'नई कहानी आन्दोलन' के प्रति पूर्वाग्रह को सहज ही समझा जा सकता है। नई कहानी के प्रति कुछ आलोचक हमलावर नजर आते हैं। सर्वविदित है कि ये आलोचक नई कहानी के विरोध में सवाल खड़े कर उसके अस्तित्व को ही नकार देते थे। नई कहानी आन्दोलन को खड़ा करने में युवा कहानीकारों की सबसे बड़ी भूमिका रही है। पुरानी पीढ़ी के कहानीकारों विशेषतः जैनेन्द्र और अज्ञेय के प्रति यह आन्दोलन निषेध का भाव रखता है। परन्तु इस भाव को ही नई कहानी आन्दोलन का मुख्य कारण नहीं माना जा सकता। नई कहानी के अस्तित्व व भविष्य पर प्रश्नवाचक दृष्टि से देखने वाले उपेन्द्रनाथ अशक लिखते हैं कि- "सन बावन-तिरपन तक पुराने लेखक जम गये थे। जाहिर है, तब नये लेखकों के सामने (राकेश के शब्द का सहारा लूँ तो) 'आइडेंटिटी' की समस्या थी। राजेन्द्र यादव ने इसके लिए सबसे ज्यादा शीर्षासन किए। खूब प्रयोग किए, खूब लेख लिखे-उनके बनाए हुए क्षेत्र को-चतुर लोगों की तरह राकेश और कमलेश्वर या कहें कि निर्मल वर्मा ने हथिया लिखा।"^{१५}

अशक जी को इतना कहने से भी संतोष नहीं हुआ तो उन्होंने नई कहानी पर अति यथार्थवादी (सूर्यलिस्टिक) होने का भी आक्षेप मढ़ दिया "उस जमाने में कृष्णचन्द्र और बेदी तक ने अति यथार्थ (सूर्यलिस्टिक) कहानियाँ लिखीं-यूरोप और इंगलिस्तान के आधुनिक कथा-लेखकों से प्रभावित होकर कहानियाँ लिखीं थी। उन सभी पश्चिमी लेखकों की अनुगूँज आज की नयी हिन्दी कहानी में है।"^{१६} पुरानी पीढ़ी के कहानीकार के साथ साथ विशुद्ध समालोचक भी नई कहानी पर पश्चिम का प्रभाव मानते हैं। अशक जी की तरह प्रगतिशील आलोचक शिवदान सिंह चौहान ने भी 'लहर' और 'आलोचना' में नई कहानी के विरुद्ध कुछ लेख लिखे थे। 'पश्चिम की विचारधाराओं का नई कहानी पर प्रभाव को' चिन्हित करते हुए लिखा है कि- "इस प्रकार आज की कहानी को व्यक्ति की कुंठाओं के यथातथ्यवादी (नेचुरलिस्टिक) चित्रण के मार्ग पर डालकर जिससे 'नई कहानी' 'अंधेरे में एक चीख' मात्र बन गई है और नया कहानीकार अस्तित्ववादी दर्शन का विज्ञापक, नई कहानी के मंच से एक विद्रोही और बुतशिकन के अंदाज में कुछ कथाकारों ने अपने और अपने मित्र वर्ग की दुंदुभी कुछ ऐसे बेसुरे और फूहड़ ढंग से बजाई कि उसकी तीव्र प्रतिक्रिया स्वाभाविक हो गई।"^{१७}

जहाँ तक नए कहानीकारों द्वारा पुरानी पीढ़ी के विरुद्ध मोर्चाबंदी का सवाल है तो वह पूर्णतः अनौचित्यपूर्ण है। निःसंदेह पुराने पीढ़ी के कहानीकारों जैनेन्द्र अज्ञेय आदि के योगदान के बिना आज की हिन्दी कहानी 'नई कहानी' तक नहीं पहुँच पाती। हिन्दी कहानी को पुष्पित और पल्लवित करने में पुराने कहानीकारों के अप्रतिम योगदान को नकारा नहीं जा सकता। ऐतिहासिक परिप्रेक्ष्य के बिना नई कहानी पर अस्तित्ववाद, प्रकृतवाद, अतियथार्थवाद का प्रभाव ढूँढना कहाँ तक तर्कसंगत है?

¹⁴ यादव, राजेन्द्र. कहानी स्वरूप और संवेदना. नेशनल पब्लिशिंग हाउस, दिल्ली, १९८८.

¹⁵ राकेश, मोहन. नये बादल. राजपाल एंड संस, नई दिल्ली, १९५७.

¹⁶ रेणु, फणीश्वरनाथ, ठेठ हिन्दी की कहानी. पेंगुइन हिन्दी, नई दिल्ली, १९६०.

¹⁷ राय, श्रीपति. कहानी की बात, वाणी प्रकाशन, नयी दिल्ली, १९७४.

यह तथ्य सही है कि नए कहानीकार अस्तित्ववाद के प्रभाव से मुक्त नहीं हैं। दुनिया के साहित्य पर द्वितीय विश्व युद्ध के बाद इस विचारधारा का वृहद् प्रभाव स्पष्ट परिलक्षित होता है। हिन्दी साहित्य भी इससे अछूता नहीं रहा। इसके प्रभाव में आकर नई कहानी के लेखक अनेक कहानियां लिखते हैं। नई कहानी के पुरस्कर्ताओं में से एक मोहन राकेश भी अपने लेखन के अंतिम दौर में इस विचारधारा के प्रति आकृष्ट दिखाई देते हैं। इन सब तथ्यों के बावजूद समग्रता में नई कहानी अपने देश, काल और परिस्थितियों की उपज है। ये कहानियां अपने समय और समाज की वास्तविकता को प्रतिबिंबित करती हैं न कि किसी आयातित सच को। इस विश्लेषण से स्पष्ट है कि नई कहानी आजादी के बाद के भारत के संश्लिष्ट सामाजिक-पारिवारिक यथार्थ की रचनात्मक अभिव्यक्ति है।

निःसंदेह नई कहानी देशकाल वातावरण और परिस्थिति से पूर्णरूपेण सम्पृक्त है। कहानी पत्रिका के यशस्वी सम्पादक श्रीपत राय ने नई कहानी के नए स्वरूप को चिन्हित करते हुए लिखा है कि: “अब प्रश्न रह जाता है नयी कहानी का-नई कहानी क्या है? देशकाल से निरपेक्ष साहित्य की परिकल्पना हम नहीं कर रहे हैं। आज जीवन बहुत जटिल हो गया है और फलस्वरूप कहानी का स्वरूप बुद्धि पर अधिक आधारित हो गया है। मन की कुंठाओं के, दमित मानसिक प्रवृत्तियों के चित्रण के रूप में आज उसका महत्त्व अधिक है। सूक्ष्मतम अनुभूतियों के प्रति इस नई कहानी का आग्रह अकारण नहीं है। यह एक जटिल मानव सभ्यता की उपज है।”¹⁸

इस दृष्टि से चिंतन करें तो नई कहानी की मूल चेतना स्वातंत्र्योत्तर भारतीय जीवन यथार्थ की अभिव्यक्ति है। उस यथार्थ का कहानीकार स्वयं एक हिस्सा रहा है। नई कहानी में अभिव्यक्त संश्लिष्ट भावबोध-तनाव, कुंठा, घुटन, ऊब, अलगाव, अजनबियत आदि जीवन की वास्तविकताओं को नये कहानीकार ने अपनी अनुभूति और सम्वेदना का हिस्सा बनाकर प्रस्तुत किया है। वह जीवन को जैसा देखता है बिना लाग लपेट के वैसा ही अपनी रचनाओं में अभिव्यक्त करता है। इस आधार पर कहा जा सकता है कि जीवन के प्रत्यक्ष बोध से नए कहानीकारों की सृजनात्मकता पैदा हुई है। इसलिए युगीन सन्दर्भों व परिस्थितियों से विलग होकर नई कहानी को नहीं समझा जा सकता।

आजादी भारतीय इतिहास की अद्वितीय घटना है। स्वतन्त्र भारत में स्वाभाविक रूप से समाज व्यवस्था में बदलाव आता है। विश्लेषकों का मानना है कि यह बदलाव नई लोकतान्त्रिक व्यवस्था के अंतर्गत जारी नई आर्थिक नीति के कारण होता है।

देश के विकास के लिए आजादी के बाद भारत ने मिश्रित अर्थव्यवस्था का ‘मॉडल’ अपनाया। नए भारत की नई अर्थव्यवस्था में प्राण फूंकने के लिए नेहरू ने पंचवर्षीय योजना के क्रियान्वयन पर ध्यान केन्द्रित किया। जनहित को केंद्र में रखकर शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य और रोजगार जैसी आधारभूत सुविधाओं की सहज उपलब्धता हेतु तमाम योजनायें लागू की गईं। पंचवर्षीय योजनाओं ने देश के आर्थिक और सामाजिक विकास को गति प्रदान की। महानगर और बड़े शहर कल कारखानों व उद्योग के अन्य आर्थिक गतिविधियों के केंद्र बन गए। परिणामतः इन शहरों में रोजी-रोजगार के अवसरों में अचानक वृद्धि हुई। शिक्षित वर्ग ने नौकरी पेशा से जुड़कर अपनी आर्थिक स्थिति में सुधार किया।

स्वाभाविक तौर से मध्य वर्ग व निम्न मध्य वर्ग का इस नई परिस्थितियों के कारण बहुत तीव्र गति से उदय हुआ। बुद्धि को प्रमुखता देने के कारण मध्य वर्गप्रायः स्वार्थ से वशीभूत होता है। इसकी आवश्यकतायें और आकांक्षाएं आय के साधन की अपेक्षा असीमित होती हैं जिसकी पूर्ति में वह प्रायः असफल होता है। यह असफलता उसे हताशा, निराशा और कुंठा की ओर ले जाती है। इसी जटिल और संश्लिष्ट भावबोध व अंतर्विरोध का चित्रण नई कहानी में हुआ है। अकेलापन, संत्रास, हताशा, कुंठा, अजनबीपन आदि तत्कालीन मनोदशाओं की यथार्थ-अभिव्यक्ति मोहन राकेश राजेंद्र यादव, कमलेश्वर और अमरकांत की कहानियों में हुई है। इसका सीधा सम्बन्ध तत्कालीन मध्य व निम्न मध्यवर्गीय जीवन से है।

ग्रामीण युवाओं का रोजगार की तलाश में महानगरों की ओर पलायन स्वातंत्र्योत्तर भारत का कटु यथार्थ है। इस दौर में महानगर रोजी रोजगार के सबसे बड़े केंद्र बनकर उभरते हैं। ऐसी स्थिति में गांवों व कस्बों के युवा रोजगार हेतु महानगर की ओर पलायन करते हैं। यहाँ के स्वार्थपूर्ण वातावरण में उन्हें गांवों जैसा वह प्रेम और अपनापन नहीं मिलता। यहाँ के व्यावसायिक व्यवहार, भीड़-भाड़ व कोलाहल भरी जीवन शैली से उनमें ऊब और अजनबियत का भाव जन्म लेता है। परिवार के छूटने की पीड़ा और महानगरों की भावनात्मक शून्य परिस्थितियों ने अपने गाँव-गिराव से जुड़ने के लिए बाध्य करती है। इसी कारण नई कहानी में आंचलिकता से लगाव दिखायी देता है। रेणु, शिवप्रसाद सिंह, मार्कंडेय, भैरव प्रसाद

¹⁸ लाल, लक्ष्मीनारायण, हिन्दी कहानी की शिल्प विधि का विकास. साहित्य भवन इलाहाबाद, १९६०

गुप्त आदि नई कहानी के कहानीकारों ने आंचलिक व ग्रामीण जीवन के विविध रंग-रूप के मुग्ध कर देने वाले चित्र उकेरे हैं। जिसका सीधा सम्बन्ध उस कालखंड के सन्दर्भों से है।

निष्कर्षतः नई कहानी आन्दोलन स्वतंत्रता प्राप्ति के बाद भारतीय समाज में आए व्यापक ऐतिहासिक परिवर्तन का साहित्यिक प्रतिबिम्ब है। यह आन्दोलन केवल शिल्प या विषय के नयेपन तक सीमित नहीं रहा, बल्कि उसमें जीवन की जटिलताओं, मध्यवर्गीय संघर्षों और आंतरिक भावनाओं एवं संवेदनाओं का सूक्ष्म चित्रण भी सम्मिलित था। मोहन राकेश, कमलेश्वर, राजेन्द्र यादव, अमरकांत, शेखर जोशी, रेणु और मार्कंडेय जैसे ख्यातिलब्ध लेखकों ने सामाजिक यथार्थ को आत्मसंवेदनात्मक धरातल पर व्यक्त किया। नई कहानी ने हिन्दी साहित्य में कहानी को केंद्रीय विधा के रूप में स्थापित करने के साथ ही सुधी पाठकों की सोच व दृष्टिकोण को गहराई दी है। यह आंदोलन न सिर्फ ऐतिहासिक रूप से, वरन रचनात्मकता की दृष्टि से भी अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण सिद्ध हुआ है।

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योगदर्शन में समग्र स्वास्थ्य की अवधारणा

सोनालि राउत
शोध छात्रा, दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय

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सारांश : योगदर्शन भारतीय संस्कृति और दर्शन का एक अभिन्न अङ्ग है जिसकी अवधारणा केवल शारीरिक व्यायाम नहीं, बल्कि एक समग्र जीवनशैली है जो मन, शरीर और आत्मा के संतुलन पर केंद्रित है। योग के माध्यम से प्राप्त स्वास्थ्य की अवधारणा न केवल रोगमुक्ति बल्कि समग्र कल्याण को दर्शाती है। प्रस्तुत शोध में यह स्पष्ट किया गया है कि योगदर्शन स्वास्थ्य की बहुआयामी व्याख्या करता है जो शरीर के शारीरिक पहलुओं के साथ-साथ मानसिक, सामाजिक और आध्यात्मिक स्वास्थ्य को भी महत्व देती है। अष्टाङ्गयोग के माध्यम से शरीर और मन के बीच गहरा सम्बन्ध स्थापित होता है। शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य की दृष्टि से योग आसन, प्राणायाम और षट्कर्म द्वारा शरीर को शुद्ध, सुदृढ़ और रोगमुक्त बनाता है। इन तकनीकों से न केवल शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य में सुधार होता है, बल्कि मानसिक तनाव, चिन्ता और अवसाद का भी समाधान किया जा सकता है। मानसिक स्वास्थ्य के क्षेत्र में ध्यान, धारणा और समाधि साधक को स्थिरता, शान्ति और सन्तुलन प्रदान करते हैं। सामाजिक स्वास्थ्य के लिए यम और नियम जैसे सिद्धान्त-अहिंसा, सत्य, अस्तेय, ब्रह्मचर्य और अपरिग्रह व्यक्ति को नैतिक और अनुशासित जीवन जीने की प्रेरणा देते हैं जिससे समाज में सहयोग, समानता और सौहार्द की स्थापना होती है। आध्यात्मिक स्वास्थ्य योगदर्शन का सर्वोच्च आयाम है, जहाँ साधक आत्मा और परमात्मा के मिलन का अनुभव कर आत्मसाक्षात्कार प्राप्त करता है। योग दर्शन का उद्देश्य आत्मा की शुद्धि और आत्मज्ञान की ओर भी प्रेरित करना है, जो व्यक्ति को पूर्णता की ओर अग्रसर करता है जिससे व्यक्ति, समाज या राष्ट्र का सर्वाङ्गीण विकास होता है।

शब्द कुंजी - योगदर्शन, अष्टाङ्गयोग, स्वास्थ्य

इस प्रकार, योग दर्शन में स्वास्थ्य की अवधारणा एक समग्र दृष्टिकोण को दर्शाती है, जो व्यक्तिगत और सामाजिक स्वास्थ्य के लिए अत्यन्त आवश्यक है। यह जीवन के हर क्षेत्र में सन्तुलन और सद्भाव को बढ़ावा देता है, जिससे व्यक्ति शारीरिक, मानसिक, सामाजिक और आध्यात्मिक रूप से सम्पन्न बनता है।

शोध के उद्देश्य-

1. योगदर्शन में वर्णित सिद्धान्त हमारे स्वास्थ्य के सभी आयामों को कैसे प्रभावित करते हैं, इसका विश्लेषण करना।
2. शारीरिक, मानसिक, सामाजिक एवं आध्यात्मिक स्वास्थ्य के परस्पर सम्बन्धों की विवेचना करना।
3. योग दर्शन में वर्णित अष्टाङ्ग योग हमारे शारीरिक, मानसिक और सामाजिक स्वास्थ्य से कैसे जुड़ा है, इसकी विवेचना करना।
4. योगदर्शन की मनोवैज्ञानिकता का विश्लेषण करना।

शोध प्रविधि-

शोध प्रविधि किसी भी शोधकार्यकी आधारशिला होती है। यह तार्किक, वैज्ञानिक और अनुशासित प्रक्रिया है जिसके द्वारा शोधकर्ता तथ्यों का अध्ययन कर सत्य निष्कर्ष तक पहुँचता है। योगदर्शन में समग्र स्वास्थ्य की अवधारणा विषय पर आधारित यह शोध दार्शनिक एवं सैद्धान्तिक स्वरूप का है। योगदर्शन में वर्णित सिद्धान्तों, सूत्रों तथा टीकाओं का अध्ययन कर समग्र स्वास्थ्य से सम्बन्धित अवधारणाओं का विश्लेषण किया गया है। साथ ही विश्व स्वास्थ्य सङ्गठन द्वारा प्रस्तुत समग्र स्वास्थ्य की अवधारणा से तुलनात्मक दृष्टि से भी अपनाई गयी है। अतः इस शोध में गुणात्मक, वर्णनात्मक एवं व्याख्यात्मक दोनों प्रकार की प्रविधियों का प्रयोग किया गया है।

शोध की सीमाएं

यह शोध मुख्यतः पतञ्जलि योगसूत्र, व्यासभाष्य, तत्त्ववैशारदी तथा योगवार्तिक जैसे ग्रन्थों पर आधारित है। इसमें योगदर्शन की स्वास्थ्य अवधारणा को ही केन्द्रबिन्दु बनाया गया है। अन्य भारतीय दर्शनों की तुलना केवल आवश्यकता अनुसार की गयी है।

पूर्वकृत शोधकार्य का सर्वेक्षण-

१. मिश्र, डॉ. हरिकान्त. स्वास्थ्य में अष्टाङ्गयोग की उपादेयता. Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (ISSN:2349-5162)10.11(2023)

इस शोध में अष्टाङ्गयोग का वर्णन करते हुए उसका प्रभाव कैसे स्वास्थ्य पर पड़ता है, वह दिखाने का प्रयास किया गया है।

२. पाण्डेय, संदीप कुमार. योगदर्शन में मानसिक रोग एवं मनश्चिकित्सा: एक अध्ययन. International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (ISSN:2320-2882)8.9(2020) प्रस्तुत शोधपत्र में बताया गया है कि योगदर्शन के अनुसार योग का मुख्य उद्देश्य मानसिक अनुशासन और नियन्त्रण है। रोग का निरूपण करते हुए उसकी चिकित्सा का उपाय भी वर्णित किया गया है।

३. कैलाश. योगदर्शन में स्वास्थ्य और आत्मविकास: आधुनिक परिप्रेक्ष्य के सन्दर्भ में विवेचनात्मक अध्ययन. पीएच्.डी.; गिरि.अन्.ओम् स्ट्रग ग्लोबल विश्वविद्यालय, हरियाणा; २०२२.

योग दर्शन एवं स्वास्थ्य (स्वास्थ्य और आत्मविश्वास) का आधुनिक सन्दर्भ में विश्लेषण किया गया है।

इस शोध में यह देखा गया है कि आधुनिक समय में योगदर्शन किस प्रकार स्वास्थ्य (आन्तरिक और बाह्य) और आत्मविश्वास को प्रभावित करता है।

भूमिका-

योग दर्शन में स्वास्थ्य एक अत्यन्त महत्वपूर्ण विषय है जो योग के सिद्धान्त और दार्शनिक दृष्टिकोण के माध्यम से शारीरिक, मानसिक, आध्यात्मिक और सामाजिक स्वास्थ्य को समझाने का एक आधुनिक तरीका प्रस्तुत करता है। योग शब्द 'युज्' धातु से उत्पन्न हुआ है, जिसका अर्थ है समाधि या संयोजन जो आत्मा, मन और शरीर के सन्तुलन, का मार्ग है। योग एक विज्ञान है जो शरीर में स्वास्थ्य, मन में शान्ति, हृदय में आनन्द और आत्मा की मुक्ति लाता है। योग सम्पूर्ण मानवता के लिए अत्यन्त महत्वपूर्ण है। योग दर्शन के प्रतिष्ठापक महर्षि पतञ्जलि के अनुसार योग का परम उद्देश्य 'चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः'^१ यानि मानसिक चित्त की वृत्तियों को नियन्त्रित करके एक स्थिर और प्रसन्न मन की स्थिति प्राप्त करना।

स्वास्थ्य मानव जीवन की अमूल्य निधि है, क्योंकि मनुष्य की प्रसन्नता सुख-समृद्धि एवं क्रियाकलाप इसी पर निर्भर करता है, जन्म से लेकर मृत्यु पर्यन्त साथ रहता है जिसके कारण हमारा जीवन चलता है। ऋषियों ने मानव जीवन पद्धति में चार पुरुषार्थ बताये हैं जिनकी प्राप्ति के लिये मनुष्य का स्वास्थ्य और दीर्घायु होना अत्यावश्यक है। अतः आर्षग्रन्थों में धर्मार्थकाममोक्षाणामारोग्यमूलमुत्तमम्।^२

योग दर्शन में समग्र स्वास्थ्य की अवधारणा केवल शरीर को रोगमुक्त रखने तक सीमित नहीं है, अपितु मानसिक शान्ति, आध्यात्मिकता, स्थिरता और सामाजिक विकास पर भी केन्द्रित है। योग दर्शन में व्यक्ति के सम्पूर्ण स्वास्थ्य को एकीकृत दृष्टिकोण से देखा जाता है।

समग्र स्वास्थ्य की अवधारणा

स्वास्थ्य के विषय में सभी को जानकारी होती है, परन्तु इसे स्पष्ट रूप से परिभाषित करना कठिन सा लगता है। लेकिन फिर भी समय-समय पर विभिन्न संस्थाएँ, विशेषज्ञों, मनोवैज्ञानिकों, विचारकों और दार्शनिकों ने स्वास्थ्य की भिन्न-भिन्न परिभाषायें प्रस्तुत की हैं। स्वास्थ्य शब्द एक अमूर्त अवधारणा है जिसे समझना कठिन है। एक प्रश्न आता है, "क्या किसी ऐसे व्यक्ति को स्वस्थ कहा जा सकता है, जो किसी रोग से ग्रस्त नहीं है?"

स्वास्थ्य का शाब्दिक अर्थ स्व+स्थ, अर्थात् जो स्वयं में स्थिर हो। अर्थात् वह अवस्था जिसमें व्यक्ति अपने मूल रूप में स्थित हो। स्वास्थ्य (स्वस्थस्य भावः) आरोग्यम्।^३ स्वास्थ्य को अंग्रेजी में हैल्थ कहते हैं, हैल्थ शब्द होलोस से बना है जिसका अर्थ है पवित्रता। वही स्वस्थ है जो शुद्ध जीवन जी रहा है। स्व में स्थित वही हो सकते हैं जो शारीरिक, मानसिक और आत्मिक दृष्टि से पूर्ण सन्तुलित हो गया है।

^१ यो.सू. १/२

^२ चरक संहिता १/१५

^३ शब्दकल्पद्रुम।

विश्व स्वास्थ्य संगठन (WHO) ने स्वास्थ्य की परिभाषा इस प्रकार दिया है-स्वास्थ्य केवल रोग एवं शारीरिक दौर्बल्य रहित होना ही नहीं है अपितु शारीरिक, मानसिक और सामाजिक साम्यावस्था की स्थिति है।^४

प्रत्येक मनुष्य के भीतर एक स्थान होता है जहाँ न रोग होता है न शारीरिक पीड़ा, जहाँ न वृद्धावस्था होती है न ही मृत्यु। जब आप इस स्थान पर पहुँच जाते हैं तो वे सारी सीमायें समाप्त हो जाती हैं जिन्हें हम सभी आम तौर पर स्वीकार करते हैं। इन सीमाओं की सम्भावना तक समाप्त हो जाती है। इस स्थान का नाम है सम्पूर्ण स्वास्थ्य।^५ समग्र स्वास्थ्य से तात्पर्य व्यक्ति की शारीरिक, मानसिक, सामाजिक और आध्यात्मिक अर्थात् सम्पूर्ण व्यक्तित्व का विकास है।

स्वास्थ्य के आयाम-

१. शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य-शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य, सम्पूर्ण स्वास्थ्य का एक महत्वपूर्ण घटक है। यह शरीर की स्थिति को दर्शाता है। शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य का अर्थ है कि शरीर के सभी अङ्ग और तन्त्र अपनी अपनी क्षमताओं के अनुसार सही तरीके से कार्य कर रहे हों, और आपस में मिलकर एक-दूसरे का सहयोग करते हों। जब शरीर के बाहरी और आन्तरिक अङ्ग सही ढंग से अपना कार्य करते हैं, तो उसे शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य कहा जाता है। शरीर का आवश्यकताओं के अनुसार उचित सन्तुलन और सही तरीके से कार्य करना शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य का प्रतीक है। ऐसा व्यक्ति अपनी दैनिक गतिविधियों को बिना थकान या रुकावट के पूरा कर पाता है। यही शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य की पहचान है। अतः स्वास्थ्य ही जीवन का आधार है। शरीर के बिना कोई भी कार्य सम्भव नहीं है। इसीलिए ऋषियों ने शरीर को ही मनुष्य का साधन स्वीकार किया है-“शरीरमाद्यं खलु धर्मसाधनम्”।^६

पतञ्जलि योगसूत्र में शारीरिक पूर्णता (काया सम्पत्) का वर्णन मिलता है। रूप-लावण्य-बल-वज्र-संहननत्वानि कायसम्पत्।^७

शरीर की पूर्णता में सुन्दरता, लावण्य, शक्ति और वज्र के समान सुदृढ़ अङ्गविन्यास सम्मिलित है। जिस पाञ्चभौतिक शरीर से रूप, रस, गन्ध, शब्द और स्पर्श आदि पञ्चतन्मात्राएँ प्रतिक्षण क्षीयमाण होती हैं, वही शरीर है।^८

शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य को लेकर योगदर्शन में षट् कर्म, आसन, प्राणायाम, मुद्रा, बन्ध इत्यादि का विशेष महत्व है। षट् कर्मों के अभ्यास से शारीरिक अशुद्धियों को दूर किया जाता है तथा वात, पित्त एवं कफ में सन्तुलन स्थापित किया जाता है। योग के महर्षि पतञ्जलि द्वारा बताए गये अष्टाङ्गों^९ में से तृतीय अङ्ग आसन^{१०} से मांसपेशियाँ मजबूत होती हैं जिससे शरीर भी स्वस्थ रहता है और चतुर्थ अङ्ग प्राणायाम^{११} श्वसन क्रिया के द्वारा हृदयगति, रक्त का शुद्धिकरण एवं रक्तसंचार की प्रक्रिया सम बनी रहती है जिसके कारण व्यक्ति स्वस्थ रहता है।

तथा चोक्तम् ‘तपो न परं प्राणायामात्ततो विशुद्धिर्मलानां दीप्तिश्च ज्ञानस्ये’ति।^{१२}

हठयोग से हमारे शरीर के अपशिष्ट पदार्थ बाहर निकल जाते हैं और वात, पित्त और कफ का सन्तुलन बना रहता है। हठयोग में वमन क्रिया से कफ, विरेचन क्रिया से पित्त, और वस्ति क्रिया से वात नष्ट होती है, जिससे शरीर स्थापित होता है। ऐसे योग अभ्यास से हम आज के समय के मानसिक और शारीरिक रोग पर नियन्त्रण कर सकते हैं।^{१३}

नतस्य रोगो न जरा न मृत्यु
प्राप्ताय योगाग्निमयं शरीरम्।^{१४}

^४ Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infinity' Constitution of the World Health Organization principles (Available : <http://www.who.int>)

^५ सम्पूर्ण स्वास्थ्य; डॉ० दीपक चोपड़ा; पृ. सं०-७

^६ कुमारसम्भवम् ५/३३

^७ योगसूत्र ३/४६

^८ मत्स्य पुराण ३/२

^९ योगसूत्र २/२९

^{१०} स्थिरसुखमासनम् २/४६

^{११} योगसूत्र २/४९

^{१२} योगसूत्र (व्यासभाष्य); पृ. सं. ३१२

^{१३} हठयोगप्रदीपिका २/३६

^{१४} श्वेताश्वेतरोपनिषद् २/१२

अर्थात् जो व्यक्ति अपने शरीर को योग रूपी अग्नि में तपा चुका है, उसे कोई रोग, वृद्धावस्था या मृत्यु प्राप्त नहीं होती। शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य की पहचान अच्छा रंग, स्वच्छ त्वचा, गहन निद्रा, स्वच्छ श्वसन, चमकदार आंखें और अच्छी दृष्टि, चमकीले केश और शालीन वस्त्रों से ढका शरीर, अच्छी भूख, नियमित एवं सहज तौर से मल मूत्र का त्याग तथा पूरे शरीर की सहज एवं समन्वयपूर्ण क्रिया से किया जाता है।

२. मानसिक स्वास्थ्य-

मानसिक स्वास्थ्य समग्र स्वास्थ्य और कल्याण का एक महत्वपूर्ण पहलू है। मानसिक स्वास्थ्य मनुष्य के आन्तरिक स्तर को व्यक्त करता है। यह विभिन्न जीवन क्षेत्रों को प्रभावित करता है, जिसमें व्यक्तिगत सम्बन्ध, कार्यप्रदर्शन और शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य शामिल हैं। शरीर की समस्याएं अधिक स्पष्ट होती हैं, इसलिए उन्हें समझना और उनका निवारण करना आसान होता है। लेकिन मन की प्रकृति सूक्ष्म है, इसलिए मानसिक रोग सीधे तौर पर नहीं दिखाई देते। मानसिक स्वास्थ्य प्रायः उपेक्षित रहता है और देखभाल की कमी होती है। मानसिक स्वास्थ्य के लिए मन की सूक्ष्म, प्रकृति और उसके गहरे स्वरूप को समझना बहुत जरूरी है।

भारतीय दर्शन में यह माना गया है कि मानसिक स्वास्थ्य का मूल आधार मन होता है। मानसिक स्वास्थ्य का सम्बन्ध व्यक्ति के सम्पूर्ण व्यक्तित्व और उसकी प्रेरणाओं, इच्छाओं और आवश्यकताओं से होता है। इस आधार पर मानसिक स्वास्थ्य के लिये तीन बातें प्रमुख हैं-क्षमतापूर्ण अभिव्यक्ति, शक्तियों में एकीकरण तथा मूल एवं अर्जित प्रेरणाओं का सामान्य लक्ष्य की ओर गमन।^{१५}

भारतीय दर्शन धारा में व्यक्ति का अस्तित्व आत्मा पर निर्भर है न कि मन पर। यहाँ मन को आत्मा के साधन के रूप में देखा गया है, जो वास्तविक स्वरूप की ओर ले जाता है। योग दर्शन में मानसिक स्वास्थ्य की समस्या को आध्यात्मिक दृष्टि से देखा गया है, जिसे आधुनिक विज्ञान ने अभी तक पूरी तरह से समझा नहीं है। महर्षि पतञ्जलि ने मानसिक स्वास्थ्य को प्राप्त करने के लिए अष्टाङ्ग योग का मार्ग बताया, जिसमें मानसिक स्वास्थ्य की आदर्श स्थिति को समाधि कहा गया है। यह स्थिति चित्त की विभिन्न अवस्थाओं के नियन्त्रण से प्राप्त होती है। योग दर्शन के अनुसार चित्त की पाँच अवस्थाएँ हैं:^{१६}

१. क्षिप्त-यह रजोगुण प्रधान दशा है जिससे चित्त अस्थिर, चञ्चल और विषयोन्मुखी बन कर सुख-दुःख भोगता है। इसमें मन तथा इन्द्रियों पर से नियन्त्रण हट जाता है। यह अवस्था योग के अनुकूल नहीं है। (रजसा विषयेष्वेव वृत्तिमत्)।
२. मूढ-इसमें तमोगुण आधिक्य होता है जिससे वह विवेक शून्य होकर प्रमाद, आलस्य निद्रा में प्रवृत्त होता है। (तमसा निद्रादिवृत्तिमत्)।
३. विक्षिप्त-इस अवस्था में सत्त्वगुण के आविर्भाव से चित्त थोड़ी देर के लिए किसी विषय में लगता है, पुनः विषय से हट जाता है। ऐसा चित्त देवपुरुषों का तथा प्रथम भूमि में आरूढ योग-जिज्ञासुओं का होता है। (क्षिप्ताद्विशिष्टं विक्षिप्तं, सत्त्वाधिक्येन समादधदपि चित्तं रजोमात्रयाऽन्तरा विषयान्तरवृत्तिमद्)।
४. एकाग्र-बहिर्वृत्तियों का निरोध करने वाला चित्त एकाग्र कहलाता है। यह चित्त की योगानुकूल अवस्था है। यहाँ चित्त सभी वस्तुओं से हटकर किसी एक विषय पर केन्द्रित हो जाता है। ऐसा चित्त प्रथम कक्षा के योगियों का होता है। (एकस्मिन्नेव विषयेऽग्रं शिखा यस्य चित्तदीपस्येत्येकाग्रम्)।
५. निरुद्ध^{१७}-इस अवस्था में चित्त अपनी स्वाभाविक शान्त अवस्था में रहता है। यह योग की अन्तिम अवस्था है। इसमें केवल संस्कारमात्र शेष रह जाता है। ऐसा चित्त केवल सिद्ध योगियों का ही होता है। (निरुद्धं च निरुद्धसकलवृत्तिकं संस्कारमात्रशेषमित्यर्थ)।

इस चित्त को स्वस्थ रखने की उपाय योगसूत्र में वर्णित है कि सुखी, दुःखी, पुण्यात्मा तथा पापात्मा (जीवों) के विषय में (क्रमशः) मैत्री, करुणा, मुदिता (प्रसन्नता) और उपेक्षा की भावना करने से चित्त प्रसन्न (निर्मल) होता है।^{१८}

व्यक्ति के मानसिक स्वास्थ्य के षट् लक्षण दिए जा सकते हैं-(१) सन्तोष (२) स्वाध्याय (३) ईश्वरप्रणिधान (४) प्रत्याहार (५) धारणा (६) ध्यान।

मानसिक असन्तुलन के कारण इस प्रकार है:-

^{१५} योग साइकोलॉजी; स्वामीराम; पृ. सं. १०३

^{१६} यो० वा०-पृ० ८

^{१७} पातञ्जलयोगदर्शनम् व्यासभाष्य-पृष्ठ सं.।

^{१८} मैत्रीकरुणामुदितोपेक्षाणां सुखदुःखपुण्यापुण्यविषयाणां भावनातश्चित्तप्रसादनम्। यो. सू. १/३३

१. गलत दृष्टिकोण
२. बाह्य परिस्थितियों से सामंजस्य का अभाव,
३. तनावपूर्ण कार्य
४. चिन्तन तथा चिन्ता,
५. मन पर संयम न होना।^{१९}

हमारे जीवन के पाँच विघ्न हैं जो मानसिक स्वास्थ्य में बाधक होते हैं।

१. दुःख
२. दौर्मनस्य
३. अङ्गमेजयत्व
४. श्वास
५. प्रश्वास^{२०}

३. सामाजिक स्वास्थ्य-

व्यक्ति समाज का महत्वपूर्ण अङ्ग है, और समाज से राष्ट्र तथा राष्ट्र से विश्व प्रभावित होता है। यदि व्यक्ति स्वस्थ होगा तो समाज भी स्वस्थ होगा, जिससे राष्ट्र और अन्ततः विश्व स्वस्थ होगा। स्वस्थ और सामञ्जस्यपूर्ण समाज का निर्माण अहिंसा पर आधारित होता है। अहिंसा की चेतना समाज में शान्ति और विकास को बढ़ावा देती है। यदि समाज में हिंसा बढ़ेगी, तो सामाजिक चेतना का स्तर कम हो जाएगा और समाज में अशान्ति फैल जायेगी। यदि व्यक्ति अनुशासन में रहेगा तो समाज भी अनुशासित ही रहेगा।^{२१} सामाजिक स्वास्थ्य वह दशा है जो व्यक्ति को सामाजिक पर्यावरण से समायोजन की स्थिति तथा सम्बन्धों को स्पष्ट करती है।^{२२}

सामाजिक जीवन को स्वस्थ रखने का एक उपाय है। सहना अर्थात् सहिष्णुता। इसी के द्वारा शक्ति का विकास होता है यदि हमारे भीतर सहिष्णुता की भावना होगी तो अनुशासन स्वयं ही उत्पन्न हो जाएगा। सहिष्णुता के विकास के लिए मस्तिष्क का स्वस्थ होना आवश्यक है।^{२३}

स्वस्थ समाज का मूल आधार-

१. सहिष्णुता
२. समानता
३. सहयोग
४. सहानुभूति
५. प्रगति

अहिंसासत्यास्तेयब्रह्मचर्यापरिग्रहाः यमाः^{२४} अर्थात् अहिंसा, सत्य, अस्तेय, ब्रह्मचर्य और अपरिग्रह पाँच यम हैं। यम को समाज सुधारक की संज्ञा दी गई है।

४. आध्यात्मिक स्वास्थ्य-

आध्यात्मिक स्वास्थ्य मानव स्वास्थ्य का एक महत्वपूर्ण पहलू है। आध्यात्मिक स्वास्थ्य का सम्बन्ध किसी धर्म विशेष से नहीं, अपितु व्यक्ति की आन्तरिक शान्ति, आत्मजागरूकता और जीवन के प्रति सकारात्मक दृष्टिकोण से है। इसे शारीरिक, मानसिक और सामाजिक स्वास्थ्य के साथ जोड़ा गया है, लेकिन यह इनसे कहीं व्यापक है।

आध्यात्मिक स्वास्थ्य वह स्थिति है जिसमें व्यक्ति अपने अस्तित्व के गहरे अर्थ और उद्देश्य को समझता है। यह एक ऐसा मानसिक और भावनात्मक सन्तुलन है, जहाँ व्यक्ति अपने आप को, अपने परिवेश को और ब्रह्माण्ड को एक गहरे आत्मिक दृष्टिकोण से देखता है। आध्यात्मिक स्वास्थ्य का तात्पर्य किसी उच्च शक्ति या ईश्वर के साथ सम्बन्धस्थापित करने से भी है, चाहे वह धार्मिक हो या गैर-धार्मिक रूप में। जब चित्तवृत्तियाँ शान्त हो जाती हैं, तब साधक अपने आत्मस्वरूप

^{१९} तत्त्ववैशारदी-पृ० ९२

^{२०} दुःखदौर्मनस्याङ्गमेजयत्वश्वासप्रश्वासा विक्षेपसहभुवः १/३१

^{२१} श्री अरविन्द का सर्वाङ्ग दर्शन; श्री रामनाथ शर्मा; मेरठ कैन्ट पृ० १७६

^{२२} प्राकृतिक चिकित्सा सिद्धांत एवं व्यवहार : प्रो० पी० डी० मिश्र; पृ० सं० १०६

^{२३} योग द्वारा समग्र स्वास्थ्य, डा० सोहनराज तातेड़; पृ० ८९

^{२४} यो.सू. २/३०

में स्थित होता है। यही आध्यात्मिक स्वास्थ्य का मूल है, क्योंकि इसमें व्यक्ति बाह्य विक्षेपों से मुक्त होकर शुद्ध आत्मा की अनुभूति करता है।^{२५}

आध्यात्मिक स्वास्थ्य वह अवस्था है जो व्यक्ति की ईश्वरीय सत्ता से सम्बन्ध स्पष्ट करते हुए जन कल्याण की ओर अग्रसर होने की स्थिति स्पष्ट करता है।^{२६}

योगसूत्र में पतञ्जलि कहते हैं कि कैवल्य ही योग का अन्तिम लक्ष्य है। “पुरुषार्थशून्यानां गुणानां प्रतिप्रसवः कैवल्यं स्वरूपप्रतिष्ठा वा चितिशक्तिरिति”^{२७} अर्थात् जब प्रकृति के गुण निष्क्रिय हो जाते हैं और चैतन्य आत्मा अपने स्वरूप में स्थित हो जाती है, वही कैवल्य है। यह स्थिति पूर्ण आध्यात्मिक स्वास्थ्य को दर्शाती है।

निष्कर्ष-

समग्र स्वास्थ्य की अवधारणा योग दर्शन का मूलभूत सिद्धान्त है, जो शरीर, मन और आत्मा के सामञ्जस्य को प्राथमिकता देता है। योग के विभिन्न आयामों के माध्यम से एक व्यक्ति न केवल शारीरिक रूप से स्वस्थ बनता है, अपितु मानसिक और आध्यात्मिक रूप से भी सशक्त होता है। योगाभ्यास के माध्यम से मनुष्य केवल स्वस्थ नहीं होता, अपितु जीवन में सद्भाव, करुणा, संयम और सन्तुलन का भाव विकसित करता है। इस प्रकार योग एक पूर्ण और सन्तुलित जीवन की दिशा है, जो रोगों से मुक्त तथा आन्तरिक शान्ति और आत्मिक विकास की ओर भी अग्रसर होता है।

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^{२५} यो.सू. १/३

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^{२७} यो.सू. ४/३४

भारतीय ज्ञान-विज्ञान का आगार: वेद

डॉ० बाबूलाल मीना

सह आचार्य, संस्कृत विभाग

दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय, दिल्ली-११०००७

सारांश- भारतीय धरा पर ऋषियों के अन्तःकरण में प्रादुर्भूत और आलोकित वेद अनन्त ज्ञान का भण्डार होने से हमारी अमूल्य व अद्वितीय धरोहर हैं। ज्ञान-विज्ञान का आगार होने के कारण ही वेदों के लिए कहा जाता है- “वेदस्य सर्वविद्या निधानत्वम्।” वेद का शाब्दिक अर्थ ही जानने एवं ज्ञान को सूचित करता है। अतैव वेदों में विश्व का समस्त ज्ञान-विज्ञान संकलित है। चारों वेदों-ऋक्, यजु, साम और अथर्ववेद में विभिन्न विद्याएँ एवं कलाएँ, धर्म-अध्यात्म, दर्शन, नीति-राजनीति, दण्डनीति, आहार विज्ञान, स्वास्थ्य एवं चिकित्सा विज्ञान, आयुर्वेद, धनुर्वेद, पशुविज्ञान, पर्यावरण विज्ञान, अंतरिक्ष, ज्योतिष व खगोल विज्ञान, ब्रह्मविद्या, संगीत व नाट्य शास्त्र, शिल्प कौशल, वास्तुविद्या, योग विज्ञान, यज्ञविज्ञान इत्यादि अनन्त ज्ञान-विज्ञान भरा पड़ा है। इस ज्ञान-विज्ञान की वैश्विक उपादेयता एवं महत्ता देखी गई है। अतैव वेदों का सतत चिंतन-मनन-अनुशीलन व आलोडन-विलोडन करणीय है।

शब्द कुंजी- चार वेद-ऋक्, यजु, साम और अथर्व वेद, ज्ञान-विज्ञान, विभिन्न विद्याएँ, कला-कौशल, आगार-भण्डार, वैश्विक महत्ता, ऋषि-मुनि, दिव्यज्ञान सूक्त एवं मन्त्र।

शोधपत्र

विश्व के प्राचीनतम ग्रन्थ वेदों में अथाह ज्ञान निहित है; इसीलिए इन्हें ज्ञान का आकर-आगार या भण्डार कहा जाता है- “वेदस्य सर्वविद्या निधानत्वम्।” एवं “वेदोऽखिलो धर्ममूलम् ज्ञानमयो हि स...”^१ इत्यादि कथन वेदों को समग्र ज्ञान-विज्ञान का आगार और धर्म का मूल सिद्ध करते हैं। वास्तव में वेद किसी व्यक्ति विशेष की रचना न होकर वह ईश्वरीय वाणी है, जो हमारे ऋषि-महर्षियों के चिंतन-मनन से, उसके दिव्य ध्यान से उनके अन्तःकरण में प्रादुर्भूत हुए और उनका आत्मसाक्षात्कार उन्होंने किया। यथोक्त-“ऋषयो मन्त्र द्रष्टारः।”^२ इसीलिए ऋषियों को मन्त्रद्रष्टा कहा जाता है; क्योंकि उन्होंने दिव्यज्ञान से युक्त मन्त्रों का स्वहृदय में साक्षात्कार किया। इसीलिए वेद अपौरुषेय कहलाते हैं।

चारों वेदों में निहित ज्ञान विविधता के साथ विषय प्रमुखता भी मिलती है। यथा-ऋग्वेद में विभिन्न देवी-देवताओं के स्तुतिपरक मंत्र हैं अर्थात् बहुदेवोपासना है। जिनमें विभिन्न प्राकृतिक शक्तियों का देवरूप में स्तवन है। यजुर्वेद में कर्मकांड एवं यज्ञानुष्ठान तथा उनकी विधियाँ हैं तथा यज्ञ को श्रेष्ठतम कर्म कहा गया है- “यज्ञो वै श्रेष्ठतमं कर्म।” सामवेद एक प्रकार से संगीत शास्त्र ही है; क्योंकि उसमें संगीत विद्या का प्रतिपादन है तथा अथर्ववेद में आयुर्वेद, समाज, नीति व राजनीति और तंत्र-मंत्र, जादू-टोना आदि का निरूपण हुआ है। इस प्रकार इन मुख्य विषयों के साथ ही वेदों में अन्य विभिन्न विषयों का भी प्रतिपादन है, जो वेदों को ज्ञान-विज्ञान का आगार बनाते हैं। लौकिक-पारलौकिक, भौतिक-आध्यात्मिक-दार्शनिक, सांस्कृतिक-सामाजिक, नैतिक-राजनैतिक-इत्यादि सभी क्षेत्रों से सम्बन्धित विषयों पर प्रकाश डाला गया है। इसीलिए इनकी न केवल भारतवर्ष की धरा पर, वरन् वैश्विक अथवा सांवाभौमिक मानव के लिए उपादेयता एवं महत्ता है। समग्र विश्व साहित्य में इनकी महत्ता देखी गई है। वेदों का महत्त्व प्रतिपादित करते हुए विदेशी विद्वान मैक्समूलर ने तो यहाँ तक कहा है कि-

यावत्स्थास्यन्ति गिरयः सरितश्च महीतले।

तावद् ऋग्वेदमहिमा लोकेषु प्रचरिष्यति।।^३

ऋग्वेद के विभिन्न सूक्तों के मन्त्रों को देखें, तो हम पाते हैं कि इनमें प्राकृतिक तत्त्वों के स्तवन एवं उपासना के माध्यम से वह ज्ञान-विज्ञान प्रकट किया गया है, जिसे जान-समझकर समस्त सृष्टि एवं ब्रह्माण्ड के रहस्यों को जाना-समझा जा सकता है। यथा-अग्नि-वायु वृक्ष-वनस्पतियों, अन्तरिक्ष-खगोल, भूमि-जल^३ इत्यादि तत्त्वों का सम्यक् ज्ञान ऐसा विशिष्ट ज्ञान या विद्या है, जिसे सम्यक् रूपेण जान-समझकर मानव भौतिक जगत् की अनेक समस्याओं का समाधान कर सकता है और नित-नए आविष्कार कर अपनी जीवनशैली को सरल व उत्तम बना सकता है। इन समस्त प्राकृतिक तत्त्वों का मूल स्वरूप, परमपिता परमेश्वर द्वारा स्पष्ट है, वास्तव में समग्र प्रकृति या सृष्टि अथवा समग्र जीवजगत् के अनुकूल या हितार्थ है। परन्तु मानवीय कुकृत्यों या उन तत्त्वों के अतिदोहन रूप अतिचारकर्मों के कारण उन्हें विकृत कर दिया गया-यही वास्तव में

^१ मनुस्मृति, २/६

^२ संस्कृत साहित्य का इतिहास, अध्याय-१/पृ.१

^३ ऋग्वेद, १/१६४/१०, पृ. २६७

मानव का सबसे बड़ा अज्ञान और प्रसाद है। अतैव वेदिविहित तत्त्वों का मूलमर्म जानना और तदनुसार जीवनशैली अपनाना-सबसे बड़ा ज्ञान और वेदों का अवदान सार्थक होना है। यहाँ ऋग्वेद के प्रस्तुत मन्त्र को देखें-“अस्ति हि ष्मा मदाय वः स्मसि ष्मा वयमेषाम्। विश्व “चिदायुर्जीवसे।।”^४ महर्षि दयानन्द सरस्वती इस मन्त्र की व्याख्या करते हुए इसमें निहित ज्ञान के रहस्य को प्रकट करते हुए लिखते हैं कि “जिस प्रकार योगाभ्यास करके प्राणविद्या और वायु के विकारों को ठीक-ठाक जानने वाले पथ्यकारी विद्वान् लोग आनन्दपूर्वक सब आयुर्दीर्घायु या चिरायु का जीवन जीते हैं, उसी प्रकार अन्य सभी मनुष्यों को चाहिए कि उन विद्वानों से उस वायुविद्या को जानें और अपने बहुत-से कार्यों को निरन्तर सिद्ध करें।” इस प्रकार ऋग्वेद के प्रस्तुत मन्त्र में योगविद्या, प्राणविद्या, आरोग्य विद्या, वायु विद्या-इत्यादि का रहस्य छिपा है, जिसे ज्ञानपूर्वक खोजा और लाभान्वित हुआ जा सकता है तथा संबंधित समस्याओं से बचने का मार्ग प्रशस्त करता है। यहाँ ध्यातव्य है कि वायु का अभिप्राय केवल पर्यावरणीय घटक-भौतिक जगत् की अथवा बाहरी वायु से ही नहीं है, वरन् मानव शरीर में विद्यमान पंच प्राणवायु-प्राण, अपान, समान, उदान और व्यान-जो प्रत्येक प्राणी में रहती हैं, से भी है और उनके विकारों से कैसे बचा जाए और उन्हें कैसे संतुलित व ठीक रखा जाए- यह रहस्यमय ज्ञान प्रकट किया है। इसी प्रकार प्रस्तुत मन्त्र में नवीन क्रिया की सिद्धि के निमित्त कर्मों की प्राप्ति हेतु निरन्तर यत्न करने की बात कही गई है-

“क्व व सुम्ना नव्यासि...विश्वानि सौभगा।।”^५

अनेक मन्त्रों में आहार विज्ञान, पाककला तथा औषधीय ज्ञान का निरूपण है, जिससे उत्तम स्वास्थ्य की प्राप्ति कही गई है।^६ इस हेतु युक्ताहार-विहार अर्थात् युक्ति के साथ उचित आहार-विहार करने का ज्ञान प्रकट किया गया है-“स्वादो पिता मधो पितो वयं त्वा ववमहे। अस्माकमविता भव।।”^७ यहाँ कहा गया है कि मनुष्यों को मधुरादि रस के योग से स्वादिष्ट अन्न और व्यंजन को आयुर्वेद की रीति से बनाकर वह भोजन करना चाहिए, जो रोग को नष्ट करने और आयु को बढ़ाने वाला अर्थात् रोगों से आयु की रक्षा करने वाला हो। केवल मनुष्यों के आरोग्य का ज्ञान ही वेद में निहित नहीं है, वरन् अन्य जीवधारियों-पशु-पक्षियों इत्यादि के भी उत्तम स्वास्थ्य हेतु रोगोपचार व औषधीय ज्ञान और चिकित्सा पद्धति इत्यादि सभी बातों का ज्ञान दिया गया है। अथर्ववेद में तो मानवों के अतिरिक्त गाय, अश्व, बैल इत्यादि पशुओं की रोगचिकित्सा एवं उत्तम स्वास्थ्य की प्राप्ति विषयक अनेक सूक्त व मन्त्र मिलते हैं।^८ निदर्शन स्वरूप प्रस्तुत मन्त्र को देखें-“एषा पशून्सं क्षिणाति...स्योना शिवा स्यात्।।”^९ प्रस्तुत मन्त्र में रोगी गाय का योग्य वैद्य के पास उपचार कराकर स्वस्थ करने की बात कही गई है। उपचार किस प्रकार किया जाए तथा रोगों से मुक्ति कैसे प्राप्त होती है^{१०}-इत्यादि समस्त बातों का ज्ञान वेदों में निरूपित है।

पर्यावरण की स्वच्छता तथा संरक्षण का ज्ञान-विज्ञान भी वेदों में भरा पड़ा है; जहाँ सर्वत्र मानव द्वारा प्रकृति का अतिदोहन न करके उसके सभी तत्त्वों की स्वच्छता और संतुलन द्वारा पर्यावरण की स्वच्छता पर ही मानव की स्वस्थता और दीर्घायु का ज्ञान प्राप्त होता है। वैदिक वाङ्मय के अध्ययनानुशीलन से यह ज्ञात होता है कि हमारे पूर्वज ऋषि-मुनि तथा सभी आर्यजन प्राकृतिक तत्त्वों में देवत्व की प्रतिष्ठा मानते थे और इसीलिए वे हर एक तत्त्व व प्राकृतिक पदार्थों का संरक्षण व संवर्द्धन करते रहते थे तथा सभी से ऐसा करते रहने की प्रार्थना व आग्रह भी करते थे। इस प्रकार प्राकृतिक तत्त्वों का अतिदोहन व अशुद्धि नहीं होती थी। वेदों का पर्यावरण विज्ञान भी महत्वपूर्ण देन है; जिसका अवबोधपूर्वक पालनानुसरण करते हुए हम पर्यावरणीय शुद्धता और उससे आरोग्यता प्राप्त कर सकते हैं। देखें, वेद का प्रस्तुत पद्य-

“या आपो दिव्या उत वा स्नवन्ति खनित्रिमा उत वा याः स्वयंजाः।

समुद्रार्था याः शुचयः पावकास्ता आपो देवीरिह मामवन्तु।।”^{११}

यहाँ जल के चार प्रकार के स्रोत बतलाए गए हैं-वृष्टि, झरने, कुएँ तथा बावड़ियाँ एवं प्राकृतिक स्रोत। ये सभी जल मूलतः पवित्र व शुद्ध होते हैं, औषधीय गुणों से युक्त हैं, जो कि आरोग्यता प्रदायक है। परन्तु मानवीय प्रमाद और उसके जलीय स्थलों पर फैलाई गई गन्दगी के कारण जल अशुद्ध होकर दूषित हो जाता है। अतैव पर्यावरणीय जागरूकता तथा

^४ वही, १/३७/१५-पृ. ७७, अन्य साम्य स्थल २/४०/१, पृ. ३६३ एवं यजुर्वेद, १२/६८, पृ. २२२

^५ वही, १/३७/३, पृ. ७७ अन्यस्थल १/३७/३

^६ वही, १/३८/५, १/८५/११, १/९१/१८, १/१८७ सूक्त सम्पूर्ण ११/८३ एवं यजुर्वेद, १२/६८, ७२-७३, १७/९९

^७ वही, १/१८७/२, पृ. ३०१ एवं यजुर्वेद १०/१४, पृ. १६९

^८ अथर्ववेद, ३/२८ सूक्त, ४/२१ सूक्त, ६/८३ सूक्त

^९ वही, ३/२८/२, पृ. १०६ एवं ३/२८, ४/ २१ सम्पूर्ण सूक्त

^{१०} वही, ३/२८/६- “यत्रा सुहार्दा सुकृतामग्निहोत्रहुतां ...।।” एवं १२/२/५१-५२, पृ. ५६६

^{११} ऋग्वेद, ७/४९/२, पृ. ८०३, अन्य साम्य स्थल, १/२३/१९-२०

स्वच्छ पर्यावरण से सुस्वास्थ्य प्राप्ति का विज्ञान वेदों में भरा पड़ा है। पर्यावरण में विद्यमान गैसों-ऑक्सीजन, कार्बन-डाइ-ऑक्साइड तथा अन्य गैसों और उनकी आवश्यकता, उपयोगिता, लाभ, हानि इत्यादि सभी का विज्ञान वेदों में निहित है। हाँ! वहाँ इन गैसों को वायु के रूप में कहा गया है। यथा-ऑक्सीजन को 'प्राणवायु' अथवा जीवनदायिनी वायु तथा जीवनी शक्ति इत्यादि कहा गया है। इसी प्रकार ऊर्जा को कार्य करने की क्षमता अथवा शक्ति के रूप में अभिव्यक्त किया गया है। मनुष्य एवं पशुओं के शरीर में होने वाले रोगों को, विष को एवं जलीय स्थानों में होने वाले विष को दूर करने का उपचार भी वेदों में बतलाया गया है। यथा-ऋग्वेद में उल्लेख मिलता है कि शरीर में यदि विष हो और जो रोग संधि एवं पर्वस्थानों में रहता है, वे सब अग्नि के द्वारा दूर किए जा सकते हैं। वात रोग हो जाने के कारण घुटने, कोहनी, टखने आदि अवयव जकड़-से जाते हैं तथा उनमें सूजन आ जाती है। ऐसे में लोहे की शलाका गर्म करके उन-उन स्थानों पर दाग देने से वह रोग नष्ट हो जाता है।^{१२} इस प्रकार यहाँ अग्नि द्वारा विष की एवं रोग के विषाणुओं की चिकित्सा बतलाई गई है। इसी प्रकार वृक्ष-वनस्पतियों और नदी जलों में होने वाले विष को अनेक प्रकार के दिव्य पदार्थों अर्थात् जल, अग्नि, वायु, औषधि, सूर्य प्रकाश आदि से दूर किया जा सकता है-ऐसा कहा गया है। इस प्रकार इन प्राकृतिक तत्त्वों की दिव्यता बतलाई गई है कि ये अपने मूलरूप में शुद्ध, स्वच्छ, औषधीय गुणों से युक्त होने के कारण आरोग्य प्रदायक हैं। आज विज्ञान सूर्य के प्रकाश से मनुष्य को विटामिन-डी मिलने के कारण और वह मानव शरीर के लिए कई प्रकार से लाभकारी या उपादेय होने के कारण सूर्य प्रकाश लेना आवश्यक मानता है; इसी प्रकार शुद्ध जल, वायु आदि तत्त्व मानव के जीवन के लिए और आरोग्यतार्थ आवश्यक बतलाए गए हैं, वह समस्त ज्ञान-विज्ञान वेदों में निहित है।

वैदिक संहिताओं में भूगोल और खगोल विज्ञान भी निहित है। ऋग्वेद का यह मन्त्र द्रष्टव्य है, जहाँ पृथ्वी के अपनी धुरी पर घूर्णन करने से दिन-रात बनने के वैज्ञानिक तथ्य का प्रतिपादन मिलता है।

वि सुपर्णो अन्तरिक्षाण्यख्यद् गभीरवेपा असुरः सुनीथः।

क्वेदानीं सूर्यः कश्चिकेत कतमां द्यां रश्मिरस्या ततान।।^{१३}

उपर्युक्त मन्त्र में स्पष्टतः इस बात का निरूपण हुआ है कि यह भूगोल अपने भ्रमण से सूर्य के प्रकाश का आच्छादन कर अंधकार करता है अर्थात् २४ घंटों में पृथ्वी के घूर्णन के दौरान जब जो हिस्सा सूर्य से दूर होता है तो जो अंधेरा होता है, वहाँ रात्रिकाल होता है और जब उसी पृथ्वी का जो हिस्सा सूर्य के सामने होता है, वहाँ दिन होता है। एक अन्य मन्त्र में भी यह कहा गया है कि पृथ्वी सूर्य का उसी प्रकार अनुभ्रमण करती है, जैसे बछड़ा गौ के पीछे जाता है-“**युक्ता मातासीद् धुरि दक्षिणाया अतिष्ठद्...**।”^{१४} इसी प्रकार पृथ्वी, चन्द्रमा और नक्षत्रादि लोक के सूर्य के प्रकाश के आश्रय से स्थित होने का विधान भी प्रकट किया गया है।^{१५}

थल, जल एवं नभ स्थलों पर चलने वाले आवागमन के साधन-रथ, नाव एवं विमानादि की रचना के प्रमाण भी वेदों में स्पष्टतः मिलते हैं। साथ ही दिशाओं का ज्ञान प्राप्त करने वाले चुम्बक, ध्रुवयन्त्र और सूर्यादि से दिशाओं को जानने का विज्ञान भी वेदों में प्रकट किया गया है। यथा-अनेक मन्त्रों में स्पष्टतः थल, नभ एवं समुद्र, नदी आदि जलीय स्थलों एवं अंतरिक्ष^{१६} में चलने वाले यानों और विभिन्न प्रकार के कला यन्त्रों का उल्लेख इस बात का प्रमाण है कि ये विभिन्न यान व यन्त्र आधुनिक मानव के आविष्कार नहीं हैं, वरन् वैदिक युग में ही इनका आविष्कार हो चुका था। द्रष्टव्य है यजुर्वेद का यह मन्त्र, जिसमें पृथ्वी, समुद्र, अंतरिक्ष में चलने वाले विमानों के उस समय अस्तित्व के प्रमाण हैं-“**समुद्रं गच्छ स्वाहान्तरिक्षं गच्छ स्वाहा...पृथिवीं भस्मनापृण स्वाहा।।**”^{१७}

विभिन्न वृक्ष-वनस्पतियों, पादपों एवं औषधीय जड़ी-बूटियों का ज्ञान भी सर्वप्रथम भारतीय धरा की ही देन हैं। वेदों तथा अन्य शास्त्रग्रन्थों में यह ज्ञान-विज्ञान खूब भरा पड़ा है। इसी प्रकार गाय के दूध में रोग प्रतिरोधक क्षमता तथा विभिन्न गुण होने का विज्ञान भी हमारे ऋषि-महर्षि-चिंतकों के दिव्य ज्ञान से प्रादुर्भूत हुआ। जिसके उल्लेख वैदिक संहिताओं में भरे पड़े हैं। इसीलिए प्राचीन आर्यजन प्रमुखता से गौपालन करते थे और उसके दूध-दही-घी आदि पदार्थों के सेवन से पुष्टि व आरोग्यता प्राप्त कर चिरायु होते थे। यजुर्वेद के-“... घृतं दुहानामदिति ... गवयमारण्यमनु ... गवयं ते शुगृच्छतु

^{१२} वही, ७/५०/२, पृ. ८०४-“यद्विजामन्यरुषि वन्दनं...अग्निष्टच्छोचन्नप...।।”

^{१३} वही, ७/५०/३-“यच्छल्मलौ भवति यन्नदीषु यदोषधीभ्यः परि जायते विषम्...।।”

^{१४} वही, १/३५/७, पृ. ७०

^{१५} वही, १/ १६४/९, पृ. २६७

^{१६} वही, १/३५/६, “---“तिस्नो द्यावः सवितुर्द्वा उपस्थां एका यमस्य भुवने...।।”

^{१७} वही, १/२५/७-१८, पृ. ४६-४७, १/३०/१९, पृ. ५७, १/४६/७-८, १०-११, पृ. ९०-९१, १/६५/४, पृ. १२१ एवं यजुर्वेद ४/१८, पृ. ६६, ६/२१,

...।।^{१८} एवं “ऋतुथेन्द्रो वनस्पतिः शशमान ... दुहे धेनुः सरस्वती।।”^{१९} इन मंत्रों तथा अन्य विभिन्न वेद मन्त्रों में^{२०} औषधि अथवा उपचार के रूप गौदुग्ध एवं गव्य पदार्थों, जल, वायु तथा वृक्ष-वनस्पतियों से प्राप्त जड़ी-बूटी रूप औषधियों के ज्ञान का प्रकटीकरण हुआ है। जिनसे रोगोपचार कर स्वस्थता प्राप्त की जाती थी।

विभिन्न विद्याओं एवं ज्ञान-विज्ञान का आगार होने के कारण वेदविद्या की आवश्यकता व महत्ता सार्वभौमिक मानव के लिए सार्वकालिक है-इस तथ्य को नकारा नहीं जा सकता। इस तथ्य का स्पष्टतः प्रतिपादन वेदविहित है। जैसा कि प्रस्तुत मंत्र में कहा गया है कि मनुष्यों को चाहिए कि ईश्वर के कहे हुए वेदों को पढ़, वायु के गुणों को जान और यश व कर्मों के बल का अनुष्ठान करके सब प्राणियों के लिए सुख देवे अर्थात् उनका हित व कल्याण करें-“प्र व शर्घाय घृष्वये त्वेषद्युम्नाय शुष्मिणे। देवत्तं ब्रह्म गायत।।”^{२१} यह तथ्य भी वेदविहित है कि जैसे आकाश में सूर्य का प्रकाश बढ़ता है, वैसे ही वेदों का अभ्यास करने से बुद्धि बढ़ती है; अतएव इस जगत् में वेद के द्वारा सब सत्य विद्याओं को जानना चाहिए, ताकि सब ओर से आगे बढ़ा जा सके।^{२२} यजुर्वेद में जो यज्ञीय कर्मकाण्ड एवं विधि-विधानपरक ज्ञान की प्रधानता है, वह पूरी तरह वैज्ञानिक है। यज्ञकर्म का अनुष्ठान समग्र सृष्टि, प्रकृति, पर्यावरण तथा जीवधारियों के कल्याणार्थ सिद्ध होता है,^{२३} इसीलिए वह प्रत्येक मानव का परम अथवा श्रेष्ठतम कर्तव्य बतलाया गया है-“यज्ञो वै श्रेष्ठतमं कर्म। यहाँ यज्ञ का तात्पर्य संकुचित न होकर बहुत व्यापक है; क्योंकि इसका अभिप्राय केवल अग्नि प्रज्वलित कर हवन करना ही नहीं है, वरन् गीता के यज्ञ की तरह मानवीय कर्तव्यों एवं दायित्वों का निर्वहन, मानवीय असत् प्रवृत्तियों का शोधन एवं लोकसंग्रहार्थ-किए गए-कर्म-इत्यादि सभी यज्ञ नाम से अभिहित किए गए हैं।

सामवेद को देखें तो यह साम अर्थात् सुंदर वचनों का संग्रह है; जो गेयात्मक होने से संगीतशास्त्र स्वरूप है एवं इसमें परमात्मा के प्रति समर्पित गेय स्तुतियाँ और अध्यात्म विद्या के द्वारा ज्ञान प्रकाश आलोकित हुआ है। इस प्रकार चारों वेद संहिताएँ ज्ञान-विज्ञान का आगार हैं।

निष्कर्ष-वैदिक संहिताओं का पर्यालोचन एवं चिंतन-मनन करने से यह स्पष्टतः निष्कर्ष निकलता है कि वेद अनन्त ज्ञान का भण्डार हैं; जिनमें समग्र जीव-जगत्, सृष्टि व ब्रह्माण्ड के रहस्यों का उद्घाटन हुआ है तथा विश्व का समग्र ज्ञान-विज्ञान, जो अद्यतन देखा-जाना गया है, उसका प्रतिपादन वेदों में पूर्ण वैज्ञानिकता के साथ प्राप्त होता है। वैश्विक स्तर पर वेदों की स्वीकृति, विश्व का इनसे ज्ञान व मार्गदर्शन प्राप्त करना एवं इनमें निहित विभिन्न विद्याओं, कला-कौशलों को स्वीकार कर इनका अनुगमन करना यह सिद्ध करता है कि भारतीय धरा पर प्रकटित व आलोकित वेदों से ही समग्र ज्ञान-विज्ञान की परम्परा प्रवर्तित व सर्वत्र प्रसारित एवं प्रचलित हुई और तभी से ये सार्वभौमिक मानव के लिए सार्वकालिक मार्गदर्शक एवं कल्याणकारी बने हुए हैं।

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^{१८} वही, १/२५/७-१८, पृ. ४६-४७, १/३०/१९, पृ. ५७, १/४६/७-८, १०-११, पृ. ९०-९१, १/६५/४, पृ. १२१ एवं यजुर्वेद ४/१८, पृ. ६६, ६/२१,

^{१९} वही, १३/४९, पृ. २४९, अन्य स्थल, १२/७२, ७३, ७७

^{२०} वही, २०/६५, पृ. ४०५, अन्य स्थल २०/३१, २२/२२ १२/८०-८१

^{२१} अथर्ववेद, १/४/५, ३/१४ गोसूक्त, ४/४/५, ४/२१/६

^{२२} ऋग्वेद, १/३७/४, पृ. ७५, अन्य साम्य स्थल, १/११२/४-७, १०५/१६-१९

^{२३} यजुर्वेद, २८/३५, एवं अन्य स्थल-ऋग्वेद १/४० सूक्त,

२४. वही, १७/७९-“सप्त तेऽग्ने समिधः सप्त जिह्वाः ...।।” एवं १७/५५ तथा ८/६०, पृ. १४६

झारखंड में खाद्य सुरक्षा योजना : उद्देश्य, प्रभाव और बहुआयामी मूल्यांकन

डॉ० ममता कुमारी

सहायक प्राध्यापक

अर्थशास्त्र विभाग, बी०एस० सिटी कॉलेज, बोकारो

सारांश : झारखंड सरकार ने राज्य के निर्धन और वंचित वर्ग के लिए “झारखंड राज्य खाद्य सुरक्षा योजना” लागू कर एक महत्वपूर्ण पहल की है। इस योजना का मूल उद्देश्य आर्थिक रूप से कमजोर वर्गों को न्यूनतम दर पर खाद्यान्न उपलब्ध कराना है, जिससे राज्य की व्यापक गरीब और आदिवासी आबादी को भूख व कुपोषण से बचाया जा सके। योजना की सफलता और चुनौतियाँ दोनों को समझना सामाजिक नीति और प्रशासनिक सुधार की दिशा में अत्यंत आवश्यक है।

शब्द कुंजी: खाद्य सुरक्षा, सार्वजनिक वितरण, अंत्योदय अन्न योजना, खाद्यान्न सुरक्षा।

परिचय:

खाद्य सुरक्षा, किसी भी राज्य की सामाजिक और आर्थिक संरचना की बुनियादी आवश्यकता है। भारत में “राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा अधिनियम २०१३” (NFSA) लागू होने के साथ ही देशभर में लक्षित सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली (TPDS) के जरिए गरीबों तक अनाज पहुंचाने की जिम्मेदारी सुनिश्चित की गई। झारखंड ने इस अधिनियम को १ अक्टूबर २०१५ से लागू किया, जिससे राज्य की २.६३ करोड़ जनसंख्या लाभान्वित हो सकती है। लेकिन इस आंकड़े की गणना २०११ की जनगणना पर आधारित है, जिससे वास्तविक जरूरतमंदों को योजना में समुचित स्थान नहीं मिल सका।

खाद्य सुरक्षा कानून और झारखंड में इसका कार्यान्वयन:

भारत सरकार के तहत शुरू की गई इस योजना में तीन प्रमुख श्रेणियों के लाभुक बनाए गए हैं-

१. प्रायोरिटी हाउसहोल्ड (PHH)- जिन्हें लाल कार्ड प्रदान किया जाता है। झारखंड जैसे सामाजिक-आर्थिक रूप से पिछड़े राज्य में प्रायोरिटी हाउसहोल्ड की भूमिका अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण है क्योंकि यह योजना राज्य की बड़ी आबादी को खाद्य सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित करती है। राज्य सरकार द्वारा चिन्हित लाभार्थियों को राशन कार्ड जारी किए जाते हैं।

अंत्योदय अन्न योजना की मुख्य विशेषताएँ:

१. **लाभार्थी चयन-** राज्य सरकारें सामाजिक-आर्थिक जनगणना (SECC) या अन्य तय मानदंडों के आधार पर “प्रायोरिटी हाउसहोल्ड” की पहचान करती हैं।
२. **अनाज की मात्रा** -हर पात्र व्यक्ति को प्रति माह ५ किलोग्राम अनाज (चावल, गेहूं या मसोटा अनाज) रियायतीदरों पर दिया जाता है-

- चावल-३ रू किग्रा
- गेहूं-२ रू किग्रा
- मोटा अनाज- १ रू किग्रा

३. पीडीएस के माध्यम से वितरण- यह अनाज सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली (PDS) के माध्यम से उपलब्ध कराया जाता है।

२. **अंत्योदय अन्न योजना (Antyodaya anna yojana)**- अत्यंत गरीब परिवारों के लिए पीला कार्ड दिया जाता है। भारत सरकार द्वारा शुरू की गई एक विशेष खाद्य सुरक्षा योजना है, जिसका उद्देश्य देश के सबसे गरीब और वंचित परिवारों को अत्यधिक रियायती दरों पर खाद्यान्न उपलब्ध कराना है।

अंत्योदय अन्न योजना की मुख्य विशेषताएँ:

१. **शुरुआत-** यह योजना २५ दिसंबर २००० को तत्कालीन प्रधानमंत्री श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी जी द्वारा शुरू की गई थी।
 २. **लाभार्थी वर्ग-** यह योजना “अत्यंत गरीब (Poorest of the poor) परिवारों के लिए है, जिन्हें सामान्य गरीबी रेखा से भी नीचे माना जाता है। इनमें निम्न वर्ग शामिल हो सकते हैं:
- भूमिहीन मजदूर
 - वृद्ध, निराश्रित व्यक्ति
 - आदिवासी समुदाय

- निराश्रित महिलाएँ, विकलांग व्यक्ति
- दिहाड़ी मजदूर आदि

३. राशन की मात्रा और दरें : हर लाभार्थी परिवार को प्रति माह ३५ किलोग्राम अनाज (चावल या गेहूँ) मिलता है। दरें-चावल एवं गेहूँ क्रमशः ३ और २ रु प्रति किलो

४. राशन कार्ड लाभार्थियों को अंत्योदय राशन कार्ड (पीला कार्ड) प्रदान किया जाता है।

विशेष श्रेणियाँ (Special Categories)

शब्द का प्रयोग खाद्य सुरक्षा योजनाओं में उन समूहों के लिए किया जाता है जिन्हें उनकी सामाजिक, आर्थिक या शारीरिक स्थिति के कारण अतिरिक्त प्राथमिकता या विशेष सुविधा दी जाती है।

राष्ट्रीय खाद्य सुरक्षा अधिनियम, २०१३ और राज्य सरकारों की योजनाओं के अंतर्गत ये “विशेष श्रेणियाँ ” अलग से चिन्हित की जाती हैं ताकि इन्हें प्राथमिकता से खाद्यान्न सुरक्षा मिल सके।

विशेष श्रेणियों के अंतर्गत आने वाले प्रमुख समूह:

१. निर्धन/अत्यंत निर्धन परिवार जो सामाजिक-आर्थिक जनगणना (SECC) में गरीब के रूप में चिन्हित हों।
२. बिना जमीन वाले मजदूर
३. विकलांग व्यक्ति (दिव्यांग) जिन्हें स्वयं आय का स्रोत नहीं है।
४. निराश्रित महिलाएँ/विधवाएँ विशेषकर वे जो अकेली रह रही हैं और जिनकी कोई आय नहीं है।
५. वरिष्ठ नागरिक (६० वर्ष से ऊपर) जो अकेले रहते हैं
६. घातक रोगों से ग्रस्त व्यक्ति जैसे- कुष्ठ, टीबी, एचआईवी-एड्स आदि से ग्रसित और कार्य करने में असमर्थ लोग।
७. आदिवासी समुदाय विशेष रूप से दूर-दराज क्षेत्रों में निवास करने वाले जनजातीय परिवार।
८. अनाथ बच्चे/ बाल देखरेख संस्थानों में रह रहे बच्चे

झारखंड

में

स्थिति:

झारखंड जैसे राज्य में AAY का महत्व और अधिक बढ़ जाता है क्योंकि यहाँ बड़ी संख्या में आदिवासी , गरीब और पिछड़े वर्ग के लोग रहते हैं। राज्य सरकार समय-समय पर SECC डेटा और ग्राम सभा की सिफारिशों से इन लाभार्थियों की पहचान करती है।

झारखंड राज्य में विशेष श्रेणियाँ:

झारखंड में इन श्रेणियों की विशेष पहचान की जाती है ताकि इन्हें प्रायोरिटी हाउसहोल्ड या अंत्योदय अन्न योजना में शामिल किया जा सके। राशन कार्ड और खाद्यान्न वितरण में प्राथमिकता दी जा सके।

झारखंड में खाद्य असुरक्षा की वास्तविकता:

नीति आयोग के “इंडिया मल्टीडायमेंशनल पावर्टी इंडेक्स २०२३” के अनुसार, झारखंड की लगभग २८.८१ प्रतिशत आबादी बहुआयामी रूप से गरीब है। गरीबी के इस बहुआयामी रूप में शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य और जीवन स्तर जैसे कई आयाम सम्मिलित हैं। राज्य की आदिवासी जनसंख्या (लगभग २७ प्रतिशत) में कुपोषण, भूख और खाद्य असुरक्षा की समस्या और भी विकराल है।

राज्य के कई ग्रामीण इलाकों में आज भी भूख से मौत की खबरें आती हैं, जिससे पता चलता है कि खाद्य वितरण प्रणाली में कई तरह की चुनौतियाँ हैं।

जन वितरण प्रणाली (PDS) की संरचना एवं कार्यशैली:

झारखंड में PDS प्रणाली के अंतर्गत खाद्यान्न के वितरण के लिए रेशन कार्ड आधारित प्रणाली, आधार प्रमाणीकरण, और इलेक्ट्रॉनिक पॉइंट ऑफ सेल (E & POS) मशीनों का प्रयोग किया जा रहा है। लेकिन ये तकनीकी नवाचार कई बार ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों की कमजोर नेटवर्क व्यवस्था के कारण बाधित हो जाते हैं।

मुख्य समस्याएँ:

- अपात्र लोगों का नाम सूची में होना
- पात्र लोगों का छूट जाना
- राशन डीलरों की अनियमितता
- राशन वितरण में भ्रष्टाचार

शिकायत निवारण प्रणाली और खाद्य सुरक्षा आयोग की भूमिका:

खाद्य सुरक्षा अधिनियम २०१३ के तहत झारखंड खाद्य सुरक्षा आयोग का गठन किया गया। इसकी मुख्य जिम्मेदारी खाद्य वितरण प्रणाली की निगरानी, जन शिकायतों का निवारण, और जन सुनवाईयों का आयोजन करना है।

उल्लेखनीय प्रावधान:

- डिस्ट्रिक्ट ग्रीवांस रिड्रेसल ऑफिसर (DGRO) हर जिले में नियुक्त।
- आयोग के पास अपील की जा सकती है।
- आयोग की वेबसाइट पर ऑनलाइन शिकायत सुविधा।
- वाट्सएप नंबर जारी कर शिकायत प्रणाली को सरल बनाया गया।

जनवरी २०२२ से सितंबर २०२३ तक आयोग को १२९२ शिकायतें प्राप्त हुईं, जिनमें से अधिकांश ऑनलाइन आईं। आयोग इन्हें “डिस्ट्रिक्ट ग्रीवांस रिड्रेसल ऑफिसर” (DGRO) के माध्यम से समाधान के लिए भेजता है।

सिविल सोसाइटी और स्थानीय संगठनों की भूमिका:

खासकर पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, गुमला और लोहरदगा जैसे जिलों में कई सामाजिक संगठन सक्रिय रूप से खाद्य सुरक्षा के लिए संघर्ष कर रहे हैं। पश्चिम सिंहभूम खाद्य सुरक्षा मंच जैसे संगठन लोगों को जागरूक करने, शिकायत दर्ज करने और जनसुनवाईयों में भाग लेने के लिए प्रेरित करते हैं।

जनजीवन पर खाद्य सुरक्षा योजना का प्रभाव:

१. आर्थिक प्रभाव- गरीब परिवारों को खाद्यान्न की लागत में राहत मिलने से उनकी आय का उपयोग अन्य जरूरतों (जैसे स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा) में होता है।
२. स्वास्थ्य और पोषण - अनाज की उपलब्धता से कुपोषण में कमी आती है, विशेषकर बच्चों और महिलाओं में।
३. शैक्षणिक सुधार- जब घर में भोजन की चिंता नहीं होती, तब बच्चे स्कूल जाने के लिए प्रेरित होते हैं।
४. सामाजिक स्थिरता- खाद्य असुरक्षा का समाधान सामाजिक अशांति को कम करता है और अपराध दर में भी गिरावट आती है।

चुनौतियाँ एवं सुधार की दिशा :

- डिजिटल अंतर - तकनीकी माध्यमों से संचालित प्रणाली में ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में कनेक्टिविटी की कमी।
- लाभुकों की अद्यतन सूची - २०११ की जनगणना के आधार पर लाभुकों की सूची तैयार की गई है, जो वर्तमान जनसंख्या आंकड़ों से मेल नहीं खाती।
- पारदर्शिता की कमी- कई क्षेत्रों में अभी भी वितरण में गड़बड़ियाँ हैं।
- स्थानीय राजनीतिक हस्तक्षेप- पात्रता निर्धारण और शिकायतों के समाधान में राजनीतिक दबाव।

सुझाव:

- डिजिटल डेटा का समय-समय पर अद्यतन
- डोर-टू-डोर सर्वे के जरिए पात्र लाभुकों की पहचान
- पंचायत स्तर पर निगरानी समिति की सक्रिय भागीदारी
- पोषणयुक्त खाद्यान्न की व्यवस्था

निष्कर्ष:

झारखंड राज्य खाद्य सुरक्षा योजना, राज्य की गरीब और हाशिए पर स्थित जनसंख्या के लिए एक जीवन रेखा के रूप में कार्य कर रही है। हालांकि, इसमें पारदर्शिता, जवाबदेही और तकनीकी दक्षता की जरूरत है। यदि प्रशासनिक इच्छाशक्ति और नागरिक भागीदारी के साथ इन योजनाओं का क्रियान्वयन किया जाए, तो यह न केवल भूख से लड़ने में सहायक होगी, बल्कि सतत विकास के लक्ष्यों की प्राप्ति में भी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाएगी।

संदर्भ सूची :

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कुड़मालि संस्कृति में जन्म-संस्कार : एक विश्लेषण

पाण्डव महतो

शोधार्थी

बिनोद बिहारी महतो कोयलांचल विश्वविद्यालय, धनबाद

सारांश-संसार में जीवों की सृष्टि से संबंधित कई विचारधाराओं ने जन्म लिया जिसे विद्वानों ने मूल रूप से दो धाराओं में बाँटा है। 'आस्तिक विचारधारा' और 'नास्तिक विचारधारा'। आस्तिकवाद के अनुसार जीवों की सृष्टि 'ईश्वर' ने किया है। परन्तु उसके विपरीत नास्तिक विचारधारा के अनुसार जीवों के जन्म का आधार विकासवादी सिद्धांत को माना गया है। पुरुष एवं प्रकृति शक्ति अर्थात् नारी-पुरुष के प्राकृतिक रूप से मिलने पर जीवों का सृजन होता है। संसार के सभी प्राणियों का जन्म का मूल आधार प्रकृति है। आध्यात्मिक रूप में देखा जाए तो ब्रह्माण्ड की मूल पाँच प्राकृतिक शक्ति यथा-जल, पवन, मिट्टी, अग्नि और आकाश के विशिष्ट समय, विशिष्ट परिवेश एवं विशिष्ट परिस्थितियों के संयोग से जीवों का सृजन होता है। इनमें से किसी एक की कमी से उस जीव का सृजन नहीं हो सकता है। संसार के सभी जीवों का जन्म और मृत्यु प्रकृति के नियमों से बंधा हुआ है। उसी तरह मनुष्य के लिए कोई अन्य नियम नहीं है। मनुष्यों ने अपने सोचने, समझने की शक्ति के कारण ही काफी तरक्की की है। यह चिर सत्य है कि जन्म का अंतिम परिणाम मृत्यु है। जन्म और मृत्यु के बीच मानव को कई अवस्थाओं से गुजरना पड़ता है। यथा -शैशवावस्था, बाल्यावस्था, किशोर, युवा, वयस्क, प्रौढ़ एवं वृद्धावस्था। जीवों का अंतिम संस्कार मृत्यु होता है। इसके उपरांत अन्य किसी प्रकार का संस्कार नहीं बचता है। मृत्यु के बाद यह शरीर पुनः पंच तत्वों में विलीन हो जाता है।

शब्द कुंजी-कुड़मालि संस्कृति, दुग्ध धारा, आसापति।

भूमिका

अतः अध्ययन सुविधा को ध्यान में रखते हुए इनकी प्रथाओं को मूलतः दो भागों में बाँटकर उक्त जनगोष्ठी की जन्म-संस्कार संबंधी प्रथाओं का क्रमबद्ध व्याख्यान किया गया है-

(क) जन्म से पूर्व की प्रथागत व्यवस्था

(ख) जन्म के बाद प्रथागत व्यवस्था

(क) जन्म से पूर्व की प्रथागत व्यवस्था

साधारणतः जब शिशु भूमिष्ठ होता है, उसी दिन को शिशु का जन्मदिन माना जाता है, परन्तु वास्तव में शिशु धरती पर आने से पहले माता के गर्भ में ही जीवन प्राप्त कर लेता है। गर्भवती माताओं को कुड़मालि भाषा संस्कृति में 'आसापति' कहते हैं।^१

माँ एवं बच्चा दो जीवन हैं। दोनों के लिए पौष्टिक संतुलित आहार की आवश्यकता होती है तथा भोजन ऐसा होना चाहिए, जिसे सहज ही पचाया जा सके। कुड़मालि संस्कृति में माँ की 'दुग्ध धारा' को बढ़ाने के लिए 'मायके' की ओर से समय-समय पर नियमित रूप से मौसी, फुफु आदि के घरों से फल, साग-सब्जी, मुर्गा, अंडा जैसे पौष्टिक खाद्य पदार्थ को लेकर आने की प्रथा देखने को मिलती है। गर्भवती माताओं को उस अवस्था से लेकर जन्म के बाद भी कई दिन व महीनों तक नेग-नेगाचार का पालन करना पड़ता है। इस समय गर्भवती माँ को अत्यन्त सावधानी बरतनी पड़ती है, ताकि गर्भ में पल रहे शिशु को किसी प्रकार की क्षति न पहुँचे। साथ ही किस प्रकार से शिशु का शारीरिक विकास व वृद्धि हो, इसका भरपूर ख्याल रखा जाता है। गर्भवती महिला को गाय, बैल, बकरी, भैस इत्यादि को बाँधने की तो दूर की बात है, उसे पशु की रस्सी को फाँदना तक निषेध रहता है। यानी माता को धीरे-धीरे चलना चाहिए, वरना संतानोत्पत्ति में कठिनाइयाँ आएंगी। इसके अतिरिक्त कुड़मालि संस्कृति में इससे संबंधित कई एक प्रथा व विश्वास प्रचलित है।

यथा-

- 'कौआ'द्वारा जूठा किया गया तेल गर्भवती माताएँ मस्तिष्क व चेहरे पर नहीं लगाती हैं। इसे लगाने से 'घेघा रोग' हो सकता है।
- चंद्रग्रहण, सूर्यग्रहण के दर्शन नहीं किए जा सकते हैं। इसके दर्शन से शिशु के हाथ-पैर, आदि शारीरिक अंगों में 'कुष्ठ रोग या विकलांगता' हो सकती है।

^१ मेहता, वसंत कुमार, 'कुड़मालि चारि', कुड़मालि भाखि बाइसि, राँची, प्रथम संस्करण- १९८९, पृ० सं० -६६

- उन्हें सांपों को देखने की इजाजत नहीं है। सांप दिखने से शिशु का स्वभाव दुष्ट प्रकृति का होगा ऐसी मान्यता है।
- माता को क्रोध करने, झगड़ने और चुगली करने से बचना चाहिए। ऐसा करने से संतान भी उसी स्वभाव की हो सकती है। झूठ, पाखंड की अनुमति नहीं दी जाएगी।
- दिन में सोना, रात को जगना वर्जित है। ऐसा करने से माता का स्वास्थ्य बिगड़ेगा। इसका असर बच्चे पर पड़ेगा।
- लोगों की नजरों से बचाने के लिए सरसों के दाने को झाड़ू-फूंक करके गर्दन में 'पुटलि' बाँधकर रखना चाहिए, इससे दुष्ट लोगों की कुदृष्टि नहीं पड़ती है।
- भूतों की कहानी एवं भयावह दृश्य देखने से परहेज करना चाहिए। भय लगने से शिशु 'पुलका' (डरपोक) पैदा होता है। पुलका को हिन्दी में 'डरपोक' कहा जाता है।
- गर्भवती माता को अच्छे विचार वाले व्यक्ति यानी किसी साधुजन का कथन-प्रवचन सुनना चाहिए। इसका बच्चों पर काफी अच्छा प्रभाव पड़ता है। अतएव माता को विभिन्न प्रकार के नियमों का पालन करना चाहिए।^२ इन नियमों के साथ ही कई अन्य रस्मों का पालन किया जाता है-

१. साधुजड़ि की प्रथा:

कुड़मालि संस्कृति में प्रथागत रूप से गर्भवती माता को नौ महीना के समय साधुजड़ि का विशेष प्रचलन है। नवा महीना में यह रिवाज होने के कारण इसे नउमासि भी कहते हैं। इसके अलावा इसे 'साध-खिआ' भी कहते हैं।^३

साध-खिआ को हिन्दी भाषा में 'गोद-भराई' कहा जाता है। साधारणतः माता से शिशु का जन्म दस महीना दस दिन माना जाता है। गर्भावस्था के समय माताएँ अधिकतर मायके में ही रहती हैं, ताकि वह हर समय प्रसन्नचित मुद्रा में रहे। सातवें से आठवें महीना में गर्भवती माता-पिता के घर से ससुराल आती है। नौ महीना के अवस्था में 'साधखिआ' का आयोजन किया जाता है। यह आयोजन ससुराल वाले एवं मायके वाले दोनों मिलकर एक शुभ दिन सुनिश्चित करते हैं। साधुजड़ि का मतलबवांछित पौष्टिक आहार से है, जिसके खाने से माँ के गर्भ में पल रहे शिशु का सर्वांगीण विकास हो। इस पौष्टिक भोज्य पदार्थ में पका हुआ कटहल, केला, अमरूद, दूध से बनी खीर, गुड़-भात, दूध से बना पिठा, गुड़ पिठा, रोटी, अंकुरित चना, भुना हुआ चिउड़ा, घी, मुर्गा या बकरा का मीट आदि खाद्य पदार्थ मायके, मौसी घर, फुफु घर, मामा घर आदि से आता है। कुड़मालि प्रथा के अनुसार उस दिन आत्मीय कुटुम्ब को निमंत्रण देकर बुलाया जाता है। यहाँ एक विशिष्ट प्रथा कुड़मि जनगोष्ठी में प्रचलित है कि- 'गर्भवती महिला के मायके की ओर से आनेवाले कुटुंबों को सर्वप्रथम पानी से भरा हुआ एक लोटा पकड़ाया जाता है तथा मायके से आये हुए फल एवं मिष्ठान आदि को साल के पत्ते से बने तीन दोनों में क्रमशः धरम-गुसाज, (सूर्यदेव) बुढ़ाबाबा, एवं ससटि-जितिआ मात्र (धरती माता) को प्रसाद चढ़ाया जाता है, तत्पश्चात 'दूध एवं पानी ढार' (अर्पण) देकर प्रणाम किया जाता है। यहाँ गर्भवती महिला की माता व पिता तब तक अनाहार में रहती है, जब तक कि गर्भवती महिला खाना नहीं खा लेती। आमंत्रित सभी कुटुम्बों को खान-पान कराया जाता है।^४ जन्म-संस्कार में असल रस्में तो शिशु के जन्म के बाद होती हैं।

(ख) जन्म के बाद प्रथागत व्यवस्था

जन्म-संस्कार जीवन के लिए कई दृष्टिकोण से अत्यन्त ही महत्वपूर्ण है। जैसे ही ज्ञात हो जाता है कि गर्भवती महिला अब शिशु को जन्म देने वाली है, तब उन्हें किसी सुरक्षित स्थान पर ले जाते हैं। जहाँ पर उन्हें हर चीज की सुविधा एवं सुरक्षित महसूस हो। देखरेख के लिए गाँव के आस-पड़ोस की तीन-चार वयस्क महिलाओं की अहम भूमिका होती है तथा इस कार्य के लिए विशेष रूप से 'धाइमाज' की पूर्व से नियुक्ति की जाती है। धाइमाज के ऊपर शिशु के प्रसव का एवं प्रसूति का पूरा भाराभार होता है।^५

जन्म के बाद माता व शिशु के स्वास्थ्य को ध्यान में रखकर कई प्रथाओं का पालन किया जाता है।

१. छाइन ढाड़ा की प्रथा:

^२ माहात, सिष्टिधर, 'कुड़मालि नेग-नीति-नेगाचार' मानभूम दलित साहित्य व संस्कृति संघ प्रकाशनी, पुरूलिया, प्रथम संस्करण-२०२१, पृ० सं० -७८

^३ सिंह, के० एस० 'पीपुल्स ऑफ इंडिया, बिहार इनक्लुड झारखण्ड', वॉल्यूम १६, भाग-२, पृ०सं० -५८१

^४ माहात, सिष्टिधर, 'कुड़मालि नेग-नेगाचार', मानभूम दलित साहित्य व संस्कृति संघ प्रकाशनी पुरूलिया, प्रथम संस्करण- २०२१, पृ०सं०-७८

^५ मेहता, वसंत कुमार, 'कुड़मालि चारि', कुड़मालि भाखि बाइसि, राँची, प्रथम संस्करण- १९८९, पृ० सं०-६६

‘छाइन ढाड़ा’ से तात्पर्य है जोरों की आवाज करना। जैसे ही शिशु भूमिष्ठ होता है वैसे ही ऊँची आवाज करने की आवश्यकता होती है। इसके लिए घर की कोई एक महिला लाठी लेकर जोर से छाइन (घर का छत) को पीटती है और यदि लड़का होता है तो कहती है कि ‘हारबाहा’ (हल चलाने वाला) आ गया, वहीं लड़की होने से कहती है कि धान ‘रपनि’ (धान रोपने वाली) आयी है। पहले घरों की दीवार मिट्टी की बनी होती, वहीं छत ‘पुआर’ (बिचाली) से छारा जाता है। जब से घरों को खपड़ैल से ढँका जाने लगा, तब से छत के स्थान पर घर का ‘कपाट’ (दरवाजा) को मारकर व ‘थारी बजाकर’ आवाज करने का प्रचलन बढ़ा है। दरवाजा के जगह वर्तमान में थाली को बजाने का रिवाज है। ऐसा विश्वास है कि इसकी आवाज शिशु के कानों में पड़ने के कारण बच्चा ‘पुलु’ (डरपोक) नहीं होता है। उनका वक्षस्थल सुदृढ़ होता है। यदि कोई शिशु जन्म के समय रोता नहीं है तो समझा जाता है कि शिशु का शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य ठीक नहीं है। यदि किसी कारणवश शिशु रोता नहीं है, तो ‘धाइमाज’ (प्रसव में सहयोगी महिला) के द्वारा रूलाने का प्रयास किया जाता है, फिर भी जिस का तस ही रहता है तो उस परिस्थिति में अच्छे वैद्य या कविराज से उचित इलाज करवाया जाता है।

वर्तमान समय में इस परिस्थिति में अस्पताल का रुख करते हैं।^६ शिशु के जन्म के बाद आसापति महिला को ‘पुआति’ कहते हैं।^७

२. नाइर गाड़ा की प्रथा:

प्रसव के तुरंत बाद ‘पुआति’ (प्रसूति) माता और शिशु के बीच ‘नाइर’ (गर्भनाल) को ‘तीर’ या ‘झिनुक’ से काट कर अलग कर दिया जाता है। परन्तु वर्तमान में ब्लेड का व्यवहार होने लगा है। इसे आग में जलाकर प्रयोग किया जाता है। तत्पश्चात घर के अंदर किसी कोने में गड्ढा खोदकर गाड़ दिया जाता है। ये सभी प्रथा में धाइमाता के द्वारा सम्पन्न होती हैं। इनकी अनुपस्थिति में गाँव की अनुभवी महिला द्वारा किया जाता है। इस प्रथा को ‘नाइरतपा’ भी कहा जाता है। ऐसा विश्वास है कि जिस घर में व्यक्ति का नाइरगाड़ा होता है उस घर के प्रति उनका जीवनभर लगाव लगा रहता है।

३. आँतुड़घार की प्रथा:

प्रथागत व्यवस्था में जिस घर में शिशु का जन्म होता है उस घर को ‘आँतुड़घार’ कहते हैं। जिस प्रकार शिशु माता के गर्भ में गर्म वातावरण में रहता था उसी तरह इस घर को हमेशा आग जलाकर गर्म रखा जाता है। धाइमाता जी ‘एडुरि’ के पत्ते से पेट को बैर के लकड़ी का आग बनाकर सेंक देती हैं। जिससे माता जल्द ही स्वस्थ हो जाए। ‘आतुड़ घार’ से संबद्ध पुरखों से निम्नलिखित प्रथा चली आ रही है-

- घर के ‘देहरी’ (दरवाजा) में छिड़ा’ (फटा) हुआ जाल बांधा जाता है। इसके पीछे मान्यता है कि इससे घर के अंदर दुष्टात्मा या दुष्ट शक्तियों का प्रवेश नहीं होता है।
- घर में ‘पाँस बाहरा’ तक आग का ‘भरसि’ जलाना ताकि घर गर्म रहे।
- ‘खाइट’ (चारपाई) में सरसों का बीज को बाँधना
- खाइट के नीचे टेंगला (कुल्हाड़ी), हंसुआ या अन्य लोहे के बने अस्त्र व औजार रखे जाते हैं।

४. जाँताछुइत की प्रथा:

कुड़मालि संस्कृति की प्रथा में मृत्यु छुआत की तरह ही शिशु के जन्म के उपरांत ‘छुआत’ का पालन करना होता है, जिसे ‘जाता छुआत’ कहते हैं। जैसे ही घर में नवजात आता है, तो उस घर के साथ ही सम्पूर्ण बाखेइर/बाखइल में जाँता छुआत हो जाता है। जबतक नारता नही हो जाता है, तब तक गाँव में किसी प्रकार की पूजा-आराधना नही होती है तथा प्रसूति के घर सहित सम्पूर्ण बाखेइर के लोग कई सामाजिक विधि निषधों का पालन करना पड़ता है। यथा-

- ‘बीच-बिहिन’ (बीजा) की रोपाई नहीं करते हैं। ऐसा करने पर अंकुर मर जाता है।
- व्यक्ति का ‘बाल-दाढ़ी’ बनाना एवं ‘मांस-मछली’ खाना बंद हो जाता है। ‘छुइत पालन’ करता है।
- ‘खार काचा’ (कपड़ा धोना), किसी को ‘अन्न’ या ‘पैसा’ मांगने पर नहीं देते हैं।

इस छुआत के बारे में विशिष्ट समाजसेवी और कुड़मालि चारि के साउताहार मानगर अनिल महतो ‘पुनअरिआर’ जी का कहना है कि- ‘पहले यह छुआत आस-पास के सभी लोग पालन करते थे, चाहे वह उस बाखेइर, गुसटि, या अन्य कबीला

^६ माहात, सिष्ठिधर, ‘कुड़मालि नेग-नीति-नेगाचार’ मानभूम दलित साहित्य व संस्कृति संघ प्रकाशन, पुरूलिया, प्रथम संस्करण-२०२१, पृ०सं० -७९

^७ मेहता, वसंत कुमार, ‘कुड़मालि चारि’, कुड़मालि भाखि बाइसि, राँची, प्रथम संस्करण- १९८९, पृ०सं०-६७

के हित मितान ही क्यों न हो, परन्तु वर्तमान समय में अपने ही बाखेइर तक सिमट कर रह गया है।^८ जाता-छुइत पालन नौ दिन तक होता है। परंतु कभी-कभी इससे छः दिन तो कभी विपरीति परिस्थिति में २१ के दिन तक छुआइत का पालन करना पड़ता है।

५. पाँसबुढ़ि की प्रथा:

छुआइत खत्म होने से पूर्व पाँचवें दिन पाँसबुढ़ि संस्कार का विधान होता है। पाँसबुढ़ि दो शब्दों के योग से बना है। 'पाँस' और 'बुढ़ि'। कुड़मालि भाषा के 'पाँस' का हिन्दी अर्थ 'राख' और बुढ़ि का अर्थ 'ससटि माहामाई' है। कुड़मालि संस्कृति में सर्वविदित है कि जहाँ पर किसी की मृत्यु होती है, वहीं छुतका लगता है। शिशु के जन्म के समय ससटि माता का अंश के रूप में गर्भाशय से निकले अवशेष को पाँस के साथ मिलाकर, मुख्य घर के अंदर ही दफना दिया जाता है। इसी नेगाचार विधान को 'पाँसबुढ़ि बाहरा' कहते हैं जिसके कारण छुइत पालन करना होता है। इस जाँताछुइत में कठोर पालन नहीं होता है। धाइमाज प्रसूति के घर को उसी दिन पूरी तरह साफ-सुथरा कर, उनके पहने हुए सभी वस्त्र तालाब से धोकर लाती हैं। उसी दिन से प्रसूति को लहसुन और घी जलाकर भुने हुए चिउड़ा के साथ खाने के लिए दिया जाता है। दोपहर के समय भुना हुआ कुर्थी एवं कुर्थी पानी पीने को दिया जाता है। वहीं शाम को ओल की सब्जी के साथ भात खाने के लिए दिया जाता है। ऐसी मान्यता है कि इस प्रकार के खाना खाने से शिशु व माता का शरीर स्वस्थ रहता है एवं प्रसव के दौरान हुए घावों को भरने में मदद मिलती है तथा रोग प्रतिरोधक क्षमता बढ़ती है। इस प्रकार माता अपने पूर्व की अवस्था में पुनः आ जाती है। उसी दौरान यदि नवजात शिशु का बुखार व जुकाम का लक्षण दिखता है, तो धाइमाता 'छागेइर लादाड़ि' (बकरी का पैखाना) और जिंदुर हेल' (चुल्हा का मिट्टी) दोनों को पानी से घोलकर शिशु के तलवा में लेप लगा कर आग की सेंक दिया जाता है। तदुपरांत एक दो दिन में ठीक हो जाता है।^९

६. नारता कामान की प्रथा:

'पाँसबुढ़ि' का संस्कार के समापन के बाद नवां दिन में 'नारता' का आयोजन किया जाता है। कुड़मालि संस्कार के प्रथागत विधानों के अनुसार नारता समारोह शिशु के जन्म के नौ दिन में किया जाता है। जाँता छुइत के दौरान हर दिन को बछर कहने की परंपरा है। नौवें दिन को नौ बछर कहा जाता है। इस अवसर पर गाँव-घर, आस-पड़ोसी, कुटुम्ब, मित्रादि व भाई-भेइआद के लोग उस परिवार को सहयोग हेतु चावल, दाल, सब्जी, अंडा, मांस आदि लेकर आते हैं। उसी समय मायके से आई हुई वस्तुओं यथा कपड़ा, आभूषण आदि देकर 'मामा' की ओर से 'भेगइना वरण' किया जाता है। 'तेल और हल्दी गाँव के लोगों में बाँटा जाता है।'^{१०} वहीं यदि गाँव वाले तेल-हल्दी लेने नहीं आते हैं तो यह समझा जाता है कि शिशु का इस वंश से संबंध नहीं है और यदि सब कुछ ठीक रहा तो भाई-भेइआद के साथ-साथ गाँव के लोग चुइल-दाड़ि हजामत करने सपरिवार आते हैं। कहीं-कहीं किसी विषम परिस्थिति में नौ दिन की जगह छहः दिनों में नारता-कामान कार्यक्रम होता है। छः दिन में नारता होने के कारण इसी नारता को 'छठियारी' कहने का प्रचलन हाल ही के दिनों में आया है। छठियारी, नारता तथा एकुइसा एक ही संस्कार है, केवल अलग-अलग दिन में होने के कारण इसे अलग-अलग नामों से जाना जाता है। 'इसी समय घर के भीतर घर 'बुढ़ा-बुढ़ि' की पूजा की जाती है'^{११} तत्पश्चात तेल, हल्दी का लेप, मेथी का लेप, सिंदूर, काजल लेकर कर धाइ माता प्रसूति को लेकर स्नान करने के लिए बाँध या नदी किनारे जाते हैं। साथ में घर के अन्यान्य महिलाओं के साथ में प्रसूति की माँ या दादी भी स्नान करने जाती है। 'स्नान करने के समय प्रसूति की माता उन्हें तीन, पाँच या सात बार हाथों से पानी उठाकर माथे में डालते हुए स्नान कराती है। उसके बाद प्रसूति तालाब के किनारे ही एक बड़े पत्थर या चट्टान में तेल, सिंदूर, हल्दी, व मेथी का लेप अर्पण कर एवं तीन अंजरा पानी देकर 'बानसिनि' (जल देवी) की पूजा करते हैं।'^{१२}

उसी नारता के दिन स्नान करने के बाद घर लौटते समय जाहिराथान में तेल, सिंदूर काजल, हल्दी को चढ़ाकर प्रणाम करती हैं एवं घर के नजदीक आने पर बैल-गाड़ी के चक्का के लोहे के भाग में उपरोक्त वस्तु के बाद अपना स्तन का दूध

^८ साक्षात्कार, श्री अनिल महतो, समाजसेवी, मनोहरटाँड़, धनबाद

^९ माहात, सिष्टिधर, 'कुड़मालि नेग-नीति-नेगाचार' मानभूम दलित साहित्य व संस्कृति संघ प्रकाशनी, पुरूलिया, प्रथम संस्करण-२०२१, पृ०सं०-८१

^{१०} सिंह, के०एस०, 'पीपुल्स ऑफ इंडिया, बिहार इनक्लुड झारखण्ड', वॉल्युम-१६, भाग-२ एंथ्रोपॉलजिकल सर्वे आफ इंडिया, कोलकाता - २००८, पृ०सं०-५८१

^{११} मेहता, वसंत कुमार, 'कुड़मालि चारि', कुड़मालि भाखि बाइसि, राँची, प्रथम संस्करण- १९८९, पृ०सं०-६७

^{१२} माहात, सिष्टिधर, 'कुड़मालि नेग-नीति-नेगाचार', मानभूम दलित साहित्य व संस्कृति संघ प्रकाशनी, पुरूलिया, प्रथम संस्करण -२०२१, पृ०सं० -८१

भी तीन बूंद डालती है। दोपहर के समय शिशु को स्नान किया जाता है। थाली के पानी को कुछ ही देर में सूर्य की रोशनी से गर्म हो जाने पर प्रथम बार धाड़ माता ही स्नान करती है। उसी दिन से शिशु का विशेष ख्याल रखा जाता है। घर की अनुभवी महिला के द्वारा प्रतिदिन तेल मालिश की जाती है। तेल मालिश के समय बच्चे की ओर देखकर महिलायें कहती हैं। इसकी जानकारी मुझे मेरी माता लीली माहाताइन से प्राप्त हुई, जो निम्नलिखित है-

“आटु बाँधअ, पाटु बाँधअ
 नुनु बाँधअ, नुनु बाढ़ेइ
 अरिल बांस, करिल बांस
 हारेक मुढ़ा, पातेक बिड़ा
 घारेक बुढ़ा, गुहेक नुड़ा
 नुनु बुढ़ाइ, पाकल बांस रकम
 नुनुक चुड़ल पाकतेइ, सन रकम
 ससटि माजके, नमअ नमअ
 बुढ़ा बाबा के नमअ नमअ
 आज्ञा पुरखा के नमअ नमअ
 गाँउथान के नमअ नमअ।”

७. डाबना दागने की प्रथा:

कुड़मालि प्रथागत व्यवस्था में डाबना की बहुत महत्वपूर्ण प्रथा है। यह शिशु के जन्म के बारहवें दिन में बाखेइर की वृद्ध अनुभवी महिला अथवा धाज माज के द्वारा डाबना की प्रथा सम्पन्न की जाती है। ‘शिशु के स्वास्थ्य को ध्यान में रखते हुए जन्म के २१ वां दिन में भी इस प्रथा को किया जाता है।’^{१३}

८. एकुइसा सिनान की प्रथा:

जिस दिन शिशु के जन्म का २१ दिन होता है उसी दिन को एकुइसा कहा जाता है। प्रथा के अनुसार नारता/छठियरी के दिन घर और बाखेइर के सभी लोग बाल-दाढ़ी करते हैं। परन्तु माता व पिता एकुइसा को ही बाल-दाढ़ी करने की प्रथा है।^{१४} इस दिन होनेवाली निम्नलिखित प्रथा कुछ इस प्रकार है-

- पुआति माता (गर्भवती) की ओर से जलाशय में बानसिनि (जल देवी) की पूजा की जाती है।
- माता द्वारा स्तन का दूध बानसिनि एवं लोहे (बैलगाड़ी के चक्का) में चढ़ाया जाता है।
- फुफु के द्वारा शिशु को काजल लगाना। इसे काजइर राँगा नेग भी कहते हैं। इसके बदले उनको साड़ी व अन्य पाउना भी मायके की ओर से सप्रेम भेंट दी जाती है।

९. मुजुठि/समधिन-देखा की प्रथा:

‘पुआति’ (जन्म देनेवाली माता) की माँ और उनकी ‘सास’ के बीच के रिश्ते को ‘समधिन’ कहते हैं। कुड़मालि प्रथा के अनुसार जब तक किसी माँ की पुत्री माँ नहीं बन जाती, तब तक वह अपनी बेटी के ससुराल नहीं जा सकती है। जिस दिन नवजात शिशु को प्रथम बार चावल खिलाया जाता है उस दिन को मुजुठि कहा जाता है। इसी दिन को समधिन देखा होता है।

‘समधिन-देखा के दिन ही शिशु का मामाघर से लाये गये मुर्गी की ‘काकरा हड्डी’ चुसा कर ‘मुजुठि’ रस्म किया जाता है।’^{१५} शिशु की ‘दुधुमाइ’ (नानी) शिशु एवं माता के लिए नये कपड़े व अन्य जरूरत के सामान उपहारस्वरूप लाती है। अति हर्षोल्लास के साथ आँगन में गाँव के लोगों के समक्ष समधिन-देखा के बाद मुजुठि नेगाचार होता है। इस समय खाने-पीने की व्यवस्था की जाती है। मुजुठि दिन में होनेवाली प्रथा-

- मामा घर से लाये गये कपड़े आदि से भेड़गना बरन

^{१३} मेहता, वसंत कुमार, ‘कुड़मालि चारि’, कुड़मालि भाखि बाइसि, राँची, प्रथम संस्करण-१९८९, कुड़मालि चारि पृ०सं०-१७

^{१४} माहात, सिष्टिधर, ‘कुड़मालि चारि’, कुड़मालि नेग-नीति-नेगाचार’ मानभूम दलित साहित्य व संस्कृति संघ प्रकाशनी, पुरूलिया, प्रथम संस्करण-२०२१, पृ०सं०-८२

^{१५} मेहता, वसंत कुमार, ‘कुड़मालि चारि’, कुड़मालि भाखि बाइसि, राँची, प्रथम संस्करण-१९८९, पृ० सं०-६८

- शिशु को मुर्गी की हड्डी चटाने की प्रथा प्रचलित है।^{१६}
- इसी दिन शिशु की माँ की माँ के साथ उनकी सास की प्रथम मुलाकात की प्रथायी व्यवस्था प्रचलित है, जिसे “समधिनि देखा” कहते हैं।

उपरोक्त सभी प्रथाएँ शिशु के जन्म के एक वर्ष के अंदर ही होती हैं। इसके बाद जब शिशु किशोर अवस्था में पहुँचता है, तब उनके घर में धरम पूजा का आयोजन किया जाता है।

१०. धरम-आखड़ा पूजा की प्रथा:

कुड़मालि संस्कृति में धरम-पूजा कुड़मालि संस्कृति में धरम-पूजा कुड़मि जनगोष्ठी की अनोखी परंपरा है, जिससे प्रत्येक कुड़मि ‘खुँट’ में अनिवार्य रूप से करना होता है। पौष, चैत्र एवं भाद्र महीना को छोड़कर शुक्ल पक्ष के किसी भी दिन शनिवार को सूर्य भगवान की पूजा ‘भूतपिड़ा’ एवं सुरजाहि आखड़ा में की जाती है।^{१७} परन्तु ज्ञात होना चाहिए कि कई कुड़मि गाँवों में यह पूजा शनिवार के अलावे किसी भी दिन करते हैं। सूर्य देवता इनके सबसे बड़े देवता माने जाते हैं। कुड़मालि भाषा में इसे ‘महाराइ’ कहते हैं। महाराइ का अर्थ श्रेष्ठ देवता होता है। राइ को हिन्दी में देवता कहते हैं। धरम-पूजा से संबंधित निम्नलिखित कुड़मालि प्रथा व विधि-निषेधों का पालन करना पड़ता है-

- यदि बाखेइर में कोई स्त्री गर्भवती हो तो धरम पूजा नहीं होती है।
 - भड़ा बाखेइर होने के कारण कोई न कोई स्त्री गर्भवती रहती है, इदर पूजा करना भी आवश्यक है, उस परिस्थिति में बच्चों को शिखा रखने का चलन है।
 - पुत्र या पुत्री के धरम-पूजा किये बिना उनका वैवाहिक संबंध नहीं कर सकते हैं।
 - यदि पैर में बेड़ी हो, तो खोल कर रखना पड़ता है। यह बेड़ी जन्म के समय ही पुत्रों को दिया जाता है।
 - सुरजाहि पूजा में बकरा (पाठा), बकरी (पठिअर) एवं भेड़ी (अढ़ाइर भेड़ि), की बलि दी जाती है। ज्ञातव्य हो कि भेड़ी को आखड़ा के बाहर बलि दी जाती है।
 - कहीं कहीं सुरजाहि का प्रसाद महिलाओं को खाने के लिए नहीं दिया जाता है।
- कुड़मि जनगोष्ठी में स्वनिर्मित प्रथागत व्यवस्था के अनुसार सुरजाहि धरम-पूजा को जन्म- संस्कार का अंतिम नेगाचार माना जाता है। इसके बाद ही समाज की ओर से लड़का व लड़की विवाह के लिए योग्य मानी जाती है।



^{१६} महतो, पुलकेश्वर और महतो, आदित्य, ‘कुड़मालि साहित्य-संस्कृति का संक्षिप्त परिचय’, मानव प्रकाशन, चितरंजन, कोलकाता, पृ० सं०- १३९

^{१७} माहात, चारियान, ‘आदि भारतेर सारि धरम परिचय’, मानभूम दलित साहित्य व संस्कृति संघ प्रकाशनी, पुरूलिया, पृ० सं०-५३

जनजातीय जीवन दर्शन में नारी की भूमिका

कु० कोमल

UGC-NET, ICPR-JRF

दर्शनशास्त्र विभाग

महात्मागांधी काशी विद्यापीठ, वाराणसी

सारांश- सृष्टि सृजन और मानव सभ्यता के विकास में नारी की महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका रही है। नारी अपने विविध रूपों में पुरुष को संवर्धन, प्रोत्साहन और शक्ति प्रदान करती है। जल, जंगल और जमीन इनके अस्तित्व के लिए अपरिहार्य तत्व हैं। प्रकृति इनकी धड़कन में बसती है। वह इनके जन्म-मरण की सहगामी है। प्रकृति के प्रति श्रद्धा, भक्ति, विश्वास, आदर, प्रेम की भावना आदिवासियों की विरासत हैं। इनकी संस्कृति, पद्धति, दर्शन और परम्परा रहस्यों से परिपूर्ण है। आज नारी की भूमिका जनजाति क्षेत्र में बहुत महत्वपूर्ण हो चुकी है तथा उन्हें कई प्रकार के अधिकार उपलब्ध कराये जा रहे हैं। इन समाजों में पुरुष और महिला दोनों को समान रूप से महत्वपूर्ण स्थान प्राप्त है। जनजातीय समाजों में नारीवाद का स्वरूप मुख्यधारा के नारीवादी आंदोलनों से भिन्न होता है। यह पश्चिमी नारीवाद की अवधारणाओं से हटकर एक विशिष्ट सांस्कृतिक, सामाजिक और आर्थिक ढाँचे में निहित होता है। जनजातीय समुदायों में महिलाओं की भूमिका को केवल शोषण और उत्पीड़न के संदर्भ में नहीं बल्कि उनके सशक्तिकरण, आत्मनिर्भरता और समाज में उनकी स्थिति के व्यापक परिप्रेक्ष्य में देखा जाता है। जनजातीय दर्शन का मुख्य उद्देश्य संतुलन बनाए रखना है। मनुष्य और प्रकृति के बीच पुरुष और महिला के बीच तथा समुदाय और व्यक्तिगत अस्तित्व के बीच। जनजातीय दर्शन में प्रकृति को स्त्री रूप में देखा जाता है। धरती को 'माता' कहा जाता है और इसका सम्मान किया जाता है। इस दृष्टिकोण से, स्त्रियों को भी समाज में विशेष स्थान प्राप्त होता है, क्योंकि वे सृजन-पोषण और संरक्षण की प्रतीक मानी जाती हैं। विशेष रूप से महिलाओं की भूमिका जनजातीय दर्शन में केवल सामाजिक या पारिवारिक नहीं बल्कि सांस्कृतिक, आर्थिक और आध्यात्मिक दृष्टि से भी अत्यन्त मूल्यवान रही है।

शब्द कुंजी- सभ्यता, अस्तित्व, सामाजिक, पारिवारिक, आर्थिक, आध्यात्मिक, सांस्कृतिक, समूह, मातृसत्तात्मक, प्रकृति, आदिवासी, समुदाय, रीति-रिवाज, शैली।

साहित्य अवलोकन-

प्रस्तुत शोध पत्र का साकार रूप देने में एस०एल० दोषी एवं पी०सी० जैन की पुस्तक जनजातीय और समाजशास्त्र आधार है। जिसका प्रकाशन रावत पब्लिकेशन्स जयपुर से किया गया है। इस पत्र को लिखने के लिए दूसरी महत्वपूर्ण पुस्तक है महेन्द्र प्रसाद सालरिया की जनजातीय दर्शन, जिसका प्रकाशन पैराडाइज पब्लिशर्स, जयपुर से किया गया है। तीसरी एवं महत्वपूर्ण पुस्तक है हरिश्चन्द्र उप्रेती की पुस्तक भारतीय जनजातियाँ, संरचना एवं विकास जिसका प्रकाशन राजस्थान हिन्दी ग्रन्थ अकादमी जयपुर है। ये तीनों पुस्तकें इस शोध पत्र के आधार हैं।

प्रस्तावना -

जनजातीय समाजों में महिलाओं की स्थिति और उनकी भूमिका को समझने के लिए यह आवश्यक है कि हम उनके सांस्कृतिक, सामाजिक, आर्थिक और राजनीतिक पहलुओं को ध्यान में रखें। जनजातीय दर्शन जो प्रकृति, समुदाय और परंपराओं से गहराई से जुड़ा है, महिलाओं को एक विशेष स्थान देता है। यह दर्शन मुख्यधारा के पितृसत्तात्मक ढाँचे से भिन्न होता है और इसमें महिलाओं की भूमिका केवल घरेलू दायित्वों तक सीमित नहीं होती, बल्कि वे निर्णय-निर्माण, आजीविका, आध्यात्मिकता और सामाजिक संरचना में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाती हैं। जनजातीय समुदायों में महिलाओं की भूमिका को केवल शोषण और उत्पीड़न के संदर्भ में नहीं बल्कि उनके सशक्तिकरण, आत्मनिर्भरता और समाज में उसकी स्थिति के व्यापक परिप्रेक्ष्य में देखा जाता है। जनजातीय दर्शन में नारी एवं पुरुष के मध्य कोई भेद नहीं दिखाई देता है।

भारतीय संविधान की प्रस्तावना में कहा गया है कि भारत में जाति, धर्म एवं लिंग के आधार पर जनजातीय समूहों के बीच कोई भेदभाव नहीं किया जायेगा। जनजातीय समाजों में स्त्री की स्थिति कतिपय भिन्न है। भारतीय जनजातीय समाजों में इस संदर्भ में कोई एक सामान्य निष्कर्ष निकालना पर्याप्त कठिन कार्य है। मेघालय की प्रसिद्ध जनजाति गारो तथा खोसी है। ये दोनों मातृसत्तात्मक एवं मातृवंशी हैं इसका तात्पर्य है कि सामाजिक, धार्मिक तथा आर्थिक क्षेत्र में स्त्रियों के अधिकारों की प्रधानता, सत्ता परिवार के बुजुर्ग महिला के हाथ में होती है तथा उत्तराधिकार एवं पदाधिकार दोनों का निर्धारण मातृवंशीयता के सिद्धान्त के आधार पर होता है। खासी परिवार का केन्द्र बिन्दु माँ होती है वह परिवार की सम्पत्ति की स्वामिनी होती है। निवास स्थान मातृस्थानीय है।

जनजातीय दर्शन की अवधारणा:

भारत में सांस्कृतिक विविधता बहुतायत में है। विभिन्न सांस्कृतिक पृष्ठभूमि के लोग यहाँ निवास करते हैं। विभिन्न धर्मों, सम्प्रदायों तथा कई विदेशी पृष्ठभूमि के लोग यहाँ निवास करते हैं। यही कारण है कि यहाँ सांस्कृतिक विविधता देखी जाती है। भारत में न केवल जातियाँ पायी जाती हैं बल्कि अनेक जनजातियाँ भी पायी जाती हैं।^१ जनजाति शब्द के समान अर्थ वाले कतिपय शब्द भारतीय, सामाजिक, मानवशास्त्र में प्रचलित हैं। कुछ लोग जनजातियों को वन्यजीवियों या वनवासी नाम से पुकारते हैं। इसका कारण यह है कि इस समूह के लोग प्रायः जंगल में रहते हैं। दूसरे लोग जनजातियों के लिए आदिवासी शब्द का प्रयोग करते हैं। इनके पीछे का इतिहास यह है कि ये समूह इस देश में निवास करते थे और इसलिए इन्हें आदिवासी कहा जाता है। कुछ मानवशास्त्री जनजातियों के लिए आदिम शब्द का प्रयोग करते हैं। इसका अर्थ है ये समूह बहुत प्राचीन हैं। जनजातियों के लिए इस प्रकार भाँति-भाँति विभिन्न शब्दों का प्रयोग होता है। प्रत्येक शब्द के पीछे एक विशेष अर्थबोध भी है।^२

जनजातियाँ वे सामाजिक समूह होते हैं जो पारंपरिक रीति-रिवाजों, भाषा, संस्कृति और जीवनशैली के आधार पर एक विशिष्ट पहचान बनाए रखते हैं। विभिन्न जनजातियों का दर्शन उनके जीवन के तरीके, प्रकृति के साथ उनके संबंध, धार्मिक मान्यताओं और सामाजिक संरचना में परिलक्षित होता है। आदिवासियों के बारे में सर्व साधारण लोगों की कल्पना अर्थात् जंगल, दरिया, पहाड़ों में रहने वाले रानटी, जंगली लोग है। सच तो यह है कि जनजातीय ही इस देश के मूल निवासी हैं।^३ विश्व के जनजातियों, आदिवासियों के ऐतिहासिक विवरण पर हम दृष्टि डालते हैं तो यह पाते हैं कि अन्य देशों की तुलना में भारत वर्ष में आदिवासियों की संख्या सर्वाधिक है।^४ जनजातीय समाजों की संरचना मुख्य रूप से सामूहिकता, समानता और प्रकृति के साथ सामंजस्य पर आधारित होती है।

प्रकृति के प्रति श्रद्धा, भक्ति, विश्वास, आदर, प्रेम की भावना आदिवासियों की विरासत है। इनकी संस्कृति, पद्धति, दर्शन और परम्परा रहस्यों से परिपूर्ण है। जनजातियों का जीवन व संस्कृति प्रकृति के साथ जुड़ा एक अटूट बंधन है इसलिए आदिवासी समुदाय आधुनिकता से दूर प्रकृति से जुड़े रहना पसंद करता है। और इसके विभिन्न रूपों की पूजा आराधना करता है।^५ जनजातीय वर्ग या समाज आज भी अपने आप को प्रकृति की ही सन्तान मानता है। जनजातीय मानव ने सदैव प्रकृति की दैवीय शक्तियों का सम्मान किया उसे इस बात का भली-भाँति अहसास था कि उनके जीवन का पोषण प्रकृति के जीवनदायी उपादानों जल, वायु, वन, भूमि, कृषि आदि से ही हो रहा है।^६ जनजातीय समाज मानव-जीवन के उन उदात्त तत्वों का दर्शन है जहाँ सरलता, सहजता, स्वच्छता, उन्मुक्तता, भोलापन, पारस्परिक सदभावना एवं प्रेम समता एवं दयादुर्भाव सतत प्रवाहमान रहते हैं। वस्तुतः आदिवासी या जनजाति शब्द मानव विज्ञान नहीं है अपितु लोक व्यवहार में प्रयोग होने वाला एवं विकसित लोगों के द्वारा ही दिया हुआ है। भारत में जनजातियों को अनेक नाम दिये गये हैं। कुछ लोग इन्हें वन्य जातियाँ अर्थात् वनों में रहने वाली जातियाँ कहते हैं। भारत सरकार ने इनको अनुसूचित जनजाति कहा है। तथा उनके लिए कुछ विशेष अधिकार स्वीकृत किये गये हैं।

नारीवाद और जनजातीय समाज-

विभिन्न समाजों में महिलाओं की प्रस्थिति, उनकी भूमिका, उनके योगदान को मापने के आधार भिन्न-भिन्न रहे हैं। नारीवाद एक विचारधारा भी है और एक आन्दोलन भी। नारीवाद के अन्तर्गत मूलरूप से समानता तथा सबलीकरण के माध्यम से महिलाओं तथा पुरुष के मध्य व्याप्त समाजगत, असमानता को नकारना है।^७ सृष्टि सृजन और मानव सभ्यता के विकास में नारी की महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका रही है। नारी अपने विविध रूपों में पुरुष को संवर्धन, प्रोत्साहन और शक्ति प्रदान करती है। आज की नारी की भूमिका जनजाति क्षेत्र में बहुत महत्वपूर्ण हो चुकी है। तथा उन्हें कई प्रकार के अधिकार उपलब्ध कराये जा रहे हैं। संविधान निर्माण के पश्चात् महिलाओं की स्थिति में काफी परिवर्तन आया है।^८

^१ दोषी एस०एल० जैन, पी०सी० २०२० जनजातीय समाजशास्त्र, रावत पब्लिकेशन्स, जयपुर, पृ०-१

^२ वही, पृ०-१९

^३ निगम, गौतम, २०१०, क्रांतिकारी आदिवासी जननायक, बहुजन साहित्य प्रसार केंद्र, नागपुर, पृ०८

^४ दोषी, एल०एल० और जैन, पी०सी०, २०२२, जनजातीय समाजशास्त्र, रावत पब्लिकेशन्स, जयपुर, पृ० १९

^५ सलारिया, महेन्द्र प्रसाद, २०२२ जनजातीय दर्शन, पैराडाइज पब्लिशर्स, जयपुर, पृ०-१३७

^६ वही, पृ०-३०

^७ गुप्ता, कमला, २०१२, भारतीय नारी प्रारम्भ से २००० ई० तक, जानकी प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली, पृ० १३

^८ सलारिया, महेन्द्र प्रसाद, २०२२, जनजातीय दर्शन, पैराडाइज पब्लिशर्स, जयपुर, पृ०-१५१

जनजातीय महिलाएँ जल, जंगल और जमीन से सीधे जुड़ी होती हैं। वे केवल उपभोक्ता नहीं, बल्कि इन संसाधनों की संरक्षक भी होती हैं। चिपको आंदोलन में उत्तराखण्ड की ग्रामीण और जनजातीय महिलाओं ने जंगलों की कटाई के खिलाफ आंदोलन किया, जिससे यह स्पष्ट होता है कि वे पर्यावरण संरक्षण में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाती हैं। नर्मदा बचाओ आन्दोलन के लिए आदिवासी महिलाओं ने बड़े बांधों के निर्माण के खिलाफ संघर्ष किया, जिससे उनकी सामुदायिक और पर्यावरण चेतना उजागर हुई।

जनजातीय महिलाओं की स्थिति-

वर्तमान समय में जनजातीय महिलाओं का महत्वपूर्ण आर्थिक योगदान है। जनजातीय समाज में महिलायें, गैर जनजातीय समाज की महिलाओं की अपेक्षा अधिक सारपूर्ण पद्धति से पारिश्रमिक बल के रूप में योगदान देती हैं। इनका योगदान पारिवारिक व्यवस्था में अति महत्वपूर्ण है। इस प्रकार जनजातीय महिलाओं की स्थिति को नकारा नहीं जा सकता। जनजातीय महिलाओं की स्थिति के सम्बन्ध में अनेक विद्वानों ने अध्ययन किया है और अपने विचार व्यक्त किए हैं। लेवी के अनुसार जनजातीय समाज में महिलाओं की स्थिति का चार संदर्भों में विचार किया जा सकता है। ये संदर्भ हैं-निश्चित प्राप्त आचरण, कानूनी स्थिति, सामाजिक भागीदारी या हिस्सेदारी का सुअवसर तथा चरित्र। इसी प्रकार मदन और मजूमदार (१९५९) ने भी महिलाओं की स्थिति के संबंध में विश्लेषण किया है। उनके अनुसार-“ महिला की स्थिति सभी प्रकार के समाज में, विशेषकर पुरुष प्रधान समाज में, विभिन्न प्रकार के निषेध जो महिलाओं का सामान्यतः साथ देती है, के द्वारा निर्धारित होता है। ये विशेष सुरक्षात्मक, प्रतिबन्धात्मक या गुणात्मक होते हैं।”

उपर्युक्त विवेचन से जनजातीय महिलाओं की स्थिति पर तो प्रकाश पड़ता है, लेकिन जनजातीय समाज की अपनी परम्परा है, उसी परम्परा के अनुरूप महिलाओं की स्थिति का सम्बन्ध भी है। पुरुषों और महिलाओं के बीच का सम्बन्ध हमेशा का सम्बन्ध हमेशा मार्गदर्शक रहा है। जनजातीय जगत में महिलायें अधिक सारपूर्ण तरीके से कार्य शक्ति के रूप में गैर-जनजातीय महिलाओं की अपेक्षा योगदान देती हैं।^९

जनजातीय महिलाओं की धार्मिक स्थिति:

जनजातीय जीवन में धर्म बहुत अधिक महत्व रखता है। अतः प्रत्येक जनजातीय परिवार एक विशेष धर्म में विश्वास करता है। जादू-टोना एवं तांत्रिक क्रियाओं में विश्वास भारतीय जनजातीय अवाम में जादू धर्म का एक अभिन्न अंग है।^{१०} भारत की जनजातियाँ बहुदेववादी हैं। दैवी शक्तियों को ऐसे देवताओं में स्थान दिया गया है जो समुदाय के जीवन की घटनाओं पर प्रभाव डालती एवं उस पर नियंत्रण करती हैं। अधिकतर जनजातियाँ अनेक देवताओं एवं देवियों में विश्वास करती हैं। उनके बीच पूजा करने की विभिन्न पद्धतियाँ हैं जो उनकी परंपरा पर निर्भर करती हैं।

सामान्य रूप से महिलायें धार्मिक आयोजनों और धार्मिक क्रियाओं के सम्पन्न होने में अपनी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका और भागीदारी निभाती हैं। आदिवासियों में तो पूर्व-त्योहार मनाने की लम्बी परम्परा रही है। हर पर्व से कोई न कोई धार्मिक आस्था, ऐतिहासिक घटना या सामाजिक स्मृति जुड़ी होती है।^{११}

महिलाओं की भूमिका-

भारत में आदिवासी जनसंख्या में अत्यधिक तीव्र रूप से वृद्धि हुई है परन्तु स्त्री-पुरुषों का स्वरूप एवं संतुलित अनुपात वर्तमान समय तक बना हुआ है। यद्यपि यह प्रश्न उठता है कि कब तक आदिवासी इस स्वस्थ एवं सन्तुलित लिंग अनुपात को बनाये रख सकेंगे। इस स्वस्थ लिंग अनुपात के लिये आदिवासी सामाजिक संरचना एवं संस्कृति को श्रेय देना होगा जो प्रकृति की गोद में स्वतंत्र रूप से विकसित हुई तथा जिसमें स्त्रियों को पुरुषों के समकक्ष प्रस्थिति प्रदान की गई तथा लैंगिक भेदभाव नहीं के बराबर रहा। किन्तु वर्तमान में ये प्राचीन जनजातीय मानदण्ड धूमिल होते जा रहे हैं।^{१२} विशेष रूप से महिलाओं की भूमिका जनजातीय दर्शन में केवल सामाजिक या पारिवारिक नहीं बल्कि सांस्कृतिक आर्थिक और आध्यात्मिक दृष्टि से भी अत्यंत मूल्यवान रही है।

रिजवी के अनुसार मानवशास्त्रियों ने जनजातीय समाजों में स्त्रियों की आर्थिक जीवन में भूमिका विषय पर बहुत कम ध्यान केन्द्रित किया है। जनजातीय अर्थव्यवस्था से सम्बन्धित प्राप्त अध्ययनों में स्त्री-पुरुषों के मध्य श्रम-विभाजन को ही प्रमुख रूप से वर्णित किया गया है। वास्तव में जनजातीय अर्थव्यवस्था मूलस्वरूप से प्रकृति केन्द्रित रही है। वर्तमान समय

^९ गुप्ता, कमला, २०१२, भारतीय नारी प्रारम्भ से २००० ई० तक, जानकी प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली, पृ० ८०

^{१०} वहीं पृ० ८५

^{११} वहीं, पृ० ८६

^{१२} उप्रेती, हरिशचन्द्र, २०२२, भारतीय जनजातियाँ, संरचना एवं विकास, राजस्थान हिन्दी ग्रन्थ अकादमी, जयपुर, पृ० ३५८

में लगभग ९० प्रतिशत आदिवासी कृषि कार्यों में व्यस्त है, चाहे वह स्थानान्तरण कृषि हो या स्थायी कृषि। जनजातीय लोग कृषक, श्रमिक से लेकर स्वयं की भूमि में कृषि कार्य करते हैं, सभी स्तरों पर स्त्रियाँ महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका अदा करती हैं।^{१३}

जनजातीय हस्तशिल्प के क्षेत्र में स्त्रियों की भूमिका पर्याप्त महत्वपूर्ण रही है। इनके उपकरणों में कलात्मक अभिव्यक्ति के साथ-साथ एक अटूट विश्वास की झलक दिखायी देती है चाहे यह देवी-देवताओं के प्रति आस्था हो अथवा जादुई कृत्यों से सम्बद्ध अथवा उपयोगिता एवं सजावट का द्योतक हो। ये लोग अपनी कलात्मक एवं अन्य वस्तुओं का निर्माण आम तौर पर अपने समुदाय की आवश्यकताओं की पूर्ति हेतु करते हैं।^{१४} भोटान्तिक नारी अपने बाल्यकाल से ही कताई, बुनाई, दन-कालीन आदि वस्त्र निर्माण की कला अपनी माता एवं अन्य वरिष्ठ स्त्रियों के संरक्षण में सीखती है। यह कला ही उसके भावी जीवन साथी के चयन में निर्णायक भूमिका अदा करती है। उदाहरण के तौर पर विवाह के अवसर पर लड़के पक्ष के लोग जब लड़की का चयन करने के लिए जाते थे तो उस अवसर पर लड़की द्वारा निर्मित वस्त्र ही उसकी योग्यता के परिचायक के रूप में माने जाते थे न कि उसका रूप-रंग एवं पारिवारिक पृष्ठभूमि। अपनी इस अद्वितीय कला के परिणामस्वरूप ही भोटान्तिक नारी एक विशिष्ट एवं सम्मानजनक प्रस्थिति प्राप्त किये हुए है तथा भोटान्तिक समाज के आर्थिक क्रिया-कलापों का केन्द्र बिन्दु बनी हुई है।^{१५}

इस प्रकार आर्थिक विकास की चाहे कोई भी अवस्था हो, जनजातीय स्त्रियाँ वर्तमान समय तक एक “लेबर मशीन” की भाँति अपना योगदान अपने परिवार की अर्थव्यवस्था में देती आयी हैं। यह योगदान आन्तरिक तौर पर ही सीमित नहीं अपितु बाहरी घरेलू आर्थिक मामलों में भी उनकी भूमिका महत्वपूर्ण रही है।

आदिम समाजों में व्यक्तिगत सम्पत्ति के विचार का आगमन पर्याप्त देरी से हुआ है। सम्पत्ति सम्बन्धी अधिकार वर्तमान समय तक भी न्यूनाधिक मात्रा में परम्परागत रूप से निर्धारित होता है। जैसे पितृसत्तात्मक समाजों में पुरुषों को ही सम्पत्ति के रख-रखाव एवं हस्तान्तरण सम्बन्धी अधिकार प्राप्त है तो मातृ सत्तात्मक समाजों में स्थिति ठीक इसके विपरीत देखी जा सकती है जहाँ सम्पत्ति का हस्तान्तरण माँ से पुत्री को होता है। यद्यपि दोनों ही प्रकारों में अपवाद भी पाये जाते हैं।^{१६}

जनजातीय समाजों में आमतौर पर विवाह एक धार्मिक संस्कार के रूप में कम तथा एक संविदा (समझौते) के रूप में अधिक है। जीवन साथी के चयन के तरीके तथा विवाह के स्वरूप उनकी प्रस्थिति के द्योतक के रूप में हैं। जहाँ एक ओर कतिपय जनजातीय समाजों में विवाह योग्य लड़के तथा लड़की को जीवन साथी के चयन की पूर्ण स्वतंत्रता प्राप्त है वहीं इसकी ओर अन्यत्र विवाह का आयोजन माता-पिता द्वारा निर्धारित किया जाता है।^{१७}

हिन्दू समाज की विवाह प्रथा के विपरीत आदिवासियों में विधवा विवाह प्रतिबंधित नहीं रहा है। विधवा विवाह को प्रायः सभी जनजातियों में परम्परागत रूप से मान्यता प्राप्त थी। सभ्य जातियों की भाँति जनजातियों में तलाक (विवाह-विच्छेद) अधिक जटिलता लिये हुए न होकर प्रमाणित सरल रूप में पाया जाता है। तलाक के मामले में जनजातीय समाजों में आमतौर पर स्त्री-पुरुष दोनों को समान अधिकार प्रथागत रूप से प्राप्त है।^{१८}

राजनीति क्षेत्र में भी आदिवासी स्त्रियाँ परम्परागत रूप से भागीदारी निभाती रही हैं। “याक” जनजाति की पंचायत में स्त्रियाँ पुरुषों के समकक्ष भागीदार रही हैं तथा “थाक” पुरुष अनेक मामलों में स्त्रियों की राय लेना श्रेयस्कर समझते हैं। इसी प्रकार “सॉसी” जनजातीय पंचायत में स्त्रियाँ महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाती थीं। वे स्वतंत्र रूप में अपने विचारों की अभिव्यक्ति करती थी तथा अपनी राय देती थी। इसके परिणामस्वरूप स्त्रियों को सम्मानजनक स्थान प्राप्त था लेकिन कुछ मामले जो पर्याप्त पेचीदगीयुक्त होते थे। अतः इस क्षेत्र में पुरुषों का ही आधिपत्य रहा तथा स्त्रियाँ इस क्षेत्र में गौण मानी गईं।^{१९} आदि समाजों में पर्दा-प्रथा का चलन मूल रूप में कही भी विद्यमान नहीं था। आदिवासियों को सुन्दरता की पर्याप्त जानकारी थी। प्रकृति ने उनके कला एवं हस्तकला के ज्ञान को आगे बढ़ाया है। उनमें भी सुन्दर दिखने की इच्छा विद्यमान है इसलिए वे अपने चेहरे एवं बदन के अन्य भागों को सजाती संवारती हैं। प्रकृति एवं पर्यावरण ने जनजातियों के सौंदर्यशास्त्र को विकसित एवं प्रभावित किया है।

^{१३} वही, पृ० -३५९

^{१४} वही, पृ० -६०

^{१५} वही, पृ० -३६१

^{१६} वही, पृ० -३६७

^{१७} वही, पृ० -३६८

^{१८} वही, पृ० -३७१-३७२

^{१९} वही, पृ० -३७७

इस प्रकार जनजातीय महिलायें न केवल पारिवारिक, आर्थिक, सामाजिक क्षेत्र में ही अग्रणी हैं, बल्कि रक्षा के क्षेत्र में भी सैनिक शक्ति के रूप में उनका योगदान रहा है। इस सम्बन्ध में जनजातीय समाज में जनजातीय महिलाओं की वीर गाथा का लोककथा के रूप में उल्लेख मिलता है। उपर्युक्त विवेचन से यह स्पष्ट है कि जनजातीय महिलाओं की स्थिति उनके समाज में महत्वपूर्ण है। इन महिलाओं का महत्व समाज के अस्तित्व के लिए आवश्यक है। परम्परागत या नवीनता द्वारा चिन्हित किसी भी समाज या समुदाय में महिलाओं की स्थिति का सांस्कृतिक और धार्मिक समता का वास्तविक प्रवर्तक सिद्धान्त कहा जाता है और महिलाओं के प्रति समाज या समुदाय की स्थिति सामाजिक प्रतिष्ठा का संकेत है। महिलाओं का पुरुषों के परस्पर समान व्यवहार करने की उच्च सांस्कृतिक स्वीकृति पक्षपातहीन न्याय का अहम मापदण्ड है।^{२०}

महिलाओं की स्थिति समाज में पुरुषों के समान नहीं है। इतिहास साक्षी है कि अधिकतर समय और घटना में महिलायें पुरुषों द्वारा प्रताड़ित की गई हैं और आज भी की जा रही हैं। झारखण्ड की मूल संस्कृति में महिलाओं के मामले में काफी खुलापन और सहजता है। इसलिए आदिवासी महिलाएँ गैर-आदिवासी महिलाओं की अपेक्षा ज्यादा स्वतंत्र-स्वावलम्बी, परिश्रमी एवं साहसी होती हैं। उनके मातृप्रधान समाज में 'दहेज' प्रथा नहीं है। वे अपनी इच्छानुसार जीवन साथी चुन सकती हैं और छोड़ सकती हैं। वे विधवा होने पर पुनर्विवाह भी कर सकती हैं। उनका जीवन काफी श्रमसाध्य व प्रकृति (जंगल, पहाड़, जमीन) के निकट होता है, लेकिन उनके समाज में भी पुरुष प्रधानता के काले बादल छा गये हैं और लिंग विभेद फैल गया है।^{२१}

उपरोक्त विवेचन से स्पष्ट होता है कि आदिवासी समाज में स्त्रियों की शिक्षा, विवाह, उनके आर्थिक अधिकार उनका हस्तशिल्प एवं कृषि धार्मिक अधिकार विमर्श के विषय रहे हैं। जनजातीय संस्कृति प्रकृति की गोद में स्वतंत्र रूप से विकसित हुई है। जिसमें जनजातीय स्त्रियों को पुरुषों के समकक्ष प्रस्थिति प्रदान की गई तथा लैंगिक भेदभाव नहीं के बराबर रहा परन्तु वर्तमान समय में आयाम कुछ बदल रहे हैं। राष्ट्र निर्माण की प्रक्रिया में समस्त आदिवासी जनजातीय महिलाओं की भागीदारी सुनिश्चित कर हम राष्ट्र निर्माण प्रक्रिया को सफल, समावेशी, लोकतांत्रिक व सहभागी बना सकते हैं। जनजातीय महिलाओं की स्थिति में सुधार लाने के लिए सर्वप्रथम शिक्षा में प्रगति और विकास लाना होगा। अतः आवश्यकता है ऐसे उपायों एवं कार्यक्रमों की जिससे जनजातीय महिलाएँ प्रोत्साहित होकर शिक्षा प्राप्त करने की ओर उन्मुख हों। तभी उनकी सामाजिक और आर्थिक स्थिति में सुधार हो सकता है।

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आचार्य शिवदत्त शर्मा चतुर्वेदी प्रणीत शतक-संहिता में अलङ्कार तत्त्व विमर्श

सोनाली कुमारी

संस्कृत विभाग, कला संकाय

काशी हिन्दू विश्वविद्यालय, वाराणसी

सारांश-आचार्य शिवदत्त शर्मा चतुर्वेदी जी ने शतक संहिता के अलङ्कार-शतकम् में अलङ्कारों के वर्णन में कहा है कि कविता में सौन्दर्य का नाम ही अलङ्कार है।

कवितासौन्दर्याणां नामेदं वाऽस्त्यलङ्काराः।

सौन्दर्ये पर्यायास्तावदिमे सन्त्यलङ्काराः।।^१

अलङ्कारों का वर्गीकरण उनके आश्रय के आधार पर दो प्रकार का किया गया है। कुछ शब्द का आश्रय लेने वाले अलङ्कार हैं तो कुछ अर्थाश्रित अलङ्कार हैं जिसके लिए पं० चतुर्वेदी जी ने कहा है-

अर्थानां यः कश्चिद् विकासमयासमाचारः।

शब्दानामाधारे प्रतिष्ठितोऽसौ समाम्नातः।।^२

शब्दालङ्कार से तात्पर्य है वे अलङ्कार जो शब्दपरिवृत्तिसह होते हैं अर्थात् किन्हीं विशेष शब्दों के रहने पर ही जो अलङ्कार रहते हैं और उन विशेष शब्दों को परिवर्तित कर देने से अथवा उन शब्दों के स्थान पर उनके पर्यायवाची का प्रयोग करने से उन अलङ्कारों की स्थिति नहीं रहती है जिससे यह स्पष्ट होता है कि ये अलङ्कार उन विशेष शब्दों के आश्रित हैं और इसीलिए इन्हें शब्दालङ्कार कहा जाता है। इन अलङ्कारों में वक्रोक्ति, अनुप्रास, यमक और श्लेष मुख्य हैं। अर्थालङ्कार से तात्पर्य वे अलङ्कार जो शब्दपरिवृत्तिसह होते हैं अर्थात् इन अलङ्कारों में शब्दों के परिवर्तन अथवा उनके समानार्थी शब्दों के प्रयोग से अलङ्कार की हानि नहीं होती है। ये अलङ्कार शब्दाश्रित होकर अर्थाश्रित होते हैं। इन अलङ्कारों में उपमा, रूपक, उत्प्रेक्षा आदि प्रमुख हैं। अलङ्कारों का वैशिष्ट्य साहित्यशास्त्र के आदि आचार्य भरतमुनि के नाट्यशास्त्र से ही देखने को मिलता है। भरतमुनि ने नाट्यशास्त्र में चार अलङ्कारों का वर्णन किया है, वे हैं-उपमा, रूपक, दीपक, यमक। परवर्ती आचार्यों में अलङ्कार की यह परम्परा और अधिक समृद्ध हुई। अप्पय दीक्षित प्रणीत कुवलयानन्द में अलङ्कारों की संख्या सौ से भी अधिक हो गई है। अलङ्कार विषयक साहित्यशास्त्रीय परम्परा में आचार्यों द्वारा अपनी रचि एवं इच्छा के अनुरूप विविध रूपों में अलङ्कार कल्पित किए गए। साहित्य के वर्तमान परिप्रेक्ष्य में भी अलङ्कार नये-नये रूपों में कल्पित किए जा रहे हैं, जिससे अलङ्कारों के भेदोपभेदों में उत्तरोत्तर वृद्धि हुई है और इसके साथ ही पूर्वाचार्यों द्वारा प्रतिस्थापित अलङ्कारों के नित-नवीन-नूतन उदाहरण भी कल्पित किए जा रहे हैं जिसका एक अच्छा उदाहरण 'शतक-संहिता के "अलङ्कारशतकम्"' में देखने को मिलता है। संस्कृत काव्यशास्त्र की परम्परा में अर्वाचीन संस्कृत आचार्यों ने जिस प्रकार अलंकारों का विवेचन किया है वह सहृदयों को आनन्दित करनेवाला एक नूतन प्रयास है। इसी संदर्भ में पं० शिवदत्त शर्मा चतुर्वेदी प्रणीत "शतक-संहिता" में वर्णित अलङ्कारशतकम् का विवेचन किया गया है।

शब्द कुंजी-अलंकार विमर्शअनुप्रास, उपमा, उत्प्रेक्षा, अलंकार व्युत्पत्ति, अलंकारत्व, अलंकृति

प्रस्तावना

अलंकार की व्युत्पत्ति, परिभाषा एवं सामान्य परिचय

काव्यशास्त्र शब्द हेतु पूर्व में 'अलङ्कारशास्त्र' शब्द प्रचलित था। परवर्ती काल में 'अलङ्कारशास्त्र' शब्द 'काव्यशास्त्र' के पर्याय के रूप में प्रयुक्त किया जाने लगा। 'अलङ्कार' शब्द में प्रयुक्त अलं पद प्रसिद्ध वैदिक पद 'अरं' से विकसित है तथा अग्निपुराण के 'अक्षरं परमं ब्रह्म सनातनमलं विभुम...वदन्ति'। इस कथन के अनुसार 'अलं' का अर्थ परब्रह्म सिद्ध होता है। 'अलङ्कार' शब्द में 'कार' स्वार्थक प्रत्यय सिद्ध होता है अहंकार अथवा ऊँकार की भांति। इस प्रकार से 'अलङ्कारशास्त्र' शब्द का अर्थ अलंशास्त्र भी कहा जा सकता है जिसका अर्थ यह हुआ कि वह शास्त्र, जो साक्षात् परब्रह्म से सम्बन्धित हो।

संस्कृत काव्यशास्त्र की वेदमूलकता पर प्रकाश डालते हुए "अलंकृति" शब्द की व्याख्या की गई है जो "अलंकृति" से अभिन्न है तथा वेदमन्त्रों में बहुशः उपलब्ध होता है। महर्षि पाणिनि ने भी अष्टाध्यायी में कतिपय अलंकार संघटक पदावलिओं की व्याख्या की है। संपूर्ण काव्यशास्त्र में 'अलङ्कार' संज्ञा एक महासंज्ञा रही है, जिसमें रस भी गिना जाता रहा है

^१शतक-संहिता, अलङ्कारशतकम् (७५)

^२शतक-संहिता, अलङ्कारशतकम् (२७)

और उपमा, रूपक आदि विच्छित्तियाँ भी, माधुर्य आदि गुण भी और वृत्ति तथा रीतियाँ भी । काव्य के सभी सौन्दर्याधायक तत्वों को अलङ्कार नाम से ही अभिहित किया जाता था और संभवतः इसे ही दृष्टि में रखकर भामह, वामन, रुद्रट, उद्भट आदि आचार्यों ने अपने ग्रन्थों को 'काव्यालङ्कार' की संज्ञा दी है। साहित्य शास्त्र के आदि आचार्य नाट्यशास्त्र के प्रणेता भारतमुनि ने नाट्यशास्त्र में कहा है-

उपमा दीपकं चैव रूपकं यमकं तथा।

काव्यस्यैते ह्यलङ्काराश्चत्वारः परिकीर्तिताः।।^३

अलङ्कार शब्द अलम् उपसर्गपूर्वक कृ धातु से घञ् प्रत्यय करने पर निष्पन्न होता है। जिसका सामान्य अर्थ है- आभूषण अथवा अलङ्करण।

अलङ्कार शब्द की तीन व्युत्पत्तियाँ प्रचलित हैं-

(१) अलङ्करोति - इत्यलङ्कारः।

(२) अलङ्क्रियतेऽनेनेत्यलङ्कारः।

(३) अलङ्कृतिः अलङ्कारः।

काव्य में अलङ्कार शब्द का अर्थ दो प्रकार से मुख्य रूप से मिलता है -

(१) करण अर्थ में

(२) भाव अर्थ में

करण अर्थ में- तृतीय विभक्ति अर्थात् करण से अभिप्राय उपकरण या साधन के अर्थ में है। अलम् कृ + घञ् प्रत्यय। घञ् प्रत्यय भाव अर्थ में प्रयुक्त है जिसका अर्थ है अलङ्कारः । यहां अलङ्कार सौन्दर्य के उपकरण रूप में है। इस प्रकार इसका अर्थ है जिसके द्वारा अलङ्कृत किया जाता है। अलङ्कार शब्द जो आभूषण अर्थ को भी देता है वह इसीलिए कि आभूषण भी शोभावर्धक होता है, आकर्षण पैदा करता है इसीलिए आनन्दजनक भी हुआ करता है।

भाव अर्थ में- आभूषण अथवा शोभा के रूप में अलङ्कार है।

अलम् + कृ + क्तिन् = अलङ्कृति।

अलङ्कृतिः अलङ्कारः, अर्थात् अलङ्कृति ही अलङ्कार है। इस अर्थ में अलङ्कार सौन्दर्य से अभिन्न है आचार्य वामन ने इसी अर्थ में अलङ्कार को सौन्दर्य का पर्याय कहा है। परवर्ती काव्यशास्त्र में भी अलङ्कार शब्द अपने इस अतीव व्यापक और सर्वग्राही अर्थ में आचार्य भामह से लेकर पण्डितराज जगन्नाथ तक प्रयुक्त होता रहा है। और इसी शृंखला में अर्वाचीन आचार्य पं० शिवदत्त शर्मा चतुर्वेदी जी ने भी अलङ्कार को सौन्दर्य का पर्याय कहा है।

अलङ्कार के लक्षणों का स्वरूप अलङ्कार सम्बन्धी अवधारणा के विकास के साथ-साथ परिवर्तित होता रहा है। अलङ्कार को विभिन्न आचार्यों ने अनेक प्रकार से परिभाषित किया है-

(१) आचार्य भामह - वक्राभिधेयशब्दोक्तिरिष्टा वाचामलङ्कृतिः।।^४

आचार्य भामह के अनुसार वाचा वक्रार्थ शब्दोक्ति ही वाणी का अलङ्कार बन जाती है।

(२) आचार्य वामन - सौन्दर्यमलङ्कारः।^५

आचार्य वामन के अनुसार अलङ्कार के कारण ही काव्य ग्राह्य होता है- काव्यं ग्राह्यमलङ्कारात् ।।

(३) आचार्य आनन्दवर्धन-

तमर्थमवलम्बन्ते येऽङ्गिनं ते गुणाः स्मृताः।

अङ्गाश्रितास्त्वलङ्कारा मंतव्याः कटकादिवत्।।^६

आचार्य आनन्दवर्धन के मतानुसार जो अङ्गी के अवलंब है उनको गुण कहते हैं और कटक आदि के समान जो अङ्गाश्रित हैं वे अलङ्कार हैं।

(४) आचार्य मम्मट-

उपकुर्वन्ति तं सन्तं येऽङ्गद्वारेण जातुचित् ।

हारादिवदलङ्कारास्तेऽनुप्रासोपमादयः।।^७

^३ अलङ्कारसर्वस्व (२८)

^४ काव्यालङ्कार (१/३९)

^५ काव्यालङ्कार सूत्र वृत्ति (१/१/२)

^६ ध्वन्यालोक, द्वितीय उद्योत-६

अलङ्कार काव्य अङ्गों (शब्दार्थ) के उत्कर्ष द्वारा काव्य में विद्यमान रस को उपकृत करते हैं जैसे कंठादि अङ्गों को अलङ्कृत करता हुआ हारादि अलंकरण शरीरी (आत्मा) को भी अलङ्कृत करता है।

(५) आचार्यविश्वनाथ-

शब्दार्थयोरस्थिरा ये धर्माः शोभातिशायिनः

रसादीनुपकुर्वन्तोऽलङ्कारास्तेऽङ्गादिवत्।।^८

(६) आचार्य कुन्तक-

लोकोत्तर चमत्कारकारिवैचित्रसिद्धये

काव्यस्यायमलंकारः कोऽप्यपूर्वो विधीयते।।^९

आचार्य कुन्तक लोकोत्तर एवं विचित्र सौन्दर्य के आधायक तत्त्वों को अलङ्कार मानते हैं।

अलङ्कारों का इतिहास

वैदिककाल से ही अलङ्कारों के प्रयोग को स्वीकार किया गया है। वेदों में अलङ्कारों का स्पष्ट विवेचन तो नहीं मिलता किन्तु उपलब्ध उपमा एवं रूपक आदि के उदाहरण पर्याप्त मात्रा में होते हैं। उपमा आदि का प्रयोग ऋग्वेद में भी देखने को मिलता है जिसका अर्थ आचार्य सायण ने उपमान या दृष्टांत के रूप में किया है।

ऋग्वेद के विष्णु सूक्त का मंत्र उदाहरण हेतु प्रस्तुत है-

मृगो न भीमः कुचरो गिरिष्ठाः।^{१०}

प्रस्तुत मन्त्र में विष्णु को मृग के समान भयंकर मानकर विष्णु की मृग से उपमा दी गई है। यहां विष्णु उपमेय, मृग उपमान तथा भयंकरता साधारण धर्म है। ऋग्वेद के उषस् सूक्त में रूपकालङ्कार के उदाहरण को स्पष्ट रूप से देखा जा सकता है-

देवानां चक्षुः सुभगा वहन्ती।^{११}

इस मन्त्र में सूर्य को देवताओं का चक्षुः कहा गया है। इसी प्रकार अतिशयोक्ति अलङ्कार का एक प्रसिद्ध उदाहरण भी ऋग्वेद के मन्त्र में स्पष्ट रूप से प्रतीत होता है-

द्वा सुपर्ण सयुजा सखाया समानं वृत्तं परिषस्वजाते।

तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वन्ति अनशनन्यो अभिचाकशीति।।^{१२}

आचार्य भरत ने भी अपने नाट्यशास्त्र में अलङ्कारों को स्वीकार किया किन्तु स्पष्ट रूप से प्रथम आलंकारिक के रूप में प्रतिष्ठित होनेवाले आचार्य भामह थे।

आचार्य भामह अलङ्कार सिद्धांत के प्रवर्तक आचार्य हैं जिन्होंने काव्य में अनिवार्य रूप से उपस्थित अलङ्कार तत्त्व को सिद्धांत रूप में निरूपित किया। इनका प्रमुख ग्रंथ “काव्यालङ्कार” है। आचार्य भामह काव्य शरीर में अलंकारत्व का मूल हेतु “वक्रोक्ति” को मानते हैं। भामह अलङ्कार और अलङ्कार्य में भेद नहीं करते। इन्होंने लगभग ३८ अलङ्कारों का उल्लेख किया है। जिनमें २ शब्दालंकार एवं ३६ अर्थालंकार हैं।

आचार्य दण्डी अपने महत्वपूर्ण ग्रन्थ काव्यादर्श में अलंकारों को काव्य का शोभाकारक धर्म मानते हुए रस, रीति, गुण आदि काव्यतत्त्वों के साथ संधि, संध्यांग, वृत्ति, लक्षण आदि नाट्य तत्त्वों को भी अलङ्कार में समाहित कर देते हैं। इस प्रकार दण्डी अलङ्कार को व्यापक अर्थ में व्याख्यायित करते हैं।

आचार्य दण्डी ने “काव्य शोभाकरान् धर्मान् अलंकारान् प्रचक्षते” में अलङ्कार को शोभाकारक धर्म कहकर काव्य के साथ उसकी अभिन्नता को बताया है।

ध्वनिवादी आचार्यों में आचार्य आनन्दवर्धन और आचार्य मम्मट ने काव्य और अलङ्कार में अङ्गी और अङ्ग का सम्बन्ध माना है।

^८ काव्यप्रकाश (८/६७)

^९ साहित्यदर्पण (१०/१)

^{१०} वक्रोक्तिजीवितम् - प्रथम उन्मेष-२

^{११} विष्णुसूक्त (१/५४/२)

^{१२} उषस् सूक्त (७/७७/३)

^{१३} ऋ० वे० (१/१६४/२०)

आचार्य मम्मट ने काव्य स्वरूप के निरूपण में काव्य की सालंकारता को स्वीकार किया है किन्तु उसकी अनिवार्यता नहीं मानी। आचार्य मम्मट द्वारा प्रदत्त काव्य स्वरूप का लक्षण-

तददोषौ शब्दार्थौ सगुणावनलंकृती पुनः क्वापि ।।^{१३}

काव्य-स्वरूप को स्पष्ट करते हुए आचार्य मम्मट ने कहा है कि दोषगुणालंकारा वक्ष्यन्ते। क्वापीत्यनेनैतदाह यत् सर्वत्र सालंकारौ क्वचित् स्फुटालंकारविरहेऽपि न काव्यत्वहानिः। इस प्रकार यह स्पष्ट होता है कि ध्वनिवादी आचार्य अलंकार को काव्य का अस्थिर धर्म मानते हैं जिसके उपस्थित नहीं रहने से भी काव्य की काव्यता बनी रहेगी। इस प्रकार यह स्पष्ट होता है कि अलङ्कार काव्य में सौन्दर्य को उत्पन्न करता है, अतिशय चारुत्व एवं चमत्कारिता में वृद्धि करता है।

अलङ्कारों का विकास

अलङ्कारों की संख्या के विषय में बड़ा मतभेद है विद्वानों में। शब्दालङ्कारों में वामन आदि ने केवल 'अनुप्रास' और 'यमक' दोनों की ही गणना की है। परन्तु आचार्य मम्मट ने अनुप्रास और यमक के साथ वक्रोक्ति, श्लेष, चित्र और पुनरुक्तवदाभास को भी शब्दालङ्कार माना है। इस प्रकार मम्मट के मत में शब्दालङ्कारों की संख्या ६ हो जाती है। आचार्य मम्मट के मत में छह शब्दालङ्कार, इकसठ अर्थालङ्कार और एक उभयालङ्कार है।

अलङ्कारों के विकास पर गौर करने पर यह प्रतीत होता है कि अलंकारों की संख्या में आशातीत वृद्धि हुई है। अलङ्कार एक व्यापक काव्यशास्त्रीय अवधारणा के रूप में भरतमुनि से लेकर पंडितराज जगन्नाथ एवं उनके बाद आज तक विकसित होता आ रहा है।

प्रारम्भ में नाट्यशास्त्रकार महामुनि भरत द्वारा चार ही अलङ्कार उपकल्पित किए गये थे- उपमा दीपकं चैव रूपकं यमकं तथा। तदनन्तर भामह तथा दण्डी ने लगभग ३८ अलंकार माने। उव्वटाचार्य ने ४१ अलङ्कारों का निरूपण किया है। आचार्यरुद्रट ने वास्तव, औपम्य, अतिशय तथा श्लेष नामक चार वर्गों में अलङ्कारों को व्यवस्थापित करते हुए लगभग ६६ अलङ्कारों को निरूपित किया है। आचार्य मम्मट ने ६७ अलङ्कारों को निरूपित किया है। भोजराज ने अलङ्कारों की संख्या ७२ मानी है। चन्द्रालोककार जयदेव ने लगभग १०० अलङ्कारों का वर्णन किया है।

अलङ्कारों का वर्गीकरण

अलङ्कारों के वर्गीकरण के इतिहास पर दृष्टि डालने से हमें यह ज्ञात होता है कि अलंकारों के प्रथमतया वर्गीकरण का प्रयास आचार्यरुद्रट ने किया। आचार्यरुद्रट के अलंकार वर्गीकरण की विधि संपूर्ण अलंकारों को समावेशित करने में सक्षम न होने के कारण अवैज्ञानिक सिद्ध हुई।

औपम्य आधार के अन्तर्गत सादृश्यमूलक सभी अलङ्कार समावेशित नहीं हो सके। यथा- 'उत्प्रेक्षा' सादृश्यमूलक अलंकार की कोटि में आता है किन्तु आचार्यरुद्रट उसे अतिशय आधार के अन्तर्गत रखते हैं।

आचार्यरुद्रट के पश्चात् अलंकारों के वर्गीकरण में आचार्यरुय्यक का नाम आता है। आचार्यरुय्यक अलंकारों को सात कोटि के अन्तर्गत विभाजित करते हैं। यथा-

१. सादृश्य गर्भ, २. विरोध गर्भ, ३. शृंखलाबद्ध, ४. तर्कन्यायमूलक, ५. काव्यन्यायमूलक, ६. लोकन्यायमूलक, ७. गूढार्थ प्रतीतिमूलक।

परवर्ती काव्यशास्त्रीय आचार्यों ने अलंकारों के तीन वर्गीकरण को ही स्वीकृत किया और वे ही साहित्यशास्त्र में प्रचलित हो गए।

१. शब्दालंकार, २. अर्थालंकार, ३. उभयालंकार

शब्द-सौन्दर्य एवं अर्थ - सौन्दर्य के माध्यम से काव्य में दो प्रकार के अलङ्कार मुख्य रूप से विद्यमान होते हैं। कतिपय आचार्यों ने उभयालङ्कार को भी माना है जिसे शब्दार्थालङ्कार भी कहा जाता है। जब शब्द और अर्थ दोनों के सन्निवेश के द्वारा कविता/काव्य में चमत्कार प्रदर्शित हो तब वह उभयालङ्कार की श्रेणी में आता है।

शब्दालंकार- जहां अलङ्कार की विद्यमानता शब्द की चमत्कारजनकता के होने से हो वह शब्दालंकार है। अर्थात् अलङ्कार जब शब्दाश्रित हो और शब्द के परिवर्तन से अलङ्कार परिवर्तित हो जाए तो वह शब्दालंकार की कोटि में आता है। प्रमुख शब्दालङ्कार हैं- अनुप्रास, यमक, श्लेष, वक्रोक्ति, पुनरुक्तवदाभास आदि।

अर्थालङ्कार - जब अलङ्कार की विद्यमानता अर्थ की चमत्कारजनकता के कारण हो तब वह अर्थालङ्कार है। अर्थालङ्कार में शब्द का परिवर्तन करके उस स्थान पर उसके पर्यायवाची के प्रयोग से अलङ्कार में परिवर्तन नहीं होता है। प्रमुख अर्थालङ्कार हैं- उपमा, रूपक, उत्प्रेक्षा आदि।

^{१३} काव्यप्रकाश (१/१)

शतक-संहिता में प्रयुक्त अलङ्कार

अर्वाचीन संस्कृत आचार्यों में पं० शिवदत्त शर्मा चतुर्वेदी जी अपनी काव्यरचना को अलङ्कृत करने में अत्यन्त कुशल हैं। शतक-संहिता में उन्होंने अनेक अलङ्कारों की सहज एवं स्वाभाविक योजना की है जिसमें उन्होंने शब्दालङ्कारों एवं अर्थालङ्कारों दोनों का ही प्रयोग किया है।

शब्दालङ्कार

शब्दालङ्कार के विषय में अलङ्कारशतकम् में आचार्य चतुर्वेदी जी लिखते हैं-

शब्दालङ्काराणां या विच्छित्तिर्वा समीक्ष्यैनाम् ।

शब्दमित्रतां याताः कवयः सर्वे प्रसीदन्ति ।।^{१४}

कर्णे स्वर्णिमशोभां निवेशयन्ती मनोरुचिरा ।

स्वरङ्गकृतिरियमसमा कवितायाः शोभिता धारा ।।^{१५}

यहां कवि के कहने का तात्पर्य यह है कि शब्दालङ्कार में श्रुतिमाधुर्ययुक्त शब्दों का सन्निवेश किया जाता है जो कविता की शोभा को बढ़ाने के साथ ही सहृदय को रुचिकर प्रतीत होता है और कवि शब्दालङ्कारों के प्रयोग से आनन्द की अनुभूति करते हैं। पं० शिवदत्त शर्मा चतुर्वेदी जी के अलङ्कारशतकम् में वर्णित अनुप्रास अलङ्कार-

सर्वशोभन धाराऽनुप्रासानां तु संरचना ।

कर्णेऽर्पितमाधुर्या नवां नवां स्फूर्तिमातनुते ।।^{१६}

संस्कृत साहित्य की काव्यशास्त्रीय परंपरा में अनेक आचार्यों द्वारा भिन्न-भिन्न प्रकार से अनुप्रास के लक्षण प्रस्तुत किए गए हैं जिनमें काव्यप्रकाशकार आचार्य मम्मट और साहित्यदर्पणकार आचार्य विश्वनाथ द्वारा प्रदत्त लक्षण अत्यंत प्रसिद्ध हैं-

(१) वर्णसाम्यमनुप्रासः छेकवृत्तिगतो द्विधा ।

सोऽनेकस्य सकृत्पूर्वः एकस्याप्यसकृत्परः ।।^{१७}

(२) अनुप्रासः शब्दसाम्यं वैषम्येऽपि स्वरस्य यत्^{१८}

वर्णों की समानता अनुप्रास है। समानता का अर्थ यहाँ एक समान वर्णों की आवृत्ति से है और वर्ण से तात्पर्य व्यंजन वर्णों से है। अर्थात् स्वर वर्णों का भेद होने पर भी व्यंजन वर्णों की समानता होने पर अनुप्रास अलङ्कार होता है।

अनेक वर्णों का एक बार साम्य छेकानुप्रास कहलाता है। एक वर्ण का भी अनेक बार साम्य वृत्त्यनुप्रास कहलाता है। शतक संहिता में अनुप्रास के प्रभेद का सुन्दर प्रयोग किया गया है, यथा

(१) पारस्परिकविरोधे लोके लोके विलोक्यते योऽयम् ।

कवितायाः संसारे सादरमेषोऽस्त्यलङ्कारः ।।^{१९}

प्रस्तुत श्लोक में लोके लोके की क्रमशः आवृत्ति होने के कारण छेकानुप्रास है।

(२) निन्दानिन्दितनन्दित सेवा सञ्जातसंस्कारैः ।

आन्दोलितमथ सर्वं कुतो न वाद्यापि रणरणकम् ।।^{२०}

यहाँ न और द वर्णों की अनेक बार आवृत्ति होने से वृत्त्यनुप्रास अलङ्कार है।

अर्थालङ्कार

अर्थालङ्कारों के वर्णन में आचार्य चतुर्वेदी सर्वप्रथम सारूप्य एवं साधर्म्य को वर्णित करते हैं-

अर्थालङ्काराणां श्लेषोऽयं विद्यते शरणम् ।

सारूप्ये साधर्म्यं शब्दादर्थद्वयोपलब्धौ यत् ।।^{२१}

^{१४} शतक-संहिता, अलङ्कारशतकम् (२१)

^{१५} शतक-संहिता, अलङ्कारशतकम् (२२)

^{१६} शतक-संहिता, अलङ्कारशतकम् (३२)

^{१७} काव्यप्रकाश (९/१०३, १०४, १०५)

^{१८} साहित्यदर्पण - १०/३

^{१९} शतक-संहिता, अलङ्कारशतकम् (४२)

^{२०} शतक-संहिता, अलङ्कारशतकम् (४०)

^{२१} शतक-संहिता, अलङ्कारशतकम् (४०)

अलङ्कारशास्त्र की परम्परा में अर्थालङ्कारों में सर्वाधिक संख्या सादृश्य मूलक अलङ्कारों की है। सादृश्य मूलक अलङ्कारों में उपमा एवं उत्प्रेक्षा अलङ्कार प्रायः कवियों के प्रिय अलङ्कार रहे हैं। उपमा अलङ्कार को सादृश्यमूलक अलङ्कारों का आधारभूत अलङ्कार माना जाता है।

उपमा एवं उत्प्रेक्षा अलङ्कारों के वर्णन में अलङ्कारशतकम् में आचार्य चतुर्वेदी जी ने कहा है-

उपमैका शैलूषी सम्प्राप्ता चित्रभूमिका भेदान् ।

रञ्जयति काव्यरङ्गे नृत्यन्ती तद्विदां चेतः ॥^{२२}

उत्प्रेक्षाऽलङ्कारः कश्चिदयं सर्वशीर्षस्थः ।

यत्र मनोमयराज्ये द्वाराण्युद्धाटितानि स्युः ॥^{२३}

उत्प्रेक्षावल्लभ इत्युपाधिना कोऽपि संयुक्तः ।

कवितावनिताकान्तः प्रसादभाषां प्रसादयन्नास्ते ॥^{२४}

आचार्य चतुर्वेदी जी उत्प्रेक्षा अलङ्कार को अर्थालङ्कारों में सर्वशीर्षस्थ बताते हैं।

काव्यप्रकाशकार आचार्य मम्मट के अनुसार उत्प्रेक्षा का लक्षण-

सम्भावनमथोत्प्रेक्षा प्रकृतस्य समेन यत् ।^{२५}

यहाँ समेन-उपमानेन और प्रकृतस्य उपमेयस्य के लिए प्रयुक्त हुआ है।

उपमेय की उपमान के साथ सम्भावना ही उत्प्रेक्षा अलङ्कार कहलाता है।

यथा-

संस्कृतविज्ञसमाजस्यधारियं पुरा नगरी।

काशीद्वितीयतायां परिगणनं कारयन्तीव ॥^{२६}

प्रस्तुत श्लोक आचार्य चतुर्वेदी प्रणीत शतकसंहिता के जयपुरशतकम् से उद्धृत है। इस श्लोक में जयपुर नगरी की परिगणना द्वितीय काशी के रूप में संभावना के माध्यम से व्यक्त की गई है। जिससे यह उत्प्रेक्षा अलङ्कार का उदाहरण बन जाता है।

काव्य में अलङ्कारों के स्थान निर्धारण को लेकर पूर्वाचार्यों से लेकर आधुनिक काव्यशास्त्र मर्मज्ञों तक विचार-विमर्श निरंतर चलता आ रहा है। हिन्दी साहित्य के सुप्रसिद्ध समालोचक आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल जी ने अलङ्कार को परिभाषित करते हुए स्पष्ट कहा है कि-“भावों का उत्कर्ष दिखाने और वस्तुओं के रूप, गुण व क्रिया का अधिक तीव्र अनुभव कराने में कभी-कभी सहायक होने वाली उक्ति अलङ्कार है। यहाँ ‘कभी-कभी’ शब्दों के प्रयोग से ही अलङ्कार की स्थिति एक सहायक के रूप में स्वीकार की है किन्तु अलङ्कारवादी आचार्यों ने अलङ्कार के बिना काव्य की सत्ता ही स्वीकार नहीं की है।

अलङ्कारवादी आचार्यों की दृष्टि में अलङ्कार का अर्थ बहुत ही व्यापक है। उनके अनुसार काव्य में काव्यत्व का हेतु अथवा काव्य में सौन्दर्याधान करने वाले प्रत्येक तत्त्व अलङ्कार पद वाच्य हो इसके लिए सबसे अच्छा उदाहरण आचार्य वामन का लिया जा सकता है। आचार्य वामन काव्यशास्त्र के षड् संप्रदायों में एक रीति संप्रदाय के प्रतिष्ठापक आचार्य हैं किन्तु इसके बावजूद भी अलङ्कारों के लिए उन्होंने कहा कि- काव्यम् ग्राह्यम् अलङ्कारात् अर्थात् अलङ्कार के होने से ही काव्य की ग्राह्यता है। इसके साथ ही आचार्य वामन कहते हैं- “सौन्दर्यमलङ्कारः” अर्थात् काव्य में जो कुछ सौन्दर्याधायक है वह अलङ्कार ही है। इससे काव्य में रीति-जनित सौन्दर्य भी समाविष्ट हो जाता है।

आठवीं सदी के उपरान्त अर्थात् ध्वनिवाद की प्रतिस्थापना के बाद से अलङ्कार का अर्थ संकुचित होता दिखाई पड़ता है और यह अनुप्रास, उपमादि अलङ्कारों के रूप में प्रयोग तक सीमित हो गया। ध्वनिवाद की प्रतिस्थापना से काव्य में आस्वाद पक्ष प्रधान हो गया जिससे अलङ्कार तिरोभूत हुए और काव्य, में अलङ्कारों की स्थिति अनिवार्य नहीं रह गई और उसकी प्रधानता भी उसकी आस्वादजनकता पर निर्भर हो गई। ध्वनिवादी आचार्यों ने काव्य के तत्त्व के रूप में उसकी उपस्थिति को स्वीकारते हैं।

^{२२} शतक-संहिता, अलङ्कारशतकम् (४१)

^{२३} शतक-संहिता, अलङ्कारशतकम् (४४)

^{२४} शतक-संहिता, अलङ्कारशतकम् (४५)

^{२५} काव्यप्रकाश (१०/१३६)

^{२६} शतक-संहिता, जयपुरशतकम्

अलङ्कारों के उपर्युक्त विवेचन से यह स्पष्ट होता है कि अर्वाचीन संस्कृत कवि पं० शिवदत्त शर्मा चतुर्वेदी ने अपने ग्रन्थ शतकसंहिता में अलङ्कारों को एवं उनके दृष्टान्तों को नूतन रूप में व्यवस्थित करने का अद्भुत प्रयास किया है जो सरल सहृदयों को आनन्दित करने वाला है। अंत में निष्कर्षतः हम यह कह सकते हैं कि अलङ्कारों का निश्चय रूप से काव्य में महत्त्व है।

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शोध सार- भारत में अंग्रेजों का शासन स्थापित होने से पूर्व यहाँ की अर्थव्यवस्था काफी समृद्ध अवस्था में थी किंतु १८ वीं शताब्दी के मध्य स्थिति में परिवर्तन आया तथा अंग्रेज सर्वप्रथम बंगाल की सत्ता पर काबिज हो गये। तत्पश्चात् उन्होंने भारत के अन्य प्रदेशों पर भी धीरे-धीरे अधिकार कर लिया। शासन की स्थापना के उपरांत अंग्रेजों ने भारत के प्राकृतिक संसाधनों का ब्रिटेन स्थित अपने उद्योग-धंधों के विकास हेतु दोहन प्रारंभ किया जिसके परिणामस्वरूप यहाँ की अर्थव्यवस्था का तेजी से पतन हुआ। व्यापार एवं वाणिज्य तथा उद्योग-धंधों का तेजी से पतन हुआ जिसका दुष्परिणाम यह हुआ कि कृषि पर जनसंख्या का तेजी से दबाव बढ़ा तथा कृषि का वाणिज्यीकरण हुआ, जिसने अकालों की गंभीर त्रासदी को जन्म दिया। जब अंग्रेजों को आर्थिक रूप से नुकसान पहुँचने लगा तो वे आर्थिक क्षेत्र में अपने हितों के अनुरूप कुछ सुधारात्मक कदम उठाने के लिये बाध्य हुये। सुधारात्मक कदम उठाने वाले अंग्रेज प्रशासकों में प्रमुख थे-लॉर्ड रिपन, जिसने अर्थव्यवस्था के विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में व्यापक सुधार किया। लॉर्ड रिपन के सुधारात्मक उपायों ने ब्रिटिश भारत में आर्थिक क्षेत्र में विकेंद्रीकरण को प्रारंभ किया जिसके परिणामस्वरूप स्थानीय स्तर पर आर्थिक विकास का मार्ग प्रशस्त हुआ।

शब्द कुंजी- अर्थव्यवस्था, सत्ता, प्राकृतिक संसाधनों, व्यापार-वाणिज्य, उद्योग-धंधों, कृषि, जनसंख्या, अकालों, अंग्रेज प्रशासकों, आर्थिक क्षेत्र, विकेंद्रीकरण, आर्थिक विकास

राजस्व नीति:

अफगान युद्ध की समाप्ति के बाद लॉर्ड रिपन ने भारत की प्रशासनिक समस्याओं में से सबसे अधिक महत्वपूर्ण स्थान भूमि सुधार को दिया।¹ उप-भारत मंत्री के पद पर कार्य करते हुए उसने बंगाल के हित में दिये गये लॉर्ड लारेन्स के सुझावों का समर्थन किया था।² इंग्लैण्ड की यात्रा के वक्त उसने कहा कि वह भारत आने के बाद शीघ्र भूमि सुधार की समस्या पर ध्यान देगा।³ १८७८ ई. में अकाल आयोग ने यह मत प्रकट किया कि भूमि सुधार में भारत के जमींदार व कृषक के मध्य सम्बन्ध ठीक नहीं थे तथा आयोग द्वारा यह भी सुझाव दिया गया था कि लगान की उगाही की व्यवस्था को लचीला बनाने तथा उसमें उदारता से काम लेने पर विचार किया जाए। रिपन के सामने बंगाल के क्राशतकारी कानून में संशोधन पर विचार करने का प्रस्ताव था, परन्तु अफगान समस्या के कारण वह इस विचार पर ध्यान न दे सका। १७९३ ई. के बन्दोबस्त में बंगाल के जमींदार और काशतकारों के अधिकार को सही तरीके से नहीं स्पष्ट किया गया था। प्राचीन पद्धति के राज्य द्वारा निर्धारित लगान को लगातार अदा करने की स्थिति में जमींदार कृषकों को बेदखल नहीं कर सकता था। किन्तु बंगाल में ऐसा हो रहा था। १८५९ ई. में एक नियम बनाया गया जिसमें एक कृषक द्वारा लगातार बारह वर्ष तक एक खेत जोतने पर उसे व उसके उत्तराधिकारी को उस खेत पर स्वामित्व के अधिकार देने की व्यवस्था की गई।⁴ मगर इस कानून से कोई सुधार नहीं हुआ।

१८७३ ई. में बंगाल में कृषि विद्रोह हो गया तथा प्रान्तीय अधिकारियों ने इससे बचने के लिए कृषक संरक्षण नियम पारित किया।⁵ मगर इस कानून की अवधि कम व ठीक तरह से लागू न होने के कारण इसे समाप्त कर दिया गया तथा

¹ अकाल आयोग (स्ट्रैची आयोग, १८७८ ई.) प्रतिवेदन, १८८० ई., अध्याय ३. पैरा १९,

² वुल्फे, लुसियन, लाइफ ऑफ लॉर्ड रिपन, किसिंजर पब्लिशिंग, मोंटना (यू.एस.ए). २०१०, पृ. २१९

³ वुल्फे, लुसियन, लाइफ ऑफ लॉर्ड रिपन, किसिंजर पब्लिशिंग, मोंटना (यू.एस.ए). २०१०, पृ. २१९

⁴ रेवेन्यू डिपार्टमेंट, जुलाई १८८३, पृ. २८

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१९७९ ई. में कानून पर संशोधन करने का निश्चय किया गया^६ तथा भारत सरकार ने बंगाल सरकार को विधेयक तैयार करने को कहा तथा १८८० ई. में प्रस्तावित संशोधन सरकार को भेजा गया जिसमें रिपन द्वारा प्रतिपादित कुछ सिद्धान्त थे।

१. वर्षों से चले आ रहे कानूनों में भूमि के उपयोग के सभी अधिकारों को काश्तकारों को देना।

२. भूमि की उपज की कीमत में वृद्धि का एक भाग जमींदार को देना।

३. जमींदारों व काश्तकारों के झगड़ों को सुलझाना।

४. तीन साल तक लगातार खेती करने वाले कृषक को हमेशा के लिए उस भूमि का अधिकार देना।

रिपन इस प्रस्ताव को शीघ्र पारित करना चाहता था, परन्तु वह यह कार्य नहीं कर सका। २१ मार्च १८८२ ई. को उसने भारत मंत्री को पत्र लिखा^७ जिसमें किसानों को निश्चित लगान देने पर भूमि के उपयोग का अधिकार देने, कलेक्टर को लगान की दर में परिवर्तन का अधिकार देने, किसी भी कृषक को रैयत भूमि में कृषि करने के अधिकार से वंचित न करना, आदि कई सुझाव थे। एशले एडन ने भारत परिषद् में इसका समर्थन नहीं किया क्योंकि वह उदारवादी दल के विरुद्ध था तथा गृह सरकार ने भी रिपन के तथा एंग्लों इण्डियन समुदाय ने भी इसका विरोध किया क्योंकि ये दोनों रिपन द्वारा किये गये कार्यों को तथा भारत में रिपन की उपस्थिति को सही नहीं मानते थे।

भारत के प्रमुख न्यायाधीश गार्थ ने ०६ सितम्बर १८८३ ई. को एक पत्र प्रकाशित किया। उसके द्वारा प्रस्तावित बिल एक वर्ग के अधिकारों का बलिदान करके समाज के दूसरे वर्ग को लाभ पहुँचाना था तथा एक शताब्दी से प्रचलित कानून द्वारा स्थापित परम्पराओं की अवहेलना करना था। रिपन ने भारत मंत्री को बताया कि उसके प्रस्तावों का उद्देश्य परम्पराओं व प्राचीन नियमों का उल्लंघन करना नहीं था।^८ उसके प्रस्ताव परम्परागत नियम के निकट थे जिसमें यह प्रावधान था कि एक काश्तकार को तब तक बेदखल नहीं किया जा सकता जब तक कि वह नियमित रूप से भूमि कर अदा करता है, परन्तु भारत मंत्री ने अपने विचारों पर दृढ़ रहते हुए रिपन को अपने बिल को केन्द्रीय धारा सभा से विचार विमर्श के लिये रखने को कहा।^९ परन्तु रिपन नहीं माना और उसने अपने बिल को संशोधित करना चाहा। किम्बरले ने गृह सरकार को बिल पारित करने की स्वीकृति दी। ०२ मार्च १८८३ ई. को इलबर्ट ने संशोधित बिल को धारा सभा में पारित किया। इस बिल से काफी असंतोष फैल गया तथा स्थिति तनावपूर्ण हो गयी। मार्च १८८४ ई. में बिल का मसविदा प्रस्तुत किया तथा इस पर पुनः विचार करने के बाद १८८५ ई. में बिल पारित कर दिया गया।^{१०}

१८८५ ई. के पारित बिल में रिपन द्वारा १८८३ ई. में प्रस्तावित विधेयक की धाराओं के साथ उनके मामलों पर समझौते किये गये थे। १८५९ ई. के अधिनियम की धाराओं का इसमें संशोधन किया था। १८८५ ई. के अधिनियम से पता चलता है कि इसकी धाराएँ १८८३ ई. के प्रस्तावों से अधिक व्यवहारिक थीं। १८८५ के कानून में रिपन तथा इलबर्ट ने अनेक परिवर्तन किये थे।

लॉर्ड रिपन ने अवध में भी काश्तकारी कानूनों को सुधारने का प्रयास किया। १८५७ ई. के विद्रोह के फलस्वरूप जागीरों को १८५७ ई. में लॉर्ड कैनिंग ने तालुकेदारों को वापिस कर दिया था। १८५७ ई. पहले तालुकेदारों को अधिकार प्राप्त थे, लेकिन उन अधिकारों की परवाह न करते हुए तालुकेदारों ने कृषकों को तंग किया तथा उनकी उन्नति में बाधा डाली। १८६९ ई. में एक कानून बनाया गया जिसके अनुसार तालुकेदारों को अपने काश्तकारों के साथ प्रत्येक वर्ष नए समझौते करने तथा वर्ष के अन्त में भूमि सुधार का मुआवजा देकर बेदखल करने के अधिकार थे।

१८६९ ई. में बड़ी संख्या में कृषक बेदखल किये गये जिसकी १८७३ ई. में जाँच हुई। लायन ने जुलाई १८८२ ई. में इस मामले को भारत सरकार के पास भेजा तथा तालुकेदारों को चेतावनी दी गयी कि यदि वे अधिकारों का दुरुपयोग करेंगे तो उनके मामले में हस्तक्षेप किया जा सकता है। रिपन ने दूसरे तरीकों द्वारा अवध के समस्त तालुकों में कृषकों को संरक्षण देने पर विचार करने का आदेश लायल को दिया। लायल ने मेजर ईर्सकिन को अवध के कृषकों की दशा पर आँकड़े एकत्रित करने के आदेश दिये^{११} तथा १८८३ ई. को प्रस्ताव भारत सरकार को भेजा गया। लायल व भारत सरकार द्वारा प्रस्तावित कानून की विशेषताएँ निम्न थीं—

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⁷ रेवेन्यू डिपार्टमेंट, २१ मार्च १८८२ ई. का वायसराय का भारत मंत्री को पत्र।

⁸ वायसराय का भारत मंत्री को पत्र, १७ अक्टूबर १८८२ ई.।

⁹ भारत मंत्री का वायसराय को पत्र, १५ दिसंबर १८८२ ई.।

¹⁰ बकलैण्ड, बंगाल अण्डर दी लेफ्टिनेंट गर्वनर्स, एस.के. लाहिड़ी एण्ड कंपनी, कलकत्ता, १९०१ ई, पृ. ८०९-८११

¹¹ रेवेन्यू डिपार्टमेंट प्रोसिडिंग्स, जून १८८४ ई, पृ. २

१. जब तक लगान की तिथि निश्चित नहीं होती तब तक एक किसान अपनी भूमि का उपयोग कर सकता है।
२. लगान की दर साढ़े छः प्रतिशत से अधिक नहीं हो।
३. सात साल के अन्दर लगान की स्वीकृति के अधिकार प्रान्तीय सरकार के पास होंगे।
४. तालुकदार और काश्तकार में समझौता न होने पर काश्तकार की लगान का वृद्धि अथवा भूमि में बेदखली का नोटिस जमींदार को देना होगा। काश्तकार द्वारा प्रस्तावित वृद्धि को न मानने पर तालुकदार भूमि दूसरे काश्तकार को दे सकता है।
५. काश्तकार के अधिकारों की पुनरावृत्ति व्यक्तिगत होगी।
६. भूमि कर में वृद्धि करने का अधिकार राज्य का होगा।

यह प्रस्ताव तालुकदार व कृषक दोनों के लिए महत्वपूर्ण थे।^{१२} इन प्रस्तावों के अलावा अन्य दो प्रस्ताव भारत मंत्री द्वारा वायसराय को दिये गये जिसमें न्यायालय तालुकदारों की अपील पर किसी काश्तकार को उसकी एक चौथाई भूमि से बेदखल करने के आदेश न दे तथा बेदखली की स्थिति में काश्तकार के उत्तराधिकारी को भूमि सुधार के अलावा और किसी को मुआवजा न दिया जाए।^{१३} रिपन के भारत से जाने के बाद इसे स्वीकृति मिली। यह बिल लॉर्ड डफरिन के काल में पारित हुआ।

किसानों की दशा को सुधारने के लिये रिपन ने पंजाब टेनेन्सी अधिनियम में सुधार किया। १८८६ ई. पंजाब के निर्जन प्रदेशों की आबादी में तेजी से बढ़ोत्तरी हुई। फलस्वरूप पंजाब टेनेन्सी अधिनियम बनाया गया जिसमें किसी नये व्यक्ति के साथ आये किसान के उत्तराधिकारी को, यदि वह १८६८ ई. में वहां पर खेती करता हो तो उसे भूमि का स्वामी माना जायेगा।^{१४} यह अधिनियम पारित न हो सका तथा रिपन ने पंजाब के उपराज्यपाल को इस मामले की जाँच करने का आदेश दिया। सर चार्ल्स ऐचीसन ने १८६८ ई. के अधिनियम में संशोधन आवश्यक नहीं माना तथा भारत सरकार ने ऐचीसन पर दबाव डाला तथा संशोधन करने का आदेश दिया।^{१५} अन्त में उसने सरकारी व्यय पर किये गये भूमि सुधार के लिये राजस्व की दरों में परिवर्तन की स्थिति में लगान निश्चित करने के अधिकार का सुझाव दिया।^{१६} जुलाई १८८२ में भारत सरकार ने ऐचीसन द्वारा प्रस्तावित संशोधन को पंजाब सरकार द्वारा उत्साह प्रदर्शित करने के बावजूद संशोधित विधेयक १८८६ ई. में पारित किया जो १८८७ ई. में कानून बना।

लॉर्ड रिपन के समय में ही उत्तर-पश्चिम प्रान्त के झांसी जिले में काश्तकारों की वित्तीय दशा को सुधारने के लिए विधेयक पारित किया गया। इस जिले में जमींदारों और काश्तकारों व साहूकारों ने कृषकों को बेदखल कर दिया था तथा इसे रोकने के लिये १८८२ ई. में विधेयक पारित हुआ जिसे झांसी एनकम्बर्ड स्टेट्स अधिनियम कहते हैं।^{१७} जिसके अन्तर्गत १८८४ ई. में सरकार को नीलामी में भूमि की वार्षिक आय की दस गुना राशि तक बोली बोलने के अधिकार दिये गये।^{१८}

१८८३ ई. में कृषकों की दशा को सुधारने के लिये अकाल आयोग ने इस अधिनियम को संशोधित करने का प्रस्ताव रखा जिसे रिपन द्वारा स्वीकृति मिली। इसके तहत भूमि का उपयोग करने वाले काश्तकारों के लिए भूमि कर की दर बन्दोबस्त के समय ही निर्धारित की जा सकती थी तथा जो साधारण किसान थे उनकी भूमि कर की दर राजस्व की दर के अनुसार होगी।^{१९} रिपन ने बर्मा में कृषि सम्बन्धी समस्याओं को देखने के बाद ही भूमि सुधार के प्रस्ताव को माना तथा मद्रास में काश्तकारों के वंशागत अधिकारों को संशोधित संरक्षण प्रदान करने के प्रस्ताव को भी स्वीकार किया।

लॉर्ड रिपन द्वारा उत्तरी भारत में कृषि की अवस्था में सुधार करने का पहला गंभीर प्रयत्न १८२२ ई. के अधिनियम द्वारा हुआ, जिसके अन्तर्गत भूमि के स्वामित्व उपयोग के अधिकार अनाज की कीमतें आदि का विवरण इकट्ठे करने की योजना बनाई गई थी, लेकिन इस अधिनियम को समाप्त कर दिया गया। भारत मंत्री चार्ल्स वुड ने भी उत्तर के प्रदेशों में स्थायी बन्दोबस्त लागू करने की घोषणा की परन्तु उत्तर-पश्चिम प्रान्त में कई प्रदेश पिछड़े हुए थे तथा वहां पर विकसित प्रदेशों की अपेक्षा भूमि की दर कम थी जिससे स्थायी बन्दोबस्त में नुकसान हो सकता था।^{२०}

¹² रेवेन्यू डिपार्टमेंट प्रोसिडिंग्स, जून १८८४ ई., पृ. २

¹³ वही

¹⁴ रेवेन्यू डिपार्टमेंट प्रोसिडिंग्स, जून १८८२ ई., पृ. ४-६

¹⁵ वही

¹⁶ रेवेन्यू डिपार्टमेंट प्रोसिडिंग्स, अगस्त १८८२ ई., पृ. ३३-३४.

¹⁷ रेवेन्यू डिपार्टमेंट प्रोसिडिंग्स, सितम्बर १८८३ ई., पृ. १०-१३.

¹⁸ रेवेन्यू डिपार्टमेंट प्रोसिडिंग्स, जनवरी १८८४ ई., पृ. १६

¹⁹ पॉवेल, बैडन बी. एच. लैण्ड सिस्टम्स इन इंडिया, ऑक्सफोर्ड एट द कलैन्ड्रन प्रेस, लंदन, १८९२ ई., पृ. ४८६-४९०

²⁰ अकाल आयोग (स्ट्रेची आयोग, १८७८ ई.) प्रतिवेदन, १८८९ ई. भाग. २

लॉर्ड लारेन्स ने केवल विकसित प्रदेशों में ही स्थायी बन्दोबस्त लागू करने का प्रस्ताव रखा। इस प्रस्ताव पर विचार करने के लिए अनेकों अधिकारियों ने भाग लिया। १८७९ ई. में बिना कोई निर्णय लिये इसे स्थगित कर दिया गया।

लॉर्ड रिपन ने इस प्रश्न पर विचार करके इसके सम्बन्ध में भारत मंत्री को पत्र भेजा^{२१} कि प्रान्तीय सरकार बिना पूर्ण जानकारी के नया बन्दोबस्त न करें। रिपन के कुछ प्रस्तावों पर भारत मंत्री सहमत नहीं था, किन्तु उसने इसे मंजूरी दे दी।

भारत मंत्री के अनुसार, उन प्रदेशों में जहां अभी राजस्व की दरें कम थी, दो बार वृद्धि की जा सकती थी तथा वह इस समस्या पर मद्रास व बम्बई की सरकार से भी परामर्श करने का निर्णय लिया^{२२} तथा इस प्रकार, एक लम्बे समय से चली आई समस्या का समाधान रिपन ने किया। भारत में रिपन ने कृषि सम्बन्धी समस्याओं को सुलझाने का प्रयास किया जिसका उद्देश्य कृषकों की आम दशा को सुधारने के साथ जमींदारों के साथ उनके सम्बन्ध को भी सुधारना था।

वित्तीय नीति:-

रिपन का दूसरा महत्वपूर्ण सुधार भी १८८२ के प्रस्ताव के माध्यम से आया जो आर्थिक विकेन्द्रीकरण के इतिहास में महत्वपूर्ण स्थान रखता है। लॉर्ड रिपन मुक्त व्यापार की नीति का समर्थक था।^{२३} उसे कई वित्तीय समस्याओं का सामना करना पड़ा क्योंकि सरकार ने देशी भाषा प्रेस अधिनियम और शस्त्र कानून पारित कर भारतीयों के असंतोष को बढ़ा दिया था तथा भयंकर अकाल के समय दिल्ली दरबार में शान-शौकत पर किये गये भारी व्यय पर भी भारी असंतोष व्यक्त किया था। लॉर्ड रिपन वित्तीय समस्याओं को सुलझाने के लिए व्यावहारिक दृष्टिकोण को अपनाना उचित समझता था।^{२४} लॉर्ड रिपन ने बैरिंग की सहायता से इस समस्या को सुलझाया। १८८२ में बैरिंग व रिपन द्वारा एक बजट पारित किया गया जिसमें राजस्व स्रोतों को तीन भागों में विभाजित किया।

(१) नमक, चुंगी, अफीम, गेहूँ को केंद्रीय सरकार के हाथों में रहना था। बैरिंग अफीम उत्पादन के अनियंत्रित उत्पादन को इसके मुक्त व्यापार में बाधक मानता था। रिपन ने बैरिंग के इन विचारों से सहमति प्रकट नहीं की, जब तक कोई अन्य स्रोत द्वारा अफीम से होने वाली आमदनी की हानि की पूर्ति न कर दे, तब तक इस व्यापार को समाप्त नहीं किया जा सकता था।^{२५} बैरिंग ने अनुभव किया कि भारत के विभिन्न प्रान्तों में लगभग समान परिस्थितियों में रहने वाले व्यक्तियों पर लाइसेन्स शुल्क का भार असमान था तथा सरकारी कर्मचारियों पर यह व्यवस्था नहीं थी।^{२६} नमक कर के भार को संतुलित करने के लिए रिपन की सरकार ने कई उपाय किये। नमक कर की दरों में कमी की गई तथा उस पर आयात शुल्क भी हटा दिया गया। १८८२-८३ ई. के बजट में मुक्त व्यापार के सिद्धान्तों के अनुसार प्रत्यक्ष करों को लगाने की नीति पूर्ण रूप से तो लागू नहीं हो सकी परन्तु भारत में आयकर लगाने के प्रस्ताव को स्थगित किया गया था।

(२) नागरिक विभाग, सार्वजनिक निर्माण आदि विषयों का कार्य प्रांतीय सरकारों को सौंपा गया। मेयो द्वारा १८७० ई. में आरम्भ की गयी वित्तीय विकेन्द्रीकरण की योजना पर भी रिपन की सरकार ने पूर्ण ध्यान दिया। इस योजना के दोषों का मूल्यांकन करके १८७७ ई. में सर जॉन स्ट्रेची ने असम और बर्मा के अतिरिक्त सभी प्रान्तों से नए समझौते किए। इन समझौते में कानून और न्याय, आबकारी शुल्क, स्टैम्प और लाइसेंस शुल्क से होने वाली आमदनी के अतिरिक्त सामान्य प्रशासन, भूमि कर, आबकारी स्टैम्प और न्याय व कानून के व्यय की जिम्मेदारी भी प्रान्तों को सौंपी गयी^{२७} तथा प्रांतीय व केन्द्रीय सरकार दोनों मिलकर इस घाटे की पूर्ति करेंगे अथवा लाभ उठावेंगे। भू राजस्व सम्मिलित अधिकार क्षेत्र में रखा गया, जिसका कुछ भाग प्रान्तों के लिए निश्चित कर दिया गया, जिससे वे अपनी कमी की पूर्ति कर सकते थे। इसी कारण निश्चित अनुदान देने की परम्परा समाप्त कर दी गई। युद्ध जैसे आपातकाल में प्रान्तों को केन्द्र के सहायतार्थ तैयार रहने को कहा गया। केन्द्र ने अपनी ओर से आश्वस्त किया कि ऐसी मांगे अत्यधिक विनाशावस्था में पेश की जायेगी, जब सरकारी स्रोतों के समाप्ति की स्थिति आ जायेगी।^{२८} दूसरी ओर, केन्द्र ने आपातकाल की स्थिति में प्रान्तों की सहायता के लिए

²¹ वायसराय का भारत मंत्री को पत्र, १० अक्टूबर १८८१ ई.

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²³ लेजिसलेटिव कांसिल प्रोसिडिंग्स, १० मार्च १८८२ ई.

²⁴ वुल्फे, लुसियन, लाइफ ऑफ लॉर्ड रिपन, किसिंजर पब्लिशिंग, मॉंटना (यू.एस.ए) २०१० पृ. ६७

²⁵ लेजिसलेटिव काउंसिल प्रोसिडिंग्स, १० मार्च १८८२ ई.

²⁶ वायसराय का भारत मंत्री को पत्र, ३० जनवरी १८८४ ई.

²⁷ रिपोर्ट ऑफ दी रॉयल कमीशन ऑन डिसेन्ट्रलाइजेशन इन इंडिया, १९०९ ई. पृ. २७

²⁸ फाइनेंस एण्ड कॉमर्स डिपार्टमेंट रिजोल्यूशन, ३० सितंबर १८८४ ई.

आश्चर्य किया। यह बन्दोबस्त पंचवर्षीय था जिसके बाद अनुभव के आधार पर इसमें परिवर्तन किया जा सकता था। आर्थिक हस्तांतरण के क्षेत्र में यह प्रस्ताव एक महत्वपूर्ण कदम था।

सी. एल. आनन्द ने लिखा है कि इसका लाभ यह हुआ कि इसे प्रान्तीय सरकारों को प्रान्तीय करों में ही रुचि नहीं रही बल्कि केन्द्र के लिये एकत्रित किये जाने वाले प्रान्तीय करों में भी हो गई।²⁹ इस व्यवस्था से दूसरा लाभ यह था कि जिस आर्थिक क्षेत्र में कठिनाई की संभावना थी वह सभी केन्द्र ने संभाल ली। लॉर्ड क्रोमर ने लिखा है कि “चार विचित्र तरह के जिन खतरों से भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था को कठिनाई पैदा हो सकती थी, वे थी, युद्ध, अफीम के राजस्व में कमी, विनियम दर में कमी और दुर्भिक्ष। इनमें से प्रथम तीन भारत सरकार के अधीन थे, और चौथा स्थानीय सरकार के अधीन।” नयी व्यवस्था के द्वारा केन्द्र और प्रान्तीय दोनों का आर्थिक प्रशासन स्वस्थ सिद्धांतों पर आधारित हो गया जिनमें से कुछ तो आज भी हमारी आर्थिक व्यवस्था के आधार हैं। इन नवीन व्यवस्था ने देश के आर्थिक प्रशासन को स्वामित्व प्रदान किया। १८८७, १८९२ और १८९७ में प्रान्तों के साथ किये गये समझौते में वित्तीय विकेन्द्रीकरण की योजना को आगे बढ़ाने में लॉर्ड रिपन ने उल्लेखनीय सफलता प्राप्त की।

कारखाना अधिनियम, १८८१ ई.-

लॉर्ड रिपन के अन्य कार्यों में कारखाना सुधार भी था। रिपन ने शासन के प्रथम वर्ष में ही कारखानों में काम करने वाले श्रमिकों की दशा को सुधारने के लिए प्रथम कारखाना अधिनियम पारित किया। वायसराय का पद लेने के पहले ०२ जून १८८० ई. को उसने एक भाषण में कहा “मेरा यह गम्भीर प्रयत्न होगा कि अफगान युद्ध का शीघ्र सम्मानजनक अन्त किया जाये जिससे कि शान्ति स्थापित होने के पश्चात् भारत सरकार आन्तरिक कार्यों की ओर अपना ध्यान लगा सके।”³⁰

१८७२-७३ की बम्बई कपास विभाग के प्रशासन की रिपोर्ट में मूर ने स्त्री एवं बालकों के काम के घण्टे निश्चित करने, मिल में काम करने वाले बालकों की न्यूनतम आयु सीमा निर्धारित करने की आवश्यकता पर जोर दिया,³¹ जिसके लिए भारत मंत्री ने एक जांच आयोग का गठन किया।

१८ अप्रैल, १८७७ ई. को उसने भारत मंत्री को बालकों के काम करने के घण्टे, उनकी आयु की सीमा और श्रमिकों की सुरक्षा के लिये मशीनों के चारों ओर बाड़ लगाने के लिये कानून बनाने को कहा तथा ०७ नवम्बर १८८० ई., को रिपन ने अपनी परिषद् में प्रथम कारखाना अधिनियम पारित किया।³² प्रस्तावित विधेयक का उद्देश्य कारखानों में दुर्घटना को रोकना तथा कम आयु के बच्चों के कार्य करने पर प्रतिबन्ध लगाना था। इस नियम में १४ वर्ष से कम आयु के व्यक्ति को ०८ घण्टे रोज से अधिक काम नहीं दे सकते थे। इसके लिये एक समिति नियुक्ति की गई तथा कई जगह इस कानून का विरोध भी किया गया।

लॉर्ड रिपन इंग्लैण्ड के साथ-साथ भारत में भी प्रथम कारखाना अधिनियम शीघ्र पारित करना चाहता था। वह इस प्रकार के कानून को उद्योगपतियों और श्रमिकों दोनों के लिये लाभदायक मानता था।³³ रिपन की इच्छा समस्त भारत के लिये कानून पारित करने की थी। ०१ जुलाई १८८१ ई. से यह कानून समस्त ब्रिटिश भारत पर यह अधिनियम केवल उन कारखानों पर लागू किया गया जहां १०० से भी ज्यादा मजदूर काम करते थे। इस अधिनियम के प्रमुख प्रावधान निम्न थे।

१. किसी भी कारखाने में ०७ वर्ष से कम आयु के बच्चों को नियुक्त न करें
२. १२ वर्ष से कम आयु के बच्चों से प्रतिदिन ०९ घण्टों से अधिक काम न लिया जाये।
३. बाल श्रमिकों को कार्यावधि के मध्य में एक घण्टे का दैनिक अवकाश तथा एक माह में चार अवकाश दिये जाये।
४. खतरनाक मशीनों के चारों ओर बाड़ लगाया जाए।
५. कारखानों के निरीक्षण की व्यवस्था की जाये तथा निरीक्षण के लिए प्रान्तीय सरकारों द्वारा निरीक्षक नियुक्त किया जाये।

प्रथम कारखाना अधिनियम एक सुधारात्मक कार्य था। भारत मंत्री की सामान्य रुचि, वायसराय की कार्यकारिणी के अधिकांश सदस्यों और बंगाल के गवर्नर के विरोध के बाद भी यह कानून पास किया गया।³⁴

²⁹ आनंद, सी.एल, हिस्ट्री ऑफ गवर्नमेंट ऑफ इंडिया, यूनिवर्सल लॉ. पब्लिशिंग कंपनी लिमिटेड, दिल्ली, २००८, पृ. २११

³⁰ स्पीचेज ऑफ लॉर्ड रिपन, पृ. ३

³¹ लेजिसलेटिव काउंसिल प्रोसिडिंग्स, १८८१ ई., १८१

³² वही

³³ लेजिसलेटिव काउंसिल प्रोसिडिंग्स, १८८१ ई., १८१

³⁴ माथुर, एल.पी, भारत में लॉर्ड रिपन का प्रशासन, पब्लिकेशन स्कीम, दिल्ली, १९८७, पृ. ५९

निष्कर्ष-

अंग्रेजों ने भारत की सत्ता पर अधिकार करने के लिये देशी एवं विदेशी शक्तियों के साथ अनेकों युद्ध लड़ा जिससे उनकी आर्थिक स्थिति काफी कमजोर हो गई। अफगान युद्ध के उपरान्त यह स्थिति और विकट हो गई जिसने ब्रिटिश भारतीय सरकार को आर्थिक क्षेत्र में सुधार करने के लिये बाध्य किया। उस काल में भूमिकर सरकार की आय का प्रमुख स्रोत था, अतः सरकार ने सर्वप्रथम इस ओर ध्यान दिया तथा कृषकों को राहत देने के लिये कुछ कदम उठाये गये। लॉर्ड रिपन से पूर्व ही लॉर्ड मेयो ने आर्थिक क्षेत्र में विकेंद्रीकरण की नीति को प्रारंभ कर दिया था किंतु उसकी हत्या के उपरान्त यह कार्यरुक्त गया था। लॉर्ड रिपन ने मेयो की आर्थिक नीति को आगे बढ़ाते हुये आर्थिक विकेन्द्रीकरण की नीति को सफलतापूर्वक लागू किया। इस नीति के लागू होने से स्थानीय ईकाईयों को भी आर्थिक मजबूती मिली तथा वे जनकल्याणकारी कार्य करने की दिशा में अग्रसर हुये। लॉर्ड रिपन ने श्रमिकों की स्थिति में सुधार के उद्देश्य से कारखाना अधिनियम पारित किया जिसका प्रभाव सीमित रहा किंतु इसने भविष्य में श्रमिक सुधार का मार्ग प्रशस्त किया। लॉर्ड रिपन के कल्याणकारी कदमों से भारतीय जनता की स्थिति में काफी सुधार हुआ। उसके कार्यों के कारण भारतीय इतिहास में लॉर्ड रिपन को सम्मानित स्थान प्राप्त है।

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११. वायसराय का भारत मंत्री को पत्र, १० अक्टूबर १८८१ ई.
१२. लेजिसलेटिव कांसिल प्रोसिडिंग्स, १० मार्च १८८२ ई.
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डफरिन फंड- भारतीय महिला चिकित्सा में सुधार का एक प्रयास

रवि कुमार

शोध छात्र

इतिहास विभाग, काशी हिन्दू विश्वविद्यालय

वाराणसी

सारांश- इस लेख में औपनिवेशिक काल के दौरान भारत में महिलाओं की चिकित्सकीय देखभाल में सुधार के लिए डफरिन फंड (१८८५) के ऐतिहासिक प्रयासों और महत्व पर प्रकाश डाला गया है। इसने महिला अस्पतालों की स्थापना और महिला डॉक्टरों के प्रशिक्षण में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई। साथ ही साथ इस लेख में भारत में, विशेष रूप से औपनिवेशिक काल के दौरान, स्वास्थ्य सेवा प्राप्त करने में महिलाओं के सामने आने वाली ऐतिहासिक चुनौतियों का भी अध्ययन है। जिसमें भारतीय सामाजिक मानदंडों और प्रतिबंधों ने महिलाओं को उपयुक्त स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं से वंचित रखा था। जिसके कारण उन्हें आवश्यक चिकित्सकीय सहायता नहीं मिल पाती थी। इन जटिलताओं के साथ ही औपनिवेशिक काल विभिन्न बीमारियों और स्वास्थ्य संकटों से भी भरा रहा है, जिनका एक परिणाम सामाजिक ढाँचे में परिवर्तन भी था। डफरिन फंड की स्थापना भारतीय महिलाओं की चिकित्सकीय देखभाल में सुधार के लिए की गई थी, जिसमें डफरिन फंड का उद्देश्य विशेष रूप से महिलाओं को संस्थागत चिकित्सकीय सहायता प्रदान करना था। यह फंड मातृ स्वास्थ्य में सुधार और महिला चिकित्सकों के प्रशिक्षण पर भी केंद्रित था। इसने महिला अस्पतालों की स्थापना और महिला डॉक्टरों के प्रशिक्षण में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई।

शब्द कुंजी- औपनिवेशिक चिकित्सा, महिला चिकित्सा, महिला चिकित्सक, डफरिन, फंड, महामारी, महिला वार्ड, स्वदेशी दाइयाँ, लिंग विभेद, स्कूल ऑफ मेडिकल फॉर वूमेन।

भूमिका

ऐतिहासिक रूप से परिवार, समाज तथा उसमें रहने वाले सभी को एक स्वस्थ-स्वास्थ्य परिवेश की आवश्यकता होती रही है, तथा वो अपने अच्छे स्वास्थ्य की आशा को लेकर प्रगतिशील रहे हैं। परंतु वैश्विक स्तर पर समय-समय पर ऐसी अनेक बीमारियाँ, महामारियाँ तथा स्वास्थ्य संबंधी समस्या आती रही है। कुछ ऐसी भी बीमारियाँ आयीं जिन्होंने महामारी का रूप लेकर समाज तथा सभ्यताओं को नष्ट भी किया है। इन सब के बावजूद इनके उपचार, उपचार विधियों और तरीकों को लेकर हमेशा से मानव सभ्यता अत्यंत संघर्षशील भी रही है।

स्वास्थ्य, उपचार तथा उपचार की विधा में ऐतिहासिक रूप से सामाजिक बनावट में महिलाओं को पुरुषों से ज्यादा चुनौतियों का सामना करना पड़ा है क्योंकि उनके सामने एक तो महिला होने के सामाजिक बंधन तथा दूसरा उसी समाज द्वारा जनित बहुत सीमाएं और चुनौतियाँ शामिल हैं, जिसके मातहत उनका पर्दा करना, किसी गैर पुरुष का स्पर्श न करना, संभव अस्पताल तक जाकर इलाज न करा सकना आदि ऐसी पुरुष सत्तात्मक सामाजिक चुनौतियाँ थी जिसकी वजह से उन्हें हर स्तर पर अनेक मुश्किलों का सामना करना पड़ता रहा है। इसके बावजूद भारतीय औपनिवेशिक काल में महिलाओं के लिए चिकित्सा के सन्दर्भ में किये गये प्रयास अतुलनीय हैं और उन्हीं प्रयासों में से एक था 'डफरिन फंड'। इस फंड के माध्यम से भारत में महिलाओं की चिकित्सा सम्बन्धी स्थिति को सुधारने का एक प्रयास किया गया, जो विशेष रूप से आर्थिक योगदान से संबंधित है।

डफरिन फंड की स्थापना १८८५ में हुई जो कि भारतीय महिलाओं को अस्पतालीय चिकित्सा में विशेष सहायता प्रदान करने के लिए थी। हालाँकि इसका जोर शिशु और माँ के स्वास्थ्य सुधार पर अधिक था परन्तु यह फंड २०वीं सदी के भारत में महिलाओं की स्वास्थ्य देखभाल में सुधार के लिए निकटता से जुड़ा था, जिसके अंतर्गत 'स्वदेशी दाइयों' का प्रशिक्षण, महिला अस्पतालों की शुरुआत और महिला डाक्टरों का प्रशिक्षण और फिर बाद में वैज्ञानिक तरीकों से प्रशिक्षित महिला डाक्टरों के द्वारा उनके स्वास्थ्य की जांच करना आदि शामिल था।¹

डफरिन फंड की नियमावली तथा व्यवस्थाओं को प्रभावशाली तथा उपयोगी बनाने हेतु एक केन्द्रीय समिति का निर्माण किया गया तथा आगे चलकर अलग-अलग क्षेत्रों के आधार पर इसकी शाखाएं भी स्थापित की गयीं। इस समिति ने सबसे पहले चिकित्सा से सम्बंधित शिक्षा पर ध्यान दिया और इसी दिशा में कार्य करते हुए अस्पतालों में कार्यरत महिला

¹ Cooper H. The Countess of Dufferin's Fund : The National Association for Supplying Female Medical Aid to the Women of India. Hospital (Lond 1886). 1889 May 11'6 81-82. PMID: 29816334; PMCID: PMC5204551.

चिकित्सा कर्मचारियों की दक्षता बढ़ाने के लिए प्रत्येक संभव प्रयास किया गया।² क्षेत्रीय समितियों ने भारत के अलग-अलग हिस्सों में 'धर्मार्थ संस्थानों के प्रयासों का समन्वय करने और उन क्षेत्रों में नए महिला अस्पतालों की स्थापना, औषधालयों की स्थापना और महिला वाडों की मांग की जहाँ वे पहले मौजूद नहीं थे।³ यह वह समय था जब भारत में चिकित्सा के क्षेत्र में कुछ बदलाव और उसमें सुधार तो आने लगे थे परन्तु महिलाओं के लिए विशेष रूप से अस्पतालों की व्यवस्था की कोई विशेष पहल नहीं दिखाई दे रही थी।

'महिला चिकित्सा के जिन विचारों को डफरिन फंड ने जन्म दिया उसमें महिलाओं के लिए एकांतवास में चिकित्सा सुविधा प्रदान करना मुख्य रूप से शामिल था। उन्होंने सार्वजनिक अस्पतालों तथा अनेक संस्थानों को उनके अनुकूल बनाने के लिए महिला मरीजों को एकांतवास में रखने पर जोर दिया क्योंकि उनका मानना था कि महिला मरीजों को पुरुष अनुचित नज़रों से देखते और जांचते थे तथा उन्हें आश्रय देते थे।'⁴ हालाँकि महिला चिकित्सा देखभाल के औपनिवेशिक निर्माण में इसके लिए उपयुक्त संस्थागत स्थान बनाने की प्रक्रिया में ही विभेद दिखाई देने लगे थे। प्रांतीय सरकारों ने महिला एकांतवास की क्षेत्रीय प्रथाओं पर प्रतिक्रिया व्यक्त की—“चूँकि यह बहुत भिन्न थी, लोगों को इसपर भरोसा भी नहीं हो रहा था, इसलिए महिला चिकित्सा देखभाल की प्रांतीय परिभाषाएं भी भिन्न-भिन्न रूप से सामने आयीं”।

१८८८ में लेडी डफरिन ने यह भी कहा कि—‘हमारे काम का आधार इस अवधारणा पर आधारित है कि नियम के रूप से महिलाएं पुरुष चिकित्सकों से परामर्श नहीं लेंगी और उनमें से कई तो ऐसी हैं जो ऐसा करने की बजाय मरना पसंद करेंगी और ऐसी स्थिति में बीमारी और पीड़ा में उनके लिए पेशेवर सहायता लेने का एकमात्र तरीका महिला डाक्टरों की आपूर्ति को पूरा करना और उनके लिए महिलाओं द्वारा संचालित अस्पताल तथा औषधालयों को स्थापित करना है।’⁵ इस कथन से ऐसा प्रतीत होता है कि जिसको ‘बर्टन’ ने भी सत्यापित किया है कि यह ‘महिला से महिला देखभाल नीति’ है, जो कि उपरोक्त को उचित भी ठहराता है। ‘लाल’ के तर्क में ‘डफरिन फंड ने औपनिवेशिक राज्य को भारतीय महिलाओं की पीड़ा को कम करने के दावों को अनुमति देने के साथ ही नस्लीय और लिंग पदानुक्रम के सुदृढ़ीकरण की भी सुविधा की।’⁶ ‘बर्टन’ चिकित्सा शिक्षा को उचित ठहराने और उसे संस्थागत बनाने के शुरुआती प्रयासों के लिए इन दावों की केन्द्रीयता की ओर इशारा करते हुए बताते हैं कि ‘लन्दन स्कूल ऑफ मेडिकल फॉर वूमेन’ के माध्यम से ब्रिटेन में महिलाओं का उत्थान और स्कूल के शुरुआती स्नातकों को अवसर प्रदान करना था’⁷ और इस सन्दर्भ में तात्कालिक समय में भारत से बेहतर जगह उनके लिए नहीं थी।

महिलाओं की चिकित्सा पर चर्चा में भारतीय महिलाओं को एक अविभाजित समूह के रूप में पेश किया गया, क्योंकि लगभग सभी महिलाएं एकांतवास के पूर्वाग्रह और रीति-रिवाजों से प्रभावित मानी गयीं। समाजशास्त्रियों और इतिहासकारों ने इस ओर इशारा भी किया कि महिला एकांतवास की प्रथाओं में भारी विभिन्नताएं हैं जो कि जाति-धर्म और समय के अनुसार बदलती रहती हैं। ‘हना पपानेक’ महिलाओं के पर्दा करने की विभिन्न सीमाओं के माध्यम से महिलाओं के लिए रहने वाले क्वाटरों को अलग-अलग करने के रूप में पुरुषों और महिलाओं के बीच बातचीत की सीमा के रूप में परिभाषित करती है ताकि केवल उन्हीं पुरुषों को महिलाओं के क्वाटरों में प्रवेश करने की अनुमति दी जाये जिन्हें चिकित्सकीय समिति द्वारा अनुमति प्रदान की गयी है।

इसी प्रकार महिला चिकित्सा की अवधारणाओं में इस बात पर जोर दिया गया कि ‘महिलाओं को पर्दा या महिला अलगाव के सख्त रूप के किसी भी पहलू का उल्लंघन किये बिना पश्चिमी चिकित्सा प्रदान की जाएगी। यद्यपि महिला चिकित्सा के बारे में महिला रोगियों के आकड़ों के अनुसार महिला अलगाव के विभिन्न रूपों तथा क्षेत्रीय और सामाजिक विविधता को शामिल करने की मांग की गयी थी जिसमें उनको एकांत तरीके से रखा गया और पुरुष चिकित्सकों को सभी भारतीय महिलाओं को एक संकेतक के रूप में देखने से रोका गया जिससे उन महिलाओं को चिकित्सकों की संख्या पर्याप्त न थी।’⁸ डफरिन फंड की प्रांतीय शाखाओं, प्रांतीय सरकारों और अस्पतालों में काम करने वाली महिला डाक्टरों द्वारा स्थानीय परिस्थितियों के आवश्यकता अनुसार महिला चिकित्सा प्रदान करने वाली संस्था के लिए विभिन्न रूपरेखाएं तैयार की गयीं। इस असंगति के मूल में यह प्रश्न था कि कौन सी संस्थाएं भारतीय महिलाओं के लिए अधिक उपयुक्त थीं? वे

² Ibid.

³ The Dufferin fund report (DFR) 1890, p. 8.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Sehrawat, Samiksha; Colonial medical care in north India : Gender state and society, c. 1840-1920, 2013.

⁶ Lal, politics of gender and medicine, 1994.

⁷ Burton, Burdens of History : British Feminists, Indian Women and Imperial culture, 1865-1915.

⁸ Sehrawat, Samiksha; Colonial medical care in north India : Gender state and society, c. 1840-1920, 2013.

संस्थाएं जो विशिष्ट तबके की महिलाओं की जरूरतों को विशेषाधिकार देती हैं तथा न्यूनतम प्रतिबंधात्मक संहिताओं का पालन करती हैं या वो जो बड़ी संख्या में भारतीय महिलाओं की जरूरतों को ध्यान में रखती थी और कम प्रतिबंधात्मक संहिताओं का पालन करती थी।

इसी ऐतिहासिक पृष्ठभूमि में बंगला भाषा प्रेस ने मांग की कि डफरिन अस्पतालों को महिला रोगियों के एकांतवास के लिए उचित व्यवस्था प्रदान करनी चाहिए। 'कलकत्ता के 'विक्टोरिया डफरिन अस्पताल' की महिला मरीजों की जांच के लिए बाहर से आये पुरुषों की नजरों से बचने के लिए बाड़ो (घेरे) की कमी और पुरुष कर्मचारियों को नियुक्त करने के लिए आलोचना की। चूँकि डफरिन फंड की बंगाली शाखा बहुत संवेदनशील तो थी ही साथ ही साथ उसने उच्च जाति या पदासीन हिन्दू महिलाओं और पर्दा-नशीन महिलाओं की उपस्थिति को बढ़ावा देने के लिए उन मुद्दों की मांग की जो सख्ती से पर्दा प्रथा का पालन करती थी।⁹ 'यहां तक कि बंगला प्रेस की मांग के बाद अस्पतालों से पुरुष चौकीदारों को उनके पदों से हटा दिया गया तथा सात वर्ष से अधिक उम्र के बच्चों को भी कलकत्ता के 'लेडी डफरिन विक्टोरिया अस्पताल' से बाहर करने के लिए कदम उठाये गये।'¹⁰ बंगाल का प्रांतीय प्रशासन मोटे तौर पर महिला स्वास्थ्य प्रावधानों में महिला रोगियों को विशेषाधिकार देने के लिए सहमत था। 'बंगाल के सिविल अस्पतालों के महानिरीक्षक ने १८९२ में दावा किया कि पुरुष और महिला विभागों का सम्पूर्ण पृथक्करण आवश्यक था जिसके माध्यम से महिला रोगियों को अस्पताल में आने के लिए कोई संकोच नहीं करना होगा तथा अस्पताल तक आकर इलाज कराने वाली महिलाओं में वृद्धि भी देखने को मिलेगी और इस तरह से वे उपचार के माध्यम से ठीक हो सकेगी और इसी के परिणाम स्वरूप '१९०२ से बंगाल अस्पताल रिपोर्ट में औषधालयों का उपयोग करने वाली महिला रोगियों की संख्या में लगातार वृद्धि देखने को मिलती है।'¹¹

यदि हम क्षेत्रीय तौर पर देखें तो १८७८ की शुरुआत में, बरार के चिकित्सा अधिकारियों ने तर्क दिया कि यदि डिसपेंसरियों में महिला मरीजों के लिए अलग से आवास तथा गोपनीयता प्रदान की जाये तो इस कार्य से भी महिला मरीजों की संख्या में वृद्धि होगी।¹² उत्तर पश्चिमी प्रान्त की सरकार महिला अस्पताल आन्दोलन के नाम से जाने जाने वाले आन्दोलन की दृढ़ समर्थक थी, जहां विशेष व्यवस्था की आवश्यकता को स्वीकार किया गया था। हम कह सकते हैं कि प्रान्तों ने डफरिन फंड के आने से पहले ही महिला एकांतवास में इलाज की कवायद इन आंदोलनों के माध्यमों से शुरू कर दी थी। १८८४ की शुरुआत में उत्तर पश्चिमी प्रान्तों और अवध में महिला रोगियों और बच्चों के लिए पुरुषों से अलग दवा लिखने की भी व्यवस्था तो थी परंतु १८८५, में महिला रोगियों में लगभग कोई वृद्धि नहीं देखी गयी। प्रशासन द्वारा महिला चिकित्सा की वकालत ने उन दस्तावेजों को नजरअंदाज कर दिया कि कुछ महिलाएं पुरुषों (शायद वे पुरुष जिन्हें वे रिश्तेदार कहा करती थीं) के साथ आना पसंद करती थीं तो महिला रोगियों को कमरे में रहने के लिए प्राथमिकताएं दी जाती थी और पुरुषों को प्रतीक्षा करना पड़ता था। इसके बावजूद औषधालयों में लिंग पृथक्करण के प्रयासों के जवाब में महिलाओं की दैनिक उपस्थिति के आकड़े बढ़ते हुए नहीं दिखे। औषधालयों में महिलाओं की उपस्थिति में निरंतर सुधार तभी हो सके जब महिला कर्मचारियों तथा चिकित्सा प्रभारी के साथ-साथ अलग महिला अस्पताल स्थापित किये गये और फिर भी भारतीय महिलाओं के लिए उपयुक्त आवास और चिकित्सा उपचार प्रदान करने की योजना को बढ़ावा देने के बाद भी कुछ महिला अस्पतालों में लगभग सभी बिस्तर खाली थे। जिसके पश्चात चिकित्सा अधिकारियों को यह समझना मुश्किल हो गया कि महिलाओं की उपस्थिति, खर्च किये गये धन और उर्जा के अनुपात में स्थिति निराशाजनक क्यों रही।

पंजाब तथा संयुक्त प्रान्त दोनों में ही महिला चिकित्सा से संबंधित घटनाएँ अधिक रहीं। हालाँकि पंजाब सरकार ने डफरिन योजना के उद्घाटन तक महिला डाक्टरों तथा महिला अस्पताल सहायकों को नियुक्त नहीं किया था, लेकिन १८८५ की अपनी रिपोर्ट में सरकार द्वारा महिलाओं के लिए अलग-अलग आवास प्रदान करने के लिए कुछ प्रयास करने का दावा किया था। महिलाओं के लिए एक अलग बाह्य रोगी कक्ष और बड़े पैमाने पर महिला कर्मचारियों और बच्चों के बाह्य रोगियों की संख्या बढ़कर दोगुनी हो गयी। पंजाब सरकार डफरिन फंड द्वारा सिविल अस्पतालों के महानिरीक्षकों को महिला चिकित्सा प्रशिक्षण और प्रान्तों में महिलाओं के लिए चिकित्सा देखभाल पर एक नियमित रिपोर्ट प्रदान करने का निर्देश देने का बहुत समर्थन कर रही थी, हालाँकि पंजाब सरकार ने इस सूत्र को स्वीकार कर लिया कि पुरुषों के अलावा महिलाओं का इलाज करने की विशेष व्यवस्था की जाए जिससे भारतीय महिलाओं द्वारा औषधालयों के उपयोग में वृद्धि होगी। हालाँकि प्रारंभिक वर्षों में इसका ध्यान अस्पताल खोलने पर जोर देने के बजाय महिला अस्पताल सहायकों द्वारा संचालित

⁹ Sehrawat, Samiskha; Colonial medial care in north India : Gender state and society, c. 1840-1920, 2013.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

मौजूदा औषधालयों के भीतर महिला वार्ड बनाने पर था, पर इसके विपरीत १८८९ में होशियारपुर और मुल्तान के अस्पतालों में महिला वार्ड खोले गये, वहीं संयुक्त प्रान्त में इसका विस्तार हो चुका था। फिर भी पंजाब सरकार ने बार-बार यह स्वीकार किया कि पुरुषों और महिलाओं के अलग-अलग उपचार से अस्पतालों और औषधालयों में अधिक उपस्थिति होगी, लेकिन इसका मतलब यह नहीं था कि वह उन अस्पतालों को वित्तपोषित और प्रोत्साहित करेगी जहाँ पर्दे का सख्त रूप से पालन होगा और सम्बंधित नियमों का विशेष ध्यान रखा जायेगा।

इस कोष के लिए जो शुरुआती से धनराशि थी वो भारतीय रियासतों के शासकों की तरफ से चंदे के रूप में आयी जिनमें अलवर, कश्मीर, रतलाम, हैदराबाद, जयपुर जैसे क्षेत्र के शासक प्रमुख थे, साथ ही प्रथम तीन वर्षों में सात लाख रुपये एकत्र किये गए। ब्रिटिशों का मानना था कि भारतीय समाज के स्वाभाविक स्वामी होने के नाते रियासतों और देसी अभिजात वर्ग को चिकित्सा परोपकार में भाग लेना चाहिए। इसी क्रम में दरभंगा के राजा द्वारा दिए गए दान की सराहना करते हुए कर्जन ने कहा कि 'उच्च पद, और साधन वाले देशी सज्जन हमारी मदद के लिए आगे आये हैं और मुझे उम्मीद है कि इस प्रकार के दिए गए प्रोत्साहन का अनुसरण अन्य लोग भी करेंगे। इसके बाद एक स्थानीय प्रेस ने लिखा कि 'राय मेला राम' द्वारा दिए गए १५००० रुपये के दान ने लौहार में अस्पताल खोलने के लिए बहुत मदद की, और देश के प्रमुख व्यक्तियों द्वारा दिए गए चंदों से ६०००० रुपये से अधिक की धनराशि प्राप्त हुई जिसे लेडी एचिसन अस्पताल की स्थापना के लिए आवश्यक माना गया।

डफरिन फंड के विषय में हम यह पाते हैं कि यह एक गैर सरकारी संगठन था। इस फंड को शासन की औपनिवेशिक विचारधाराओं द्वारा ध्यान दिया गया था, इसके प्रशासनिक ढांचे में औपनिवेशिक अधिकारियों और उनकी पत्नियों का महत्वपूर्ण प्रतिनिधित्व रहा। इसके परिणामस्वरूप उत्तर भारत में महिला अस्पतालों का विस्तार हुआ तथा चिकित्सा परोपकार और एक सार्वजनिक साझा संस्कृति में भागीदारी के माध्यम से भारतीय आचरण में सुधार को डफरिन फंड ने महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया।

इसी विषय में भारतीय सामाजिक व्यवस्था के अंतर्गत देखे तो हम पाते हैं कि सामाजिक वर्गों तथा जातीय भेदभाव की भावना का स्वरूप भी इससे अछूता नहीं रहा है। कलकत्ता सहित स्थानीय डफरिन फंड शाखाओं ने वर्ग और जाति पदानुक्रम के विषय में महिला रोगियों का ध्यान रखते हुए यह व्यवस्था की कि डफरिन अस्पताल केवल उन महिलाओं के लिए थे जो सख्ती से पर्दे का पालन करती थी। श्रमिक और निचली जाति के वर्ग की महिलाओं और गरीब महिला रोगियों की डफरिन अस्पतालों में अनदेखी, निम्न वर्ग की महिलाओं के डफरिन अस्पतालों में भरती पर रोक आदि को यह कहकर कि उनको सिविल अस्पतालों या सिविल सर्जनों द्वारा देखे जाने में कोई आपत्ति नहीं है। महिला चिकित्सा की ऐसी अनेक व्याख्या पर्याप्त मात्रा में उपलब्ध नहीं थी। उदाहरण के लिए 'मिलड्रेड स्टेली' जो दिल्ली और कलकत्ता दोनों में महिला अस्पतालों के प्रभावी थे, ने यह दावा किया कि- 'उच्च वर्ग और निम्न मध्यम वर्ग की पर्दानशीन महिलाओं के बीमार होने पर खुद को एक ही छत के नीचे या यहाँ तक कि एक ही वार्ड में रहने पर थोड़ी सी भी आपत्ति नहीं होती, बशर्ते कि किसी भी पुरुष को प्रवेश न करने दिया जाये तथा आगंतुकों और अधिकारियों के द्वारा सभी आंतरिक व्यवस्थाओं में उचित व्यवहार अपनाया जाये।'¹³

कुछ डफरिन अस्पताल समितियां गरीब और गरीब मरीजों को मना कर रही थी क्योंकि उन्हें अस्पताल के बजट से अस्पताल का आहार प्रदान किया जाता था जो अक्सर सीमित होता था। डफरिन अस्पतालों में आकस्मिकताओं के लिए प्रदान की जाने वाली छोटी राशि से प्रभावित एक महिला डाक्टर ने बताया कि अस्पताल की नीति गरीब रोगियों के बजाय उच्च वर्ग के महिला रोगियों के पक्ष में है। जब आहार भत्ता खर्च हो जाता था तो गरीबों को वार्डों से दूर कर दिया जाता था जबकि अमीर वर्ग के लिए द्वार तक जाकर इलाज की व्यवस्था भी कर दी जाती थी। इन सबके बावजूद अस्पताल समितियों में उच्च वर्ग के भारतीयों को कठोर प्रवेश नीतियों को लागू करते समय अपने वर्ग के हित में कार्य करते हुए भी देखा जा सकता है, और इस कार्य के लिए उन्हें अनुदानों का दुरुपयोग करने वाला माना गया। अतः इन प्रमाणों को ध्यान में रखकर यह कहा जा सकता है कि डफरिन अस्पतालों में सम्पन्न मरीजों की मुफ्त में इलाज की व्यवस्था की निंदा की गयी, और कहा गया कि आर्थिक रूप से सम्पन्न मरीजों के लिए मुफ्त में भोजन आदि की व्यवस्था करना धन की बर्बादी था, जबकि यही धन उन गरीब मरीजों के इलाज में खर्च किया जा सकता था जिन्हें अक्सर पैसों की कमी के कारण अस्पतालों से वापस लौटना पड़ता था।

¹³ Sehrawat, Samiksha; Colonial medical care in north India : Gender state and society, c. 1840-1920, 2013.

शुरुआत में ऐसा माना गया कि यह फंड एक गैर सरकारी फंड था परंतु इसमें कार्यरत अधिकारी, राजघराने और वायसराय के साथ इनके संबंध आदि इसके अर्ध-सरकारी स्वरूप की पुष्टि करते हैं, और यह केवल नाम मात्र के लिए गैर सरकारी संस्था थी। इसकी प्रवृत्ति को देखते हुए कुछ विद्वानों ने यह तर्क प्रस्तुत किया कि भारतीय महिलाओं की स्वास्थ्य सेवा को वायसरायों और राज्यपालों की पत्नियों के भरोसे छोड़ दिया गया तथा उनके लिए यह मुद्दा ही गौण था।

जैसा कि विदित है कि यह सम्पूर्ण व्यवस्था चंदे के आधार पर ही टिकी थी जिनमें भारतीय रियासतों के शासक और व्यापारी वर्ग के लोग भी शामिल थे। इन्हीं चंदों को वसूल करने के तरीकों को स्थानीय प्रेसों ने उत्पीड़न का आधार भी बताया। मतलब कि डफरिन फंड के लिए सरकारी अधिकारियों ने चंदों को वसूल करने के लिए लोगों का उत्पीड़न भी किया। जैसा कि 'इलाहाबाद के प्रयाग समाचार ने यह दावा किया कि अभाव की स्थिति होने के बावजूद तहसीलदारों द्वारा चंदा एकत्रित किया जा रहा था। डफरिन फंड की दिल्ली की एक समिति ने १८९१ की अपनी एक रिपोर्ट में उन लोगों से चंदा इकट्ठा करने में आने वाली कठिनाई का जिक्र किया जिन्होंने एक साधारण बैठक में डिप्टी कमिश्नर के प्रभाव में आकर चंदा देने का वादा किया था'।^{१४} ऐसा ही एक और मामला कानपुर के क्षेत्र में देखने को मिलता है जहाँ चंदा न देने वालों के लिए एक उपाय खोजने का प्रयास किया गया और तहसीलदार के माध्यम से चंदे की वसूली के लिए एक समन जारी कर दिया गया। इसप्रकार हिन्दुस्तानी अखबार ने दावा किया कि इस कोष के लिए चंदा आयकर की भांति वसूला जाता था।^{१५} पर इन आरोपों पर लेडी डफरिन ने यह कहा कि भारतीय पुरुषों को इन मांगों को शिकायत के रूप में या फिर उसमें अरुचि के रूप में नहीं देखना चाहिए। इन सब के बावजूद उत्तर-पश्चिमी प्रान्त के लेफ्टिनेंट गवर्नर अपने भाषण में बार-बार यह कहते हैं कि- 'मैं आपसे पूछना चाहता हूँ कि जब हम कहते हैं कि मूल निवासियों पर इस तरह के दबाव नहीं डालना चाहिए तो हमारा क्या मतलब है? उनकी सहायता के बिना उन लक्ष्यों को प्राप्त नहीं किया जा सकता जिनपर उनका अपना ही कल्याण आधारित है, और जिनकी ओर उन्हें ले जाना हमारा कर्तव्य है। उनकी सहायता के अलावा और किस प्रकार हम उनके समक्ष प्रयास, कल्याण और जन-प्रयास के उस उच्चतर मानक को लाने के मिशन को अंजाम दे सकते हैं, जिसका प्रतिनिधित्व हम पश्चिमी दुनिया की ओर से करते हैं, और पश्चिम जिसकी हमसे अपेक्षा करता है कि हम पूर्व को अपनी उपस्थिति की शर्त और औचित्य के रूप में बताएं'।^{१६}

इस फंड की स्थापना के ५० से अधिक वर्षों के बाद भारतीय महिलाओं के लिए चिकित्सा में राहत के लिये किये गए प्रयासों तथा क्षेत्रीय समितियों के द्वारा किये गये कार्यों और उनके प्रयासों को 'पहला राष्ट्रीय प्रयास' के रूप में वर्णित किया गया और वास्तव में इस फंड ने स्पष्ट रूप से भारतीय महिलाओं के लिए उपलब्ध चिकित्सा सुविधा के विस्तार में एक महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई। 'डफरिन फंड के माध्यम से भारतीय महिलाओं के लिए चिकित्सकीय देखभाल प्रदान करने की पहल की जो रूपरेखा तैयार की गयी उसमें 'एसोसिएशन आफ मेडिकल वूमेन इन इंडिया' (AMWI) के तहत कार्य करना एक प्रमुख कार्य था और उसकी व्यवस्थाओं का जिम्मा प्रांतीय प्रशासनों को सौंपा गया, पर हमें इस पूरी प्रणाली को केवल महिलाओं की चिकित्सा के विश्लेषण के रूप में जोड़कर नहीं देखना चाहिए बल्कि उनके विचारों को भी ध्यान में रखना चाहिए क्योंकि भारतीय महिलाओं की स्वास्थ्य संबंधी देखभाल उनके विचारों के साथ निकटता से जुड़ी हुई थी'।^{१७}

इन तमाम बातों को ध्यान में रखते हुए हम यह पाते हैं कि डफरिन फंड भारत में महिला चिकित्सा के सुधार और उनमें तकनीकी सुधार लाने का एक प्रयास था जिसमें वो कुछ हद तक सफल भी हुआ। इस संगठन की स्थापना इसलिए की गयी थी क्योंकि ऐसा माना जाता था कि महिलाओं को एकांतवास में उपचार की आवश्यकता थी जहाँ उनके लिए महिला डाक्टरों और स्वदेशी दाइयों द्वारा इलाज की सुविधाएँ प्राप्त हो सकें। उन्नीसवीं सदी के उत्तरार्ध में डफरिन फंड राज्य के चिकित्सा परोपकार के आदर्श को सफलतापूर्वक मूर्त रूप दिया था लेकिन औपनिवेशिक शासन के साथ अपने अर्ध-सरकारी/आधिकारिक संबंधों के बावजूद बीसवीं सदी में इसके कार्यों की गति धीमी पड़ रही थी। इसके बावजूद भारत में चिकित्सा महिलाओं ने महिलाओं की चिकित्सा में सुधार के लिए भारत सरकार को शामिल करने के लिए एक जन अभियान चलाकर जनाना रोगियों का अपने हित में प्रयोग किया, और ऐसे दावों को सही ठहराने के लिए उन्होंने खुद को महिला चिकित्सा विशेषज्ञों के रूप में पेश किया। उन्होंने यह तर्क दिया कि भारतीय महिलाओं की चिकित्सा की आवश्यकताओं को पूरा करने के लिए महिला डाक्टरों की कार्य स्थितियों में राज्य के हस्तक्षेप के माध्यम से सुधार की आवश्यकता है। बीसवीं सदी की शुरुआत तक भारत में बड़ी संख्या में कार्यरत ब्रिटिश चिकित्सा महिलाओं के हित भी

¹⁴ Surgeon-Major Dennys quoted in The Dufferin fund report 1885, p. 24.

¹⁵ Hindustani, Lucknow, 8th December 1889.

¹⁶ Quoted in The Dufferin fund report 1890, p. 29-30.

¹⁷ Sehrawat, Samiskha; Colonial medical care in north India : Gender state and society, c. 1840-1920, 2013

महिला रोगियों की छवि से घनिष्ठ रूप से जुड़े हुए थे, जिन्हें व्यापक रूप से महिला एकांतवास की बर्बर प्रथाओं के कारण चिकित्सा देखभाल की कमी से पीड़ित बताया जाता था।

डफरिन फंड पर विचार करते हुए हम यह भी पाते हैं कि इस संगठन को औपनिवेशिक प्रशासकों का पर्याप्त समर्थन भी प्राप्त था और यह ब्रिटेन में भी धन जुटाने में सफल रहा तथा भारत में रूढ़िवादी अभिजात वर्ग के बीच भी लोकप्रिय था। ब्रिटेन में चिकित्सा महिलाओं के प्रशिक्षण के लिए डफरिन फंड से छात्रवृत्तियां लन्दन स्कूल फॉर मेडिकल वीमेन के प्रारंभिक इतिहास का एक अभिन्न अंग थी, और ब्रिटिश चिकित्सा महिलाओं के व्यवसायीकरण के प्रारंभिक वर्षों में भारतीय महिला अस्पतालों में रोजगारों के अवसर महत्वपूर्ण थे। इन्हीं बातों को लेकर बर्टन का यह मानना था कि यह फंड और यह संगठन इसलिए बनाया गया ताकि ब्रिटेन में जो महिला ग्रेजुएट हो रही थी उनको भारत में रोजगार के अवसर प्राप्त हो सकें।

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अग्निमहापुराण में वर्णाश्रम धर्म का निरूपण

डॉ० आशा सिंह रावत

सह आचार्य संस्कृत विभाग
दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय, दिल्ली

सारांश-विषय विविधता तथा लोकोपयोगिता की दृष्टि से अष्टादश पुराणों में अग्निमहापुराण का सर्वाधिक महत्त्व है। यथोक्तम् “आग्नेये हि पुराणेऽस्मिन् सर्वविद्याः प्रदर्शिताः।” सनातन परम्परा में वर्णाश्रम धर्म की वैज्ञानिकता एवं महत्ता सर्वविदित है। यह वास्तव में मानव-जीवन तथा समाज की एक वह सुदृढ़ और वैज्ञानिक व्यवस्था है, जिस पर समग्र मानव-जीवन, समाज और राष्ट्र का धर्म-कर्म, अनुशासन, संस्कृति और उन्नति-प्रगति निर्भर करती है। चार वर्ण तथा चार आश्रमों के सम्यक् पालन द्वारा धर्मार्थकाममोक्ष की सतत साधना की जाती है तथा इन्हीं पर सामाजिक, आर्थिक, सांस्कृतिक, भौतिक, धार्मिक, आध्यात्मिक सुदृढ़ता और उत्कर्ष निर्भर करता है। अतः प्रस्तुतालेख में भारतीय सनातन परम्परा में सदैव से प्रचलित वर्णाश्रम धर्म पर प्रकाश डाला गया है।

शब्द कुंजी-चार-वर्ण-ब्राह्मण, क्षत्रिय, वैश्य, शूद्र।

चार आश्रम-ब्रह्मचर्य, गृहस्थ, वानप्रस्थ, संन्यास। पुरुषार्थ चतुष्टय-धर्म, अर्थ, काम, मोक्ष। अग्निमहापुराण, वर्णाश्रम धर्म, समाज, राष्ट्र, शास्त्रविहित धर्म-कर्म।

भूमिका

पौराणिक साहित्यान्तर्गत अष्टादश पुराणों में बहुविध सामग्री का महत्त्व सर्वविदित है; क्योंकि समस्त पुराण वेदों की तरह ही ज्ञान-विज्ञान का आगार तथा धर्मार्थकाममोक्ष प्रदायक हैं। वास्तव में धर्म-कर्म में प्रवृत्ति बनाए रखने हेतु प्राचीन शास्त्रग्रन्थों का अध्ययन-मनन परमावश्यक होता है; क्योंकि ये स्वयं परमपिता परमात्मा के ही निःश्वास हैं। यथोक्तम् शतपथ ब्राह्मणे-“चारों वेद, इतिहास, पुराण-ये सब महान परमात्मा के ही निःश्वास हैं।”^१ अथर्ववेदेऽपि च-“ऋचः सामानिच्छन्दांसि पुराणं यजुषा सह। उच्छिष्टाज्जज्ञिरे सर्वे देवा दिविश्रितः।।”^२ इस प्रकार वेद, पुराण साक्षात् परमात्मा के वचन या पालनीय आदेश माने जाते हैं तथा इनमें निहित किसी भी तथ्य या बात पर न तो कोई शंका की जा सकती है और न ही इनकी उपेक्षा की जा सकती है।

प्रसंगतः यहाँ समस्त पुराणों में विशालकाय तथा बहुविध सामग्री अथवा समस्तविद्याओं से ओत-प्रोत^३ अग्निमहापुराण की बात करें तो हम पाते हैं कि यह महापुराण विष्णुरूप भगवान अग्निदेव द्वारा महर्षि वसिष्ठ के प्रति उपदिष्ट है; अतएव ब्रह्मस्वरूप है, सर्वोत्कृष्ट तथा वेदतुल्य है।^४ इसमें मानव के लौकिक-पारलौकिक व पारमार्थिक हितार्थ समग्र विषयों का निरूपण मिलता है। जैसा कि देखा गया है कि भारतीय सनातन परम्परा में समस्त मानव समाज को चार वर्णों-ब्राह्मण, क्षत्रिय, वैश्य एवं शूद्र तथा समग्र मानव-जीवन को चार आश्रमों-ब्रह्मचर्य, गृहस्थ, वानप्रस्थ तथा संन्यास में विभक्त किया गया है। यह वास्तव में समस्त समाज तथा मानव-जीवन की वह सुव्यवस्थित और अनुशासित, वैज्ञानिक तथा कर्मठ व्यवस्था है, जिस पर समग्र राष्ट्र, समाज और सृष्टि का अस्तित्व, सुदृढ़ता और सतत संचालन निर्भर करता है। मानव-जीवन के पुरुषार्थ चतुष्टय-धर्म, अर्थ, काम और मोक्ष की साधना भी इसी के द्वारा सम्पादित होती है। इस विषय में अग्निमहापुराण में प्रतिपादित सामग्री का अध्ययनावलोकन करने पर हम पाते हैं कि इसमें वर्णधर्म एवं आश्रमधर्म के स्वरूप, महत्त्व एवं वैज्ञानिकता इत्यादि सभी आयामों पर प्रकाश डाला गया है। वर्णधर्म को समझाते हुए कहा गया है कि वर्णमात्र का आश्रय लेकर जो अधिकार प्रवृत्त होता है, वह ‘वर्णधर्म’ है-“वर्णत्वमेकमाश्रित्य योऽधिकारः प्रवर्तते।।”^५ जैसा कि ब्राह्मण, कैसे आरम्भ हो सकता है।^६ आश्रम का अवलम्बन लेकर जिस धर्म का संविधान होता है, वह ‘आश्रम धर्म’ कहा गया है-“यस्त्वाश्रमं समाश्रित्य पदार्थः संविधीयते। उक्तं आश्रमधर्मस्तु...।।”^७ ब्रह्मचारी, गृहस्थ, वानप्रस्थ और संन्यासी-

^१ शतपथ ब्राह्मण, १४/२/४/१० का उद्धरण अग्निमहापुराण भूमिका, पृ. १८ से उद्धृत।

^२ अथर्ववेद, ११/७/२४, पृ. ५३०

^३ अग्निमहापुराण, ३८३/५२ का पूर्वार्द्ध-“आग्नेये हि पुराणेऽस्मिन्सर्वविद्याः प्रदर्शिताः।”

^४ वही, भूमिका, पृ. १८

^५ वही, १६६/१ का उत्तरार्द्ध, पृ. ५११

^६ वही, १६६/२ का उत्तरार्द्ध, “वर्णधर्मः स विज्ञेयो यथोपनयनं त्रिषु।”

^७ वही, १६६/२-३, पृ. ५११

इनसे संबंधित धर्म 'आश्रम धर्म' है। इस विषय में विष्णुरूप भगवान् अग्निदेव का उपदेश प्रकृत पुराण में इस प्रकार मिलता है कि अहिंसा, सत्यभाषण, दया, सम्पूर्ण प्राणियों पर अनुग्रह तीर्थों का अनुसरण, दान, ब्रह्मचर्य, मत्सरता का अभाव, देव, गुरु और ब्राह्मणों की सेवा, सब धर्मों का श्रवण, पितरों का पूजन, मनुष्यों के स्वामी श्री भगवान् सदा भक्ति रखना, श्रेष्ठतम शास्त्रों का अवलोकन करना, क्रूरता का अभाव, सहनशीलता तथा आस्तिकता (ईश्वर और परलोक पर विश्वास)–ये वर्ण और आश्रम दोनों के लिए 'सामान्य धर्म' हैं।^८ अर्थात् उपर्युक्त बातों और कार्यों का पूर्ण पालन सभी के लिए अवश्यमेव करणीय है। इनके ठीक विपरीत किए गए कार्य 'अधर्म' होते हैं तथा मनुष्य के लिए निषिद्ध हैं। चारों वर्णों के पृथक्-पृथक् कार्यों का विधान बतलाते हुए प्रस्तुत पुराण का कथन है कि यज्ञ करना और कराना, दान, वेद पढ़ाना, श्रेष्ठतम प्रतिग्रह लेना और स्वाध्याय करना–ये ब्राह्मण वर्ण के कर्म हैं–“यजनं याजनं दानं वेदाद्यध्यापनक्रिया। प्रतिग्रहं चाध्ययनं विप्रकर्माणि निर्दिशेत्।।”^९ क्षत्रिय एवं वैश्य वर्ण के सामान्य कर्म–दान देना, वेदों का अध्ययन करना और विधिपूर्वक यज्ञानुष्ठान करना कहे गए हैं।^{१०} क्षत्रिय वर्ण के विशेष धर्म–कर्म–प्रजा का धर्मपूर्वक पालन करना और दुष्टों को दण्ड देना बतलाए गए हैं–“क्षत्रियस्य विशेषेण पालनं दुष्टनिग्रहः।।”^{११} वैश्य वर्ण के विशेष कर्म–खेती, गौरक्षा और व्यापार कहे गए हैं–“कृषिगोरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यस्य परिकीर्तितम्।”^{१२} चतुर्थ वर्ण शूद्र के लिए द्विजों अर्थात् अन्य तीनों की सेवा–शुश्रूषा तथा सभी तरह की शिल्प–रचना करना–ये निर्धारित हैं।^{१३} इस प्रकार चारों वर्णों के सामान्य एवं विशेष कर्मों का विधान शास्त्रविहित है। जैसा कि स्वयं भगवान् नारायण श्रीकृष्ण ने श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता में चारों वर्णों के लिए करणीय धर्म–कर्म का उपदेश दिया है, वह उनके गुण, स्वभाव अथवा प्रकृति के अनुसार है।^{१४} इसी प्रकार अन्य शास्त्रग्रन्थों में भी वर्णाश्रम व्यवस्था का उल्लेख मिलता है, वहाँ भी चारों वर्णों तथा चारों आश्रमों के लिए करणीय और पालनीय कर्म की जो व्यवस्था बतलाई गई है, वह सभी के–व्यष्टि, समष्टि तथा सम्पूर्ण समाज, सृष्टि और जीव–जगत् के हित–कल्याणार्थ है।

अग्निमहापुराण में ब्राह्मणादि चारों वर्णों तथा ब्रह्मचर्य, गृहस्थादि चारों आश्रमों के मानवों के लिए शास्त्रोक्त धर्म–कर्म के निर्देशोपदेश सविस्तार प्राप्त होते हैं।^{१५} जिनसे यह स्पष्टतः ज्ञात होता है कि ब्राह्मणादि चारों वर्णों के सामान्य एवं विशेष कर्म वास्तव में उस मानवता धर्म से सराबोर हैं, जिनसे समग्र जीवधारियों का जीवन–निर्वाह भी होता है तथा सभी के अस्तित्व सुरक्षित रहते हैं। किसी को भी कोई पीड़ा, त्रास या भय नहीं रहता और परस्पर प्रेम, सद्भाव तथा सौहार्द बना रहता है। तब निश्चयमेव “आत्मवत् सर्वभूतेषु समाचरेत्” एवं “परस्परपग्रहो जीवानाम्” जैसे भारतीय संस्कृति के उद्घोष सार्थक होते हैं। क्योंकि मानवता धर्म के पालनानुसरण से सभी जीवों को अभयपूर्वक जीने का अवसर मिलता है तथा उनका अस्तित्व सुरक्षित रहता है। इसी प्रकार चारों वर्णों के विशेष कर्मों द्वारा भी समग्र सृष्टि, प्रकृति, समाज एवं तथा शूद्र के लिए निर्धारित धर्म–कर्म–क्रमशः ज्ञान अथवा विज्ञान तथा धार्मिक कर्म, प्रजापालन तथा राष्ट्ररक्षा, कृषि–व्यापार तथा पशुपालन और सेवा व शिल्पकर्म इत्यादि कर्मों से समग्र लोक व समाज के शैक्षिक, धार्मिक, राजनीतिक, आर्थिक, सांस्कृतिक इत्यादि ध्येय सिद्ध होते हैं। चारों वर्णों के क्रमशः विभागपूर्वक कार्यों से मानव को ज्ञान, दान, त्राण, अर्थार्जनादि की प्राप्ति होती है तथा उनका सम्यक् भरण–पोषण होता है। इसीलिए शास्त्रविहित वर्णव्यवस्था पूर्णतः वैज्ञानिक एवं औचित्यपूर्ण है। इसीलिए शास्त्रोक्त कर्म का अनुष्ठान प्रत्येक वर्ण के लिए आवश्यक कहा गया है। यथा–अग्निमहापुराण में कहा गया है कि ब्राह्मण अपने शास्त्रोक्त कर्म से ही जीविका चलाए; वह क्षत्रिय, वैश्य तथा शूद्र के धर्म से जीवन–निर्वाह न करे–

आजीवं तु यथोक्तेन ब्राह्मणः स्वेन कर्मणा।

क्षत्रविदः शूद्रधर्मेण जीवन्नेव तु शूद्रजात् ।।^{१६}

हाँ! आपत्तिकाल में वह क्षत्रिय और वैश्य की वृत्ति ग्रहण कर सकता है। अर्थात् यदि ऐसी परिस्थितियाँ बन जाएँ कि वह अपने लिए निर्धारित कर्मों से जीविका न चला सके, तो क्षत्रिय तथा वैश्य की वृत्ति अपना सकता है। द्विजों के लिए

^८ वही, १५१/२–६, पृ. ४७०–“अहिंसा सत्यवचन दया भूतेष्वनुग्रहः...।।”

^९ वही, १५१/६–७, पृ. ४७०

^{१०} वही, १५१/७–८, ,, –“दानमध्ययनं चैव .. कर्मेदं परिकीर्तितम् ।।”

^{११} वही, १५१/८ का उत्तरार्द्ध

^{१२} वही, १५१/९ का पूर्वार्द्ध

^{१३} वही, १५१/९ का उत्तरार्द्ध–“शूद्रस्य द्विजशुश्रूषा सर्व शिल्पानि वाऽप्यथ।।”

^{१४} श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता, १८/४१–४४, पृ. ५३८–५३९–“ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशां...कृषि गोरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं...।।”

^{१५} अग्निमहापुराण, अध्याय १५१–१६२, १६५–१६६

^{१६} वही, १५१/१, पृ. ४७२

कृषि, व्यापार, गोपालन तथा कुसीद (सूद या ब्याज लेना)–ये वृत्तियाँ शास्त्रविहित हैं।^{१७} निःसन्देह कृषि, व्यापार और पशुपालन बिना जीवधारियों का भरण-पोषण संभव नहीं और न ही देश की व्यवस्था चल सकती है। अस्तु! अहिंसा तथा जीवदया आदि रूप मानवता धर्म का विधान सभी मनुष्यों के लिए शास्त्रोक्त है, तो फिर कृषिकर्म से भूमि में स्थित कुछ जीवों का घात होना स्वाभाविक है–ऐसे में इस हिंसा दोष और उससे मुक्त होने का विधान भी पुराणकार ने इस प्रकार बतलाया है–

भूमिं भित्त्वौषधीश्छित्त्वा हत्वाकीटपिपीलिकान्।

पुनन्ति खलु यज्ञेन कर्षकादेवपूजनात् ।।^{१८}

अर्थात् किसान लोग धरती को कोड़ने-जोतने के द्वारा जो कीड़े और चींटी आदि की हत्या कर डालते हैं और सोहनी के द्वारा जो पौधों को नष्ट कर डालते हैं, उस दोष से यज्ञ और देवपूजा करके मुक्त हुआ जा सकता है।

वर्णव्यवस्था के विषय में यह ज्ञातव्य है कि यह कोई थोपी गई व्यवस्था नहीं थी कि जिसे व्यक्ति पर लाद दिया गया हो, वरन् जैसा कि गीता में स्वयं भगवान श्रीकृष्ण ने कहा है तथा अन्य ग्रन्थों में उल्लिखित है कि जैसा जिस व्यक्ति की प्रवृत्ति, गुण, स्वभाव व रुचि थी, उसे वैसा ही कर्म सौंपा गया अर्थात् शास्त्राध्ययन, अध्यापन की योग्यता रखने वाले मेधावी जनों को ब्राह्मण वर्ण में, राष्ट्ररक्षा और शौर्य, तेज, पराक्रम की सामर्थ्य वालों को क्षत्रिय वर्ण में, कृषि-व्यापारादि करने में समर्थ जनों को वैश्यवर्ण में और जो इन तीनों वर्णों को करने में समर्थ नहीं थे अथवा कहना चाहिए कि जो न बुद्धि से तीक्ष्ण थे, न शौर्य-पराक्रम से युक्त थे और न आर्थिक रूप से सशक्त थे, परन्तु शिल्प रचना करने में कुशल थे–ऐसे जनों को चतुर्थ वर्ण-शूद्र वर्ण में रखा गया और इसी व्यवस्था ने समग्र समाज में प्रत्येक कार्य की सम्पन्नता द्वारा एक उत्तम व्यवस्था को बनाये रखा। इस प्रकार सभी अपनी योग्यता, रुचि, सामर्थ्य और प्रवृत्ति व गुण-स्वभाव के अनुसार विभिन्न कार्यों को करने में समर्थ हुए एवं वर्णव्यवस्था सामाजिक व्यवस्था के रूप में प्रचलित रही।

प्रस्तुत महापुराण के पृथक्-पृथक् अध्यायों में ब्रह्मचर्यादि चारों आश्रमों के व्यक्तियों के लिए भी शास्त्रसम्मत जीवनशैली तथा धर्म-कर्म का विधान बतलाया गया है, वह भी पूर्णतः वैज्ञानिक तथा सुव्यवस्थित व्यवस्था औचित्यपूर्ण है। क्योंकि चारों आश्रमों की क्रमशः व्यवस्था द्वारा घर-परिवार, समाज तथा राष्ट्र का अस्तित्व भी बन रहा है तथा नैतिकता व मर्यादा का पालन भी होता है। साथ ही चारों आश्रमों के व्यक्तियों का तथा अन्य जीवधारियों का भरण-पोषण भी इसी व्यवस्था पर निर्भर करता है और धर्मार्थकाममोक्ष रूपी पुरुषार्थों की साधना भी सम्पादित होती है। जैसा कि प्रथम आश्रम-ब्रह्मचर्य में ब्रह्मचारी द्विज अपने लिए निर्धारित संस्कारों-नामकरण, चूड़ाकरण तथा उपनयन आदि के सम्पादनपूर्वक स्वयं को शुद्ध व सुशिक्षित करके अगले आश्रम-गृहस्थाश्रम के योग्य बनकर उसमें प्रवेश करता है और फिर विवाह संस्कार द्वारा गृहस्थ जीवन में प्रवेश कर घर-पवार, समाज-राष्ट्र तथा प्रकृति-सृष्टि के प्रति अपने दायित्वों का निर्वहन करता है। यथा-पंचमहायज्ञ, ऋणत्रय से मुक्ति आदि के रूप में। शास्त्रग्रन्थों में उल्लेखित है कि गृहस्थाश्रम समस्त आश्रमों का सिरमौर है; क्योंकि इसी पर अन्य सभी आश्रम निर्भर करते हैं^{१९} और उनका भरण-पोषण भी इसी आश्रम की कृपा द्वारा संभव होता है तथा सन्तति की सतत प्रक्रिया द्वारा समाज का अस्तित्व भी इसी आश्रम पर निर्भर करता है। इसीलिए गृहस्थ द्वारा करणीय विभिन्न धर्म-कर्म तथा कर्तव्यों व दायित्वों का उल्लेख अग्निमहापुराण व अन्य शास्त्रग्रन्थों में विस्तारपूर्वक एवं महत्ता व उपादेयता के प्रकटीकरण के साथ मिलता है। इसी प्रकार वानप्रस्थियों और संन्यासियों के लिए करणीय कर्म व पालनीय धर्म का विचार प्रकटीकरण भी अग्निमहापुराण के पृथक्-पृथक् अध्यायों में देखा गया है।^{२०} यथा-आयु के तृतीय भाग में वानप्रस्थी के लिए निर्धारित वेशभूषा तथा जीवनशैली के साथ ही उसे वन का आश्रय लेकर अकेले या सपत्नीक ब्रह्मचर्य व्रत का पालन करते हुए रहना तथा यथाशक्ति उग्रतपस्या करना होता है तथा पुनः गृहस्थाश्रम में न लौटे-यह भी आवश्यक है।^{२१} इसी प्रकार अगले आश्रम में तथा आयु के चतुर्थ भाग में सभी तरह के संग तथा आसक्ति का परित्याग कर विरागी हो गृहत्याग कर संन्यास धारण करे और अकेला ही विचरण करें।^{२२} संन्यासी के लिए आचरणीय धर्म-कर्म का भी विस्तृत निर्देश यहाँ मिलता है। इस प्रकार चारों आश्रमों की साधना वास्तव में चारों पुरुषार्थों की साधिका बनती है।

^{१७} वही, १५२/२ का पूर्वाद्ध, पृ. ४७२

^{१८} वही, १५३/३

^{१९} मनुस्मृति, ३/७७-८१, पृ. ११८-११९ – गृहस्थेनैव धार्यन्ते तस्माज्ज्येष्ठाश्रमोगृही...।।”

^{२०} अग्निमहापुराण, अध्याय-१६०-१६२

^{२१} वही, १६०/१-५, पृ. ४९५-“वानप्रस्थयतीनां च धर्मः...तृतीयमायुषो भागमेकाकी...पञ्चतपा नित्यं...।।”

^{२२} वही, १६१/१-३, पृ. ४९६-“यतिधर्मं प्रवक्ष्यामि...एक एवं चरेन्नित्यं...।।”

अस्तु! भारतीय सनातन संस्कृति में प्रवृत्ति से निवृत्ति तथा भोग से मोक्ष की ओर प्रयाण करने की अवधारणा मिलती है। अतएव प्रस्तुत पुराण में भी इस विषयक विचार-अवधारणा इस प्रकार मिलती है-

प्रवृत्तं च निवृत्तं च द्विविधं कर्म वैदिकम्।
काम्यं कर्म प्रवृत्तं स्यान्ननिवृत्तं ज्ञानपूर्वकम्।
वेदाभ्यासस्तपो ज्ञानमिन्द्रियाणां च संयमः॥
अहिंसा गुरुसेवा च निःश्रेयसकरं परम्।
सर्वेषामपि चैतेषामात्मज्ञानं परं स्मृतम् ॥^{२३}

अर्थात् वैदिक कर्म दो तरह का है-प्रवृत्त तथा निवृत्त। कामनायुक्त कर्म 'प्रवृत्तकर्म' हैं तथा ज्ञानपूर्वक निष्कामभाव से किए जाने वाले कर्म 'निवृत्तकर्म' हैं। वेदाभ्यास, तप, ज्ञान, ज्ञानपूर्वक निष्कामभाव से किए जाने वाले कर्म 'निवृत्तकर्म' हैं। वेदाभ्यास, तप, ज्ञान, इन्द्रियसंयम, अहिंसा तथा गुरुसेवा-ये परम श्रेष्ठतम कर्म निःश्रेयस् अर्थात् मोक्षरूप कल्याण के साधक हैं। इन सब में भी आत्मज्ञान ही श्रेष्ठतम है और समस्त विद्याओं में श्रेष्ठ है। क्योंकि इसी से अमृतत्व की प्राप्ति होती है। सम्पूर्ण भूतों में आत्मा को और आत्मा में सम्पूर्ण भूतों को समान भाव से देखते हुए जो आत्मा की ही यजन-आराधना करता है, वह मोक्ष को प्राप्त होता है। इसीलिए सदैव आत्मज्ञान तथा शम (मनोनिग्रह) के लिए यत्नशील रहना चाहिए-

सर्वभूतेषु चाऽऽत्मानं सर्वभूतानि चाऽऽत्मनि।
समं पश्यन्नात्मयाजी स्वाराज्यमधिगच्छति।

आत्मज्ञाने स (श) मे च स्याद्वेदाभ्यासे च यत्नवान् ॥^{२४}

निष्कर्ष:-अग्निमहापुराण में प्रतिपादित वर्णाश्रम धर्म विषयक विचारोपदेश पर दृष्टिपात करने और उसका चिंतन-मनन करने के उपरांत यह निश्चित रूप से कहा जा सकता है कि प्रस्तुत पुराण में जो चारों वर्ण और आश्रमों के धर्म-कर्म बतलाए गए हैं, वे भारतीय सनातन परम्परा के अनुरूप हैं तथा एक सुव्यवस्थित, अनुशासित और वैज्ञानिक जीवनशैली, सृष्टि, समाज तथा राष्ट्र की व्यवस्थार्थ आवश्यक व उपादेय हैं। मानव-जीवन के परमध्येय तथा लक्ष्यों-धर्मार्थकाममोक्ष की सिद्धि के साधक हैं और समग्र जीवजगत् के अस्तित्व, भरण-पोषण तथा कार्यों व ध्येयों की सिद्धि एवं भारतीय संस्कृति की सुदृढ़ता और विशिष्टता के पोषक हैं।

संदर्भ ग्रन्थ सूची-

१. झा, सुरकान्त (अनुवादक एवं सम्पादक), अग्निमहापुराण, संस्करण, २०११, चौखम्बा संस्कृत सीरीज ऑफिस, वाराणसी।
२. स्वामी प्रभुपाद श्रीमद् ए.सी. भक्तिवेदान्त, श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता, (व्याख्याकार), संस्करण, २००९, भक्ति वेदान्त बुक ट्रस्ट, जुहू मुम्बई।
३. शास्त्री, स्यवीर (संपादक), अथर्ववेद, द्वितीय संस्करण, २०१७, डी.पी.बी. पब्लिकेशन्स, ११०, चावडी बाजार, दिल्ली-६
४. शास्त्री, हरगोविन्द (टीकाकार), मनुस्मृति, तृतीय संस्करण, सन् २०११ : चौखम्बा संस्कृत सीरीज ऑफिस, वाराणसी।



^{२३} वही, १६२/३-५, पृ. ४९९
^{२४} वही, १६२/६-७, पृ. ४९९

भारत की राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति में संस्कृत का महत्त्व

डॉ० लक्ष्मीकान्त पाठक

एसोसिएट प्रोफेसर-इतिहास

रानी पद्मावती तारा योगतन्त्र आदर्श संस्कृत महाविद्यालय, वाराणसी

(केन्द्रीय संस्कृत विश्वविद्यालय, नई दिल्ली से सम्बद्ध)

सारांश-संस्कृत भारत की सांस्कृतिक चेतना, दार्शनिक दृष्टि तथा ज्ञान-परंपरा की मूलाधारभूत भाषा रही है। औपनिवेशिक काल में इस भाषा का शैक्षणिक प्रभाव क्षीण अवश्य हुआ, किन्तु राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति-२०२० (NEP 2020) ने पुनः इसे भारतीय शिक्षातंत्र की केन्द्रीय धुरी के रूप में प्रतिष्ठित किया है। नीति का दार्शनिक अधिष्ठान यह है कि शिक्षा केवल तकनीकी दक्षता का माध्यम न होकर मानव-मूल्य, आचार-विवेक तथा सांस्कृतिक बोध का संवाहक बने। इस परिप्रेक्ष्य में संस्कृत को “ज्ञान-भाषा” के रूप में पुनर्स्थापित करना नीति का प्रमुख लक्ष्य है।

शब्द कुंजी-संस्कृत शिक्षा, राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति-२०२०, भारतीय ज्ञान-परंपरा, बहुभाषिकता एवं सांस्कृतिक पुनर्जागरण, शैक्षिक दार्शनिक दृष्टिकोण

भूमिका

NEP 2020 संस्कृत को विद्यालय स्तर से लेकर उच्च शिक्षा तक जीवंत, व्यवहारिक और बहु-विषयी शिक्षण की दृष्टि से प्रस्तुत करती है। परंपरागत संस्कृत विश्वविद्यालयों को बहुविषयी अध्ययन-केंद्र में रूपांतरित करने, अध्यापक-प्रशिक्षण की नूतन रूपरेखा अपनाने, तथा Outcome-Based Education में संस्कृत का समावेश करने की दिशा में नीति ने ठोस पहल की है। यद्यपि इसके प्रवर्तन में प्रशिक्षित अध्यापकों की अल्पता, सामाजिक पूर्वाग्रह तथा रोजगारोन्मुख दृष्टिकोण की कमी जैसी चुनौतियाँ हैं, तथापि यह नीति संस्कृत के माध्यम से भारतीयता की आत्मा को पुनः जीवित करने का सशक्त प्रयास है।

अतः NEP 2020 संस्कृत को केवल भाषा नहीं, बल्कि राष्ट्रचेतना और सांस्कृतिक पुनर्जागरण का माध्यम बनाकर प्रस्तुत करती है-जो भारत को पुनः “ज्ञान-भूमि” के रूप में प्रतिष्ठित करने की दिशा में एक निर्णायक कदम है।

संस्कृत भारतीय सभ्यता की वह अधिष्ठात्री भाषा है, जिसमें न केवल वेदों-उपनिषदों की दार्शनिक विमर्शधारा प्रवाहित हुई, अपितु समस्त भारतीय ज्ञान-परंपरा का स्रोत भी प्रतिष्ठित है। यह भाषा भारत की आत्मा की स्वरध्वनि है-“संस्कृतं नाम देववाणी”-ऐसा भारतवर्ष का विश्वास रहा है। नवीन राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति-२०२० ने इस प्राचीन, किंतु अनश्वर भाषा को पुनः राष्ट्रीय शिक्षाप्रवाह में प्रतिष्ठित करने का प्रयत्न किया है। नीति का मूलाधार “भारतीयता” के साथ आधुनिकता का समन्वय है-और इस समन्वय की केन्द्रीय धुरी संस्कृत को बनाया गया है। इस प्रकार NEP 2020 केवल एक शिक्षा-सुधार-प्रस्ताव नहीं, अपितु एक सांस्कृतिक पुनर्जागरण-प्रयास है।^१

प्राचीन भारत में शिक्षण का सम्पूर्ण तंत्र-गुरुकुल, आश्रम, तथा विश्वविद्यालय (तक्षशिला, नालंदा इत्यादि)-संस्कृत के ही माध्यम से संचालित होता था। दर्शन, न्याय, व्याकरण, ज्योतिष, नाट्यशास्त्र तथा आयुर्वेद-इन समस्त विद्याओं की शिराओं में संस्कृत ही जीवन-स्रोत के रूप में प्रवाहित था। औपनिवेशिक युग के आगमन से भारतीय शिक्षा-संरचना पर पाश्चात्य दृष्टिकोण का प्रभाव पड़ा, जिससे संस्कृत का अकादमिक स्थान क्रमशः सीमित होता गया। स्वतंत्रता के उपरांत भी संस्कृत का पाठ्य-विस्तार सीमित विषय-वर्गों तक ही सिमटा रहा।^२ ऐसे समय में NEP 2020 का आविर्भाव एक प्रकार का ऐतिहासिक पुनर्प्रत्यावर्तन है-जिसमें भारतीयता की आत्मा को शिक्षा के आधुनिक ढाँचे में पुनः प्रतिष्ठित करने की आकांक्षा दिखाई देती है।^३

राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति २०२० का मूल तत्त्व भारतीय ज्ञान-परंपरा के अन्तःसार को आधुनिक शिक्षातंत्र की बाह्य-संरचना से जोड़ना है। नीति स्पष्ट रूप से यह उद्घोष करती है कि शिक्षा का लक्ष्य केवल रोजगारोन्मुख दक्षता नहीं, अपितु संपूर्ण मानव-विकास है। संस्कृत इस नीति में इस ज्ञान-नाड़ी के रूप में स्वीकार की गई है, जो विज्ञान, साहित्य, दर्शन और संस्कृति को एकसूत्र करती है। नीति के अनुच्छेद ४.१७ में यह स्पष्ट उल्लेख है कि संस्कृत को “mainstreamed language” के रूप में विकसित किया जाएगा, यह “Knowledge systems of ancient India” का सेतु बन सके।^४

संस्कृत से संबंधित नीतिगत प्रावधान

१. विद्यालय स्तर पर संस्कृत शिक्षण का सुदृढीकरण-नीति अनुशंसा करती है कि संस्कृत को प्राथमिक से माध्यमिक स्तर तक एक सुगम, जीवंत तथा आनंदमयी भाषा के रूप में प्रस्तुत किया जाए। यह केवल वैकल्पिक विषय न रहकर

प्रत्येक विद्यार्थी के लिए सुलभ हो। आधुनिक शिक्षण-पद्धतियों जैसे activity-based learning एवं story-based grammar के माध्यम से संस्कृत को पुनः लोकप्रिय बनाने का संकल्प व्यक्त किया गया है।^५

२. उच्च शिक्षा संस्थानों में संस्कृत विश्वविद्यालयों का पुनर्रचना-प्रयास-NEP 2020 के अनुसार, पारंपरिक संस्कृत विश्वविद्यालयों को multidisciplinary institutions के रूप में विकसित किया जाएगा, जहाँ पारंपरिक शास्त्रों के साथ विज्ञान, प्रौद्योगिकी, गणित, योग, आयुर्वेद, ज्योतिष और दर्शन का समन्वय साधा जाए। इस प्रयास का उद्देश्य यह है कि संस्कृत केवल भूतकालीन भाषान रहकर भविष्य की भाषा बने, जो आधुनिक वैज्ञानिक विमर्श का भी अंग हो।^६

३. संस्कृत अध्यापक प्रशिक्षण और व्यावसायिक विकास-राष्ट्रीय अध्यापक शिक्षा परिषद् (NCTE) ने २०२५ के Draft Recognition Norms and Procedure regulations में संस्कृत अध्यापकों के लिए Continuous Professional Development (CPD) की अनिवार्यता निर्धारित की है। यह पहल संस्कृत शिक्षण को Outcome-Based Education (OBE). ढाँचे में एकीकृत करने की दिशा में महत्वपूर्ण कदम है।^७

४. संस्कृत को 'जीवित और आधुनिक भाषा' के रूप में प्रतिष्ठा-नीति यह उद्घोष करती है कि संस्कृत किसी जाति, संप्रदाय या पंथ की भाषा नहीं, अपितु भारत की सार्वभौम सांस्कृतिक धरोहर है। अतः इसे आधुनिक भाषाओं के समकक्ष दर्जा देकर सार्वजनिक संवाद, अनुवाद और डिजिटल प्रौद्योगिकी में सम्मिलित करने की दिशा में अग्रसर किया गया है।

संस्कृत भारत की लिंग्वा फ्रांका (संपर्क-भाषा) रही है। उत्तर में हिमालय से लेकर दक्षिण के केरल तक, और पश्चिम के गुजरात से लेकर पूर्व के असम तक-संस्कृत शब्द-संरचना और व्याकरणिक तंत्र ने भारत की भाषाई एकता को स्थायित्व प्रदान किया है। संस्कृत के श्लोकों, सूक्तियों और नीतियों में निहित मूल्य-सत्यं वद, धर्मं चर, मातृदेवो भव-भारतीय जीवन दर्शन के नैतिक स्तम्भ हैं। आज जब वैश्विक शिक्षा प्रतिदिन अधिक तकनीकी होती जा रही है, संस्कृत हमें पुनः “मानव-केन्द्रित शिक्षातत्त्व” की स्मृति कराती है, जो ज्ञान को केवल उपोयगिता नहीं, बल्कि मूल्य से जोड़ती है।

परंतु, संस्कृति के संवर्धन में कुछ ठोस बाधाएँ अब भी विद्यमान हैं। उदाहरणस्वरूप, आज भी समाज के एक वर्ग में संस्कृत को “अप्रासंगिक” या “मृत भाषा” मानने की धारणा गहराई से स्थापित है, जिससे इसके अध्ययन-अध्यापन के प्रति उत्साह घटता है। संस्कृत शिक्षण के क्षेत्र में प्रशिक्षित और सक्षम अध्यापकों की संख्या अत्यंत सीमित है, जिसके कारण शिक्षण-गुणवत्ता पर प्रतिकूल प्रभाव पड़ता है। वर्तमान शैक्षणिक ढाँचे में संस्कृत को रोजगारोन्मुख या व्यावहारिक दृष्टि से उपयोगी विषय के रूप में नहीं देखा जाता, जिससे विद्यार्थी इसकी ओर आकर्षित नहीं हो पाते। अनेक शिक्षण-संस्थानों में संस्कृत के लिए आवश्यक पाठ्य-संरचना, तकनीकी संसाधन और प्रोत्साहन का अभाव भी इसकी प्रगति में अवरोध उत्पन्न करता है। इन सभी अड़चनों को नीति-स्तर पर निरंतर कार्यवाही, शिक्षक-प्रशिक्षण की सुदृढ़ व्यवस्था तथा जन-भागीदारी के माध्यम से क्रमशः दूर किया जा सकता है।

यदि संस्कृत शिक्षण में प्रौद्योगिकी का सशक्त प्रयोग हो-जैसे AI-assisted translation tools, MOOCs, e-learning platforms-तो यह भाषा पुनः जन-संपर्क की भाषा बन सकती है। विदेशी विश्वविद्यालयों में संस्कृत अध्ययन की बढ़ती प्रवृत्ति भारत के लिए एक अवसर है कि वह स्वयं को “Global Knowledge Heritage Hub” के रूप में प्रस्तुत करे। संस्कृत न केवल परंपरा की भाषा है, अपितु भारत के बौद्धिक भविष्य की भी आधारशिला है-यदि इसे सम्यक् रूप में विकसित किया जाए।^८

निष्कर्ष

संक्षेपतः कहा जा सकता है कि राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति-२०२० ने भारतीय शिक्षा-तंत्र को औपनिवेशिक विचारधारा की जड़ता से मुक्त कर पुनः “भारतीय ज्ञान-तंत्र” की ओर लौटने का साहसिक और ऐतिहासिक संकल्प लिया है। इस नीति ने यह प्रतिपादित किया है कि शिक्षा का उद्देश्य केवल व्यवसायिक प्रावीण्य नहीं, अपितु मानवोचित मूल्य-संपोषण और सांस्कृतिक जागरण भी है। इस व्यापक दृष्टि में संस्कृत का स्थान शिक्षा की आत्मा का है-क्योंकि यही भाषा भारत की दार्शनिक चेतना, आध्यात्मिक विमर्श और सांस्कृतिक स्मृति की संवाहक रही है। संस्कृत ही वह सूत्र है जो भारत की विविध भाषाओं, प्रदेशों और परंपराओं को एकात्मता के सूत्र में बाँधता है। जब तक संस्कृत भाषा शिक्षा के केन्द्र में प्रतिष्ठित नहीं होगी, तब तक शिक्षा की “भारतीयता” अपूर्ण रहेगी। भारतीय शिक्षा को उसकी जड़ों से जोड़ने के लिए संस्कृत का पुनर्स्थापन अनिवार्य है। यह भाषा केवल अतीत की विरासत नहीं, बल्कि वर्तमान का प्रकाश और भविष्य की दिशा भी है।

संस्कृत का पुनर्जागरण मात्र एक भाषिक घटना नहीं, बल्कि राष्ट्रचेतना का पुनरुत्थान है-एक ऐसा जागरण जो भारतीय समाज को उसकी मूल पहचान, आत्मगौरव और सृजनशीलता से पुनः परिचित कराता है। यह नीति उस नवभारतीय शिक्षा-संस्कृति का मार्ग प्रशस्त करती है जिसमें आधुनिकता और परंपरा, विज्ञान और अध्यात्म, ज्ञान और मूल्य-सभी का संतुलित

संगम संभव है। यदि इस नीति के संकल्पों को यथार्थ रूप में कार्यान्वित किया गया, तो आने वाले युग में संस्कृत पुनः भारत की ज्ञान-भाषा बनकर न केवल राष्ट्रीय शिक्षातंत्र को आलोकित करेगी, बल्कि समस्त विश्व के लिए भी एक मानवीय, समन्वित और मूल्य-आधारित शिक्षा-मॉडल प्रस्तुत करेगी।

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शैक्षिक उपलब्धि के निर्धारक : माध्यमिक विद्यालय के विद्यार्थियों की शैक्षिक प्रगति का अध्ययन

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मंगलयातन विश्वविद्यालय – अलीगढ़, उत्तर प्रदेश, भारत

सारांश

यह लेख माध्यमिक विद्यालय के छात्रों की शैक्षणिक उपलब्धि को प्रभावित करने वाले सबसे महत्वपूर्ण तत्वों का एक समन्वित और आलोचनात्मक विश्लेषण प्रदान करता है। यह उत्तर प्रदेश में परिवार की सामाजिक-आर्थिक पृष्ठभूमि, माता-पिता के शैक्षिक स्तर और आय, शिक्षण गुणवत्ता, शिक्षण विधियों की प्रभावशीलता, छात्र की आत्म-प्रभावकारिता, आंतरिक और बाह्य प्रेरणा, और परिवार तथा समुदाय के समर्थन पर केंद्रित है।

यह विद्यालय, भौतिक और मानव संसाधनों, स्वास्थ्य और पोषण स्थिति, उपस्थिति के रुझान, डिजिटल संसाधनों तक पहुँच, लिंग अंतर और ग्रामीण-शहरी विभाजन का भी विश्लेषण करता है। अध्ययन नेशनल अचीवमेंट सर्वे (NAS), वार्षिक स्थिति रिपोर्ट (ASER), और अन्य हालिया सरकारी और स्वायत्त सर्वेक्षणों से डेटा का उपयोग करता है।

यह अंतरराष्ट्रीय शोध साहित्य के तुलनात्मक दृष्टिकोण को भी शामिल करता है ताकि ठोस नीति सिफारिशें, रणनीतिक शैक्षिक हस्तक्षेप, और भविष्य के अनुसंधान के लिए अनुशंसित विधियों की सिफारिश की जा सके, जो प्रणालीगत समर्थन के दीर्घकालिक प्रभावों पर अंतर विभागीय अनुसंधान में शैक्षिक गुणवत्ता को बेहतर बनाने के लिए हैं।

शब्द कुंजी

अकादमिक उपलब्धि, माध्यमिक विद्यालय, संकेतक

परिचय

माध्यमिक शिक्षा विद्यार्थी की शैक्षिक, व्यावसायिक और सामाजिक जीवन की दिशा निर्धारित करती है। यह केवल उच्चतर शिक्षा में प्रवेश का माध्यम नहीं है, बल्कि व्यक्तित्व-निर्माण, सामाजिक सहभागिता और आजीविका की संभावनाओं का आधार भी प्रदान करती है।

भारत के संदर्भ में Govinda & Varghese, (१९९३) ने बताया कि शैक्षिक अवसरों की असमानता सीधे विद्यार्थियों के परिणामों से जुड़ी हुई है। भारत में हाल के वर्षों में किए गए सर्वेक्षण, जैसे ASER २०२३ एवं २०२४ और PRATHAM २०२४, यह संकेत देते हैं कि कुछ राज्यों, विशेषकर उत्तर प्रदेश, ने बुनियादी भाषा एवं गणितीय दक्षताओं में उल्लेखनीय प्रगति की है, जिससे वह शैक्षिक सुधार के मामले में अग्रणी राज्यों की श्रेणी में आ गया है।

इन प्रगतियों से यह स्पष्ट होता है कि नीतिगत हस्तक्षेप, शिक्षक-प्रशिक्षण, तथा सामुदायिक भागीदारी, विद्यार्थियों की उपलब्धियों पर सकारात्मक प्रभाव डाल सकते हैं।

फिर भी, भारत में माध्यमिक शिक्षा कई संरचनात्मक और संचालनगत चुनौतियों से जूझ रही है। शिक्षक रिक्तियों की अधिकता, विद्यालय संसाधनों की कमी, डिजिटल पहुँच में असमानता, तथा उच्च कक्षाओं में नामांकन एवं सीखने के स्तर में गिरावट जैसी समस्याएँ अब भी विद्यमान हैं।

इन चुनौतियों के बीच, यह आवश्यक है कि हम माध्यमिक विद्यालय स्तर पर शैक्षिक उपलब्धि को प्रभावित करने वाले प्रमुख निर्धारकों की पहचान करें, उनका समालोचनात्मक अध्ययन करें, और उनकी पारस्परिक क्रियाओं को समझें। इसी संदर्भ में, यह लेख भारत में माध्यमिक शिक्षा के विद्यार्थियों की शैक्षिक प्रगति का व्यापक विश्लेषण प्रस्तुत करता है, जो न केवल वर्तमान स्थिति का आकलन करता है, बल्कि भविष्य की नीति एवं व्यवहार के लिए ठोस आधार भी प्रदान करता है।

सैद्धान्तिक ढाँचा

किसी विद्यार्थी की शैक्षिक उपलब्धियाँ किसी भी स्तर पर उनके व्यक्तिगत प्रयासों से कहीं अधिक व्यापक होती हैं। यह हर छात्र की समस्या होती है।

एक विद्यार्थी अपने पारिवारिक और सामाजिक संदर्भों से कैसे जुड़ा है, उस संदर्भ में बहु-आयामी सोच एकदम आवश्यक है। इन दो संदर्भों में यह क्षेत्र विज्ञान और सामाजिक कार्य जैसे बेहद महत्वपूर्ण सिद्धांतों से जुड़ा है।

(क) पारिस्थितिक मॉडल (Bronfenbrenner, १९७९)

यह मॉडल विद्यार्थी के विकास को एक बहु-स्तरीय प्रणाली के रूप में देखता है, जिसमें माइक्रो-स्तर (परिवार, मित्र, शिक्षक), मेसो-स्तर (विद्यालय और समुदाय के बीच संबंध), एक्सो-स्तर (स्थानीय प्रशासन, मीडिया, अभिभावक / अभिभाविका कार्यस्थल), और मैक्रो-स्तर (राष्ट्रीय नीतियाँ, प्रसंगिक सांस्कृतिक मान्यताएँ) सभी स्तर शामिल हैं।

इस विशेष दृष्टिकोण से यह भी स्पष्ट होता है कि शिक्षा में सुधार केवल कक्षा-स्तरीय प्रयासों से नहीं, बल्कि बहुआयामी सामाजिक-संरचनात्मक प्रयासों से संभव है।

(ख) सामाजिक-संज्ञानात्मक सिद्धांत (Bandura, १९८६)

बंदूरा का सामाजिक-संज्ञानात्मक सिद्धांत यह दर्शाता है कि किसी सीखने की प्रक्रिया में आत्म-समर्थन (Self-Efficacy) का अत्यधिक महत्व होता है। जब विद्यार्थी अपनी सीखने की कबिलियत पर विश्वास रखते हैं, तो यह उनकी लक्ष्य निर्धारित करने की क्षमता, चुनौतियों का सामना करने की इच्छा-शक्ति, और कार्य में निरंतरता को प्रभावित करता है। यह सभी तत्व शैक्षिक सफलता के लिए आवश्यक माने जाते हैं। इसके अलावा, शिक्षक का सहयोग, माता-पिता का समर्थन, और संसाधनों की उपलब्धता जैसी बाहरी स्थितियाँ भी आत्मविश्वास को बढ़ाने या घटाने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाती हैं। (Bandura, 1986; ASER Centre, 2024)

इन दोनों सिद्धांतों को मिलाकर हम यह समझ सकते हैं कि शैक्षिक प्रगति के लिए बहु-स्तरीय हस्तक्षेप आवश्यक है—एक ओर व्यक्तिगत स्तर पर आत्म-प्रेरणा और आत्म-विश्वास का विकास और दूसरी ओर संस्थागत एवं नीतिगत स्तर पर अनुकूल वातावरण और संसाधनों की उपलब्धता। यह द्विआत्मक दृष्टिकोण शिक्षा सुधार के लिए नीति-निर्माताओं, शिक्षकों और समुदाय के लिए ठोस दिशा प्रदान करता है।

प्रमुख निर्धारक

सामाजिक आर्थिक पृष्ठभूमि

विद्यार्थियों की शैक्षणिक प्रगति पर उनके सामाजिक-आर्थिक हालात का प्रभाव बेहद महत्वपूर्ण है। कम आय वाले परिवारों में अध्ययन से जुड़े समस्त संसाधनों की कमी, जैसे किताबें, अध्ययन सामग्री, शांतिपूर्ण वातावरण और उचित अध्ययन स्थान, बच्चों की शुरुआती शैक्षिक तैयारी में बाधा डालती हैं। इसके अलावा, माता-पिता के शिक्षा स्तर का भी विद्यार्थियों की सफलता पर गहरा असर होता है।

शिक्षकीय गुणवत्ता एवं अभ्यास

शिक्षकों की शैक्षणिक पृष्ठभूमि, कक्षा प्रबंधन कौशल, विषय का गहरा ज्ञान, और मूल्यांकन विधियाँ विद्यार्थियों की सीखने की गुणवत्ता पर महत्वपूर्ण प्रभाव डालती हैं।

विद्यार्थी का आत्म-समर्थन व प्रेरणा

शैक्षिक मनोविज्ञान में यह पाया गया है कि स्व-प्रभाव (Self-Efficacy) और लक्ष्य-उन्मुखता (Goal Orientation) छात्रों के प्रदर्शन को प्रभावित करने वाले प्रमुख कारक हैं।

अभिभावक भागीदारी

बच्चों की शिक्षा में अभिभावकों की सक्रिय भागीदारी, जैसे कि होमवर्क में सहायता, प्रगति पर चर्चा करना, और विद्यालय की बैठकों में शामिल होना, विद्यार्थियों की शैक्षिक सफलता को बढ़ाता है।

विद्यालय संसाधन व अवसंरचना

विद्यालय की भौतिक एवं शैक्षणिक सुविधाओं का विद्यार्थी के सीखने पर सीधा प्रभाव होता है।

स्वास्थ्य-पोषण व उपस्थिति

विद्यार्थियों का शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य, पोषण, और नियमित उपस्थिति शैक्षिक सफलता के अनिवार्य घटक हैं।

डिजिटल पहुँच व लिंग अंतराल

डिजिटल शिक्षा के विस्तार के बावजूद, डिजिटल उपकरणों और इंटरनेट की पहुँच में लिंग आधारित असमानताएँ बनी हुई हैं।

निष्कर्ष

माध्यमिक स्तर पर शैक्षिक उपलब्धि एक जटिल और बहु-स्तरीय प्रक्रिया है, जिसमें सामाजिक-आर्थिक परिस्थितियाँ, शिक्षण की गुणवत्ता, विद्यार्थी की आत्म-धारणा, स्वास्थ्य स्थिति तथा विद्यालयीय संसाधनों की उपलब्धता जैसे कारक आपस में गहन रूप से अंतःक्रियाशील होते हैं।

इन कारकों का संयुक्त प्रभाव इस बात को स्पष्ट करता है कि केवल एक आयाम पर केंद्रित सुधार पर्याप्त नहीं होंगे। प्रभावी परिवर्तन के लिए नीतिगत और व्यवहारिक दोनों स्तरों पर समेकित एवं बहु-आयामी हस्तक्षेप आवश्यक हैं।

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व्यक्तित्व विकास में क्रियायोग की भूमिका

वैष्णवी चौहान

ICPR JRF

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सारांश

व्यक्तित्व विकास में क्रियायोग का महत्वपूर्ण योगदान है, क्योंकि यह व्यक्ति के शारीरिक, मानसिक और आत्मिक स्तर पर संतुलन और सुधार लाने में मदद करता है। क्रियायोग एक प्राचीन योग पद्धति है, जो श्वास नियंत्रण, ध्यान और विश्राम के माध्यम से आत्म-साक्षात्कार और मानसिक शांति की प्राप्ति पर जोर देती है। क्रियायोग का अभ्यास मानसिक तनाव, चिंता और नकारात्मक विचारों को कम करने में मदद करता है। नियमित ध्यान और श्वास नियंत्रण से व्यक्ति के मन में शांति और संतुलन स्थापित होता है, जो मानसिक स्पष्टता और सही निर्णय लेने में मदद करता है। इससे व्यक्तित्व में आत्मविश्वास और स्थिरता आती है।

इस शोध पत्र में यह विश्लेषण किया गया है कि क्रियायोग शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य को भी बेहतर बनाता है। श्वास पर नियंत्रण और ध्यान के माध्यम से शरीर में ऊर्जा का संचार होता है, जिससे व्यक्ति ताज़गी और ऊर्जा का अनुभव करता है। यह शरीर को स्वस्थ और सक्रिय रखने में मदद करता है, जो व्यक्तित्व को आकर्षक और प्रभावशाली बनाता है। इससे स्पष्ट होता है कि क्रियायोग के अभ्यास से तनाव कम होता है, स्मरण शक्ति और निर्णय लेने की क्षमता बढ़ती है, शरीर स्वस्थ रहता है तथा व्यक्ति समाज के प्रति अधिक सहानुभूतिशील और जागरूक बनता है।

वर्तमान समय में प्रतिस्पर्धा और तनावपूर्ण जीवन में क्रियायोग एक प्रभावी साधन के रूप में उभर कर आया है, जो व्यक्ति को आत्मसंतुलन, आन्तरिक शान्ति और सकारात्मक दृष्टिकोण प्रदान करता है। यदि क्रियायोग को नियमित जीवन का अंग बना लिया जाए, तो व्यक्ति न केवल अपने व्यक्तित्व को सम्पूर्ण रूप से विकसित कर सकता है, बल्कि समाज और विश्व के उत्थान में भी योगदान दे सकता है।

शब्द कुंजी

क्रियायोग, तप, स्वाध्याय, ईश्वर प्रणिधान, शारीरिक, मानसिक, भावनात्मक, आध्यात्मिक।

उद्देश्य

इस शोध पत्र का मुख्य उद्देश्य क्रियायोग और समग्र व्यक्तित्व विकास के मध्य संबंध को स्पष्ट करना है। क्रियायोग केवल एक साधना नहीं, बल्कि एक वैज्ञानिक पद्धति है, जो व्यक्ति के मानसिक, शारीरिक, भावनात्मक और आध्यात्मिक उत्थान में सहायक सिद्ध होती है। इस शोध के माध्यम से क्रियायोग के परिभाषा एवं महत्व पर और साथ ही साथ व्यक्तित्व विकास में क्रियायोग की भूमिका और शारीरिक एवं मानसिक स्वास्थ्य पर प्रभाव, भावनात्मक एवं सामाजिक संतुलन और आध्यात्मिक जागरूकता एवं आत्मबोध के साथ आधुनिक जीवन में क्रियायोग की प्रासंगिकता पर प्रकाश डाला गया है। अतः इस शोध पत्र का उद्देश्य क्रियायोग के सिद्धान्तों और उनके व्यावहारिक लाभों को विस्तार से समझना और इसे व्यक्तित्व विकास के एक प्रभावी साधन के रूप में स्थापित करना है।

प्रस्तावना

क्रियायोग एक प्राचीन और दिव्य साधना पद्धति है। जिसे महान योगी और तपस्वी महर्षि पतंजलि ने योग सूत्रों में प्रस्तुत किया था। यह योग का एक उच्चतम रूप है। जो व्यक्ति का शारीरिक, मानसिक और आत्मिक उन्नति की दिशा में मार्गदर्शन करता है। क्रियायोग के माध्यम से व्यक्ति अपनी मानसिक अशांति को शांत करता है और आत्मज्ञान की प्राप्ति के लिए मानसिक और शारीरिक साधनाओं का पालन करता है। इस योग पद्धति में विशेष रूप से प्राणायाम, ध्यान, आत्म निरीक्षण और योगासन का अभ्यास किया जाता है। क्रियायोग एक प्रगति और आत्मविश्वास की अद्भुत साधना पद्धति है। जो शरीर, मन और आत्मा में संतुलन स्थापित करती है। दूसरे इस माध्यम से व्यक्ति न केवल शारीरिक और मानसिक स्वास्थ्य प्राप्त

करता है अपितु वह अपनी आत्मा के वास्तविक स्वरूप को भी पहचानता है। यह जीवन के हर पहलू को सुधारने और उसे अधिक सार्थक बनाने में सहायक होती है।

क्रियायोग को परिभाषित करते हुए पतंजलि लिखते हैं -

तपः स्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि क्रियायोगः

(पातंजलयोगदर्शन २/१)

इसका अर्थ यह हुआ कि तप, स्वाध्याय तथा ईश्वर प्रणिधान तीनों क्रियायोग सुविदित हैं। निज कर्तव्यों का पालन करते हुए जो शारीरिक एवं मानसिक कष्ट हमें मिलते हैं, उनको हर्षपूर्वक सह लेना ही तप कहा है तथा स्वाध्याय को स्वयं के अध्ययन के रूप में परिभाषित किया है। वेद, शास्त्र, महापुरुषों के द्वारा कथित वाक्यों का पठन-पाठन व इष्ट देवता के मंत्र का जप स्वाध्याय कहा है और यह भी सुविचारित है कि ईश्वर के प्रति शरणागति ही ईश्वर प्रणिधान है।^१

स्वामी विवेकानन्द कृत विवेकानन्द साहित्य के प्रथम खण्ड में “तपःस्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि क्रियायोगः” सूत्र की व्याख्या करते हुए स्पष्ट करते हैं कि कर्म के सहारे योग की ओर बढ़ना क्रियायोग है^२ तथा यथोक्त की दिशा तक पहुँच जाता है। क्रियायोग का प्रथम तत्व है- तप, जो एक तरह से लाभ-हानि, सुख-दुख एवं शीतोष्ण तथा भूख-प्यास को सहन करना है तथा उक्त तप को हम आध्यात्मिक जीवन शैली भी कह सकते हैं।

व्यक्तित्व के विकास के कारण तप की बहुत महत्ता है। व्यक्तित्व विकास की उक्त तकनीक में तप को जीवन शैली के रूप में विवेचित किया है। वासना, तृष्णा, अहंता से पिंड छुड़ा करके परमेश्वर की तरफ अग्रसर होने का नाम ही तप है, इस मार्ग पर जो शारीरिक व मानसिक पीड़ाएं उत्पन्न होती हैं, तपस्वी उनको सहज भाव से सह लेता है। तप का भावार्थ है, भूखे रहना, नीर या धूप में खड़े रहना नहीं है। तप एक प्रकार से हमारी आध्यात्मिक जीवन शैली तथा चिन्तन शैली है, जो हमारे शारीरिक एवं मानसिक विकारों को धुलने के साथ-साथ इनकी विकसित क्षमताओं के विकास का कार्य भी करती है। पातंजल योगदर्शन में महर्षि व्यास तप को उल्लिखित करते हुए कहते हैं - “तपो द्वन्द्वसहनम्” अर्थात् द्वन्द्वों को सहन करने से ही तप सिद्ध होता है।^३ मन को दुखित करने वाली घटनाएँ हम सभी के जीवन में दिन-प्रतिदिन घटती रहती हैं, जिनके प्रभाव से हमारे मन में द्वन्द्व उत्पन्न हो जाता है। अतएव असमंजस में जीवन चलता रहता है वरन् ऐसे समय में हमारी चिंतनशैली इस प्रकार की हो जाती है कि हम स्व-जीवन लक्ष्य के मार्ग पर चलते रहें, भटके नहीं तथा उक्त द्वन्द्वों को सहन करते हुए आगे की ओर बढ़ जाएँ। जीवन में दुख यथार्थ व कटु सत्य है, चूँकि सुख-दुख जीवन के दो पहलू सिद्ध होते हैं तथा दुःख को यदि धैर्य, साहस व विवेकपूर्ण ढंग से सह लिया जाए तो तप का प्रतिरूप भी बन जाता है।

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता के १७वें अध्याय में तप की चर्चा की गयी है। जिसमें तीन प्रकार के तप हैं यह उल्लेख किया गया है -

श्रद्धया परया तप्तं तपस्तत्त्रिविधं नरैः।

अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्युक्तैः सात्त्विकं परिचक्षते।।

अर्थात् फलको न चाहने वाले योगी पुरुषों द्वारा परम श्रद्धा से किये हुए उस पूर्वोक्त तीन प्रकार के तप को सात्त्विक कहते हैं।^४ यहाँ मन, वचन, शरीर से किये हुये तप की बात की गयी है।

भारतीय शास्त्रों में तीन तरह के तप का वर्णन प्राप्त होता है।

१) कायिक तप - इस तप के अन्तर्गत दैहिक तप समाविष्ट है- महापुरुषों, देवगणों तथा गुरु का पूजन, आदर सत्कार करना तथा पवित्रता, सरलता, ब्रह्मचर्य एवं अहिंसा का पालन करना शारीरिक तप सिद्ध होता है।

२) वाचिक - वाचिक तप के अन्तर्गत मन में किसी तरह का उद्वेग न करने वाला व प्रिय एवं हितकारी तथा यथार्थ वचन बोलना, वेद शास्त्रों का अध्ययन करना आता है, यह सभी वाचिक तप कहलाते हैं।

३) मानसिक - मन की प्रसन्नता अर्थात् शान्तभाव, मनोनिग्रह, मौन तथा अन्तःकरण के भावों की पवित्रता को मानसिक तप कहा है।

अगर हम तप के परिणाम को देखते हैं तो हम सभी को स्मरण है कि स्वास्थ्य विषयक समस्त प्रकार की परेशानियाँ चाहे वह शारीरिक हो अथवा फिर मानसिक, किसी न किसी प्रकार के असंयम के कारण ही पनपती हैं। वस्तुतः यह भी हमें पता है की असंयम से जीवन की प्रतिरोधक शक्ति में कमी उत्पन्न होती है तथा बीमारियाँ घेर लेती हैं, हालाँकि संयम रूपी तप

¹ हरिहरानन्द आरण्य; स्वामी, पातञ्जलयोग दर्शन, मोतीलाल बनारसीदास, दिल्ली, २००७, पृ० १४६

² विवेकानन्द; स्वामी, विवेकानन्द साहित्य-प्रथम खंड, अद्वैत आश्रम, कोलकाता, २०२३, पृ० १५१

³ हरिहरानन्द आरण्य; स्वामी, पातञ्जलयोग दर्शन दर्शन, मोतीलाल बनारसीदास, दिल्ली, २००७, पृ० २५०

⁴ श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता गीताप्रेस, गोरखपुर (१७/१७)

प्रतिरोध शक्ति की लौह रूपी दीवार बन करके खड़ी हो जाती है तथा यह भी निर्विवादित सत्य है की 'संयम रूपी तप के द्वारा जीवन इतना शक्तिशाली होता है कि किसी भी प्रकार के जीवाणु-विषाणु या फिर नकारात्मक विषयक विचार प्रवेश ही नहीं कर पाते हैं। एक तरह से तप हमारे भीतर शारीरिक तथा मानसिक तौर पर प्रतिरोधी क्षमता को विकसित करता है। जिससे हम सभी तरह के आघातों को निस्संदेह सह सकते हैं।

इन्द्रियों का मल तप के सतत अभ्यास से धुल जाता है। इसलिए तपस्वी जीवन दैहिक व मानसिक अपवित्रता के शोधन का सोपान है। जैसे ही देह तथा मन के शोधन की प्रक्रिया पूर्ण होती है और तप के माध्यम से योगाग्नि प्रकट की जाती है। व्यायाम से देह बल तथा अध्ययन से बुद्धि, शक्ति, व्यवसाय से धन, शक्ति में वृद्धि होती है। इसी तरह आत्मिक पुरुषार्थ की तपश्चर्या से योगाग्नि उत्पन्न होती है और यह भी सुविदित है कि शाप-वरदान देने से दूसरों को सहायता करना भी उक्त साधन के द्वारा सम्भव होता है। मैत्रेय्युपनिषद् में ऋषि कहते हैं-

तपसा प्राप्यते सत्त्वं सत्त्वात्संप्राप्यते मनः।

मनसा प्राप्यते ह्यात्मा ह्यात्मापत्त्या निवर्तते।।

(मैत्रेय्युपनिषद् १/६)

अर्थात् तप के माध्यम से ज्ञान प्राप्त होता है और ज्ञान के वश में होने से मन वशीभूत होता है, मन वश में होने से आत्मा की प्राप्ति होती है और आत्मा के प्राप्त हो जाने पर इस नश्वर संसार से मुक्ति मिल जाती है।^५

“स्वाध्यायः प्रणवादिपवित्राणां जपः मोक्षशास्त्राध्ययनं वा।”

(पातञ्जलयोगदर्शन २/१)

पातञ्जलयोग के साधनपाद के प्रथम श्लोक के अन्तर्गत स्वाध्याय के बारे में व्यास जी कहते हैं कि प्रणवादि पवित्र मन्त्रों का जप अथवा मोक्ष शास्त्र का अध्ययन स्वाध्याय है।^६ अतः क्रियायोग का द्वितीय चरण स्वाध्याय व्यक्तित्व विकास में बड़ा महत्व रखता है। जीवन में प्रकट समस्त समस्याओं को हल करने के लिए बोध व ज्ञान का होना अपरिहार्य है। ज्ञान के अभाव में हम भौतिक या आध्यात्मिक अर्थात् किसी भी क्षेत्र में प्रगति नहीं कर सकते हैं। इसलिए ज्ञान प्राप्त करने का मुख्य उपाय स्वाध्याय सिद्ध होता है क्योंकि स्वाध्याय करने से विचार चिन्तन के बिन्दु निर्मित होते हैं और चिन्तन के द्वारा चरित्र का निर्माण होता है तथा जैसा हमारा चरित्र होता है, वह व्यवहारिक रूप से सामने आ जाता है। इसलिए स्वाध्याय एक तरह से जीवन में आमूल-चूल परिवर्तन करने की विद्या है।

इसी प्रसंग में स्वामी विवेकानन्द विवेकानन्द साहित्य के प्रथम खण्ड में कहते हैं कि स्वाध्याय अथवा पठन-पाठन, यहाँ पठन का अभिप्राय क्या है? नाटक, उपन्यास अथवा कहानी की पुस्तक का पठन नहीं, अपितु उन ग्रन्थों का पठन जो यह शिक्षा प्रदान करते हैं कि आत्मा की मुक्ति किस प्रकार होती है। मोक्षशास्त्रों का अध्ययन व प्रणव जप को स्वाध्याय कहा है तथा शास्त्र निर्देश से सुस्पष्ट होता है कि स्वाध्याय में प्रमाद नहीं करना चाहिए। उत्तम साहित्य के प्रकाश में आत्म विवेचन की तरफ गति स्वाध्याय है।^७

स्वाध्याय की प्रभावशीलता की अगर हम चर्चा करते हैं तो पाते हैं कि स्वाध्याय को हम चिकित्सा कह सकते हैं। स्वाध्याय एक तरह से हमारे जीवन में चिकित्सा के रूप में कार्य करता है। यदि किसी तरह मन को रोग मुक्त कर लिया जाए तो जीवन पूर्ण रूपेण निरोग हो सकता है। वस्तुतः यदि हमारे सोच-विचार का तन्त्र ही मलिन है तो उसके प्रभाव दैहिक रोगों व व्यावहारिक गड़बड़ियों के रूप में उभरेंगे। मानसिक आरोग्य की तरफ ध्यान दिये बिना देह को स्वस्थ करने की सोचना अथवा व्यावहारिक दोषों का निवारण करना वृक्ष की जड़ों को काट करके पत्तों को जाँचते रहना जैसा हो जाएगा, चूँकि जब तक सोच विचार के तन्त्र में विकृति स्थापित रहेगी, दैहिक, मानसिक परेशानियाँ निःसंदेह बनी रहेगी। सोच-विचार अथवा बोध के तन्त्र को निरोग करने की सार्थक व प्रभावी प्रक्रिया स्वाध्याय से बढ़ करके कुछ भी नहीं है क्योंकि श्रद्धापूर्वक स्वाध्याय का अनुष्ठान करने वाले अभ्यासी साधक को अभिलाषित इष्टदेव का साक्षात्कार निश्चित हो जाता है।

ईश्वरप्रणिधानं सर्वक्रियाणां परमगुरावर्पणं तत्फलसन्धासो वा।

(पातञ्जलयोगदर्शन २/१)

पातञ्जलयोगदर्शन के साधनपाद द्वितीय अध्याय के प्रथम श्लोक के अन्तर्गत ईश्वरप्रणिधान क्रियायोग के विषय में व्यासभाष्य कहता है कि समस्त कर्म तथा क्रियायें परमगुरु परमात्मा को समर्पित कर देना तथा उनके फल प्राप्ति की कामना

⁵ मैत्रेय्युपनिषद् (१/६)

⁶ हरिहरानन्द आरण्य, स्वामी पातञ्जलयोगदर्शन मोतीलाल बनारसीदास, दिल्ली, २००७, पृ० १४६

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न होना अर्थात् निष्काम कर्म करना ईश्वरप्रणिधान कहलाता है।^८ तप के साथ स्वाध्याय तथा उक्त दोनों के साथ ईश्वर प्रणिधान समस्त व्यक्तित्व के विकास की अन्तिम क्रिया है। ईश्वर प्रणिधान अथवा प्रभु शरणगति क्रियायोग का शिखर है।

“तत्परं यच्चित्तं परमात्मानमानन्दयति।”

(परब्रह्मोपनिषद्-२)

परब्रह्मोपनिषद् में ईश्वर के प्रति समर्पण द्वारा ‘ईश्वर प्रणिधान’ को बताते हुए कहा गया है कि “जिस सन्यासी का चित्त उस ब्रह्म में तत्पर अर्थात् समर्पित हो जाता है, वह परमात्मा में स्थित होकर आनन्द स्वरूप हो जाता है।”^९ ईश्वर प्रणिधान मानव जीवन में ईश्वर को स्थापित करना है। ईश्वर समस्त प्राणियों के हृदय में विराजमान है, सर्वव्यापक परमेश्वर समस्त के रोम-रोम में व्याप्त है तथापि मनुष्य उसको भूला हुआ है। समस्त मनुष्य ईश्वर को जानते भी है तथा मानते हैं परन्तु व्यवहार में ईश्वरत्व दिखाई नहीं देता जबकि वास्तविक तथ्य यह है कि जीवन में परमेश्वर को गौण स्थान पर रखा जाता है। परमेश्वर को धन, सम्पत्ति, पुत्र, पोता, स्वास्थ्य, विद्या, बुद्धि, स्वर्ग तथा मुक्ति इत्यादि प्राप्त करने के लिए या कोई विपत्ति पड़ जाने पर पुकारते हैं। इसी सन्दर्भ में पतञ्जलि सुझाव देते हैं कि परमेश्वर को धारण यानी स्थापित करके जीवन जीना चाहिए अर्थात् ईश्वर को स्वहृदय में स्थापित करके चौबीस घण्टे का साथी बना लेना चाहिए, न की केवल संकट में पड़ने पर याद करे, ऐसी प्रवृत्ति को त्याग देना चाहिए क्योंकि जब व्यक्ति ईश्वर के साक्षित्व में जीवन जीता है, तो स्व कर्मों में दिव्यता का विस्तार होने लगता है। भक्त में ईश्वर के गुण आने लगते हैं। उसकी कमियाँ अल्प हो करके परमेश्वर के गुणों का समावेश होने लगता है। जिस तरह चन्दन वृक्ष के समीपस्थ पैदा होने वाले वृक्षों में भी चन्दन की सुगन्ध आ जाती है, उस तरह ईश्वर के सम्पर्क में रहने पर, रहने वाले व्यक्ति के भाव एवं विचार सत्य से परिपूर्ण होने लगते हैं। परमेश्वर महान् है, दिव्यता से युक्त है, सत्य है, चैतन्य है, आनन्द गर्भित है, परमेश्वर के सानिध्य समीपस्थ से उक्त समस्त गुण अभ्यासी साधक के भीतर विकसित होने लगते हैं तथा अन्त में परमेश्वर के प्रति शरणागत होने का फल समाधि के रूप में प्राप्त होता है।

निष्कर्षतः क्रियायोग एक पूर्ण जीवन पद्धति है, जो व्यक्ति को उसके भीतर की ऊर्जा का सही उपयोग सिखती है, उसका अपने उद्देश्य की ओर मार्ग दर्शन करती है और उसे संतुलित, शांतिपूर्ण और दिव्य जीवन जीने के लिए प्रेरित करती है। यह एक निरन्तर यात्रा है जो साधक को अपने आत्मज्ञान की ओर ले जाती है।

सन्दर्भ ग्रन्थ सूची

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^९ परब्रह्मोपनिषद्-२

प्राचीन भारतीय ज्ञान परम्परा में शैक्षिक विधियाँ और उनकी प्रासंगिकता

डॉ० सुजोदय भट्टाचार्य

एसो० प्रोफेसर (शिक्षा विभाग)

डॉ० राम मनोहर लोहिया राजकीय महाविद्यालय

मुफ्तीगंज, जौनपुर (उ०प्र०)

सारांश

गुरुकुल प्रणाली प्राचीन काल में शिक्षा का प्राथमिक माध्यम थी, जहाँ छात्र व्यावहारिक अनुभव के माध्यम से सीखते थे। वेद और उपनिषद् मौखिक परम्परा, संवाद और तर्क पर जोर देते हैं। कालान्तर में अर्थात् मध्ययुगीन काल में विश्वविद्यालयों ने शिक्षा हेतु एक सुव्यवस्थित संस्थागत ढांचा प्रदान किया, जहाँ व्याख्यान, तर्क और शोध पर आधारित शिक्षण-विधियों का उपयोग किया जाता था। इसी क्रम में भारतीय शिक्षा प्रणाली ने आधुनिक युग में पश्चिमी शिक्षण-विधियों को अंगीकार तो किया है तथापि पारम्परिक भारतीय शिक्षण-विधियों, जैसे कि गुरु-शिष्य परम्परा और व्यावहारिक अनुभव इत्यादि अभी भी कुछ क्षेत्रों में प्रचलित हैं। भारतीय ज्ञान प्रणाली में शिक्षण-विधियाँ छात्रों को व्यावहारिक ज्ञान और कौशल प्रदान करती हैं, वे छात्रों में आलोचनात्मक सोच, समस्या-समाधान और संचार कौशल विकसित करती हैं एवं छात्रों को उनकी सांस्कृतिक जड़ों से जोड़ती हैं; उन्हें अपनी विविधतापूर्ण सांस्कृतिक विरासत को समझने, संभालने और आत्मसात कर जीवन जीने में सहायता प्रदान करती हैं। आधुनिक शिक्षा प्रणालियों में भारतीय शिक्षण-विधियों को शामिल करने से जहाँ एक तरफ छात्रों का समग्र विकास होगा वहीं दूसरी तरफ सांस्कृतिक विविधता को बढ़ावा मिलेगा और साथ ही भारतीय ज्ञान प्रणाली की समृद्ध विरासत को संरक्षित करने में भी मदद मिल सकती है।

शब्द कुंजी

शिक्षण-विधि, भारतीय ज्ञान प्रणाली, बौद्ध शिक्षण-प्रणाली, जैन शिक्षण-विधि।

उद्देश्य

किसी भी देश की शिक्षण-विधियाँ ज्ञान के हस्तांतरण में एक महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाती हैं। प्रभावी शिक्षण-विधियाँ जिज्ञासा, आलोचनात्मक सोच और आजीवन सीखने को प्रेरित करती हैं। शिक्षण-विधियों के प्राथमिक कार्यों में से एक छात्रों को सीखने की प्रक्रिया में सक्रिय रूप से शामिल करना है। आधुनिक कक्षाओं में इंटरैक्टिव व्याख्यान, चर्चा, सामूहिक गतिविधियाँ और व्यावहारिक प्रयोग जैसी विधियाँ छात्रों की रुचि को प्रोत्साहित करती हैं और उन्हें सीखने में सक्रिय भूमिका निभाने के लिए प्रोत्साहित करती हैं। प्रभावी शिक्षण-विधियाँ शिक्षार्थियों की विविधता को स्वीकार करती हैं और सीखने की विभिन्न शैलियों को प्रतिबलित करती हैं (मुखर्जी, १९५१)। जो शिक्षण-विधियाँ जाँच, विश्लेषण और मूल्यांकन को प्रोत्साहित करने वाली होती हैं, वे अवधारणाओं और उनके अनुप्रयोगों के प्रति गहरी समझ पैदा करती हैं। प्राचीन भारत में शिक्षण और सीखने का इतिहास ज्ञान, विवेक और नवाचार की समृद्ध विरासत को स्वयं में समेटे था, जिसने सभ्यता को आकार दिया है (गुप्ता, २०१६)। वैदिक काल से गुप्त साम्राज्य तक, प्राचीन भारतीय शिक्षा के केंद्र में सीखने के लिए एक समग्र दृष्टिकोण था, जहाँ छात्र एकांत वातावरण में न केवल औपचारिक निर्देश के माध्यम से बल्कि दैनिक कार्यों, अनुष्ठानों और व्यक्तिगत संपर्कों के माध्यम से ज्ञान प्राप्त करते थे; छात्र वहाँ शैक्षणिक ज्ञान के साथ-साथ नैतिक मूल्यों, जीवन कौशल और आध्यात्मिक मार्गदर्शन को भी प्राप्त करते थे (जोशी, २०१५)। शिक्षा के इस व्यक्तिगत और अनुभवात्मक रूप ने ऐसे विद्वानों का पोषण किया जो न केवल विद्वतापूर्ण खोजों में बल्कि सामाजिक जिम्मेदारियों में भी उत्कृष्ट थे (चट्टोपाध्याय, २०१८)।

प्राचीन भारत में शैक्षणिक विधियाँ:

वैदिक शिक्षण-विधियाँ प्राचीन भारतीय शिक्षा-प्रणाली की समृद्धि और उसकी विविधता के प्रमाण थे, जिसने छात्रों को आध्यात्मिक ज्ञान प्राप्त करने योग्य बनाया और साथ ही महत्वपूर्ण सोच, स्मृति और संचार कौशल विकसित करने में भी सक्षम बनाया (कुमार, २०१४)। ये विधियाँ आज भी प्रासंगिक हैं और आधुनिक शिक्षा प्रणालियों को प्रभावित करती हैं।

वेदों और उपनिषदों में शिक्षण-विधियाँ: प्रबुद्ध ज्ञान-प्राप्ति का माध्यम

प्राचीनतम साहित्य के रूप में वेदों की शिक्षण-विधियाँ, जिसमें मौखिक परम्परा, स्मृति तकनीकों और अनुभवात्मक अधिगम के संयोजन की विशेषता समाहित थी, आध्यात्मिक ज्ञान के भण्डार थे। उनमें अनुष्ठानों, दर्शन, ब्रह्मांड-विज्ञान, व्याकरण और गणित सहित विभिन्न विषयों पर भी निर्देश शामिल थे। वैदिक ज्ञान का प्रसार गुरु-शिष्य परम्परा के ढाँचे के भीतर हुआ, जो आवश्यकताओं के अनुरूप व्यक्तिगत निर्देशन पर जोर देता है। वहीं पूजनीय उपनिषद् वास्तविकता की

प्रकृति, स्वयं और परम सत्य के प्रति गहन अंतर्दृष्टि प्रदान करते थे (मुखर्जी, १९५१; भट्टाचार्य, २०१९)। इन प्राचीन ग्रंथों में विभिन्न शैक्षणिक-विधियों के माध्यम से सम्प्रेषित कालातीत शिक्षाएँ अंतर्निहित थीं। उपनिषदों में नियोजित शिक्षण-विधियों में परिवर्तनकारी शक्तियाँ थीं। वेदों और उपनिषदों में पाई जाने वाली कुछ प्रमुख शिक्षण-विधियाँ इस प्रकार हैं -

१. **मौखिक परम्परा और गुरु-शिष्य के बीच संवाद :** वैदिक ज्ञान को मौखिक रूप से पीढ़ी-दर-पीढ़ी प्रसारित किया जाता था। छात्र अपने गुरुओं से वेद-मंत्रों, अनुष्ठानों और दार्शनिक अवधारणाओं को सुनते और याद करते थे। उपनिषदों में शिक्षण-विधियों के केन्द्र में गुरु और शिष्य के बीच संवाद है। ये संवाद, जो प्रायः एक ऋषि और एक साधक छात्र के बीच प्रश्नोत्तर, चिंतन और स्पष्टीकरण के रूप में प्रस्तुत किए जाते थे एवं आध्यात्मिक ज्ञान और दार्शनिक सत्य प्रदान करने के एक माध्यम के रूप में कार्य करते थे।

२. **स्मृति तकनीक:** वेदों ने याद रखने में सहायता हेतु पुनरावृत्ति और स्मृतियों का प्रयोग किया। छन्द अक्सर एक तालमय और पुनरावृत्तिक ढंग से संरचित होते थे, जिससे उन्हें याद करना आसान हो जाता था और साथ ही स्मृतिशील तकनीकों में छंद, समाक्षरण एवं चित्राक्षर विज्ञान का उपयोग किया जाता था, जिससे जटिल जानकारी को आसानी से याद किया जा सकता था। यह लिखित पाठों की अनुपस्थिति में भी पीढ़ियों के बीच ज्ञान के संचय और प्रसार को सुविधाजनक बनाता था (धर, २०१७)।

३. **अनुभवात्मक अधिगम:** छात्रों को अनुष्ठानों, ध्यान और अन्य व्यावहारिक गतिविधियों में भाग लेकर वैदिक सिद्धांतों का अनुभव करने के लिए प्रोत्साहित किया जाता था, जिससे उन्हें सैद्धांतिक अवधारणाओं की गहरी समझ विकसित करने में मदद मिलती थी।

४. **रूपक कथाएँ और दृष्टांत:** उपनिषद् में जटिल दार्शनिक विचारों को सरल तरीके से व्यक्त करने हेतु रूपक कथाओं और दृष्टांतों का उपयोग किया जाता था। प्रतीकवाद और रूपक से भरी हुई ये कहानियाँ अक्सर कल्पना को जोड़ती थीं और गहन चिंतन को प्रेरित करती थीं (अग्रवाल, २००९)। छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् में इंद्र और चींटियों की कहानी जैसे आख्यानों के माध्यम से, व्यक्तिगत आत्मा (जीव) और सार्वभौमिक चेतना (ब्रह्म) के बीच सम्बन्ध के बारे में गहन सत्य व्यक्त किए जाते थे।

५. **सादृश्य और रूपक:** उपनिषदों में अमूर्त अवधारणाओं और जटिल दार्शनिक सिद्धांतों को स्पष्ट करने के लिए अक्सर सादृश्य और रूपकों का उपयोग किया जाता था, जो सूक्ष्म जगत् और स्थूल जगत् के बीच समानताएँ बनाकर उसके प्रति समझ और अन्तर्दृष्टि को सुविधाजनक बनाते थे (गुप्ता, २०१६)।

६. **चिंतनशील ध्यान:** उपनिषद् अपने वास्तविक स्वरूप को साकार करने के लिए शक्तिशाली उपकरणों के रूप में चिंतनशील ध्यान और आत्मनिरीक्षण पर जोर देते थे और जिसमें आत्मनिरीक्षण एवं आत्म-चिंतन द्वारा साधकों को आत्मा (आत्मान) की प्रकृति और परम वास्तविकता (ब्रह्म) से स्वयं के सम्बन्ध की जाँच करने के लिए प्रोत्साहित किया जाता था।

बौद्ध और जैन परम्परा में शिक्षण-विधियाँ: अंतर्दृष्टि से नवाचार तक

ईसा पूर्व छठी शताब्दी से शुरू होकर बौद्ध काल में सम्पूर्ण एशिया में बौद्ध धर्म एक प्रमुख धार्मिक और दार्शनिक आंदोलन के रूप में उभरा और फैला। इस युग की विशिष्ट शैक्षणिक-विधि जिसमें अनुभवात्मक शिक्षा, नैतिक विकास और ज्ञान के प्रसार पर आग्रह किया गया था। वहीं दूसरी तरफ, अहिंसा, करुणा और आध्यात्मिक मुक्ति और नैतिक सिद्धांतों में निहित जैन शिक्षण-विधियों का उद्देश्य नैतिक गुणों, बौद्धिक अन्तर्दृष्टि एवं आध्यात्मिक जागरण को विकसित करना था, जो जैन परम्परा से जुड़े हुए थे। इस समय की कुछ प्रमुख शिक्षण-विधियाँ इस प्रकार हैं-

१. **संवाद और चिंतन:** बौद्ध शिक्षण-विधि ने सीखने के आवश्यक घटकों के रूप में संवाद, जाँच और आलोचनात्मक चिंतन को प्रोत्साहित किया। बुद्ध स्वयं अपने शिष्यों के साथ संवादों में संलिप्त हुए, उन्हें स्वयं के लिए सत्य पर प्रश्न उठाने, जाँच एवं विचार करने हेतु प्रोत्साहित किया, जिसने गहन आत्मनिरीक्षण और अन्तर्दृष्टि को सुगम बनाया, जिससे छात्रों को दुख की प्रकृति, दुख के कारणों और उससे मुक्ति हेतु मार्ग (अष्टांगिक मार्ग) की खोज करने में मदद मिली (भटनागर, २००८)। जैन शिक्षण-विधियों में अक्सर, जैन आचार्यों द्वारा दिए गए व्याख्यान, प्रवचन और उपदेश शामिल होते, जो समकालीन जीवन के लिए प्रासंगिक बन जाते थे।

२. **अनुभवात्मक शिक्षा एवं सामाजिक जुड़ाव:** जैन शिक्षण-विधियाँ सेवा और करुणा के कार्यों के माध्यम से आध्यात्मिक सिद्धांतों की शिक्षा और उसके व्यावहारिक अनुप्रयोग पर जोर देती थीं। शिष्य सक्रिय रूप से धर्मार्थगतिविधियों,

पर्यावरण संरक्षण और सामुदायिक सेवा जैसे कार्यों में संलग्न होते थे और जिसका उद्देश्य आदर्श सार्वभौमिक प्रेम, सद्भाव और लोककल्याण को बढ़ावा देना था (अग्रवाल, २००९)।

भारतीय ज्ञान प्रणालियों में खेलों की शक्ति का एकीकरण

भारतीय ज्ञान प्रणाली में खेलों को लंबे समय से सीखने, छात्रों को जोड़ने और समग्र विकास को बढ़ावा देने के लिए शक्तिशाली उपकरण के रूप में मान्यता प्राप्त है। शैक्षणिक उपकरण के रूप में खेलों का उपयोग पूरे इतिहास में प्रचलित रहा है। प्राचीन काल से लेकर आधुनिक शैक्षणिक प्रथाओं तक खेलों को सहजता से एकीकृत एवं अंगीकार किया गया है, जो अनुभवात्मक शिक्षा और बौद्धिक अन्वेषण हेतु अद्वितीय मार्ग प्रदान करते रहे हैं।

प्राचीन भारत में खेल-विधियाँ:

शिक्षा में खेलों का उपयोग हमें प्राचीन भारत में वापस ले जाता है, जहाँ खेलों को गुरुकुल शिक्षण प्रणाली में एकीकृत किया गया था। छात्र विभिन्न खेलों में शामिल होते थे, जैसे – पचीसी, अष्टापद और ब्रह्मगुप्त की शतरंज, जो न केवल मनोरंजन करते थे बल्कि महत्वपूर्ण संज्ञानात्मक और सामाजिक कौशल भी प्रदान करते थे। ये खेल गणित, रणनीति, समस्या-समाधान और पारस्परिक संचार को बढ़ाने के लिए प्रभावी उपकरण के रूप में कार्य करते थे (राघवन, २०२२) जिससे छात्रों और विषय वस्तु के बीच एक गहरा सम्बन्ध स्थापित होकर ज्ञान की समझ और उसके प्रति विश्वास को बढ़ावा मिलता था (सिंह, २०१८)।

आध्यात्मिक, नैतिक शिक्षा एवं सांस्कृतिक संवर्धन में खेल:

खेलों ने बौद्धिक विकास के अलावा आध्यात्मिक और नैतिक शिक्षा प्रदान करने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभायी है। मोक्षपटम् जैसे पारम्परिक खेल प्रतीकात्मक अर्थों से ओतप्रोत थे, जो मोक्ष की ओर आध्यात्मिक यात्रा का प्रतिनिधित्व करते थे (गुप्ता, २०१६)। खिलाड़ियों ने खेल बोर्ड के उतार-चढ़ाव के माध्यम से कर्म, पुण्य और कतिपय कार्यों के परिणामों के बारे में महत्वपूर्ण नैतिक पाठ सीखे। इसी तरह डंब चरेड (डंब सी), कबड्डी, खो-खो जैसे पारम्परिक लोक-खेल न केवल मनोरंजक गतिविधियाँ थे बल्कि सांस्कृतिक मूल्यों, सामाजिक मानदण्डों और सामुदायिक भावना को भी मूर्त रूप देते थे (चट्टोपाध्याय, २०१८)।

अतीत और वर्तमान का मेल: प्राचीन शिक्षण-विधियों की आधुनिक प्रासंगिकता

प्राचीन शिक्षण-विधियाँ शिक्षार्थियों के बौद्धिक, भावनात्मक और आध्यात्मिक आयामों के पोषण हेतु अनुभवात्मक और सक्रिय समकालीन शिक्षण-विधियों को प्रभावित करती हैं। प्राचीन शिक्षाशास्त्र में छात्रों को गुरुओं से व्यक्तिगत मार्गदर्शन और समर्थन प्राप्त होता था। इनके अलावा आधुनिक समय में, खेलों को आधुनिक शैक्षिक अभ्यासों में सम्मिलित करना भारतीय ज्ञान प्रणाली की सफलता है। सहभागिता, प्रेरणा और सीखने के परिणामों को बढ़ाने हेतु शैक्षिक बोर्ड खेल, इंटरैक्टिव सिमुलेशन, और डिजिटल अधिगम के मंच अधिकतम रूप से प्रयोग किये जा रहे हैं (सिंह, २०१८)। वर्तमान में खेल- आधारित शैक्षिक दृष्टिकोण, प्राचीन कहानीकरण और प्रायोगिक सिद्धांतों का अत्यधिक सहारा लिया जा रहा है, जो २१वीं शताब्दी की तेजी से बदलती दुनिया में सफलता के लिए अत्यन्त महत्वपूर्ण हैं।

निष्कर्ष

प्रभावी शिक्षण-विधियों में निवेश न केवल शैक्षणिक सफलता को बढ़ाता है अपितु एक जटिल और गतिशील दुनिया में विकास के लिए शिक्षार्थियों का भी निर्माण करता है। प्राचीन भारत में शिक्षण-विधियों में नवीनता, रचनात्मकता और अनुकूलन क्षमता की विशेषता थी, जो आज तक बौद्धिक, आध्यात्मिक और सांस्कृतिक समृद्धि के वाहक के रूप में कार्य कर रहे हैं और शिक्षार्थियों के बीच समग्र विकास का पोषण करते हैं।

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मध्य सोन घाटी परिक्षेत्र का नृ-पुरासांस्कृतिक वैभव: बैगा समुदाय के विशेष संदर्भ में

श्वेता कुमारी

शोध छात्रा

प्राचीन भारतीय इतिहास संस्कृति एवं पुरातत्व विभाग

काशी हिन्दू विश्वविद्यालय, वाराणसी

सारांश

विंध्य पर्वत क्षेत्र के उत्तर-पूर्व में स्थित मध्य सोन घाटी का क्षेत्र प्रारंभ से ही मानवीय गतिविधियों का केंद्र रहा है। यहाँ हुए पुरातात्विक अन्वेषण एवं उत्खनन से प्राप्त साक्ष्यों से इस बात की पुष्टि होती है कि मध्य सोन की पर्यावरणीय परिस्थितियाँ सदैव आदिमानव व जनजातीय समुदायों के अनुकूल रही हैं। मौर्य व गुप्तकालीन अभिलेखों में विंध्य क्षेत्र में निवास करने वाले जनजातीय समुदायों का उद्धरण 'आटवीक' या 'वनवासी' के रूप में मिलता है। वर्तमान में भी यह क्षेत्र आदिवासी समुदायों का निवास स्थल है जो अपनी पारंपरिक और स्थानीय संस्कृतियों को दृढ़ता के साथ सँजोये हुए है। इनकी श्रवण परंपरा भारतीय लोक संस्कृति की विरासत है जिसका संग्रहण व संकलन करना आवश्यक है। इस कड़ी में शोधार्थी द्वारा क्षेत्र विशेष में बैगा समुदाय का सर्वेक्षण कार्य किया गया। जिसके अंतर्गत अधिवासित बैगा समुदाय से परस्पर संपर्क कर व्यक्तिगत साक्षात्कार द्वारा उनके जीवन से संबंधित रीति-रिवाज, पर्व- त्योहार, नृत्य- संगीत, चित्रकला आदि जैसे नृजातीय आँकड़ों का संकलन किया गया। नृजातीय अध्ययन विधि एक ऐसा माध्यम है जिसमें वर्तमान आदिवासी समुदायों के लोक व्यवहार और जीवन शैली का अध्ययन किया जाता है जिसका उद्देश्य जनजातीय संस्कृति के संरक्षण के साथ ही साथ इसके द्वारा प्रागैतिहासिक समाज के विविध पक्षों को वास्तविक संदर्भ में समझने का प्रयास करना है। प्रस्तुत शोध पत्र सर्वेक्षण से प्राप्त इन्हीं आँकड़ों पर आधारित है।

शब्द कुंजी

नृजातीय, अन्वेषण, स्वदेशी संस्कृति, लोक संस्कृति, बैगा,

प्रस्तावना

नृ-पुरातात्विक अध्ययन के दृष्टिकोण से मध्य सोन घाटी का क्षेत्र जनजातीय कला और सांस्कृतिक समृद्धि से परिपूर्ण है। अद्भुत प्राकृतिक सुंदरता, सघन वनों का आच्छादन, पर्वत, नदी, नालें-झरनें, इस क्षेत्र को रमणीय व जनजातीय समुदायों के निवास योग्य बनाते हैं। सोन परिक्षेत्र के अदवा घाटी के विषय में यह कहा गया की क्षेत्र विशेष में हुए अन्वेषण व उत्खनन द्वारा प्राप्त पुरावस्तुएँ जैसे- पाषाण उपकरण, शैलचित्र, महापाषाण समाधियाँ, लौह भट्टियाँ व मृदभांड परंपरा इस क्षेत्र में जनजातीय अधिवास का प्रमाण प्रस्तुत करती है।¹ जनजाति शब्द आंग्ल भाषा के शब्द 'ट्राइब' का हिन्दी रूपांतरण है जो इंडिजिनस शब्द का पर्याय है। इस क्षेत्र के अधिवासित महत्त्वपूर्ण समुदायों में से एक बैगा समाज के लोगों ने अपनी पारंपरिक और प्राचीन भौतिक संस्कृति और पर्यावरणीय पृष्ठभूमि के मध्य अनुकूल रणनीतियों के माध्यम से अपनी बुनियादी स्वदेशी सांस्कृतिक पहचान को बनाए रखा है। यद्यपि यह तथ्य है कि प्रत्येक आदि जनजातीय समूह की अपनी कोई विशिष्ट पहचान तथा संस्कृति व परम्पराएँ होती हैं। जो सैकड़ों हजारों-वर्षों के कालखंड में धीरे-धीरे विकसित हैं व एक पीढ़ी से दूसरी पीढ़ी तक मौखिक रूप से हस्तांतरित की जाती हैं। बैगा समुदाय आज भी अपने आदिम स्वरूप में विद्यमान है। इसका प्रमुख कारण शेष विश्व से पृथक् इस जनजातीय समूह का अपनी संस्कृति से अटूट जुड़ाव तथा अन्य संस्कृतियों से सांस्कृतिक अलगाव है। यही कारण है कि इससे संबंधित नृ-जातीय आँकड़ों की महत्ता विभिन्न विषयों जैसे- पुरातत्त्व, मानवशास्त्र, समाजशास्त्र आदि के लिए बहुत बढ़ जाती है।

मध्य सोन घाटी क्षेत्र की पुरातात्विक महत्ता की ओर सर्वप्रथम ध्यान इंगित कराने का श्रेय १९३५ में येल-कैम्ब्रिज अभियान के निर्देशक डी टेरा व उनके पश्चात् ज्वाइनर को जाता है। राधाकांत वर्मा ने १९५८-६२ में, निसार अहमद ने १९६२-६३ में सर्वेक्षण कार्य किया। तत्पश्चात् १९८० के दशक की शुरुआत में हुए शोध कार्य से मध्य सोन घाटी (मुख्यतः सिद्धि जिले) में पैलियोएंथ्रोपोलॉजी, पुरातात्विक और भूविज्ञान संबंधी नवीन तथ्य जैसे निम्न, मध्य व उच्च पुरापाषाणकालीन नवीन पुरास्थल, पशु जीवाश्म, चौहत्तर हजार(७४ka) वर्ष पुराने तोबा सुपरविस्फोट के राख के अवशेषों

¹ मिश्रा व अन्य : २०१४, द मेगालीथिक कल्चर ऑफ अदवा वैली इन नॉर्थ सेंट्रल विंध्याज, मेगालीथिक कल्चर ऑफ साउथ इंडिया, नई दिल्ली, भारतीय पुरातत्व परिषद्, पृ. ३४२-३७५.

की खोज हुई।² सीधी जिले के ढाबा नामक पुरास्थल से प्राप्त टोबा प्रस्फुटन सोन क्षेत्र में ७४ka पूर्व के मानव गतिविधि का प्रमाण देता है।³ इस तरह के पुरातात्विक शोध से प्राप्त परिणाम के आधार पर मध्य सोन घाटी क्षेत्र के प्रागैतिहासिक संस्कृति के कुछ पक्षों का ज्ञान तो हो सकता है किन्तु समग्र संस्कृति का नहीं क्योंकि किसी भी संस्कृति को समझने हेतु उसकी तत्कालीन आवश्यकताओं व विभिन्न परिस्थितियों की पृष्ठभूमि का अध्ययन आवश्यक हो जाता है। इसी संपूर्णता को समझने हेतु पुरातत्त्ववेत्ता नृजातीय आँकड़ों का सहारा लेता है। यही कारण है कि वर्तमान में गहन व बहु-आयामी शोध के दृष्टांत नृ-जातीय अध्ययन पुरातत्व व मानवशास्त्र विषय का अभिन्न अंग बन चुका है। इसी संदर्भ में अधिवासित बैगा समुदाय द्वारा दैनिक उपयोग में लायी गयी भौतिक सामग्रियों के साथ-साथ उनकी अन्य क्रियाविधियों (जैसे-पूजा-पाठ, खान-पान, तीज-त्योहार, शादी-विवाह, पहनावा-पोशाक, शिल्प-कला, अंत्येष्टि संस्कार आदि) का संकलन स्वदेशी संस्कृति को अक्षुण्ण बनाए रखने व संपूर्णता को समझने में अद्वितीय योगदान हो सकता है।

अध्ययन क्षेत्र : अध्ययन हेतु मध्य सोन घाटी परिक्षेत्र में सोनभद्र व सीधी जिले के गावों को चयनित किया गया। जहाँ बहुसंख्यक रूप में जनजातीय समुदाय निवासित है जिसमें विभिन्न जनजातियों के साथ ही बैगा जनजाति अधिसंख्यक रूप में निवासित है। यह क्षेत्र जनजातीय आबादी की दृष्टि से समृद्ध व बैगा बहुल क्षेत्र है। यहाँ की प्रमुख नदी सोन नदी है तथा उसकी सहायक नदियाँ कनहर, पांडा, करमनासा आदि इस भू-भाग को सिंचित व उपजाऊ बनाती हैं। यह क्षेत्र कैमूर पर्वत श्रेणी के अंतर्गत आता है।

बैगा समुदाय का नृ-वंश विज्ञान के संदर्भ में विवरण

बैगा इस क्षेत्र की आदिम जनजातीय समूहों में से एक है। बैगा स्वयं को जंगल का राजा मानते हैं। यह जनजाति अपने स्वभाववश ऊँचे स्थानों, जंगलों में बसना पसन्द करती है। बैगा समूह में रहते हैं। आठ-दस घरों का एक टोला इनका पूरा गाँव होता है। इनके उत्पत्ति के विषय में कोई लिखित प्रमाण तो नहीं प्राप्य है किन्तु इससे संबंधित कई मिथक प्रचलित है। प्रकृति के सतत् सानिध्य में रहने से इनकी त्वचा का रंग प्रायः गहरा काला है। यद्यपि हल्का ताम्र वर्ण भी बैगा समाज में देखा जाता है। बैगा लोगों की शारीरिक संरचना में सामान्यतः नाक चौड़ी होती है, होंठ कुछ मोटे होते हैं। आँखें औसतन कम गोल और काली होती हैं। स्त्री और पुरुषों के बाल लम्बे और घुँघराले होते हैं। पुरुष लम्बे बाल जन्म से रखते हैं, कभी कटवाते नहीं हैं। सर्वेक्षण के दौरान बैगा युवक से जब मैंने उनके लंबे बाल रखने के निहितार्थ पूछा तो उसने उत्तर दिया कि 'यही तो हमारा बैगापन है।' जिसका आशय था कि लम्बे बाल बैगाओं की खास पहचान है। बैगा एक आदिम जनजाति है। यद्यपि बैगा भूमिया की एक शाखा है तथापि बैगाओं का स्वतंत्र अस्तित्व और निजी अस्मिता है। गणना के अनुसार बैगाओं के एक सौ आठ जाति है।⁴ सर्वेक्षण के दौरान जाति और गोत्र सम्बन्धी कई तथ्य सामने आए, पचास से ऊपर जातियों के नाम प्राप्त हुए हैं। बैगा पंडित द्वारा मरावी, धुर्वे, मरकाम, परतेती, तेकाम को अपना गोत्र बताया गया और जिस नाम से वंश या परिवार जाना जाता है, उसे वे जाति कहते हैं।

रीति-रिवाज एवं परम्पराएँ

जन्म संस्कार

बैगा समाज में स्त्री के गर्भवती होने की पर किसी प्रकार की खुशी या रस्म नहीं मनाई जाती है। बड़ी-बूढ़ी महिलाएँ गर्भवती स्त्री को समय-समय पर जड़ी-बूटी व आवश्यक निर्देश देती है। बैगा समाज में लड़का या लड़की दोनों के जन्म पर समान खुशी मनाया जाता है। अन्य जनजातियों के समान बैगा लोगों द्वारा जन्मोत्सव पर किसी प्रकार का गीत, नृत्य, ढोल बजाने की प्रथा नहीं है। जन्म पर शिशु के नाल काटने के बाद शिशु को कोदो या कुटकी रखे सूप में सुला देते हैं। थोड़ी देर बाद स्नानोपरांत जच्चा-बच्चा को पुआल के ऊपर सुला देते हैं।

जन्म के छठे दिन माँ (स्थानीय शब्द महतारी) स्वयं घर की सफाई गोबर-मिट्टी से करती है। नदी में स्नान करने जाती है तथा काली मिट्टी से सिर धोती है। घर आकर हल्दी एवं तेल से शिशु का मालिश करती है। 'झालर' नामक एक रस्म में छठी के दूसरे दिन बैगा पिता द्वारा शिशु के सिर का बाल काट जाता है। मुंडन संस्कार में किसी प्रकार का कोई उत्सव नहीं

² हैसलम व अन्य : २०१२, ढाबा : एन इनिसियल रिपोर्ट ऑन एन एश्यूलियन, मिडिल पैलियोलिथिक एंड मैक्रोलीथिक लोकलिटी इन द मिडिल सोन वैली, नॉर्थ सेंट्रल इंडिया, क्वाटरनरी इंटरनेशनल जर्नल, पृ. १९१-१९८.

³ क्लार्कसन व अन्य; २०२०, ह्यूमेन ऑक्यूपेशन ऑफ इंडिया स्पैस द तोबा सुपर एरपसन-२४००० ईयर एगो, नेचर, पृ० ९६.

⁴ निरगुणे वसंत; २०१८, बैगा (हिन्दी में), संपदा, मध्य प्रदेश की जनजातीय सांस्कृतिक परंपरा का साक्ष्य, आदिवासी लोक कला एवं बोली विकास अकादमी, भोपाल, पृ० ८६-८८.

मनाया जाता है। दिन, महीने, पशु-पक्षी, नदियों देवताओं के नाम और बच्चे की सूरत शक्ल, रंग और क्रियाओं के आधार पर नामकरण किया जाता है।

विवाह संस्कार

अन्य समुदाय की भांति बैगा समाज में भी विवाह एक पवित्र बंधन माना जाता है। इनमें समजातीय विवाह वर्जित है। किन्तु सगोत्रीय विवाह संभव है जबकि गोंड समाज में सगोत्र विवाह निषेध है। बैगा समाज की संरचना से यह प्रतिबिंबित होता है कि यह स्त्री प्रधान समाज है। यहाँ कन्या को पूर्ण स्वतंत्रता प्राप्त है। सर्वेक्षण के दौरान हुए वार्तालाप में एक महिला ने यह बताया कि हमारे समाज में विवाह के पूर्व कन्या का अपनी इच्छा से यौन सम्बन्ध बनाने को सामाजिक स्वीकृति प्राप्त है। बैगा इस विषय में परम सहिष्णु और उदार हैं। सामूहिक नृत्य-गान जैसे आयोजनों पर बैगा युवती अपने साथी का चुनाव कर सकती है। हाट-बाजारों में वे एक-दूसरे को अच्छी तरह परखते हैं। जब उनके इस संबंध के विषय में मुखिया और सगे-सम्बन्धियों को पता लगता है तब मुखिया या दोनों के माता-पिता के बीच विवाह की बातचीत शुरू होती है। बैगा समाज में छह विवाह पद्धति प्रचलित हैं जैसे मँगनी विवाह या चढ़ विवाह, उठवा विवाह, चोर विवाह, पैटूल विवाह लमसेना विवाह, उधारिया विवाह।⁵

मृत्यु संस्कार

बैगा समुदाय के अंतर्गत शव को दफनाने और जलाने की दोनों प्रथाएँ प्रचलित हैं। किन्तु इनके द्वारा दफनाने की प्रथा प्रायः अपनायी जाती है। अधिक दिनों तक बीमार व्यक्ति की मृत्यु होने पर शव को जलाया जाता है। बैगा लोग किसी महामारी जैसे हैजा, चेचक आदि से मरे व्यक्ति को दफनाते हैं। बैगा दफनाने की क्रिया को मिट्टी देना कहते हैं। यह विदित है कि पुरातात्विक संदर्भ में दफनाने का साक्ष्य सरस्वती-सिंधु सभ्यता से ही प्राप्य है। सैन्धव लोग मृतक के अंतिम संस्कार को लेकर पूर्ण सजग थे। हड़प्पा, मोहनजोदड़ो, कालीबंगा, लोथल, राखीगढ़ी, फरमाना आदि कई पुरास्थलों से मृतक व उनके साथ अन्त्येष्टि सामग्री को दफनाने का प्रमाण मिलता है।⁶ बैगा समुदाय में इस परंपरा की सातत्यता को देखा जा सकता है। बैगा समाज के लोग मृतक को उसके प्रिय वस्तुओं के साथ दफनाते हैं। स्त्री शव के साथ उसके गहने सिर के पास रखे जाते हैं जबकि पुरुष के सिरहाने धनुष-बाण, कुल्हाड़ी, तम्बाकू, चिलम, चोंगी आदि रखते हैं। मृतक के मुँह में सोने या चाँदी के रुपये के ऊपर दही रखकर डालने की प्रथा है। ऐसा करने के पीछे इनका मानना है कि अगले जन्म में मृत व्यक्ति धन-धान्य से परिपूर्ण होगा। इसे सामरा प्रथा कहते हैं।

वस्त्राभूषण

प्रकृति से समन्नव्यता बैगा जनजाति के पहनावे में भी दिखाई देती है। बैगा लोग बहुत कम वस्त्र शरीर पर धारण करना पसंद करते हैं। प्रायः पुरुष लँगोटी व स्त्री सिर्फ शरीर पर एक साड़ी लपेटती हैं। बच्चे प्रायः नग्न अवस्था में रहते हैं। यद्यपि आजकल आधुनिक प्रभाव से इनके पहनावे में परिवर्तन हुआ है। किसी अवसर विशेष पर बैगा पुरुष हतोष (कमीजी), धोती, सिर पर पगड़ी लपेटते हैं।

बैगा स्त्रियाँ तीन तरह के लुगड़े (एक प्रकार का जनजातीय वस्त्र) पहनती हैं। मुंगी, बिगरा, चगदरिया परम्परागत स्त्री वस्त्र हैं। तीनों मोटे सूत की बनी होती हैं, जिनमें कलात्मक बेलबूटों की कढ़ाई होती है। कढ़ाई का काम पनिका जनजाति द्वारा किया जाता है। किन्तु सर्वे के दौरान लगभग सत्तर वर्षीय एक वृद्ध पनिका स्त्री से हुई बातचीत में यह बताया गया की अब यह काम लगभग बंद हो चुका है यहाँ तक की उनके घरों में उपयोग किए गये हथकरघा मशीनों का अस्तित्व भी नहीं है। पुरुष हाथ में जर्मन चूड़ा, कान में एक या दो पीतल की कनबद्धी, कान के ऊपरी हिस्से मूंगा बालियाँ, ऊपरी हिस्से में तांत की बनी बाड़ी, गले में मोती माला पहनते हैं। बैगा स्त्रियाँ गले में काँच की मोतियों से बनी गुरिया पहनती हैं। यहाँ यह उल्लेखनीय है की महदहा नामक पुरास्थल के दूसरे उपकाल से दो समाधियाँ मिली है जिसमें से एक समाधि में पुरुष का एक कंकाल तथा दूसरी युग्म समाधि है। एकाकी पुरुष कंकाल हिरण के शृंगो की बनी पाँच मुद्रिकाओं की एक माला गले में पहने हुए था। युग्म समाधि का पुरुष शृंगो की बनी बारह मुद्रिकाओं की एक माला गले में व बाएं कान में शृंग का बना हुआ गोल कुंडल धारण किए हुए था।⁷

⁵ निरगुणे वसंत; २०१८, बैगा (हिन्दी में), संपदा, मध्य प्रदेश की जनजातीय सांस्कृतिक परंपरा का साक्ष्य, आदिवासी लोक कला एवं बोली विकास अकादमी, भोपाल पृ० ९४-१०४

⁶ थपल्याल, किरण कुमार, १९७६, सिंधु सभ्यता, उत्तर प्रदेश हिन्दी संस्थान, लखनऊ, पृ० २१४-२१५.

⁷ पाण्डेय, जयनारायण; २०२०, पुरातत्त्व विमर्श, प्राच्य विद्या संस्थान, इलाहाबाद, पृ० ३१४

आवास संरचना

स्वावलोकन के आधार पर यह कहा जा सकता है कि यह बैगा समुदाय घने जंगलों में रहना पसंद करते हैं। यहाँ टोला की संकल्पना है जो सामान्य गाँव से छोटा होता है। वहाँ के लोगों द्वारा बातचीत में बताया गया कि वर्तमान में जो बैगा बसावट है उसमें काफी परिवर्तन हो चुका है। बैगा टोला (गाँव का छोटा रूप) किसी नदी-नाले या कुएँ के आस-पास बसा होता है। बैगा लोग कच्चे मकान में रहते हैं। ये मकान इनके द्वारा जंगल से लकड़ी, बाँस डोरा (बकल) और घास से बनाई जाती है। घर बनाने में गाँव के सभी लोग सहायता करते हैं। बैगा लोग पहाड़ी के ढलान या पहाड़ के समतल स्थल पर अपना घर बनाते हैं।

रोग-उपचार पद्धति

बैगा समाज अंधविश्वासी व झाड़ू-फूंक पर विश्वास करने वाला है। कठिन से कठिन बीमारियों के लिए बैगा लोग ओझा-गुनिया के हिकमत पर भरोसा करते हैं। गुनिया बैगा समाज का वैद्य होता है। यह कई प्रकार की जड़ी-बूटियों को जानता है। गुनिया मुफ्त में इलाज करता क्योंकि उसका मानना है कि पैसे लेने पर उसका गुनियापन (वैद्यता) कम हो जाएगा। यद्यपि रोग ठीक होने पर बलि में दिये गये बकरा, मुर्गा, सुअर और दो-चार बोटल दारू गुनिया को देना पड़ सकता है। गुनिया स्वेच्छा से कोई वस्तु नहीं माँगता। बैगा समाज में गुनिया का विशेष महत्त्व है। एक बैगा गुनिया ने बताया कि वे आदमियों के इलाज के साथ पशुओं का उपचार भी निःशुल्क करते हैं। गुनिया (स्थानीय वैद्य) अपने मंत्र-तंत्रों की सिद्धि बनी रहने के लिए कई तरह के नियम जोग मानते हैं। साल में एक बार तंत्र-मंत्र को जगाते भी हैं। गुनिया सामान्यतः विविध उपचारों हेतु विभिन्न प्रकार की जड़ी-बूटियाँ देता है जिसे वर्तमान में एथनो मेडिसिन कहा जा रहा है। जैसे:-

जड़ी-बूटी(एथनो मेडिसिन) स्थानीय नाम	उपयोग
मुरकुद	हड्डी टूटने के बाद
बैर की जड़े	धात की बीमारी (मेटल सिन्ड्रोम) में
चिलबिल का पेड़	दाद, खुजली
परास /पलाव का पेड़	पेचीस (डिसेन्ट्री) में
केला का जड़	पेचीस (डिसेन्ट्री) में
बोकला के छाल का प्रयोग	हड्डी टूटने में
कोरकोट का छिलका देसी अंडे के साथ लेप में	हड्डी जोड़ने के लिए
सरपोक की जड़	मीयादी बुखार (इन्टर्मिटन्ट फीवर)
चिरैटा पीस के पिए	मीयादी बुखार(इन्टर्मिटन्ट फीवर)
लडैया का पत्ता	चक्कर आने में
बनछुरिया बेल लाल की जड़ी	पीलिया में
चिटकी की जड़ें और पत्ते पीसकर महलोन के पत्ते में बाँधना	पेट फूलने में
कांदा को बीच में काटकर खाना	सिर दर्द
आलू कस व कांदा का रस मिलाकर	गठिया जोड़ दर्द में
जरिया पत्ती	आंखे आने पर

तालिका सं० १: (सर्वे से प्राप्त आंकड़ों पर आधारित सूची)

धार्मिक विश्वास

बैगा समाज में देवी देवता के पहचान के लिए गुनिया बैठक करता है। बैगा लोग देवी देवता पकड़ने के लिए मंत्र जाप करते हैं। बूढ़ा देव, म्हरा देव, महारानी देवी और देशावर देवी, ठाकुर देव, खैर माई, बागेशवर बेवर, बंजारिन माई इनके प्रमुख देवी-देवता हैं। इनकी मान्यता के अनुसार यदि बूढ़ा देव ने किसी व्यक्ति को पकड़ा है तो बकरा, महारानी देवी हो तो बकरी, म्हरा देव हो तो सूअर, देशावरी देवी हो तो मुर्गा या मुर्गी चढ़ाई जाती है। देवी-देवताओं के पकड़ने का लक्षण मरीज पर भी दिखता है। जैसे- बूढ़ा देव पकड़ता है तो हाथ-पैर में दर्द होता है। मरीज खटिया पर पड़ा रहता है या जमीन में ही लोटता है। महारानी देवी पकड़ती है तो चक्कर आते हैं, आँखें मुँद जाती हैं, मरीज चुप होकर सो जाता है। म्हरा देव पकड़ते हैं तो उलट मारते हैं अर्थात् उल्टी होती है। देशावर देवी पकड़ती है तो उल्टे होकर गिर पड़ते हैं, उल्टी होती है। गुनिया (वैद्य)

देवता के अनुसार दान की घोषणा करता है। दिये गये दान अर्थात् बकरा-बकरी, सूअर या मुर्गी के सामने गुनिया (वैद्य) थोड़े चावल मंत्रित कर रखता है। इन पशुओं ने दाना खा लिया तो यह संभावना रहेगी कि देवता इलाज होने पर चला जाएगा। यदि नहीं खाया तो देवी-देवता जल्दी उस व्यक्ति को छोड़कर जाने वाला नहीं है।

आर्थिक संरचना

बैगाओं का आर्थिक आधार अभी भी खेती-बारी, घरेलू धंधे, पशुपालन व मजदूरी है। परंपरागत कृषि में बैगा बहुत अधिक विश्वास करते हैं। बैगा अपने घरों में कई छोटे-छोटे उद्योग धंधे करते हैं जैसे- बाँस की टोकरीयाँ, डलियाँ, मछली के फन्दे आदि बनाकर बेचते हैं। लेकिन इससे कोई खास आमदनी नहीं होती। बैगाओं का मुख्य उद्योग जंगली पैदावार जैसे जड़ी-बूटी, शहद, महलों के पत्ते, जंगली फलों में तेंदू, चार, भिलमा, घूई, जामुन इकट्ठा कर बाजारों या गाँव में बेचने का काम करते हैं। कृषि फसलों से प्राप्त अन्न के अभाव में बैगा शेष समय में मजदूरी (कूटी-कवारी) कर अपना गुजर-बसर करते हैं। ज्येष्ठ से अगहन तक बैगा कृषि कार्य में व बाकी समय मजदूरी करने में जुट जाता है। बैगा कुल्हाड़ी चलाने में होशियार होता है। इसलिये वन विभाग पेड़ों की कटाई में बैगा मजदूरों को प्राथमिकता देता है। बैगा अपने घरों में सुअर, मुर्गी, बकरी, गाय और भैंस पालते हैं। इसके अलावा अन्य जनजातीय समुदाय मुसहर, कोल, चेरो आदि की भाँति बैगा जंगलों में छोटे जीव-जंतुओं का शिकार करके अपना भरण पोषण करते हैं। मुर्गी अण्डे, बकरी, गाय, भैंस का दूध बेचकर बैगा कुछ आमदनी कर लेते हैं। कुछ बैगा महुआ की मंद या दारू बनाकर बेचते हैं।^८

लोक कला (नृत्य-संगीत)

नृत्य-संगीत कला- बैगा समुदाय का अपना आदिम संगीत है जो प्रकृति प्रदत्त है। नदियों, हवाओं, वनों से बैगाओं ने अपने सुर व ताल को सिखा है। प्रकृति स्वयं इनकी गुरु है। बैगा समुदाय में नृत्य का भी प्रकृति से अनूठा संबंध है। इनके नृत्य दशहरा से शुरू होकर वर्षा के होने तक चलता है। इनके नृत्य शृंगार प्रधान होते हैं जिसमें बैगा स्त्री व पुरुष बिना शृंगार के सम्मिलित नहीं होते हैं। दशहरा नृत्य, करमा, बैगानी, झरपट, रीना, सैला, बिलमा, परघोंनी नृत्य बैगा समुदाय के प्रसिद्ध नृत्य हैं।

निष्कर्ष

इस प्रकार सर्वे से प्राप्त नृजातीय आँकड़ों के आधार पर यह कहा जा सकता है कि बैगा समाज में संस्कार व परंपराओं का दर्शन होता है। इनकी सामाजिक, धार्मिक, आर्थिक गतिविधियों में भारतीय लोक संस्कृति के मूल तत्व विद्यमान हैं। मुख्यतः एकजुटता, एकरूपता व प्रकृत्यनुरूप क्रियाविधि को बैगा समाज के लोगों से सीखा जा सकता है। उपर्युक्त सभी विशेषताएँ इस समाज के लोगों में मौखिक रूप से विद्यमान हैं जिसका समय के साथ दस्तावेजीकरण करना आवश्यक है ताकि इसे अक्षुण्ण बनाया जा सके व इन तथ्यों के आधार पर प्रागैतिहास, मानवशास्त्र, समाजशास्त्र जैसे विषयों में भी उचित प्रसंग के साथ शोध कार्य किया जा सके।

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९. केशरी, अर्जुनदास; २००१, भारतीय लोककला, लोकवार्ता शोध संस्थान, सोनभद्र।
१०. सिन्हा, ए.एम; १९९४, मध्यप्रदेश डिस्ट्रिक्ट गजेटियर, सतना, भोपाल, गवर्नमेंट ऑफ मध्यप्रदेश।
११. वर्मा, आर; १९९४, मध्यप्रदेश डिस्ट्रिक्ट गजेटियर, सीधी, भोपाल: डिपार्ट्मेंट ऑफ कल्चर।
१२. ब्रोकमेन, डी.डी.एल; १९९१, मिर्जापुर गजेटियर, इलाहाबाद: सुपरिंटेंडेंट गवर्नमेंट प्रेस। □□

⁸ अंसारी, शाहीदा; २०००, स्मॉल गेम हंटिंग मुसहर : एन एथ्नोआर्किऑलॉजीकल एप्रोच, पुरातत्व ३०, पृ० १४२-१५०

शंकराचार्य कृत स्तोत्र साहित्य : एक समीक्षा

प्रो० सरिता शर्मा

प्रोफेसर, संस्कृत विभाग,

कमला नेहरू महाविद्यालय, दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय, दिल्ली

सारांश

आदि शंकराचार्य के स्तोत्र साहित्य में भक्ति एवं अद्वैत वेदान्त का अद्भुत समन्वय दृष्टिगोचर होता है। काव्य लोकानुरंजन के लिए होता है। इन स्तोत्रों में काव्यात्मकता के साथ सहजतापूर्वक आध्यात्मिक तत्व का समायोजन किया गया है। इस पत्र में शंकराचार्य कृत विविध स्तोत्रों का अध्ययन किया जाएगा एवं लोकजीवन में भक्ति के माध्यम से दार्शनिक सिद्धांतों के प्रतिपादन का अध्ययन किया गया है। अद्वैत वेदान्त में माया अथवा अध्यास का ब्रह्मसूत्र में प्राप्त वर्णन चर्पटपंजरिका स्तोत्र में सरल शब्दों में वर्णित है।¹

शब्द कुंजी

आदि शंकराचार्य, हिन्दू, सनातन, स्तोत्र साहित्य, साहित्यिक तत्व, दार्शनिक तत्व, आलोचनात्मक समीक्षण

मुख्य विषय

आदि शंकराचार्य न केवल अद्वैत वेदान्त की परम्परा में महान् योगदान के लिए विख्यात हैं अपितु हिन्दू धर्म की पुनर्स्थापना में उनका योगदान अद्वितीय है। उन्होंने सनातन धर्म को संगठित भी किया।

झगद्गुरु शंकराचार्य के विषय में प्रसिद्ध है -

अष्टवर्षे चतुर्वेदी द्वादशसर्वशास्त्रवित्।

षोडशे कृतवान् भाष्यं द्वात्रिंशे मुनिरभ्यगात्।।

अर्थात् आठ वर्षों की आयु तक आचार्य ने वेदों का अध्ययन किया, बारह वर्ष की आयु तक वह सभी शास्त्रों के ज्ञाता हुए, षोडश वर्ष की अवस्था में ब्रह्मसूत्र शारीरक भाष्य लिखा एवं ३२ वर्ष की आयु में उन्होंने देहत्याग किया।

शंकराचार्य केरल प्रान्त के 'कालडी' नामक स्थान पर सातवीं या आठवीं शताब्दी में 'पिता शिवगुरु' में माता 'सती' या 'विशिष्टा' की सन्तान के रूप में जन्म लिया। उनके दीक्षागुरु आचार्य गोविन्द थे। शंकराचार्य ने चार दिशाओं में चार मठों की स्थापना की -

बदरिकाश्रम में ज्योतिर्मठ (उत्तर)

जगन्नाथपुरी में गोवर्धनमठ (पूर्व)

शृंगेरी में शृंगेरीमठ (दक्षिण)

द्वारका में शारदामठ (पश्चिम)

शंकराचार्य ने अनेक ग्रन्थों की रचना की थी। जिनमें से उपनिषद् भाष्य, गीता भाष्य, ब्रह्मसूत्र भाष्य तथा उपदेशसाहस्री (प्रकरण ग्रन्थ) विशेष रूप से प्रसिद्ध हैं।

शंकराचार्य के शिष्यों में निम्नलिखित दश नामों वाले संन्यासी होते हैं (४ मठों के) - सरस्वती, आश्रम, तीर्थ, भारती, वन, (नागा साधु) अरण्य, पर्वत, गिरि, सागर, पुरी।

ब्रह्मसूत्र पर शंकराचार्य का शारीरक भाष्य अद्वैत वेदान्त की प्रतिष्ठापना करने वाला अद्भुत भाष्य है। शारीरकभाष्य पर २५ टीकाएं रची गईं।

इस भाष्य में शंकराचार्य ने प्रथमतः अध्यास बताया है - स्मृतिरूपः परत्र पूर्वदृष्टावभासः। अतस्मिन् तद् बुद्धिः अध्यासः। ब्रह्मसूत्र के प्रथम चार सूत्रों को चतुःसूत्री कहा जाता है। इन चारों सूत्रों पर शंकराचार्य का भाष्य विशिष्ट व्याख्या करने के कारण लब्ध प्रतिष्ठ है -

¹ मा कुरु धनजनयौवनगर्वम्
हरति निमेषात्कालः सर्वम्
तथा
बालस्तावत् क्रीडासक्तः तरुणस्तावत् तरुणीसक्तः।
वृद्धस्तावत् चिन्तामग्नः परमे ब्रह्मणि कोपि न लग्नः॥

१. अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा -

विवेक आदि साधनचतुष्टय सिद्धि अनन्तर साधक को कर्मफल के अनित्य और ज्ञानफल मोक्ष के नित्य होने के कारण मुमुक्षु को ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा करनी चाहिए।

२. जन्माद्यस्य यतः -

इस जगत् की उत्पत्ति, स्थिति तथा लय जिससे होते हैं, वह ब्रह्म है।

३. शास्त्रयोनित्वात् -

ऋग्वेद आदि शास्त्र का कारण होने से ब्रह्म सर्वज्ञ है। अथवा ब्रह्म केवल ऋग्वेद आदि शास्त्र प्रमाणक है। ब्रह्म के यथार्थ स्वरूप के ज्ञान में ऋग्वेदादि शास्त्र ही प्रमाण हैं।

४. तत्तु समन्वयात् -

वह ब्रह्म स्वतन्त्र से वेदान्त वाक्यों द्वारा ही अवगत होता है, क्योंकि सम्पूर्ण वेदान्त वाक्य उसके प्रतिपादन में तात्पर्य से सम्बन्धित है।

आचार्य ने 'ब्रह्म' के लक्षण कहे -

१. तटस्थ लक्षण - जन्माद्यस्य यतः - अर्थात् ब्रह्म वह है जो इस जगत् की उत्पत्ति, स्थिति एवं लाभ का हेतु है।

२. स्वरूप लक्षण - सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म - अर्थात् ब्रह्म सत्य, ज्ञान और अनन्त अथवा आनन्द है अर्थात् सच्चिदानन्द है।

'आत्मा' ज्ञानस्वरूप है। आत्मा से भिन्न जो कुछ भी है, वह 'माया' है। माया सदसद् विलक्षण है, तत्त्व और अन्यत्व से भिन्न है -

'अव्यक्ता हि माया, तत्त्वान्यत्वनिरूपणस्य अशक्यत्वात्' माया ईश्वर की शक्ति है। मायामुक्त होने पर ब्रह्म को ही 'ईश्वर' कहा गया है। आत्मज्ञान ही 'मोक्ष' है।

प्रश्न - एक सहज प्रश्न जिज्ञासुओं के मस्तिष्क में आ सकता है कि यदि शंकराचार्य ने स्वयं ही अद्वैत वेदान्त को अद्वितीय प्रतिष्ठा प्रदान की तो उन्होंने शिव, पार्वती गणेश, विष्णु, लक्ष्मी, हनुमान आदि विविध देवताओं की स्तुतिपरक स्तोत्रों की रचना क्यों की?

उत्तर - इस प्रश्न के दो उत्तर हो सकते हैं -

१) निर्गुण की अपेक्षा सगुण की उपासना सरल है। साधारण सांसारिक भाव की आध्यात्मिक प्रवृत्ति के उपन्यास हेतु आचार्य ने इन स्तोत्रों की रचना की होगी।

२) यह साहित्य स्वयं आदि शंकराचार्य की नहीं अपितु शंकराचार्य द्वारा स्थापित मठों के मठाधीश जगद्गुरु शंकराचार्यों की रचनाएं हैं। ज्ञातव्य है कि इन मठों के सञ्चालन के लिए आचार्य ने कुछ उपदेश दिए थे, जो कि महानुशासन के नाम से प्रसिद्ध हैं। इसमें २६ श्लोक हैं। इन जगद्गुरुओं को शंकराचार्य ने आदि शंकर की मूर्ति ही माना है -

अस्मत्पीठसमारुढः परिब्राडुक्तलक्षणः।

अहमेवेति विज्ञेयो यस्य देव इति श्रुतेः॥

आदि शंकराचार्य ने निम्नलिखित कृतियों की रचना की है, ऐसा विद्वानों का मत है^२ -

भाष्यग्रन्थ- ब्रह्मसूत्र, ईशावास्योपनिषद्, केनोपनिषद्, कठोपनिषद्, प्रश्नोपनिषद्, मुण्डकोपनिषद्, माण्डूक्योपनिषद्, माण्डूक्यकारिका, ऐतरेयोपनिषद्, तैत्तिरीयोपनिषद्, छान्दोग्योपनिषद्, बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्, श्रीनृसिंहतापनीयोपनिषद्, भगवद्गीता, विष्णुसहस्रनाम, सनत्सुजातीयम्, ललिता त्रिशती, हस्तामलकीयम्

प्रकरण ग्रन्थ-विवेकचूड़ामणि, अपरोक्षानुभूति, उपदेशसाहस्री, वाक्य वृत्ति, स्वात्म निरूपणम्, आत्म बोध, सर्व वेदान्त सार संग्रह, प्रबोधसुधाकरम्, स्वात्मपरीक्षा, अद्वैतानुभूति, ब्रह्मअनुचिन्तनम्, प्रश्नोत्तररत्नमालिका, सदाचारअनुसन्धानम्, यागतारावली, अनात्माश्रीविग्रहणम्, स्वरूप-अनुसन्धानम्, पञ्चीकरणम्, तत्त्वबोध, प्रौढअनुभूति, ब्रह्मज्ञानावली, लघुवाक्यवृत्ति, भजगोविन्दम्, प्रपञ्चसारम्

² Weblink - Vivekavani.com/Work-adi-Shankaracharya/Written by Vivekvani on 29th Jan 2014. accessed on 15/9/21 at 7:49 pm IST.

स्तोत्र ग्रन्थ- श्रीगणेशपञ्चरत्नम्, गणेशभुजंगम्, शिषभुजंगम्, देवीभुजङ्गम्, भवानीभुजंगम्, श्रीरामभुजंगम्, विष्णुभुजंगम्, शारदाभुजंगम्, शिवानन्दलहरी, सौन्दर्यलहरी, आनन्दलहरी, शिवपादादि केशन्तवर्णन, शिवकेशादिपादान्तवर्णन, श्रीविष्णुपादादिकेशान्त, उमामाहेश्वर स्तोत्रम्, त्रिपुरसुन्दरी वेदापद स्तोत्रम्, त्रिपुरसुन्दरी मानसपूजा, त्रिपुरसुन्दरी अष्टकम्, देवी शक्ति उपचार पूजा, मन्त्रमात्रिका पुष्पमाला, कनकधारास्तोत्रम्, अन्नपूर्णास्तोत्रम्, अर्धनारीश्वर स्तोत्रम्, भ्रमराम्बा अष्टकम्, मीनाक्षीस्तोत्रम्, मीनाक्षीपञ्चरत्नम्, गौरीदशकम्, नवरत्नमालिकास्तोत्रम् कल्याणदृष्टिस्तवः, ललितापञ्चरत्नम्, मायापञ्चकम्, सुवर्णमालास्तुति, दशश्लोकी, वेदसारशिवस्तोत्रम्, शिवपञ्चाक्षरस्तोत्रम्, शिवापराधक्षमापन, दक्षिणामूर्तिस्तोत्रम्, दक्षिणामूर्ति वर्णमाला, श्रीमृत्युञ्जयमानसिकपूजास्तोत्रम्, शिवनामावल्याष्टकम्, कालभैरवाष्टकम्, शतपदीस्तोत्रम्, शिवपञ्चाक्षर नक्षत्रमाला, द्वादशलङ्गस्तोत्रम्, काशीपञ्चकम्, हनुमत्पञ्चरत्नम्, लक्ष्मीनृसिंहपञ्चरत्नम्, लक्ष्मीनृसिंहकरावलम्बस्तोत्रम्, पांडुरङ्गाष्टकम्, अच्युताष्टकम् श्रीकृष्णाष्टकम्, हरिस्तुति, गोविन्दाष्टकम्, भगवानमानसपूजास्तोत्रम्।

‘गणेशपञ्चरत्नम्’ छह पद्यों में निबद्ध स्तोत्र है। प्रभातकाल में आदरपूर्वक पाठ करने वाले साधक को आरोग्य, दोषराहित्यत्व, पुत्रप्राप्ति, आयु एवं अष्टभूति की प्राप्ति होती हैं।^३ ‘गणेशभुजंगम्’ नव पद्यों में रचित प्रातः पठनीय स्तोत्र है। इससे वाणी की सिद्धि होती है तथा मनुष्य की सभी कामनाओं की पूर्ति होती है।^४

भुजंगप्रयात छन्द में ही सुब्रह्मण्य की स्तुति तैत्तिरीय पद्यों में की गई है। इस स्तोत्र का नाम ‘श्रीसुब्रह्मण्यभुजंगस्तोत्र’ है। इस स्तोत्र का पाठ करने वाले साधक को ‘स्कन्दसायुज्य’ प्राप्त होता है। पुत्र, स्त्री, धन, दीर्घ आयु भी प्राप्त होती है।^५

‘शिवभुजंगस्तोत्र’ में ४० पद्यों में भगवान शिव की स्तुति की गई है। इस स्तवन से मनुष्य को सुपुत्र आयु, आरोग्य, ऐश्वर्य की प्राप्ति होती है। भगवान शिव को ही समर्पित ‘शिवानन्दलहरीस्तोत्र’ में श्रीमत्भगवत्पाद आचार्य शंकर ने तर्कशास्त्र का खण्डन करते हुए वेदान्त के सिद्धान्तों का मण्डन किया है -

घटो वा मृत्पिण्डोऽप्यणुरपि च धूमोऽग्निश्चलः

पटो वा तन्तुर्वा परिहरति किं घोरशमनम्।

वृथा कण्ठक्षोभं वहसि तरसा तर्कवचसा

पदाम्भोजं शम्भोर्भज परमसौख्यं व्रज सुधीः॥६॥

यथा बुद्धिः शुक्तौ सुतमिति काचाश्मनि मणि-

जले पैष्ठे क्षीरं भवति मृगतृष्णासु सलिलम्।

तथा देवभ्रान्त्या भजति भवदन्यं जडजनो

महादेवेशं त्वां मनसि च न मत्वा पशुपते॥७॥

१०० पद्यों में निबद्ध यह उत्तम काव्य कृति भगवान शिव के अग्रगण्य देवत्व को समर्पित है। शंकराचार्य जी अपनी कविता रूपी कन्यका परम आराध्य श्रीशिव को समर्पित करते हैं -

सर्वालंकारयुक्तां सरलपदयुतां साधुवृत्तां सुवर्णां

सद्भिः संस्तूयमानां सरसगुणयुतां लक्षितां लक्षवाद्याम्।

उद्यद्भूषाविशेषामुपगतविनयां द्योतमानाथरिखां

कल्याणीं देव गौरीप्रिय मम कविताकन्यकां त्वं गृहाण॥९७॥

³ महागणेशपञ्चरत्नमादरेण योन्वहं
प्रजल्पति प्रभावके हृदि स्मरणाणेश्वरम्।
अरोगतामदोषतां सुसाहितीं सुपुत्रतां
समाहितायुरष्टभूतिमभ्युपैति सोऽचिरात्॥ ६, गणेशपञ्चरत्नम्

⁴ इमं सुस्तवं प्रातरुत्थाय भक्त्या
पठेद्यस्तु मर्त्यो लभेत्सर्वकामान्।
गणेशप्रसादेन सिध्यन्ति वाचो
गणेश विभौ दुर्लभं किं प्रसन्ने॥ ९, गणेशभुजंगम्

⁵ भुजङ्गाख्यवृत्तेन क्लृप्तं स्तवं यः
पठेद्भक्तियुक्तो गुहं संप्रणम्य।
स पुत्रान्कलत्रं धनं दीर्घमायु -
लभेत्स्कन्दसायुज्यमन्ते नरः सः॥ ३३

‘शिवपादादिकेशान्तवर्णनस्तोत्रम्’ ४१ पद्यों में भगवान भोलेनाथ की स्तुति है। इस स्तोत्र का पाठ प्रातःकाल में करणीय है। ‘शिवकेशादिपादान्तवर्णनस्तोत्रम्’ २९ पद्यों में भगवान शिव को समर्पित है। ४१ पद्यों में निबद्ध ‘वेदसारशिवस्तोत्रम्’ अनुप्रास अलंकार से विभूषित सुन्दर स्तोत्र है। ‘शिवापराधक्षमापणस्तोत्रम्’ में मातृकुक्षि में अवस्थित, जीव की अवस्था, बाल्यावस्था, युवावस्था, प्रौढावस्था, वृद्धावस्था तथा दैनन्दिन के क्रियाकलापों में, भगवान शिव की भक्ति में हुई त्रुटियों के लिए क्षमा मांगी गई है। स्तोत्र १५ पद्यों में रचित है।

‘सुवर्णमालास्तुतिः’ में ५० पद्यों में अ, आ, इ, ई, उ, ऊ, ऋ, ॠ, ए, ऐ, ओ, औ, अं, अः, इन स्वरों तथा क, ख, ग, घ, ज्ञ, च, छ, ज, झ, ञ, ट, ठ, ड, ढ, ण, त, थ, द, ध, न, प, फ, ब, भ, म, य, र, ल, व, श, ष, स, ह, ङ, क्ष – इन व्यञ्जनों से पद्यों को प्रारम्भ कर भगवान शिव की स्तुति है। प्रत्येक पद्य के तृतीय तथा चतुर्थ चरण एक समान हैं –

“साम्ब सदाशिव शंभो शंकर

शरणं मे तव चरणयुगम्।”

‘दशश्लोकीस्तुतिः’ में भी भगवान शिव की १० पद्यों में स्तुति है। प्रत्येक पद्य का अंतिम चरण समान है –

‘तस्मिन् मे हृदयं सुखेन रमतां साम्बे परब्रह्मणि’।

‘दक्षिणामूर्तिवर्णमालास्तोत्रम्’ में २५ पद्य हैं। प्रत्येक पद्य का अन्तिम चरण समान है –

‘तं तस्मै प्रत्यञ्चं दक्षिणवक्त्रं कलयामि।’

‘श्रीदक्षिणामूर्त्यष्टकम्’ में भी प्रथम नौ पद्यों का अन्तिम चरण एक ही है, दशम का पद्य भिन्न है।

‘तस्मै श्रीगुरुमूर्तये नम इदं श्रीदक्षिणामूर्तये’ – यह अन्तिम चरण है।

‘श्रीमृत्युञ्जयमानसिकपूजास्तोत्रम्’ में ४४ पद्यों में भगवान शिव की मानसिक पूजा तथा अन्तिम दो पद्यों में इस स्तोत्र का लाभ बताया गया है। शिवलिंग का प्रातः दर्शन स्वर्गप्रदायि, मध्याह्न दर्शन अश्वमेधतुल्य फलदायी, सायंकालीन दर्शन मोक्षदायी होता है।

‘शिवनामावल्याष्टकम्’ में भगवान शिव के निम्न ७६ नामों को सम्बोधित किया गया है –

चन्द्रचूड, मदनान्तक, शूलपाणि, स्थाणु, गिरीश, गिरिजेश, महेश, शंभु, भूतेश, भीतभयसूदन, पार्वतीहृदयवल्लभ चन्द्रमौलि, भूताधिप, प्रमथनाथ, गिरीशचाप, वामदेव, भव, रुद्र, पिनाकपाणि, नीलकण्ठ, वृषभध्वज, पञ्चवक्त्र, लोकेश, शेषवलय, प्रमथेश, शर्व, धूर्जटि, पशुपति, गिरिजापति, विश्वनाथ, शिव, देवदेव, गंगाधर, प्रमथनाथक, नन्दिकेश, बाणेश्वर, अन्धकरिपु, हर, लोकनाथ, वाराणसीपुरपति, मणिकर्णिकेश, वीरेश, दक्षमखकाल, विभु, गणेश, सर्वज्ञ, सर्वहृदयैकनिवास, नाथ, श्रीमन्महेश्वर, कृपामय, दयालु, व्योमकेश, शितिकण्ठ, गणाधिनाथ, भस्मांगराग, नृकपालकलापमाल, कैलाशशैलविनिवास, वृषाकपि, मृत्युञ्जय त्रिनयन, त्रिजगन्निवास, नारायणप्रिय, मदापह, शक्तिनाथ, विश्वेश, विश्वभवनाशक, विश्वरूप, विश्वात्मक, त्रिभुवनैकगुणाधिकेश, करुणामय, दीनबन्धु, गौरीविलासभवन, पञ्चानन, शरणागतकल्पक, शर्व, सर्वजगतामधिप जगदीश। प्रत्येक पद्य का अन्तिम चरण समान है। इसमें सांसारिक दुःखों से रक्षा की प्रार्थना की गई है –

“संसारदुःखगहनाज्जगदीश रक्ष।”

‘शिवपञ्चाक्षरस्तोत्रम्’ में ‘नमः शिवाय’ के प्रत्येक अक्षर को आदि में रखकर पाँच पद्यों में भगवान शिव की स्तुति है।

‘उमामहेश्वर स्तोत्र’ में १३ पद्यों में भगवान शिव एवं माता पार्वती की स्तुति है। प्रत्येक पद्य का अन्तिम चरण है – “नमो नमः शंकरपार्वतीभ्याम्।”

‘सौन्दर्यलहरी’ में पद्यशतक द्वारा मां भगवती की स्तुति है। इस शतक में माता त्रिपुरसुन्दरी की उपासना के साथ साथ शृंगार रस का उद्रेक होता है। एक तरफ सौन्दर्यलहरी में काव्य सौन्दर्य की पराकाष्ठा है तो उसी तरह यः तंत्र साधना के तत्त्व की आध्यात्मिक प्रस्तुति भी है। ‘देवीभुजंगस्तोत्रम्’ में २८ पद्यों में देवी को ही सर्वस्व बताया गया है –

जगज्जालमेतत्त्वयैवाम्ब सृष्टं

त्वमेवाद्य यासीन्द्रियैरर्थजालम्।

त्वमेकैव कर्त्री त्वमेकैव भोक्त्री

न मे पुण्यपापे न मे बन्धमोक्षौ॥२७॥

आचार्य स्वयं को बालक एवं इस कविकर्म को बालक विनोदप्रयास कहते हैं –

इति प्रेमभारेण किञ्चिन्मयोक्तं

न बुधैव तत्त्वं मदीयं त्वदीयम्।

विनोदाय बालस्य मौख्यं हि मात-

स्तदेतत्प्रलापस्तुतिं मे गृहाण॥२८॥

‘आनन्दलहरी’ में २० पद्य हैं। देवी की इस स्तुति से ज्वर के कारण उत्पन्न पीड़ा का नाश हो जाता है। माँ भगवती के स्वरूप का वर्णन करते हुए आचार्य शंकर ने भारतमाता का चित्र अनायास ही अपनी कार्यकूचिका से रचित कर दिया है –

मुखे ते ताम्बूलं नयनयुगले कज्जलकला
ललाटे काश्मीरं विलसति गले मौक्तिकलता।
स्फुरत्काञ्ची शाटी पृथुकटितटे हाटकमयी
भजामि त्वां गौरी नगपतिकिशोरीमविरतम्॥३॥

‘त्रिपुरसुन्दरीवेदपादस्तोत्रम्’ ११० पद्यों में देवी की स्तुति है। इस स्तोत्र को पढ़ने वाले साधक को विद्या, यश, धन, वर्चस्व प्राप्त होते हैं। इसे सुनने वाले को भी श्रीविद्या आदि प्राप्त होते हैं।

‘त्रिपुरसुन्दरीमानसपूजास्तोत्रम्’ में १२७ पद्यों में देवी की वाणी रूपी पुरुषों से अर्चना की गई है।
‘देवीचतुःषष्ट्युपचारपूजास्तोत्रम्’ में ७२ पद्यों में माँ भगवती की स्तुति है। इस स्तोत्र के पाठ से धर्मार्थकाम की प्राप्ति का तथा मनुष्य देहावसान होने पर ‘शिवभाव’ को प्राप्त होता है प्रतिदिन पाठ करने वाले साधक को वाग्वादिनी का प्रसाद मिलता है और वह कवित्व को प्राप्त करता है।

‘त्रिपुरसुन्दर्यष्टकम्’ में आठ पद्यों में माँ त्रिपुरसुन्दर की स्तुति है।

‘ललितापञ्चरत्नम्’ में ६ पद्य हैं। प्रातःकाल में इस स्तोत्र का पाठ करने वाले साधक को ललिता देवी शीघ्र ही विद्या, श्री तथा कीर्ति प्रदान करती हैं।

‘कल्याणवृष्टिस्तवः’ में १६ पद्य हैं। इसका पाठ करने से चिरस्थायिलक्ष्मी की प्राप्ति होती है।

‘नवरत्नमालिका’ १० पद्यों वाला स्तोत्र है। इसके नित्य वाला नियमपूर्वक वाचन से भुक्ति एवं मुक्ति प्राप्त होती है।

‘मन्त्रमातृकापुष्पमालास्तवः’ में १७ पद्यों में देवी की स्तुति है।

‘गौरीदशकम्’ ११ पद्यों का प्रातः स्मरणीय स्तोत्र है। इससे वाणी की सिद्धि तथा संपत्ति की प्राप्ति होती है।

‘भवानी भुजंगम्’ १७ पद्यों में निबद्ध शोक, मोह, पाप तथा भयनाशक स्तोत्र है। आचार्य के अनुसार –

भवानी भवानी भवानी त्रिवार-

मुदारं मुदा सर्वदा ये जपन्ति।

न शोकं न मोहं न पापं न भीतिः

कदाचित्कथंचित्कुतश्चिज्जनानाम्॥१७॥

६ पद्यों में ‘हनुमत्पञ्चरत्नम्’ स्तोत्र का पाठ करने से इस लोक के भोगों की प्राप्ति तथा श्रीराम की भक्ति का भागित्व प्राप्त होता है।

‘श्रीरामभुजंगप्रयातस्तोत्रम्’ में २९ पद्यों में भगवान राम की स्तुति है।

‘लक्ष्मीनृसिंहपञ्चरत्नम्’ में ५ पद्यों में भगवान विष्णु के नृसिंह अवतार तथा माता लक्ष्मी की स्तुति है।

‘लक्ष्मीनृसिंहकरुणारसस्तोत्रम्’ में १७ पद्य हैं। इसके पाठन से हरिभक्ति की प्राप्ति होती है।

‘श्रीविष्णुभुजंगप्रयातस्तोत्रम्’ में १४ पद्य हैं। इसके पाठ से मोह का नाश एवं योग की प्राप्ति होती है।

‘विष्णुपादादिकेशान्तस्तोत्रम्’ में ५२ पद्य हैं।

‘पाण्डुरंगाष्टकम्’ में श्रीहार के पाण्डुरंग स्वरूप की ९ पद्यों में स्तुति है। इसके पाठ से मुक्ति की प्राप्ति होती है।

‘अच्युताष्टकम्’ में ९ पद्य हैं। इसका पाठ करने से ‘हरिवश्यत्व’ की प्राप्ति होती है।

‘कृष्णाष्टकम्’ में भगवान की अष्टपद्यात्मिका स्तुति है।

‘हरिस्तुतिः’ ४३ पद्यों में निबद्ध दार्शनिक स्तोत्र है।

‘गोविन्दाष्टकम्’ में भगवान श्रीकृष्ण की स्तुति है।

‘भगवामानसपूजा’ भी श्रीकृष्ण की १० पद्यों में स्तुति है।

‘मोहमुद्गरस्तोत्र’ लोकप्रसिद्ध है। ३१ पद्यों में निबद्ध यह स्तोत्र जीवन के प्रति वैराग्य की दृष्टि की उद्भावन करता है और ईश्वर की भक्ति की महत्ता का प्रतिपादन करता है। भज गोविन्दम् के उद्घोष के कारण इसे भज गोविन्द स्तोत्र भी कहा जाता है।

‘कनकधारास्तोत्रम्’ में १८ पद्य हैं। इसका पाठ करने से धन की प्राप्ति होती है।

‘अन्नपूर्णाष्टकम्’ भगवती पार्वती के अन्नपूर्णा स्वरूप की १२ पद्यों में स्तुति है। इसका पाठ करने वाले के घर में अन्न का अभाव नहीं रहता।

‘मीनाक्षीपञ्चरत्नम्’ माता पार्वती के मीनाक्षी स्वरूप की पाँच पद्यों में स्तुति है।

‘मीनाक्षीस्तोत्रम्’ ८ पद्यों में निबद्ध स्तुति है।

‘दक्षिणामूर्तिस्तोत्रम्’ में १९ पद्यों में स्तुति की गई है।

‘कालभैरवाष्टकम्’ में काशी नगर के अधिनाथ कालभैरव की स्तुति है। प्रत्येक पद्य का अन्तिम चरण समान है -

‘काशिकापुराधिनाथकालभैरवं भजे।’

‘नर्मदाष्टकम्’ में नर्मदास्तुति, ‘यमुनाष्टकम्’ में यमुनास्तुति, ‘गंगाष्टकम्’ में गंगास्तुति, ‘मणिकर्णिकाष्टकम्’ में काशी नगरी की मणिकर्णिका की स्तुति की गई है।

‘निर्गुणमानसपूजा’ ३३ पद्यों में गुरुशिष्यसंवादात्मक शैली में निबद्ध स्तुति है। इसमें दार्शनिक विषयों को प्रकाशित किया गया है।

‘प्रातः स्मरणस्तोत्रम्’ में ७ पद्यों में निर्गुण की स्तुति है।

‘जगन्नाथाष्टकम्’ में भगवान् जगन्नाथ की स्तुति है।

‘षट्पदीस्तोत्र’, भ्रमराम्बाष्टकंस्तोत्र, शिवपञ्चाक्षरनक्षत्रमालास्तोत्र, द्वादशलङ्घस्तोत्रम्, अर्धनारीश्वरस्तोत्रम्, शारदाभुजंगप्रयाताष्टकम्, गुर्वष्टकम्, काशीपञ्चकम् की भी रचना आचार्य ने की थी।

निष्कर्षः

इन स्तोत्रों के अध्ययन से यह सुस्पष्ट ही है कि शंकराचार्य का स्तोत्र साहित्य आध्यात्मिक, साहित्यिक एवं लौकिक दृष्टि से देश एवं काल की सीमाओं से परे है। आचार्य के विषय प्रतिपादन में लौकिक वाग्व्यवहार की भाषा है किन्तु वेदान्त दर्शन का गहन चिन्तन भी प्राप्त होता है। ईश्वर की भक्ति के साथ साथ अद्वैत वेदान्त की चिन्तन परम्परा का दर्शन भी परिलक्षित होता है। साकार ईश्वर के विभिन्न स्वरूपों की हृदयावर्जक काव्यात्मक प्रस्तुति मोक्ष का मार्ग प्रशस्त करती है। यह स्तोत्र भारत की दार्शनिक, आध्यात्मिक, सांस्कृतिक, लौकिक एवं साहित्यिक परम्परा का सम्यक् निदर्शन करते हैं। आचार्य की भाषा संस्कृत है और विविध छंदों में निबद्ध है। शब्दालंकारों एवं अर्थालंकारों का प्रचुर प्रयोग किया गया है। वर्तमान में इन स्तोत्रों के पठन पाठन की परम्परा सतत विद्यमान है। यही निरन्तरता शंकर कृत स्तोत्र साहित्य का महत्त्व प्रतिपादन करती है। भविष्य में इन स्तोत्रों की भाषिक, साहित्यिक एवं दार्शनिक प्रवृत्तियों को आधार बनाकर शोधकार्य किए जा सकते हैं।

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आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत 'चिन्तामणि' भाग-१ के अनुसार काव्य-मानकों के अनुप्रयोग का समीक्षात्मक अध्ययन

कु० विद्या

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सहायक प्राध्यापिका (शिक्षाशास्त्र)

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सारांश

प्रस्तुत शोध कार्य के अन्तर्गत शोधकर्त्री द्वारा आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत 'चिन्तामणि' भाग एक के 'कविता क्या है' निबन्ध पाठ की विषय वस्तु का विश्लेषण किया गया है। जिसमें गुणात्मक शोध उपागम के अन्तर्गत विषय वस्तु विश्लेषण शोध विधि का प्रयोग किया गया है। इस शोध के अन्तर्गत प्रमुख तीन उद्देश्यों काव्य के सारतत्त्व, काव्य की भाषा एवं काव्यशास्त्रीय मान्यताओं का पता लगाया गया है। इस शोध कार्य के माध्यम से हिन्दी काव्य-शिक्षण हेतु अनेक सुझाव एवं मार्ग प्रशस्त किये गये हैं। जिसमें काव्य के महत्त्व की आवश्यकता, काव्य शिक्षण के उद्देश्य, काव्य की भाषा व सारतत्त्व के साथ-साथ काव्यशास्त्रीय मान्यताओं को भी सम्मिलित किया गया है। हम सभी इस तथ्य से भली-भाँति परिचित हैं कि आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल हिन्दी साहित्य के मूर्धन्य विद्वान् हैं। इनको निबन्ध लेखन व आलोचक के रूप में प्रसिद्धि प्राप्त है। इसके साथ ही साथ 'कविता क्या है' निबन्ध है, जो काव्य के मापदण्ड को प्रस्तुत करता है। इसी मानदण्डों की कसौटी पर काव्य शिक्षण हेतु स्पष्ट व निर्देशित मार्गदर्शन प्राप्त किया जा सकता है। जिसको विद्यालयी शिक्षा हेतु हिन्दी भाषा-शिक्षण के अन्तर्गत आधार तथा मानदण्ड के रूप में सत्यापित व मान्यता प्रदान किया जा सकता है। इस शोध कार्य के परिणाम स्वरूप इन्हीं मान्यताओं को उद्देश्यवार विश्लेषित व सत्यापित किया गया है। जिसको विद्यालयी एवं विश्वविद्यालयी स्तर के दस्तावेजों की संस्तुतियों के रूप में शामिल किया जा सकता है, और हिन्दी भाषा में शुक्ल जी के कसौटियों को काफी हद तक प्रत्यक्ष तथा अप्रत्यक्ष रूप में सम्मिलित किया गया है। इस शोध कार्य में काव्य मानकों के अनुप्रयोगों को विश्लेषित किया गया है।

शब्द कुंजी

काव्य अनुप्रयोग, काव्य-शिक्षण का उद्देश्य, काव्य-सारतत्त्व, काव्य-मानदण्ड, काव्यशास्त्रीय मान्यताएँ, काव्यभाषा व विद्यालयी शिक्षा।

अध्ययन की पृष्ठभूमि: इस प्रस्तुत लघु शोध के अंतर्गत हिन्दी के प्रसिद्ध इतिहासकार आलोचनाकार एवं निबन्धकार आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल द्वारा लिखित निबन्ध 'चिन्तामणि' पुस्तक का चयन किया गया है। चिन्तामणि एक निबन्ध संग्रह है। इसके चार भाग हैं। चिन्तामणि भाग-१ का प्रकाशन १९३९ ईस्वी में हुआ था। चिन्तामणि प्रथम भाग-१ का शोध किया जाएगा। चिन्तामणि निबन्ध संग्रह के विषय वस्तु का विश्लेषण करने के उपरान्त शोधार्थी द्वारा यह पता लगाया जाएगा कि चिन्तामणि निबन्ध संग्रह में संकलित विभिन्न निबन्धों को पढ़ने के बाद हिन्दी गद्य शिक्षण के अंतर्गत आने वाली गद्यशिक्षण के उद्देश्य को इसमें किस सीमा तक पूरा किया जा सकता है और इसके साथ ही साथ प्रत्येक निबन्ध को पढ़ने के उपरान्त राष्ट्रीय पाठ्यचर्या रूपरेखा के द्वारा निर्धारित हिन्दी गद्य शिक्षण के उद्देश्यों में से किन-किन उद्देश्यों को प्राप्त किया जा सकता है आदि का अध्ययन किया जाएगा।

किसी भी साहित्य के अंतर्गत विविध विधाओं का समावेश किया जाता है। हिन्दी भाषा साहित्य की विधाओं में गद्य की सदैव से ही एक विशिष्ट भूमिका रही है। प्राचीन समय से ही गद्य को लेखक की कसौटी के रूप में स्वीकार किया जा रहा है। 'गद्य कवीनां निकषं वदन्ति' उक्ति इस तथ्य की पुष्टि करती है कि भाषा का जितना परिमार्जित, परिष्कृत एवं व्यवस्थित रूप गद्य विधा के रूप में देखने को मिलता है उतना अन्यत्र नहीं। काव्य के सृजन में यदि कहीं भी किसी प्रकार की त्रुटि देखी जाती है, वहां कवि की स्वतंत्रता को प्रमुख मानते हुए क्षम्य समझ लिया जाता है क्योंकि कवि अपनी इच्छा एवं सुविधा अनुसार रचना को सुंदर बनाने हेतु भाषागत नियमों का उल्लंघन कर सकता है, किंतु गद्य रचना में इस प्रकार की त्रुटि को रचनाकार की अज्ञानता और अयोग्यता समझा जाता है। कहने का आशय यह है कि गद्य रचना में रचनाकार के लिए विशिष्ट कौशलों की जानकारी अपेक्षित होती है।

हिन्दी गद्य की प्रमुख विधाएँ-संस्कृत के समान ही हिन्दी में भी गद्य की अनेक विधाएँ देखी जा सकती हैं, जैसे- निबन्ध, कहानी, जीवनी, आत्मकथा, संस्मरण, रेखाचित्र, उपन्यास, आलोचना इत्यादि। गद्य की इन सभी विधाओं को भले ही गद्यात्मक रूप में प्रस्तुत किया जाता है। पत्रा की जाती है, उसी शैली स्पष्ट अंतर देखा जा सकता है, अर्थात् रचना की जाती है, उसी शैली के आधार पर आत्मकथा अथवा जीवनी की रचना नहीं किया जा सकता है। प्रत्येक विद्या की अपनी एक विशिष्ट शैली होती है, जिसका अनुसरण करते हुए साहित्यकार अपने रचना कार्य की ओर प्रवृत्त होता है।

अध्ययन का औचित्य: प्रस्तुत शोध के अध्ययन का औचित्य के अंतर्गत राष्ट्रीय पाठ्यचर्या रूपरेखा द्वारा निर्देशित हिन्दी भाषा शिक्षण के उद्देश्यों के अंतर्गत आने वाली हिन्दी गद्य शिक्षण के उद्देश्यों को पूरा करने हेतु अथवा गद्य शिक्षण के उद्देश्यों के निर्धारण में आचार्य रामचंद्र शुक्ल द्वारा रचित प्रसिद्ध निबन्ध संग्रह 'चिन्तामणि' में निबन्धों को पढ़ने के उपरांत जिन-जिन उद्देश्यों को पूरा किया जा सकता है, वह अध्ययन की औचित्य का प्रतिपादन किया गया।

अद्यत प्रमुख शोध: वर्तमान अध्ययन के लिए प्रस्तुत अध्ययन के चयन के समय, सम्बन्धित साहित्य का विस्तृत सर्वेक्षण किया गया तथा सम्बन्धित साहित्य और अध्ययन का एक व्यापक और गहन सर्वेक्षण करने पर पता चलता है किशर्मा, राम विलास (२००९), 'आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल हिन्दी आलोचना' १में, नवल, नन्द किशोर (२०११), 'हिन्दी आलोचना का विकास' २में, डॉ० नगेन्द्र (२०१४), 'हिन्दी साहित्य का इतिहास' ३में, शर्मा, शिवदत्त (२०१५), 'आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल की निबंध शैली' ४में, वर्मा, डॉ० आर० पी० (२०१६), 'युगद्रष्टा आलोचक आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल के समीक्षा सिद्धान्त का आलोचनात्मक अध्ययन' ५में, वर्मा, अरुण लता (२०१६), 'काव्य में लोकमंगल की साधनावस्था आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल के संदर्भ' ६में, दीवाली, आस्था (२०१७), 'काव्य में लोकमंगल की साधना आस्था के आधार पर आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल की आलोचना दृष्टि' ७में, मीणा, सिया राम (२०१८), 'आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल के साहित्यिक दर्शन का आलोचनात्मक अध्ययन' ८में, सिंह, बच्चन (२०२१), 'आधुनिक हिन्दी साहित्य का इतिहास' ९में, बाला, अंजु (२०२१), 'आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल के निबंध अन्तर्वस्तु एवं शैली' १०में, डोगरे, सौ सरिता मोहरराव (२०२२), 'हिन्दी आलोचना के आधार शुक्ल, एक परिशीलन' ११में, श्रीवास, दिनेश (२०२३), 'आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल के निबन्धों की मनोवैज्ञानिक: करुणा भाव के विशेष संदर्भ' १२में, बिसरिया, प्रो० पुनीत (२०२३), 'आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल की हिन्दी आलोचना दृष्टि' १३में अध्ययन से सम्बन्धित अवधारणाओं और इसके लक्ष्य, उद्देश्य, भूमिकाओं आदि को समझाया गया है।

ज्ञान में रिक्ति: ज्ञान में रिक्ति के अंतर्गत आचार्य रामचंद्र शुक्ल द्वारा लिखित 'चिन्तामणि निबन्धपरिसर' से पहले जितने भी शोध कार्य किए गए हैं, वह साहित्यिक दृष्टिकोण से किए गए थे, परंतु आचार्य रामचंद्र शुक्ल के निबन्धों में भाषा शिक्षण में योगदान से संबंधित कोई शोध कार्य नहीं हुआ है अतः इस ज्ञान रिक्ति को पूरा करने हेतु चिन्तामणि में लिखित निबन्धों को शिक्षणशास्त्री परिप्रेक्ष्य में इसके औचित्य को सिद्ध किया गया है। आचार्य रामचंद्र शुक्ल लिखित निबन्ध में राष्ट्रीय पाठ्यचर्या रूपरेखा के अनुसार हिन्दी भाषा शिक्षण उद्देश्यों को पूरा कर रहे हैं। इसके अध्ययन हेतु यह शोध कार्य किया गया है।

प्रमुख शोध प्रश्न:

१. आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत 'चिन्तामणि' भाग-१ के अनुसार काव्य के सारतत्व क्या है?
२. आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत 'चिन्तामणि' भाग-१ अनुसार काव्यशास्त्रीय मान्यताएँ कौन-कौन सी हैं?

अध्ययन की आवश्यकता:

आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल का निबन्ध 'चिन्तामणि' एक प्रसिद्ध तथा सफल निबन्ध के रूप में प्रतिष्ठित है। राष्ट्रीय पाठ्यचर्या रूपरेखा के अनुसार हिन्दी भाषा शिक्षण के उद्देश्यों को इस निबन्ध में काफी हद तक पूरा किया जा सकता है। इस दृष्टि से लघु शोध कार्य किया गया है।

समस्या कथन:

आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत चिन्तामणि भाग-१ के अनुसार काव्य मानकों के अनुप्रयोग का समीक्षात्मक अध्ययन

अध्ययन में प्रयुक्त शब्दों की परिभाषा:

आचार्य रामचंद्र शुक्ल हिन्दी साहित्य के प्रकाण्ड विद्वान् आचार्य माने जाते हैं, जिन्होंने एक आलोचक, निबन्धकार, कहानीकार, कोशाकार, साहित्य-इतिहासकार और अनुवादक के रूप में हिन्दी साहित्य में अपना विशेष योगदान दिया है। आचार्य रामचंद्र शुक्ल की ख्याति का अक्षय स्रोत उनके द्वारा लिखित "हिन्दी साहित्य का इतिहास" है जो हिन्दी साहित्य में

“मील का पत्थर” मानी जाती है। चिन्तामणि सन् १९३९ में प्रकाशित आचार्य रामचंद्र शुक्ल द्वारा रचित हिन्दी का निबन्धात्मक ग्रंथ है। इस पुस्तक के चार भाग हैं।

अध्ययन का उद्देश्य:

१. आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत ‘चिन्तामणि’ भाग-१ के अनुसार काव्य के सारतत्त्वों का पता लगाना।
२. आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत ‘चिन्तामणि’ भाग-१ के अनुसार काव्य की भाषा विषय मान्यताओं का अध्ययन करना।
३. आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत चिन्तामणि भाग-१ में वर्णित काव्यशास्त्रीय मान्यताओं का अध्ययन करना।

अध्ययन के परिणाम:

प्रस्तुत शोध में विषयवस्तु का विश्लेषण एवं विवेचना निम्नलिखित उद्देश्यों के माध्यम से किया गया है। इस अध्ययन के परिणाम इस प्रकार हैं-

उद्देश्य १. आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत निबन्ध चिन्तामणि प्रथम भाग के अनुसार काव्य के सारतत्त्वों का पता लगाना।

आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल का निबन्ध चिन्तामणि प्रथम भाग का हिन्दी साहित्य में एक महत्वपूर्ण स्थान है। इस निबन्ध में आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल जी कविता के विभिन्न पहलुओं का गहन और विस्तृत चर्चा किये हैं। इन पहलुओं को हम दो भागों में बाँट सकते हैं।

१. भावपक्षगत विशेषताएँ

२. कलापक्षगत विशेषताएँ

१. भावपक्ष: आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल ने अपने निबन्ध चिन्तामणि, प्रथम भाग के निबन्ध ‘कविता क्या है’ में कविता के भावपक्षगत पर गहन चर्चा की है। वर्णन करते हुए उन्होंने कविता की संवेदनशीलता और उसकी भावनात्मकता गहराई को प्रमुखता से चित्रित किया है। यहां पर उनके निबन्ध के कुछ प्रमुख भावगत पहलुओं को प्रस्तुत किया गया है।

भावनात्मक अभिव्यक्ति:

विवेचन एवं स्पष्टीकरण:

आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल जी के अनुसार, कविता का मुख्य उद्देश्य भावनाओं की अभिव्यक्ति करना है। कविता के माध्यम से कवि अपनी गहन अनुभूतियों तथा भावनाओं की प्रस्तुत करता है। यह पाठकों के हृदय को जगाने वाली होनी चाहिए। उसमें संवेदना का समावेश होना चाहिए।

सजीव चित्रण:

विवेचन एवं स्पष्टीकरण: आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल जी ने अपने निबन्ध ‘कविता क्या है’, ने भावों का सजीव चित्रण किये हैं। उनके अनुसार कवि अपने विचारों और भावनाओं को इस प्रकार से प्रस्तुत किया है कि श्रोता या पाठक के मन में स्पष्ट एवं जीवन्त चित्र उभर कर सामने प्रस्तुत हो जाता है। यह चित्रण निबन्ध को प्रभावशाली बनाता है।

“हम धूप से व्याकुल होकर उसकी ओर बढ़ते हैं। देखते हैं उसकी जड़ के पास एक गाय बैठी आँखें मूँदे जुगाली कर रही है। हमलोग भी उसी के पास आराम से जा बैठते हैं। इतने में एक कुत्ता जीभ बाहर निकालते हाँफता हुआ उस छाया के नीचे आता है और हममें से कोई उठकर उसे छड़ी लेकर भगाने लगता है; चिन्तामणि, प्रथम-भाग पृ० संख्या ९४।” १४

उपर्युक्त पद में नर क्षेत्र तथा मनुष्येतर सजीव सृष्टि के क्षेत्र का उल्लेख हुआ है।

सभ्यता के आवरण और कविता:

विवेचन एवं स्पष्टीकरण: इसमें बताया गया है कि सभ्यता के वृद्धि के साथ-साथ ज्यों-ज्यों मनुष्य के व्यापार में बहुरूपी वृद्धि होती गई त्यों-त्यों उनके मूल रूप बहुत कुछ आच्छन्न होते गए। जैसे-जैसे सभ्यता बदली जा रही है। वैसे-वैसे ही कवियों के लिए यह काम बढ़ता जाएगा।

“इससे यह स्पष्ट है कि ज्यों-ज्यों हमारी वृत्तियों पर सभ्यता के नये-नये आवरण चढ़ते जायेंगे त्यों-त्यों एक ओर तो कविता की आवश्यकता बढ़ती जाएगी। दूसरी ओर कवि कर्म कठिन होता जायगा; ‘चिन्तामणि’ प्रथम-भाग। पृ० ८९।” १४

कविता और सृष्टि का प्रसार:

विवेचन एवं स्पष्टीकरण: हृदय पर नित्य प्रभाव रखने वाले रूपों और व्यापारों की भावना को सामने लाकर कविता बाह्य प्रकृति के साथ मनुष्य की अन्तःप्रकृति का सामाञ्जस्य घटित करती हुई, उसके भावात्मक सत्ता के प्रकार का प्रसार करती है।

१. **नरक्षेत्रः** संसार में अधिकतर कविता इसी नरक्षेत्र के भीतर हुई है। नरत्व की बाह्य प्रकृति और अन्तःप्रकृति के विभिन्न सम्बन्धों और पारस्परिक विधानों का संकलन काव्यों में मुक्तक तथा प्रबंधक दोनों ही रूपों में पाई जाती है।

२. **मनुष्येत्तर बाह्य प्रकृति:** मनुष्येत्तर बाह्य प्रकृति का आलम्बन के रूप में ग्रहण हमारे यहाँ संस्कृत के प्राचीन प्रबन्ध काव्यों के बीच-बीच में ही पाया जाता है। यहाँ प्रकृति का ग्रहण आलम्बन रूप में है। किसी वर्णन में आई हुई वस्तुओं का मन में ग्रहण दो प्रकार से होता है।

३. **समस्त चराचर:** समस्त चराचर के क्षेत्र से मार्मिक तथ्यों का चयन करने वाली दृष्टि उत्तरोत्तर अधिक व्यापक और गंभीर हो जाती है। समस्त चराचर काव्य दृष्टि से तात्पर्य कविता रचना अर्थात् इस संसार के बाह्य ब्राह्माण्ड पर, आकाश पाताल पर भी काव्य का सृजन करना।

इसमें आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल जी ने बताया है। सबसे अधिक कविता नरक्षेत्र पर लिखी गयी है। नरक्षेत्र अर्थात् मनुष्य के मानवीय संवेदना पर अनुभूति मनुष्य को मनुष्य से जोड़ना ही काव्य दृष्टि इसके अन्तर्गत आता है।

मार्मिक तथ्य

विवेचन एवं स्पष्टीकरण: इस बिन्दु के अन्तर्गत आचार्य, रामचन्द्र शुक्ल ने बताया है कि ज्ञान ही भावों में संचार का मार्ग खोलती है। ज्ञान के द्वारा ही भाव का प्रसार होता है। कविता के माध्यम से ही अनन्त व्यक्ति सत्ता के भीतर नरसत्ता का अनुभव करता है। तथ्यों के मर्म स्पर्शी पक्ष तथा मूर्तरूप में अभिव्यक्त करना तथा कविता में सजीव चित्रण करना ही कवि के काव्य का लक्षण होता है।

मनुष्यता की उच्च भूमि

विवेचन एवं स्पष्टीकरण: इस बिन्दु में आचार्य शुक्ल जी ने मनुष्य की मनुष्यता की चर्चा काव्य के द्वारा की है। कविता पढ़ने या सुनने के उपरान्त, कविता वाचन करते समय हम मनुष्यता के उच्च भूमि पर प्रतिष्ठित होते हैं। यहाँ कविता की मनुष्यता का उच्च भूमि से आशय कविता द्वारा मनुष्य अच्छा बुरा व्यवहार का ज्ञान प्राप्त होता है।

“कविता ही मनुष्य के हृदय को प्रकृति दशा में लाती है” और जगत के बीच क्रमशः उसका अधिकाधिक प्रसार करती हुई उसे मनुष्यत्व की उच्च भूमि पर ले जाती है। (चिन्तामणि प्रथम भाग पृ० ९८)।” १४

मनोरंजन

विवेचन एवं स्पष्टीकरण: आचार्य शुक्ल का मानना है कि कविता का उद्देश्य मनोरंजन करना मात्र नहीं है। कविता का लक्ष्य संसार के मार्मिक पक्षों का प्रत्यक्षीकरण करके उनके साथ मनुष्य हृदय का सामाज्यस्थ स्थापित करना है।

सौन्दर्य की प्रधानता

विवेचन एवं स्पष्टीकरण: कविता या काव्य में सौन्दर्य बाहर की कोई वस्तु नहीं है बल्कि मन के भीतर की वस्तु है। सौन्दर्य गुलाबों जैसे फूलों में नहीं होता सौन्दर्य अपने विचारों तथा कर्मों में होती है।

“कविता केवल वस्तुओं के ही रंग-रूप में सौन्दर्य की छटा नहीं दिखाती, प्रस्तुत कर्म और मनोवृत्ति के भी अत्यन्त मार्मिक दृश्य सामने रखती है। (चिन्तामणि प्रथम भाग, पृ० १०२)।” १४

कविता की आवश्यकता

विवेचन एवं स्पष्टीकरण: कविता की आवश्यकता मनुष्य को सदैव रहती है। क्योंकि मनुष्य समाज में रहता है। मनुष्य को समाज के प्रति कर्तव्य बोध से अवगत करने के लिए कविता की आवश्यकता होती है। समाज के प्रति दायित्वों का निर्वाह करने के लिए कविता का प्रचार आवश्यक है। मनुष्य में मनुष्यता अथवा मनुष्यत्व भाव को बनाये रखने के लिए कविता आवश्यक होती है। कविता के माध्यम से मनुष्य में समाज बोध की क्षमता जागृत करता है। अतः मनुष्य में मनुष्यत्व तथा सामाजिक बोध जागृत करने के लिए कविता परमावश्यक होती है।

कलापक्ष की विशेषताएँ: आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत निबंध ‘चिन्तामणि, प्रथम भाग, कविता क्या है’ में निबंध के माध्यम से कविता के कला पक्ष के पाठकों पर विशेष ध्यान दिया गया है। इसमें शुक्ल जी ने कविता की कलात्मक वृत्तियों का गहन विश्लेषण किया है। इस निबंध की कला पक्ष की मुख्य विशेषताएँ निम्नलिखित हैं।

शब्द चयन और संयोजन

विवेचन एवं स्पष्टीकरण: कविता में शब्दों का चयन और उनका संयोजन बहुत महत्वपूर्ण होता है। शुक्ल जी ने इस पर जोर दिया है कि कवि को अपने शब्दों का चयन बहुत सावधानी से करना चाहिए ताकि वे भावनाओं और विचारों को प्रभावी ढंग से व्यक्त कर सके। शब्दों की सुन्दरता और उनकी रचनात्मकता कर सकें। शब्दों की सुन्दरता और उनकी रचनात्मकता द्वारा कविता को प्रभावशाली रूप दिया गया है।

अलंकार योजना

विवेचन एवं स्पष्टीकरण: आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल के अनुसार, अलंकार कविता को सौन्दर्य और प्रभाव प्रदान करते हैं। अलंकारों के माध्यम से कवि अपने विचारों और भावनों के सजाता है जिससे कविता में अर्थिक आकर्षक और सजीव बनाती है। शुक्ल जी ने अलंकारों को कविता की शोभा माना है। अलंकारों के समुचित उपयोग कविता की गहराई और उसके कलात्मक पक्ष को प्रभावपूर्ण बनाना है। अलंकारों का प्रयोग शुक्ल जी निम्नलिखित रूपों में प्रयुक्त करते हैं।

१. सौन्दर्य के वृद्धि में
२. भावों की अभिव्यक्ति के लिए
३. चित्रात्मकता के लिए

भाषा (कविता की भाषा)

विवेचन एवं स्पष्टीकरण: कविता की भाषा के संदर्भ में आचार्य शुक्ल जी बिम्ब तथा नाद सौन्दर्य पर बल दिया है। शुक्ल जी अलंकारों के अनुसार भाषा का गठन करना चाहिए। कविताओं की भाषा में सर्वप्रथम प्राथमिकता लाक्षणिकता को महत्त्व प्रदान करते हैं।

कविता में व्यङ्गपूर्ण भाषा विषय के व्यञ्जकता को बढ़ाती है। वही दूसरी और गम्भीर विषय को सरस व सरल बनाती है। इनका मानना था कि भाषा ऐसा प्रयोग करना चाहिए कि पाठक को बोधगम्य हो सके तथा भाव को भाषा के माध्यम से चित्रात्मक रूप में प्रकट या प्रस्तुत करने की क्षमता होनी चाहिए।

“कविता में कही गई बात चित्र रूप में हमारे सामने आनी चाहिए, यह हम पहले कह आए है ‘चिन्तामणि, प्रथम भाग, पृ० १०७)” १४

कविता की भाषा के संदर्भ में शुक्ल जी बिम्ब एवं नाद सौन्दर्य पर बल दिया है। वे सौन्दर्य को आन्तरिक वस्तु मानते हैं और कहते हैं कि सौन्दर्य बाहर की कोई वस्तु नहीं है मन के भीतर की वस्तु है।

शैली की प्रधानता:

विवेचन एवं स्पष्टीकरण: आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल जी इन निबंधों में प्रयुक्त ‘कविता क्या है’, में शैली अद्वितीय है। निगमन और आगमन शैली का प्रयोग किया गया है। शैली में शुक्ल जी का व्यक्तित्व की छाप है, हृदय और बुद्धि का संतुलित समन्वय है। इनकी शैली में भावात्मक, गवेषणात्मक और समीक्षात्मक है। समीक्षात्मक शैली में शुक्ल जी निष्कर्ष तथा तुलना के क्षेत्र में प्रयोग करते हैं। भावात्मक शैली में गद्यकाव्य जैसा आनन्द देती है। इस शैली की भाषा व्यावहारिक है। भावों की आवश्यकतानुसार छोटे तथा बड़े दोनों वाक्य अपनाये हैं।

उद्देश्य (२) आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत ‘चिन्तामणि’ भाग-१ के अनुसार काव्य की भाषा विषय मान्यताओं का अध्ययन करना।

उद्देश्य-२ के परिणाम बिन्दुवत् निम्नलिखित इस प्रकार है।

- आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत निबंध ‘चिन्तामणि’ प्रथम भाग में वर्णित निबंध ‘कविता क्या है’ में काव्य की भाषा विषयक मान्यताओं के द्वारा विद्यार्थियों में भाषा के बारे में समझ विकसित कर सकेंगे।
- इसमें आचार्य शुक्ल जी के अनुसार भाषा में सरल स्पष्ट तथा भावानुकूल शब्दों का प्रयोग होनी चाहिए। शब्द ऐसे प्रयुक्त होना चाहिए कि जो शब्दों द्वारा कहा जाए वह पाठक तथा श्रोता में भाव उत्पन्न होना चाहिए।
- भाषा में भावाभिव्यक्ति तथा विचारों की नवीनता उत्पन्न करने क्षमता होनी चाहिए। सरल, सहज, परिष्कृत प्रांजल और साहित्यिक भाषा का प्रयोग किया गया है। शब्द चयन वाक्य रचना और सादृश्य विधान सबमें उनकी काव्यात्मक रूचि का परिचय मिलता है।

उद्देश्य (३) आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत चिन्तामणि भाग-१ में वर्णित काव्यशास्त्रीय मान्यताओं का अध्ययन करना।

उद्देश्य-३ के परिणाम, बिन्दुवत् इस प्रकार निम्नलिखित है।

आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत निबंध चिन्तामणि प्रथम भाग में वर्णित काव्य शास्त्रीय मान्यताओं का अध्ययन करना। इस कृति की शैक्षिक प्रासंगिकता को निम्न बिन्दुओं से समझा जा सकता है।

- शोधकर्त्री को आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल द्वारा रचित ‘चिन्तामणि’ प्रथम भाग में वर्णित निबंध ‘कविता क्या है’, के अध्यायों का विश्लेषण करने के उपरान्त यह परिणाम प्राप्त हुआ है कि यह पुस्तक विद्यार्थियों में भावपक्ष अथवा काव्यगत तथा कला पक्ष के विशेषताओं को अध्ययन कर सकेंगे।

- आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत निबंध 'चिन्तामणि' प्रथम भाग में वर्णित निबंध 'कविता क्या है', के द्वारा अध्ययन करने पश्चात् विद्यार्थियों काव्य के माध्यम से मानव जीवन के विविध पक्षों एवं भारतीय सांस्कृतिक परम्पराओं की जानकारी देना, जिससे भारतीय मूल्यों एवं आदर्शों की रक्षा किया जा सके।
- आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत 'चिन्तामणि' प्रथम भाग में वर्णित निबंध 'कविता क्या है', का विश्लेषण करने के उपरान्त यह परिणाम निकलता है कि इसका अध्ययन करने के बाद विद्यार्थियों, छात्राएँ काव्य सौन्दर्य में वृद्धि करने वाले रस, छन्द, अलंकार, शब्द शक्ति, आदि तत्त्वों के महत्त्व से परिचित हो सकेंगे, जिससे वे उसमें निहित भावों की रसानुभूति तथा भावों तथा विचारों की अभिव्यक्ति कर सकते हैं।

१०. सीमाएँ

इस लघु शोध कार्य के दौरान शोधकर्त्री द्वारा निम्नलिखित सीमाओं का अनुभव किया गया।

- प्रस्तुत लघु शोध में 'चिन्तामणि' निबंध से सम्बन्धित अन्य पुस्तकों एवं इसके अन्तर्गत आने वाली गद्यों की सम्मिलित करने से इसके परिणामों तथा आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत चिन्तामणि प्रथम भाग में वर्णित कविता क्या है? से सम्बन्धित काव्य अथवा कविता शिक्षण के उद्देश्यों व मानकों की सूची की सम्भावना बढ़ जाती है।
- इस शोध में प्रमुख रूप से केवल काव्य के मानकों पर ही अध्ययन किया गया है।
- प्रस्तुत शोध में काव्य मानकों से सम्बन्धित पुस्तकों को ही शामिल किया गया है।

शैक्षिक निहितार्थ: किसी भी शोधकार्य के पीछे कोई न कोई शैक्षिक निहितार्थ अवश्य होता है। बिना किसी शैक्षिक निहितार्थ के शोध की उपादेयता सिद्ध नहीं होती। शोधकर्त्री के लघु शोध 'आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत 'चिन्तामणि' प्रथम भाग के अनुसार काव्य मानकों के अनुप्रयोग का समीक्षात्मक अध्ययन की शैक्षिक निहितार्थ निम्नलिखित है।

१. आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत 'कविता क्या है', निबन्ध के आधार पर कविता के उद्देश्यों का निर्धारण किया जा सकता है।
२. राष्ट्रीय पाठ्यचर्या रूपरेखा में दिये गये हिन्दी शिक्षण में उद्देश्यों के अन्तर्गत कविता शिक्षण के उद्देश्यों के निर्धारण में आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत निबंध कविता क्या है, का इसमें महत्त्वपूर्ण योगदान है।
३. राष्ट्रीय पाठ्यचर्या रूपरेखामें हिन्दी शिक्षण से सम्बन्धित विभिन्न अनुच्छेदों और अनुशंसाएँ शामिल हैं। जहाँ मुख्य बिन्दु का उल्लेख किया गया है जो हिन्दी शिक्षण को परिभाषित और निर्देशित करते हैं।
- शोधकर्त्री द्वारा प्रस्तुत लघु शोध के माध्यम से विद्यार्थियों में भाषाई कौशल (सुनना, बोलना, पढ़ना और लिखना) का विकास।
- शोधकर्त्री द्वारा इस लघु शोध के माध्यम से भाषा के माध्यम से विद्यार्थियों के संज्ञानात्मक और सामाजिक विकास को प्रोत्साहित।
- इसके साथ ही साथ जब पाठ्यपुस्तक का निर्माण होता है अथवा हिन्दी पाठ्यपुस्तक का लेखन किया जाता है उसमें भी कविता शिक्षण के मुख्य उद्देश्यों को ध्यान में रखते हुए इन उद्देश्यों को कविता क्या है, निबंध के माध्यम कविता शिक्षण के उद्देश्यों को पूर्ति किया जा सकता है।

भावी शोध हेतु सुझाव: इस प्रस्तुत लघु शोध में शोधकर्त्री द्वारा कुछ सुझाव दिया जा रहा है, जिनका उपयोग भावी शोध हेतु किया जा सकता है।

- शिक्षा के उच्चतर स्तर पर सम्मिलित आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल की अन्य विधाओं जैसे ललित निबंध, कविताएं, हिन्दी साहित्य का इतिहास, आलोचना तथा भाषा विज्ञान आदि शैक्षिक निहितार्थ पर शोध किया जा सकता है।
- आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल के समकालीन अथवा आधुनिक लेखकों की रचनाओं के साथ आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल के रचनाओं के साथ आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल के रचनाओं के शैक्षिक निहितार्थ पर तुलनात्मक अध्ययन किया जा सकता है।
- आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल के साहित्यिक दर्शन का आलोचनात्मक अध्ययन।
- आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल के निबंधों की मनोवैज्ञानिक करुणा भाव के विशेष संदर्भ में अध्ययन किया जा सकता है।
- आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल एवं आचार्य हजारी प्रसाद द्विवेदी के निबंध साहित्य का तुलनात्मक अध्ययन किया जा सकता है।
- आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल के समग्र रचनाओं में निहित निबंध कला की विशेषताओं का समीक्षात्मक अध्ययन करना।

निष्कर्ष

आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल हिन्दी साहित्य के प्रसिद्ध आलोचक एवं विद्वान् हैं। उनके निबंध 'चिन्तामणि प्रथम भाग' में वर्णित 'कविता क्या है', में काव्य शास्त्रीय से सम्बन्धित विभिन्न पहलुओं पर विस्तार से चर्चा किये है। इस निबंध में उन्होंने कविता के स्वरूप, उसका उद्देश्य तथा उनके गहन विश्लेषण को प्रस्तुत किया है। शुक्ल जी के अनुसार, कविता का उद्देश्य मात्र मनोरंजन नहीं है बल्कि मानव मन को उन्नत करना और उसे सृजनात्मक बनाना है। किसी भी अनुसंधान कार्य का प्रमुख ध्येय शोध समस्या से सम्बन्धित निष्कर्षों को प्राप्त करना है। निष्कर्ष वास्तव में शोध कार्य का परिणाम है, जिन्हें संकलित तथ्यों के विश्लेषणों एवं विवेचन के आधार पर प्राप्त किया जाता है। हिन्दी निबंध के तृतीय चरण को शुक्ल युग की संज्ञा प्रदान की गई है। आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल के निबंध क्षेत्र में पर्दापण करने से इसे नए आयाम एवं नई दिशाएँ प्राप्त हुई है। उन्होंने 'चिन्तामणि' में जो निबंध संकलित किए हैं उनसे हिन्दी निबंध अपने चरमोत्कर्ष पर प्रतिष्ठित किये है। वास्तुतः 'चिन्तामणि' निबंध कला के सभी गुण इनके निबंधों में उपलब्ध होते हैं। आचार्य शुक्ल जी ने 'चिन्तामणि' निबंध के माध्यम से 'कविता क्या है', में कविता अथवा काव्य का उद्देश्य, प्रयोजन तथा काव्य सौन्दर्य की विशिष्टताओं को परिलक्षित किये। वे निबंधों के माध्यम से भाव एवं विचार अर्थात् हृदय एवं वृद्धि का सन्तुलित समन्वय मिलता है।

अतः प्रस्तुत लघु शोध के अन्तर्गत आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल कृत निबंध 'चिन्तामणि' के प्रथम भाग में वर्णित 'कविता क्या है', पाठ्यपुस्तक को लिया गया है। जिसमें कुल पृष्ठों की संख्या १६६ है जिसमें से ८७ से ११४ पृष्ठों में काव्य का प्रयोजन, काव्य का उद्देश्य, आदि प्रेरक प्रसंग पाया गया है जिनको जिनको पढ़ने के उपरान्त विद्यार्थी वर्तमान जीवन में कविता की आवश्यकता को जान सकता है। कविता के माध्यम से मनुष्य को मनुष्यता को बोध होता है। यह संसार के मानव समाज में लोक कल्याण की भावना जागृत करती है।

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A comparative study of the religious counselling of Dr. Bhagwan Das and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

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I. Abstract

This paper presents a critical comparative study of the religious counselling philosophies of Dr. Bhagwan Das and Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, two of the most influential Indian thinkers of the twentieth century. Both grounded their spiritual visions in Advaita Vedanta, yet they approached religious counselling through distinct methodologies. While Dr. Bhagwan Das emphasized the ethical and universal principles of religion—*Satya* (Truth), *Prem* (Love), *Nyāya* (Justice), and *Karuṇā* (Compassion)—as the foundation for self-cultivation and collective harmony, Dr. Radhakrishnan focused on spiritual intuition, personal realization, and religious pluralism as paths toward inner freedom and unity of humankind.

This study compares their perspectives in five major areas: their metaphysical foundations, their concept of religion and religious experience, their models of the counselor and counseled, their ethical frameworks, and their views on interreligious harmony. By examining their primary works and contextualizing them within modern religious counselling, this paper reveals that while Bhagwan Das offers a grounded, ethical framework suitable for socio-moral upliftment, Radhakrishnan provides a metaphysical and intuitive vision suitable for global spiritual dialogue. Together, their philosophies contribute toward developing a more inclusive, ethical, and spiritually transformative model of religious counselling.

II. Keywords

Religious counselling, *Mānava Dharma*, *Advaita Vedānta*, Ethics, Spiritual Realization, Religious Pluralism, Indian Philosophy, Self-realization.

III. Research Objectives

- To examine the core philosophical principles behind the religious counselling methods of Dr. Bhagwan Das and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan.
- To analyse their views on the counsellor's role in guiding individuals spiritually and ethically.
- To compare their concepts of religious pluralism, moral responsibility, and spiritual unity.
- To evaluate how their models can be applied in modern spiritual and religious counselling.
- To explore their relevance to contemporary issues such as religious intolerance, moral relativism, and existential alienation.

IV. Introduction

The role of religion in modern life is increasingly complex, especially in the face of moral decline, existential crisis, and interfaith conflict. In this context, religious counselling—the practice of guiding individuals through spiritual and ethical challenges—emerges as a crucial endeavour. Within Indian philosophy, two modern thinkers stand out for their comprehensive yet distinct contributions to this field: Dr. Bhagwan Das (1869–1958) and Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1888–1975). Both were inspired by the metaphysical foundations of Advaita Vedanta, yet each responded to the spiritual and ethical crises of their time in a unique way.

Dr. Bhagwan Das was a theosophist, freedom fighter, and philosopher who emphasized the ethical and universal aspects of religion, especially through his vision of *Mānava Dharma Sāra*—the essence of human religion. For him, religion was not just a private belief but a social and moral commitment to truth, justice, love, and compassion¹. He proposed that religious counselling must lead an individual from selfishness to universal brotherhood through moral discipline and ethical self-realization.

Dr. Radhakrishnan, a philosopher-statesman and the second President of India, took a more metaphysical and experiential approach, positing religion as a direct intuition of the divine. According to him, spiritual counselling should awaken the seeker to the universal spirit within,

¹ Bhagwan Das, *The Essential Unity of All Religions*, 2nd ed. (Varanasi: Bharatiya Vidya Mandir, 1932), 20.

fostering harmony among diverse religious traditions². Radhakrishnan believed that religion must not be reduced to dogma or ritual; it must remain a transformative force, guiding the soul toward unity, freedom, and creative action.

Though both thinkers shared the goal of spiritual upliftment and religious unity, their methods and emphasis differed: Bhagwan Das stressed moral action, Radhakrishnan emphasized spiritual insight. This paper seeks to explore these convergences and divergences and evaluate their relevance to contemporary religious counselling.

V. **Metaphysical Foundations of Counselling**

Both thinkers were rooted in Vedantik non-dualism (Advaita Vedanta). However, their interpretations diverged.

Dr. Bhagwan Das sees spiritual evolution as a moral journey. He writes that the goal of life is the realization of the Universal Self, not through ritual or belief, but through active engagement in ethical duties³. His metaphysics is deeply linked to *karma*, *dharma*, and self-discipline, emphasizing that divine realization occurs in and through moral living.

Dr. Radhakrishnan, in contrast, views intuition (*anubhava*) as the supreme way of knowing the real. He states:

“The highest truth is not a matter of inference or reasoning, but of direct spiritual experience.”⁴

For him, spiritual counselling must awaken this direct realization, guiding the seeker to the inner divine beyond words and doctrines.

Thus, while Bhagwan Das equates religious evolution with ethical transformation, Radhakrishnan views it as spiritual illumination. This fundamental difference shapes their respective models of counselling.

VI. **Concept of Religion and Religious Counselling**

Bhagwan Das describes religion as “that which uplifts and refines the human being through truth, love, justice, and compassion.”⁵ His *Mānava Dharma* system is not sectarian but universal, offering principles that any religion can adopt. He sees the religious counsellor as one who facilitates ethical reflection, self-discipline, and social responsibility.

By contrast, Radhakrishnan holds that true religion is an inner realization of the infinite spirit. He critiques organized religion for degenerating into ritualism and intolerance, and emphasizes the counsellor’s role as a spiritual awakener who guides people toward mystical unity and inner freedom⁶.

Both recognize that religion must transform character, but while Bhagwan Das insists on ethical rules, Radhakrishnan privileges inner awakening.

VII. **The Role of the Counsellor and the Method of Counselling**

Bhagwan Das envisions the religious counsellor as a moral guide—someone who leads the seeker through rational dialogue, ethical practices, and social empathy. He writes:

“Religion is not a matter of belief alone. It is a practice in life; a service to truth and love.”⁷

His method is introspective and dialogical, rooted in the self’s responsibility to society and the cosmos.

Radhakrishnan sees the counsellor more as a philosophical friend and spiritual witness. He suggests:

“The true teacher of religion is one who has seen the truth and leads others by illumination, not instruction.”⁸

His approach is intuitive and existential, aiming to liberate the seeker from dogma and stimulate direct realization of the Self.

² S. Radhakrishnan, *The Hindu View of Life* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1927), 45.

³ Bhagwan Das, *Science of Social Organization* (Varanasi: Bharat Vidya Mandir, 1940), 88–90.

⁴ S. Radhakrishnan, *An Idealist View of Life* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1932), 112.

⁵ Bhagwan Das, *The Essential Unity of All Religions*, 26.

⁶ S. Radhakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought* (Oxford: OUP, 1939), 174.

⁷ Bhagwan Das, *The Science of Religion* (Varanasi: Bharatiya Vidya Mandir, 1936), 59.

⁸ Radhakrishnan, *Religion and Society* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1947), 66.

In sum, Bhagwan Das offers a socially engaged model of counselling; Radhakrishnan offers a contemplative, liberating one.

VIII. Ethical Framework and Universal Religion

For Bhagwan Das, the basis of religious counselling is the cultivation of ethical values common to all faiths. His *Mānava Dharma Sāra* comprises four pillars:

Satya (Truth)

Prem (Love)

Nyāya (Justice)

Karuṇā (Compassion)⁹

These form the core of religious advice that transcends boundaries. He emphasizes that true religion begins with ethical living, not metaphysical belief.

Radhakrishnan, while not formulating an explicit ethical code, insists on integrity, love, humility, and service as signs of spiritual maturity. His ethics are derived from inner realization, not social conformity. For him, religious pluralism is a moral imperative, rooted in the recognition of the divine in all beings.¹⁰

Thus, Bhagwan Das begins with universal ethics, while Radhakrishnan arrives at ethics through spiritual vision.

IX. Relevance to Modern Religious Counselling

The 21st century faces unprecedented spiritual dilemmas: religious intolerance, identity confusion, materialism, and moral relativism. The models of Bhagwan Das and Radhakrishnan offer valuable insights:

Bhagwan Das's model is especially useful for interfaith counselling, value education, and moral rehabilitation in communities. His focus on universal values is ideal for secular spiritual frameworks.

Radhakrishnan's approach is better suited for existential counselling, inter-spiritual dialogue, and inner transformation of seekers from diverse backgrounds.

Together, they offer a complementary vision—one ethical and practical, the other mystical and experiential—providing a comprehensive Indian model of religious counselling that integrates reason, compassion, and spiritual depth.

X. Conclusion

This comparative study has shown that Dr. Bhagwan Das and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan offer two richly developed yet distinct frameworks for religious counseling. Bhagwan Das focuses on the moral-spiritual evolution of the self, emphasizing ethical universality, while Radhakrishnan emphasizes the intuitive realization of the divine and promotes religious pluralism as the highest virtue of spiritual civilization.

Their contributions are deeply relevant today—offering tools for spiritual healing, interfaith harmony, and ethical awakening in a divided world. A synthesis of their thought could provide a new paradigm for religious counseling rooted in Indian philosophical traditions, and capable of addressing the moral and spiritual challenges of the modern world.

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⁹ Bhagwan Das, *Manav Dharma Sar* (Varanasi: Bharat Vidya Mandir, 1931), 14–18.

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Election and Indian media: secrecy of understanding

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I. Abstract

Societies, like other aspects of human life, are essentially progressive; and it is important that we should try to understand not merely what they are, but what they have in them to become¹. The change of society has not always been unidirectional but two ways in nature. However, this change has accelerated progress and sometimes caused deterioration, it can be safely said that society is never static. Social life is constantly changing. Only changing things have two states, 'Being' and 'Becoming'. First one is real stage and second one is ideal of future. Considering the above '**One Nation One Election**' is a breakthrough as well as time demanding effort that has been introduced in the Indian parliament as a bill. After introducing the bill in the house there is a continuing debate, discussion, seminar and conferences regarding its advantages and disadvantages and on its necessity in the 21st century. In this situation it cannot be denied that election and media: secrecy of understanding is a well-known fact because it has prolonged history in Indian mind. If we critically observe and analyse the past activities of media specially during the general as well as assembly election in India and the different state of India then it would be clear that there is a secret and paradoxical understanding between election and media. This kind of behaviour between the two constitutional authority is bearing colossal implication in the society and its effect is immensely influences the exercise of the democratic right of the citizens of India. If, it continues, then it will be detrimental for the values of democracy. This paper will try to conceptually explore the nature and variations of secret understanding is made between Political Parties, Governments and Media. Secondly, it will also look into whether this paradoxical relation is feasible for the restoration of democratic environment? And thirdly, can the policy of the '**One Nation One Election**' be the way-out by which the above issues can be neutralised and justice can be established in the society?

II. Key Words

Election, Democracy, Paradoxical relation, Media, Justice.

III. Introduction

In the age of 21st century, we are standing at a juncture where everyone is involved for protecting their own interest. In this material world, everyone is busy with how to fulfil their own personal interest by trampling on the interest or freedoms of others. But we all are expected to live in an environment where everyone's needs are met according to their ability and everyone is compassionate towards everyone else. In this so-called modern world, almost everyone has embraced the democratic system of governance. Democracy usually refers to a particular type of government. But instead of this narrow meaning, the word democracy has a broader meaning. In a broad sense, democracy refers to a particular type of social system, state system, economic system, that is a type of governance of society and its various organisations. "The democratic ideals are sometimes taken to mean the government by the lower class in the community or (what is almost the same thing) the government by the majority². According to the democratic ideals, freedom of thoughts, speech, and action is essential for every person, but that freedom should not conflict with the interest of others. It is not exaggeration to say that India is the largest democratic country in the world. The Indian constitution is also the largest written document in the world. Basically, there are four pillars in Indian constitution which are namely legislature, judiciary, executive and press-media. In India, as the fundamental rights, the freedom of expression, the cornerstone of

¹ J.S Mackenzine, 'Outline of social philosophy', p.270

² J.S Mackenzine, 'Outline of social philosophy', p.272

democracy, is guaranteed under Article 19 (1) (a) of the constitution, allowing citizens to express their views and opinions freely, but subject to certain reasonable restrictions. Freedom of the press is also considered as an integral part of freedom of expression and it protected under the Article 19(1) (a). The Supreme Court has played a crucial role in interpreting and expanding the scope of freedom of speech and expression, ensuring its protection and preventing undue restrictions. The Supreme Court has held that the right to propagate one's own views, the right to freedom of silence, freedom of the press, and the right to know about government activities are all part of the freedom of expression. Freedom of speech and expression is essential for a healthy democracy, enabling open debate, participation in decision-making, and the pursuit of truth. For maintaining democratic values as well as environment there is invariably be required open discussion, debate, created public opinion for taking decision-making ability to the policy maker for the sake of searching of real truth for the betterment of the mankind, nobody can deny it. So, the role of media in the era of 21st century in Indian democratic setup is colossal. In this respect, the proposal of one nation one election brings may be impactful and it will bring positive flavour for the society from the obligatory aspect of the state. But many questions arise in mind including the following:

- a. What Types of secret understanding is made between political parties, Government and media?
- b. Whether this paradoxical relation is acceptable looking for the restoration of democratic values?
- c. And thirdly, can the 'One Nation One Election' policy be the way-out by which the above issues can be neutralised and justice can be established in the society?
- d. Here, one by one, the above issues will be discussed conceptually with the empirical observation and will some suggestive measures for consideration to the researchers as well as to the policy makers looking for the betterment of the society will be provided.

IV. Secret understanding between political parties, Government and media

Before going to the detail on the captioned, it would be better to highlights some facts and figures that may be more supportive as well as relevance for the subject. According to the article titled as 'Does Media Exposure Affect Voting Behaviour and Political Preferences in India?'³ There is a refrain that the 2014 Lok Sabha elections was India's first real media election, or at least a "substantially mediatised" one compared to previous polls (Palshikar 2014). It has been argued that it was "media logic" and not "political logic" that determined the outcome of the elections, and the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) victory was largely due to its high-voltage media campaign. An analysis of six rounds of National Election Study (NES) data between 1996 and 2014 leads us to make four general conclusions and reveals that the regularity with which voters watch news on TV has been gradually rising since 1996. The percentage of voters who watch TV news daily went up from 19% in 1996 to 46% in 2014. Not surprisingly, in these years, listening to radio news declined. Daily newspaper readership almost doubled, and the proportion of people who never read newspapers has come down by three times in the last two decades. This has been helped by the increasing voting literacy in the country. The male-female gap in the literacy rate and the urban-rural literacy gap have significantly been reduced in the last decade. Using the feedback of this kind of data, all the political parties desired to control over the media because media has the power to change the voting behaviour and create an ambience among the voters to accepting political preferences. This is detrimental for the democratic values. In 2024, *Lok Sabhā* general election, there have mass introduction of a wing of media which is social media. During the 2024 *Lok Sabhā* election, the media campaign has enormously influenced to the election, here one thing must be noted that media has openly divided themselves into two group, some have highlighted the agendas of ruling dispensation and some others highlighted the agendas of oppositions but unfortunately the real issues directly related to the public have not been revealed due to the secret understanding between political parties, government and media. Now the question arises who would be the dominated and captured more media houses and why? Answer in a single word, ruling dispensation

³ Rahul Verma, Shreyas Sardesai, September 27, 2014 Vol. XIX no 39 EPW Economic & Political Weekly, Does Media Exposure Affect Voting Behaviour and Political Preferences in India.pdf

whether they have power in the state or at the centre. They have more dominance in controlling the media because they have the authority to provide advertisement secretly to the media houses and not only that the ruling dispensation has also the power to controlling the media houses using their governmental agencies. As a result of that, as per the mutual understanding between two authorities, media works as the mouthpiece of political parties. However, this kind of secrecy is mostly unable to understand by the mass number of citizens whose votes do matter in any kind of electoral politics. In a simple way it can be said that they have mysterious as well as secret relations. This relation is beyond comprehension by the ordinary people but it has impactful implication in voting behavior. In this case, the media houses provide propaganda, create sensationalism and mislead the public through fake news to try to change the voting behavior for conversion in favour of their favourite political party through main stream production as well as social media publication, this aspect actually is called to be pre-poll understanding. Once the results are published and their closeup party is on power, post-election period blessing working with in accordance with the pre-poll commitment. This secret understanding between political parties, government and media is actually destroying the democratic values and beauties of a nation like India. On the other hand, those who able to understand the real fact but unfortunately their percentage of votes does not matter in electoral politics. If we look from the background of financial involvement between the two authorities, it costs millions of rupees to maintain these secret deals. The burden of the financial aspect is actually covered up by the general public indirectly. Therefore, it is this kind of nexus is actually very crucial to abolish this kind of nexus. So, why not introduce such a system that can mitigate the issue. That is why one nation one election may be the best proposals for address this kind of problem.

Moreover, requirement of impartiality in media practice is very much essential because impartiality is a principle of justice would ensure that decisions should be based on objective criteria rather than based on bias, prejudice, or preferring the benefit to one person or collectives of persons over another for improper reason. There is no question of doubt that impartiality is the key concept of determining or so to speak conceiving any form of justice. Impartiality thus is the sui-genesis of justice. If anything is impartial it would be just if anything is unfair or biased it would be unjust. The objectivity of justice is determined by the concept of impartiality. Even the concept of impartiality counts the most when we talk of deontological approach of justice or morality. The objective principle of justice or morality must be universalizable. It had been established long back by Immanuel Kant and R. M Hare. Kant says, "Act always on such a maxim as thou canst at the same time will to be a universal law"⁴. So, the media personnel should act as a moral agent and they should picturise the original object before the society by which society can take the decision on the basis of this originality that should be the main subjectivity of the media.

V. Paradoxical relation between Media and Government

In a nutshell, paradoxical relation can be defined as 'a paradox is a statement, situation, or argument that seems contradictory or illogical but may reveal a deeper truth or insight' (Wikipedia).

As per the definition, there have some characteristic of paradoxical relation such as -

Contradiction

Interconnectedness

Ambiguity

Complexity

Out of the four most important features of paradoxical relation, here I shall try to discuss only two characteristics which are related to the subject. First of all, ambiguity, in ambiguity paradoxical relations often create tension, ambiguity, or uncertainty, making it challenging to understand or navigate the relation. In complexity, paradoxical relations involve complex, nuanced, and multifaceted dynamics that cannot be reduced to simple or binary explanation. Here my confusion is that whether this paradoxical relation is acceptable looking for the restoration of democratic

⁴ Kant, Immanuel, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Ethics*, translated by T.K. Abbott, 3rd edn, London, Macmillan, 1907, p-66

environment? When political parties and media have paradoxical relations then the main problem arises among the citizens of India because it is very complex and not only that it makes very challenging to understand, the myth it created to exploit the people of India. In a democratic country, the role of media is colossal because media should act in accordance with the public demand and through investigating journalism, real truth should be published before the public and then only public will be able to decide which is good or bad for them. If, the fourth pillar of Indian democracy hides the truth from the public in exchange for money, then true democracy can never be attained. This is inauspicious for each of us. If this continues for a long time, none of us will be able to escape its evil eyes. So, looking for the better future for the future generations, it is our duty to protect our democratic values and environment. In the 21st century, media can do it. Always, media must understand the fact that their survival depends on the public opinion.

VI. One Nation One Election

The concept of simultaneous elections is not a new idea in India. Following the adoption of the Constitution, elections to the *Lok Sabhā* and all State Legislative Assemblies were conducted simultaneously from 1951 to 1967. The first general elections to the *Lok Sabhā* and State Assemblies were held together in 1951-52, a practice that continued for three subsequent general elections in 1957, 1962, and 1967.

However, this cycle of synchronized elections was disrupted in 1968 and 1969 due to the premature dissolution of some State Legislative Assemblies. The Fourth *Lok Sabhā* was also dissolved prematurely in 1970, with fresh elections held in 1971. Unlike the First, Second, and Third *Lok Sabhā*, which completed their full five-year terms, the Fifth *Lok Sabhā*'s term was extended until 1977 under Article 352 because of the declaration of Emergency. Since then, only a few *Lok Sabhā* terms have lasted the full five years, such as the Eighth, Tenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth. Others, including the Sixth, Seventh, Ninth, Eleventh, Twelfth, and Thirteenth, were dissolved early⁵.

State Assemblies have faced similar disruptions over the years. Premature dissolutions and term extensions have become a recurring challenge. These developments have firmly disrupted the cycle of simultaneous elections, leading to the current pattern of staggered electoral schedules across the country. One nation one election, a High-Level Committee on Simultaneous Elections, headed by former President Ram Nath Kovind was formed and they recommended for one nation one election with some the positive aspects which are not possibly denied by the public.

Promotes Consistency in Governance

Prevents Policy Paralysis

Mitigates Resource Diversion:

Preserves Regional Party Relevance

Enhances Political Opportunities

Focus on Governance

Reduced Financial Burden

So, in this changing world, change is the only future for humanity. Rather than clinging to the old, it is a sign of intelligence of the old to invite the new. In this case, we must remember that when inviting anything new, that new thing should be tested and acceptable to everyone. Change should not prefer for the personal interest in a democratic country at large change always should be the relief for the all. It is a way of conversion from evil to good.

VII. Concluding remarks

At the concluding part, it should not be wrong to say that change is real. Only changing things have two aspects, one is to be and another is to become. The first one is the existing situation and second one is ideals for future. Society is not static, society is dynamic and the people are associated with the society with others. The basic characteristics and history of the society always prefers changeability. So, as we are rational being, we should prefer one nation one election and if it

⁵ Das Kantilal, *The Paradigm of Justice: A Contemporary Debate between John Rawls and Amartya Sen*, Published by Levant Books India, P-186

happens, easily new possibilities will come for us and to address the issues that I have raise in this paper. On the other side, it is well known that in the 21st century, the media will prioritize only in their own financial profit. But for the welfare of the society and the state, the state cannot sit idly. For the welfare of the state, the ruling dispensation should need to take necessary measures in this regard. In a democratic state, every democratic pillar has its own freedom, but their freedom is not absolute. If a government of a state due news media, the beauty and values of democracy are on the verge of destruction. Therefore, here the state intervention is inevitable in such a case. It is the high time that the state holders take necessary step to stop the misdeed by the media constitutionally in India.

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The future of paperless education: The potential of fully digital learning to replace textbooks and handwritten notes

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I. Abstract

The current paper aims to explore the possibility of having a paperless education system. This study analyses the possibility whether the traditional mode of education can be replaced by digital learning methods or not. The aim is to explore the associated challenges, benefits and the implications in the future of the education system.

The study takes a secondary analysis approach. The study uses the existing literature, reports and the case studies in order to examine and evaluate the effectiveness of the digital learning means. The data sources used in the study are peer reviewed journals, government reports and reports from international organisations. The techniques for data analysis include a thematic analysis, comparative analysis and evaluations of case studies.

The findings of the study highlights that digital learning offers a lot of advantages. It offers greater accessibility, cost effectiveness and ensures environmental sustainability. However, adopting digital means for education can bring cyber security risks and certain health concerns. Thus, this study proposes a blended model for learning. By integrating traditional and digital methods, a sustainable and effective model for learning can be created.

II. Keywords

Accessibility, Digital learning, Education, Paperless, Technology

III. Introduction

The modern world is increasingly dependent on digital advancements, and the education sector has adopted these technologies, sparking a debate on whether a paperless learning model can fully replace traditional methods¹. Online platforms are using digital assessment tools, and many institutions are shifting to digital solutions, driven by technological progress and the increased flexibility of digital education². However, this increased reliance on electronics also raises environmental concerns.

A paperless education system offers several advantages, including enhanced accessibility and cost-effectiveness. It uses multimedia-based content to boost student engagement and gives students convenient access to educational material, reducing their reliance on physical textbooks and paper-based study materials. Additionally, online platforms are using AI technology to create personalized learning paths, complete with quizzes and other evaluation methods, which has improved students' learning abilities³.

Despite the benefits, the shift to a digital system faces significant challenges. The “digital divide” is a primary obstacle, as not all students have access to electronic gadgets and internet connectivity, posing a major burden for low-income populations^[15]. Not all the students have access to electronic gadgets and internet connectivity. Thus, this would be a huge burden for the poor segment of the population. Secondly, sitting for long hours in front of electronic devices can raise several health problems. Parents remain concerned about the strain caused to their eyes. Another concern is the health issues associated with prolonged screen time, such as eye strain, which worries parents⁴. Another area of concern is “Cybersecurity”. Data breaches and online harassment

¹ Abuali, T. and Ahmed, A.A., 2025. Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing E-Learning in Developing Countries. The Open European Journal of Social Science and Education (OEJSSE), pp.1-12.

² Altnay, Z., 2017. Evaluating peer learning and assessment in online collaborative learning environments. Behaviour & Information Technology, 36(3), pp.312-320.

³ Clarke, V. and Braun, V., 2017. Thematic analysis. The journal of positive psychology, 12(3), pp.297-298.

⁴ Cozart, D.L., Horan, E.M. and Frome, G., 2021. Rethinking the Traditional Textbook: A Case for Open Educational Resources (OER) and No-Cost Learning Materials. Teaching & Learning Inquiry, 9(2), p.n2.

are increasing every day. This has become a matter of concern for many parents. Cybersecurity is also a growing concern, as data breaches and online harassment are becoming more frequent, making the adoption of a digital model challenging⁵.

The current study is aimed to examine the full potential of the digital model in education. It seeks an answer whether digital learning can replace the traditional textbook based system of education. This study will delve into the benefits and barriers to the adoption of the digital model. This, therefore, would help understand the feasibility of adoption of this model of education. This study takes a secondary approach for the analysis of data. It examines the existing literature to explore the benefits and challenges of this adoption. This study aims to examine the full potential of the digital model, exploring whether it can replace the traditional textbook-based system. It delves into the benefits and barriers to adoption and suggests ways to address these challenges. Using a secondary analysis approach, the study examines existing literature to provide a detailed insight into digital learning and its potential to replace textbooks and handwritten notes.

IV. Data Analysis

For this research, secondary data analysis is done. The study uses the available literature for its data analysis. Additionally, global reports and the case studies are used to evaluate the impact as well⁶. The analysis and evaluation have been done to gain a deeper insight on the topic. The available data was thematically analysed to reach a conclusion.

V. Selection Criteria

For the current study only, peer reviewed academic journals were considered. Additionally, reports from government bodies were also evaluated. The existing government policies were used to further analyse the impact. To get a global perspective, organisational reports from “UNESCO” and the “World Bank” were also studied. This has been done to get an idea about the statistical data on a global scale. Therefore, a clear idea about the adoption of the digital model can be understood. This analysis of data gives us an idea about the challenges in accessibility. It also helps identify the infrastructural shortages. Additionally, examining the available case studies was also important. This would provide a practical insight on the adoption barriers. It will also help identify the benefits of paperless learning models^[19]. This approach therefore, would give real world perspective for analysis.

The selection of literature has been done based on a few factors. The reports and studies which specifically dealt with digital education and online platforms were considered. The effectiveness of the digital learning model was thus considered. Further, the publications that were considered in this study belong to reputable sources. Only those from government bodies, reputable institutes and globally recognised organisations were considered. Additionally, a filter was set up such that only reports within the last ten years were considered. This ensures that the insights analysed are recent and up to date. For a direct comparison of the educational models, both the traditional textbook based system and the digital environment were considered for this study.

VI. Methodology

Data Analysis

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⁵ Diggle, P.J. and Taylor-Robinson, D., 2024. Longitudinal data analysis. In *Handbook of Epidemiology* (pp. 1-34). New York, NY: Springer New York.

⁶ Dey, P. and Bandyopadhyay, S., 2019. Blended learning to improve quality of primary education among underprivileged school children in India. *Education and Information Technologies*, 24(3), pp.1995-2016.

the “World Bank” were also studied. This has been done to get an idea about the statistical data on a global scale. Therefore, a clear idea about the adoption of the digital model can be understood. This analysis of data gives us an idea about the challenges in accessibility. It also helps identify the infrastructural shortages. Additionally, examining the available case studies was also important. This would provide a practical insight on the adoption barriers. It will also help identify the benefits of paperless learning models⁷. This approach therefore, would give real world perspective for analysis.

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VIII. Analytical Approach

For the current study, a thematic analysis was done. This was done in order to identify the repeating themes and patterns in the existing literature. The patterns of accessibility issues, the implications of cost and the engagement patterns of young students were mainly considered⁸. Further, a comparative analysis was done. This was done in order to understand the effectiveness of the paperless system. This would also provide an insight on the student performance matrix. The longitudinal data was used to identify the adoption patterns, in the different regions⁹. The review of implementation methods was also analysed in order to understand the factors of which led to failure of implementation.

IX. Limitations

Even though secondary analysis offers various advantages, it also has certain limitations. This form of analysis does not involve the collection of primary data. Thus, it relies on the available data from studies and reports for its analysis. Therefore, the reliance on the available sources is high. Further, the variations in methods of data collection may vary in the existing studies. This may lead to some inconsistencies in the process of data interpretation. To address these issues, the data was cross referenced from various sources before their consideration.

X. Results and Discussion

Ease of Access

The integration of digital technologies has offered an ease in accessibility to the students. It has enabled the students with access to educational materials at any location with the help of an internet connection. This has eliminated the need of carrying physical textbooks and materials. With the logistical ease, it also allows them to learn at their own pace, at their own convenience. Additionally, the introduction of cloud-based storages has provided them with seamless access to the course materials. Further, it also allows them access to educational tools for their own use. Teachers can use online cloud-based storages like “Google drive” to provide the students with their assignments and study contents. This ensures that the student can access these resources as soon as the teachers finish uploading¹⁰.

⁷ Fatima, N., Fatima, I. and Rubab, A.S., 2024. Awareness of Digital Eye Strain and Its Effects on the Ocular Health among Young Individuals. *International Journal of Healthcare Professions*, pp.2-7.

⁸ Guchinskaya, O. and Kraeva, L., 2017, June. From the E-Learning and Blended-Learning to M-Learning: trends, benefits and risks of education digital transformation. In *Proceedings of the International Conference IMS-2017* (pp. 82-89).

⁹ Hatcher, M., 2020. Race, Education, and Technology: How the Expansion of “E-Rate” Could Alleviate Educational Inequalities from Online Education Exacerbated by COVID-19.

¹⁰ James, K.H., 2017. The importance of handwriting experience on the development of the literate brain. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 26(6), pp.502-508.

However, the accessibility to these services still remains a challenge in many regions. Studies have revealed that in the low-income countries, the homes still lack a stable internet connection. For instance, UNESCO reports that roughly 50% of these families had no internet connectivity in 2022. This has, therefore, restricted them to actively take the benefits of digital learning¹¹. To address these challenges, several policies have been initiated. The “Digital India” campaign, for instance, is launched to bridge this gap. This initiative provides tablets at low costs and provides internet plans at a subsidised rate. This has improved their ability to access digital education¹². Even after such initiatives, further improvements in infrastructure and policy interventions would ensure a good and equitable learning experience.

XI. The Cost of Education

The transition of a student from the traditional mode of education to the digital learning model, requires an initial investment. The investment is required to get digital devices like laptops and e-readers. This investment may be larger than buying textbooks and notebooks, but over time, it adds up to be less than buying printed books and other materials. Thus, the digital textbooks and the open educational resources (OERs), have made education cost effective. This, therefore, has significantly reduced the financial barriers for students¹³.

Reports reveal that switching to the digital learning mode has reduced the cost of textbooks by roughly 40%. Additionally, the shift to digital education has allowed the universities to launch low-cost courses. This has had a democratising effect in providing access to education¹⁴. However, there are still concerns regarding the affordability of devices in the low-income households. Thus, mitigating these would require subsidies from the governments, and partnerships with universities. Therefore, providing a financial backup and subsidised devices to the underprivileged students can overcome this barrier¹⁵.

XII. Interactive Nature of Education

The incorporation of interactive features has enhanced the engagement of students in education. This has been one of the prime benefits of digital learning. In contrast, the traditional mode of education relies more on passive delivery. Several features such as quizzes and multimedia provide the students with an immersive learning experience. It has helped improve the ability to comprehend and helps them retain much more information¹⁶.

Personalised study materials are designed for the students using artificial intelligence (AI). This modification in the digital model has helped the students learn at their own pace. Studies have shown that the gamification of educational content has led to improvement in the ability of a student to retain knowledge in comparison to classroom teaching methods¹⁷. Additionally, a digital education model promotes a collaborative learning environment. It archives such an environment

¹¹ Jampala, M.B. and Shivnani, T., 2019. A step towards sustainable development in higher education in India by implementing new media technologies: A paperless approach. *World Journal of Science, Technology and Sustainable Development*, 16(2), pp.94-100.

¹² Kiryakova, G., 2017. Application of cloud services in education. *Trakia journal of sciences*, 15(4), pp.277-284.

¹³ Moletsane, R. and Venter, C., 2018. The 21st century learning environment tools as electronic waste. In *Proceedings of the world congress on engineering and computer science* (Vol. 1, pp. 188-192).

¹⁴ Motebele, M.M., 2020. The experiences of leaders and teachers who are leading learning in paperless classrooms. University of Johannesburg (South Africa).

¹⁵ Motebele, M.M., Yassim, K. and Uleanya, C., 2023. Challenges and Constraints of the Paperless Classroom: Way Forward. *Cultural and Historical Heritage: Preservation, Presentation, Digitalization (KIN Journal)*, 9(2), pp.38-60.

¹⁶ Nalini, G.K., Deepak, P., Neelamma, P., Sahana, G.N. and Jayashree, V.N., 2020. Effectiveness of digital learning versus traditional learning among undergraduate students—Prescription writing. *National Journal of Physiology, Pharmacy and Pharmacology*, 10(01).

¹⁷ Paludi, M., 2024. The Right to Privacy and Data Protection for High School Students in the Context of Digital Learning Models and Learning Analytics.

using virtual discussion boards and study groups. Further, it also has incorporated a peer feedback strategy, which has helped create a sense of community in the virtual classrooms¹⁸.

XIII. Impact on the Environment

The shifting of the education system towards a digital and paperless mode contributes to environmental sustainability. This shift reduces the demand for paper, and therefore, minimises deforestation. This also reduces the carbon footprint which is directly linked to the traditional mode of education¹⁹. Reports suggest that the education industry accounts for a significant amount of paper consumption. This highlights the importance of shifting towards a sustainable system for education.

However, the environmental benefits must also be balanced with the consideration of electronic wastes (e-wastes). Electronic devices with time can become slow and lagging. Thus, they need to be upgraded over time. Therefore, the old devices need to be recycled or it would add burden to the environment. Proper methods of disposal are required to ensure they can be recycled. This will reduce the amount of e-waste and reduce the environmental burden²⁰. The educational institutes can promote the importance of recycling. This will help the students understand the importance of environmental sustainability. Use of refurbished devices should also be promoted. This will help reduce the wastage of older devices.

XIV. Digital Divide

The implementation of paperless education has created a digital divide among the students. The lack of availability of digital devices and internet, students cannot get these benefits. This reduces the overall impact of this model of education. In the poorly developed regions, the internet infrastructure is poor. Also, the electronic devices are expensive and most families cannot afford them²¹. This creates a significant barrier in the implementation of this form of education.

For reducing the digital gap significant investments would be required. These investments would help in improving the internet infrastructure in the ill developed areas. Governments and institutions can look to provide devices at subsidised rates as well. Existing initiatives, like the “E-rate” initiative, can be used as a reference to address this²².

XV. Health Concerns

Introduction of digital education has increased the screen time of students. This has resulted in several health concerns. The exposure to bright screens can lead to eye stain, headaches and other health issues. Reports suggest that a majority of the students using digital screens have presented with eye strains²³. Additionally, the reduced use of handwriting practice may have a significant impact in the cognitive development in children. Several studies have highlighted the fact that taking handwritten notes can stimulate different regions of the brain. Further, these students can retain much more information, more efficiently²⁴. To address the health concerns, the educators should promote screen time breaks. Additionally, they can promote the use of stylus-based apps for

¹⁸ Prasetyo, S.E., Damaraji, G.M. and Kusumawardani, S.S., 2020. A review of the challenges of paperless concept in the society 5.0. *International Journal of Industrial Engineering and Engineering Management*, 2(1), pp.15-24.

¹⁹ Ruggiano, N. and Perry, T.E., 2019. Conducting secondary analysis of qualitative data: Should we, can we, and how?. *Qualitative social work*, 18(1), pp.81-97.

²⁰ Salimi, F., 2024. *Exploring Educational Technology Policies and Practices of the World Bank* (Doctoral dissertation).

²¹ Serrano, D.R., Dea-Ayuela, M.A., Gonzalez-Burgos, E., Serrano-Gil, A. and Lalatsa, A., 2019. Technology-enhanced learning in higher education: How to enhance student engagement through blended learning. *European Journal of Education*, 54(2), pp.273-286.

²² Sharma, P.B. and Sarmah, R., 2020. Perception and awareness of youth towards digital India campaign. *International Journal of Management (IJM)*, 11(6), pp.1381-1393.

²³ Topping, K.J., Douglas, W., Robertson, D. and Ferguson, N., 2022. Effectiveness of online and blended learning from schools: A systematic review. *Review of Education*, 10(2), p.e3353.

²⁴ Vrabie, C., 2023. Education 3.0—ai and gamification tools for increasing student engagement and knowledge retention. In *PLAIS EuroSymposium on Digital Transformation* (pp. 74-87). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.

taking notes. Thus, the educators would play a crucial role in balancing the digital and traditional learning systems.

XVI. Data Security and Privacy

With the rise of multiple online platforms for education, the concerns about data security and student privacy have increased. Educational institutes have become prime targets for cyber threats due to the vast amount of student data that they store. Studies have highlighted that educational institutions have had a significant number of cyber-attacks in the last three years²⁵. Thus, protection of the student data becomes a critical challenge for the educational institutes. Therefore, strict cybersecurity measures must be taken by the institutions. It includes data encryption, multi-factor authentication and conduction of regular security audits. Additionally, the students must be made aware of the risks and should be taught about the best practices for data protection. The institutions and the platforms for online education should also look to comply with the data privacy norms set by the government²⁶.

XVII. Teacher Training and Resistance to Change

Even though the advantages of digital education are well known, many educators may resist this change. The teachers who are accustomed to the traditional method of teaching may not prefer this system. Therefore, teacher training becomes a key process to mitigate the challenge of resistance. The educators who are digitally literate, would help in a smoother transition into the paperless mode of education²⁷. Thus, professional development of teachers has a key role in mitigating this challenge.

XVIII. Effectiveness Compared to Traditional Learning

The available studies show that digital learning can be effective. With well designed strategies, the digital learning method can be as effective as the traditional methods of teaching. The studies have shown that when a blended learning model is used, it has produced superior outcomes in the educational context. Studies based in the United States, by their department of education, have shown that in the blended model of education the students perform much better. Roughly 12% better results were seen when the blended mode of education was applied. The effectiveness of digital learning has been enhanced further with the adaptive learning technologies. It offers the students a more personalised experience. The use of AI in designing the courses, can help the institutions to create a course based on the student's needs and progress. However, balancing between the two modes of learning is essential. It is crucial that a balance between the digital interactions and face to face interactions are maintained. This would additionally foster collaborative learning and critical thinking abilities. Furthermore, the students would develop their problem-solving skills in a better fashion.

XIX. Conclusion

From the current study, we can conclude that the digital model for education has significant benefits. It helps increase accessibility of education and provides a cost-effective way of learning. Additionally, this helps in maintaining environmental sustainability. Digital learning has proved to enhance student engagement and reduces the reliance on physical textbooks. This makes education more flexible and efficient.

However, the digital system for learning has some demerits as well. With increasing shifting towards this model, students are exposed to longer screen times. This has led to them facing several health issues. It includes strain to their eyes, leading to headaches and several other health issues. Further, with technological advancements, older devices become obsolete. This generates a significant number of electronic wastes. Additionally, the risks of cybersecurity also become predominant. Thus, mitigation of these challenges becomes necessary.

²⁵ Watini, S., Davies, G. and Andersen, N., 2024. Cybersecurity in Learning Systems: Data protection and privacy in educational information systems and digital learning environments. *International Transactions on Education Technology (ITEE)*, 3(1), pp.26-35.

²⁶ Wangenge-Ouma, G. and Kupe, T., 2020. Uncertain times. *Physics World*, 34(1), p.15.

²⁷ Yaseen, K.A.Y., 2022. Digital education: The cybersecurity challenges in the online classroom (2019-2020). *Asian Journal of Computer Science and Technology*, 11(2), pp.33-38.

Thus, from this study, a blended mode of education is recommended. The role of governments and educational institutions becomes key in effectively balancing this. Additionally, the role of educators is also crucial. They need to ensure that students are taking regular breaks, which would help reduce their screen times. Further, they need to ensure that the digital tools are balanced with face-to-face interactions. Therefore, with implementation of proper strategies, the benefits of digital learning can be maximised and be sustained efficiently.



Kaliṅga varṇanā of Raghuvamśa: A thematic study in views of the commentators

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I. Abstract

Kālidāsa is well-known for his thematic interpretations on various historical places, regions, rivers, flora, fauna etc. through his poetic excellence in his works. The description of the then kingdom Kaliṅga and its king Hemāṅgada finds a place in his epic poem *Raghuvamśa*. In the context of the *Indumatī-svayamvara*, *Kālidāsa* presents the magnanimity of Kaliṅga and king Hemāṅgada, which is the thrust area of present study in this paper. The views of various commentator on *Raghuvamśa* on the context of *Indumatī-svayamvara* is considered while preparing the paper.

II. Key Words

Kālidāsa, Raghuvamśa, Kaliṅga, Indumatī etc.

III. Introduction

Kālidāsa, the well-known poet of our land is famous for his application of *upamālaṅkāra* in his *kāvyas* and *nāṭakas*. He has created his own kingdom in which he is the creator (*prajāpati*) and his compositions (*kr̥tis*) (both *kāvyas* and *nāṭakas*) are his creations. He is not only adept in depicting geography of our country, but also, he has shown his deep knowledge in ancient history. *Raghuvamśa* is being a historical *mahākāvya*, the poet takes the opportunity to introduce different kings ruling India in different parts in his time. This can be substantiated with the fact that *Kālidāsa* described different royal dynasties ruling India of his time. This is more evident when he creates a plot to introduce these kings in the royal marriage of *Indumatī*, sister of king *Bhoja*.

IV. Indumatī-svayamvara

In the sixth *sarga* of *Raghuvamśa*, *Kālidāsa* describes the marriage (*svayamvara*) of *Indumatī*, the sister of *Bhoja*, king of *Vidarbha* and later the wife of *Aja*, son of *Raghu*. Many kings of India had come to attend the *svayamvara*, which was a tradition in ancient India for the marriages of royal families. *Sunandā*, the maid of *Indumatī* while introducing the kings to *Indumatī* with details of their qualities and belongings. She introduces the king of *Kaliṅga* namely *Hemāṅgada* also one of the invitees of the royal marriage ceremony, about whom *Kālidāsa* discusses in the voice of *Sunandā* in five verses. *Sunandā* is describing various qualities (*guṇas*) of the king and his kingdom (*Kaliṅga*) to *Indumatī* in five verses (6/53-57). Let's discuss some of them in the eyes of commentators, because the commentators with their own ideas have interpreted the words in various forms. Five commentators viz. *Aruṇagirinātha*, *Jinasamudra*, *Dakṣiṇāvartanātha*, *Nārāyaṇa* and *Mallinātha* have been considered with their views. The paper will focus on the commentaries and highlight the views of the commentators.

The Commentators

Although the *Raghuvamśa* has near 100 commentaries, the following commentators are mainly consulted in this article.

Aruṇagirinātha: His alternative name sare *Śivadāsa*, *Annāmalai* and *Aruṇācalanātha*. He is the son of *Rāmadatta* and disciple of *Śrīkaṇṭha*. He belongs to 12th Cent¹. His commentary is known as *Prakāśikā*.

JinasamudraSūri: He is the disciple of *Bhaṭṭāraka Jinacandra*. He belongs to C. 1468-1526 CE. and of *Kharataragaccha*². His commentary is named as *īrkā*.

Dakṣiṇāvartanātha: He belongs to 13th Cent.; later than *Mallinātha*; was the son of *Sūrya* and

¹ New Catalogus Catalogorum, Vol. I., p. 372; also Vol. XXII. p. 244.

² ibid. Vol. VII, p. 271; also Vol. XXII. p. 245.

belonged to Mahārjunagrāma, prob.associated with Tiruvalaṅcuzhi in Tamilnadu³. The name of the commentary is *Dīpikā*.

Nārāyaṇa : He is the disciple of Kṛṣṇa⁴. His commentary is known as *Padārthadīpikā*.

Mallinātha: He is also called as Pedda (ddi) Bhaṭṭa and Viśveśvara. He is quoted in the Bhojaprabandha⁵. The name of the commentary is *Saṅjīvanī*.

Hemādri: His alternative name is Makkibhaṭṭa and he is the son of Īśvara sūri⁶.

V. The Description of Kaliṅga (Kaliṅgavarṇanā)

In the first verse of *Kaliṅgavarṇanā*, Sunandā introduces Indumatī with Hemāṅgada, the then king of Kaliṅga, presently Odisha who has *keyūra* (handornament) in his arms and who destroyed his enemies.

*athāṅgadāśliṣṭabhujam bhujiṣyā hemāṅgadaṁ nāma kaliṅgarājam/
āseduṣīm sāditaśatrupakṣam bālāmbālendumukhīm babhāṣe//⁷*

All the above commentators have given their views on this particular verse in their own ways.

In the case of the word *bhujiṣyā*, Nārāyaṇa, Aruṇagirinātha, Dakṣiṇāvartanātha and Mallinātha defining it with *kiṅkarī* for which Mallinātha and Nārāyaṇa are quoting from Halāyudha that *bhujiṣyā kiṅkarīmatā*. Jinasamudra puts the word *pratihārī* for *bhujiṣyā*, while Hemādri puts *paricārikā* for the same and Hemādri quotes from *Amarakośa* that *niyojyaḥ kiṅkaraḥ pretye bhujiṣyaḥ paricārakaḥ*. Dakṣiṇāvartanātha also quoting the same from *Amarakośa*, even his view is same with Nārāyaṇa, Aruṇagirinātha and Mallinātha.

Kaliṅga, which was a king domat that time had not found a specific place in the commentaries of four commentators for which they simply comment. Only Nārāyaṇa comments on it that *kaliṅgā janapadāḥ* from which it is clear that *Kaliṅga* is the name of a kingdom ruled by Hemāṅgada.

It is quite logical that when the kings were sitting on their chairs, above little height from the ground where Indumatī is moving one after one followed by the introduction by Sunandā about each king. The word *āseduṣīm* which refers that Sunandā and Indumatī stand in front of the chair of Hemāṅgada has not find an important place in the commentaries of the commentators that they simply refer it as *āseduṣīm prāptām*, but Nārāyaṇa says that *āseduṣīm mañcakrameṇa prāptām*.

For the word *āṅgadāśliṣṭa-bhujam*, all the above-mentioned commentators differ from each other while commenting on it. Mallinātha and Jinasamudra say that *āṅgadāśliṣṭa-bhujam* is the hands which is ornamented with *keyūra*. But Nārāyaṇa does not refer *keyūra* and simply says that *sakalābharanopeta* and Aruṇagirinātha says *sakalaprasādhanopalakṣaṇam*. Hemādri says in this context that *ābharanapriyatvam*.⁵ All the commentators refer *pūrṇacandrā* for *ābālendumūkhī*, an adjective given to Indumatī, but Hemādri goes one step ahead says *bālā* means the 16-year-old girl and her face is like the moon (*ābālendumukhī*) for which he quotes from *Ratirahasya* that *bālāṣoḍaśavārṣikī*. Sunandā again talks about Hemāṅgada that he has valor comparable with Mahendra Mountain and he is also the king of mountains and sea. When he is going for battle, the two elephants who always in the forefront of the kings look like the mountain Mahendra that creates an illusion that Mahendra Mountain itself is going. Kālidāsa uses the word Mahendra thrice in this verse to show his poetic excellence. The first one for the famous Mahendra Mountain, the second one is for mountain and the third one to show them ilitary power of the king. He was the king of the mountains and also of oceans. Here the purpose of Kalidāsa was to introduce the king asking of *jala* and *sthala*.

*asau mahendrādisamānasāraḥ patirmahendrasya mahodadheśca/
yasya kṣaratsainyagajacchalena yātrāsu yātvā puro mahendraḥ//⁸*

He was the king of the mountains and also of oceans. Here the purpose of Kālidāsa was to introduce the king asking of *jala* and *sthala*.

³ ibid. Vol. VIII, pp. 302-03; also Vol. XXII. p. 246.

⁴ ibid. Vol. XXII. pp. 246-47.

⁵ ibid. Vol. XVIII. pp. 308-312; also Vol. XXII. pp. 247-50.

⁶ ibid. Vol. XXII. p. 252.

⁷ Raghuvamśa- 6/53

⁸ ibid. 6/54

While commenting on this verse all commentators have given same views except some differences. For *patir mahendrasya mahodadheś ca*, Mallinātha, Nārāyaṇa, Aruṇagirinātha, Hemādri, Dakṣiṇāvartanātha refer that the king had both the types of palaces viz. mountain palace and water palace. As per Jinasamudra's view: *asau rājā mahendrasya parvatasya mahodadheśca samudrasya patiḥ vartate*. While Nārāyaṇa says that *anenaparvatavartinīnām ca samṛddhīnām prāptiruktā, parvatadurgavattvaṃ jaladurgavattvaṃ ca*.

Hemāṅgada was introduced as a victorious king who defeated many kings and also arrested their wives, who were crying and their tears were coming out mixed with collyrium (*añjana*) applied to their eyes (*sāñjanavāspaseke*). Kālidāsa says that Hemāṅgada was the best among the archers (*dhanurdhāris*) with his beautiful arms and because of the continuous fights his arms bore black lines caused by the friction of bow-string. He was shooting the arrows with equal skill with either hand. The two bow-stings of his arms were looking like the tearful eyes of the wives of his enemies.

***jyāghātarekhe subhujo bhujābhyām bibharti yaścāparbhatām purogaḥ/
ripuśriyām sāñjanabāspaseke vandīkṛtānāmiva paddhaṭī dve/⁹***

All the commentators refer his *savyasācitvaṃ*, as he has two black lines in both of his arms, because he can shoot the arrows with equal skill. Mallinātha explains in this context that because the use of *dvivacana* it is understood that the authors intention is for *savyasācitva*. *Dvivacanāt savyasācitvaṃ gamyate*. Jinasamudra says for *jyāghātarekhe* that the *cāturya* of both the hands is examined from it. In his opinion *jyāghātarekhe pratyāñcāprahāranikaṣau-etenā ubhayahastacāturyakathanām*. Nārāyaṇa says for the same that- *anena parvatavartinīnām samudravartinīnām ca samṛddhīnām prāptiruktā parvatadurgavattvaṃ jaladurgavattvaṃ ca*.

Hemādri quotes a different verse and accepts as a *pāṭhāntara* to the text, but he does not give any commentary.

***raṇebhyamitarīṇatayā prakāśaṃ śarāsanajyānikāṣo bhujābhyām/
viśpaṣṭalekhau ripuvikramasya nirmāṇamārgāviva yo vibharti/¹⁰***

Kālidāsa further says in the next verse that the palace of the king was situated on the bank of the sea. Any body could see the waves of the sea from the windows of the palace. The sea was getting him (Hemāṅgada) up in the morning.

***yamātmānaḥ sadmani sannikṛṣṭo mandradhvanityājītayāmatūryaḥ/
prāsādavātāyanadrśyavīciḥ prabodhayatyarṇava va suptam/¹¹***

While all the commentators refer the term *gambhīra* for the word *mandra*, Jinasamudra says *madhura* for *mandra* (*mandreṇa madhureṇa dhvaninā*). Mallinātha and Nārāyaṇa refer the *Amarakośa* for referring the word *gambhīra* for *mandra* that (*mandrastu gambhīre ityamaraḥ*) But Nārāyaṇa refers Keśava's view in addition to *Amarakośa* on the same ('*tūryo'strī vādyanirghoṣe' iti keśavaḥ*).

Aruṇagirinātha also refers Keśava, however Hemādri refers the term *gambhīra* for *mandra* but does not refer any lexicon rather he gives some rules of *Aṣṭādhyāyī* to strengthen his views. He says the word *yamātmānaḥ* is *grāmya*, because it has *yama*, referring to *Kāvyādarśa* of Daṇḍin. In his opinion '*yamātmānaḥ' iti padaṃ saṃhitāyām grāmyaṃ yamasvarūpapratīteḥ/ kāvyādarśe-*

***padasandhānavṛtyā vā vākyārthatvena vā punaḥ/
duṣpratikaraṃ grāmyaṃ yathā sā bhavataḥ priyā/¹²***

In the last verse of introducing Indumatī with Hemāṅgada, Kālidāsa says in the voice of Sunandā that Oh! Indumatī! If you want to stay as well as move on the bank of the sea, where you can listen the *marmara* sound of the leaves of the palm tree and you also get the smell (and cool breeze) of *lavaṅga* flowers, imported from outside (*dvīpāntara*) which will to relieve your drops of sweat, then you will assume with him.

⁹ ibid. 6/55

¹⁰ Hemādri's commentary on Raghuvamśa 6/55.

¹¹ Raghuvamśa- 6/56

¹² Kāvyādarśa- 1/66.

*anena sārddham viharāmburāśeṣṭīreṣu tālīvanamarmareṣu/
dvīpāntarānītalavaṅgapuṣpairapākṛtasvedalavā marudbhīḥ*¹³

Jinasamudra simply comments on it without referring any lexicon or some other texts, which he does for other verses. Hemādri, Nārāyaṇa and Mallinātha refer the same from *Amarakośa* that *atha marmarah* *svanite vastraparṇānām* for the word *marmara*. All agree on the context that the word *marmar* are fleets the sound (*śabdaordhvanī*). While commenting on the portion of *lavaṅga* flower, Nārāyaṇa and Hemādri mention the term *vañija*¹⁴, which determines both the process of sale and purchase by our merchants from other regions. Among all the commentators only Mallinātha says the *Lavaṅga* flower is one among the flowers meant for gods referring to *Amarakośa* (*lavaṅgaṁ devakusumam ityamarah*) probably differs from the spice. This verse shows the ancient trade and commerce of Odisha that Kālidāsa says the *lavaṅga* flowers have imported from outside.

VI. Conclusion

Mahākavi Kālidāsa is quite impressive to introduce Hemāṅgada, which shows his lovability for Odisha, then Kālīṅga. The commentators, who are consulted for this paper, have presented opinions in their own style. Among the six of the commentators, the language of Jinasamudra's commentary is very simple and his style of presentation is very impressive and also favourable for beginners. He composes the commentary in question-answer style. Hemādri's commentary is *prauḍha* gives more reference than others. As far as Mallinātha is concerned he is very famous for his presentation in a unique style. It seems that Aruṇagirinātha just follows Nārāyaṇa while composing his commentary. The commentary of Nārāyaṇa gives an elaborate discussion, while Aruṇagirinātha's commentary does not. Dakṣiṇāvartanātha's commentary also gives light to the path to study his ideas from the commentary. Most of the times his views and Mallinātha's views are seem to be same. If we classify the above six commentaries into groups according to quoted dereferences of *kośas*, Mallinātha, Nārāyaṇa, and Aruṇagirinātha fall in one group and Dakṣiṇāvartanātha, Jinasamudra and Hemādri fall in three different groups.

So much so we will work to bring out the unpublished commentarie so fall the works of Kālidāsa, that will be a real tribute to our great sage. However, to give proper justification to Kālidāsa's view on these 5 verses, we need to study more commentaries.

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¹³ Raghuvamśa-6/57

¹⁴ dvīpāntādānitenā kenacidvastunā kiñcitkrīṇato vañijaḥ pratīteḥ/ Nārāyaṇa's commentary of the verse 6/57.

vañijo muktāmaṇīnivavātā dvīpāntarāt lavaṅgapuṣpānyādāya/ Hemādri's commentary on the verse 6/57.

Capabiliy approach of Amartya Sen for development of education

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I. Abstract

The chief aim of this article is to analyze how Amartya Sen's Capability Approach has contributed to the development of different conceptual backgrounds of education. It seeks to explore how Sen's framework, which prioritizes individual freedoms and real opportunities over narrow economic outcomes, reshapes our understanding of educational development. By moving beyond traditional metrics such as income, enrollment rates, grades or exam scores, the article investigates how the capability approach broadens the lens through which we view educational success focusing instead on learners' actual ability to lead lives they have reason to value. Sen's model provides not only a normative and philosophical foundation for rethinking education but also practical implications for pedagogy, policy design, curriculum development, and inclusive learning environments. By redefining educational success, Sen's framework offers a people-centered model for equitable, empowering, and transformative education in both global and local contexts.

II. Keywords

Capability Approach, Development, Education, Empowering, Equitable.

III. Introduction

Over the past decade, Amartya Sen's Capability Approach (CA) has gained wide recognition as a powerful alternative to conventional economic paradigms that narrowly focus on income, utility, or resource distribution. Instead of measuring development solely by GDP or per capita income, Sen directs attention to the substantive freedom individuals enjoy their capabilities to lead lives they have reason to value. His framework has profoundly influenced thinking around poverty, inequality, and human well-being, particularly through his landmark work *Development as Freedom* (1999), which synthesized decades of prior research into a more accessible and compelling narrative (Sen, 1999).¹

Sen's approach is grounded in a normative concern with human freedom and dignity, drawing intellectual lineage from Adam Smith's (1776) reflection on necessities and living conditions and Karl Marx's (1844) critique of human alienation and deprivation (Otto et.al., 2004).² Both these classical thinkers, in different ways, considered poverty and inequality not merely as a lack of resources but as constraints on the ability to live a fulfilling life. Sen reformulates this tradition in modern terms, defining functionings as the various "beings" and "doings" a person achieves such as being well-nourished, being literate, or participating in community life. Capabilities represent the real opportunities or freedoms to achieve these functionings (Alkire, 2002).³

Thus, a key distinction is drawn: functionings reflect actual achievements, while capabilities refer to potential freedoms a person's real opportunity to achieve valued outcomes. For example, a child who is able to attend school but does not do so voluntarily has different implications than a child who is unable to attend due to poverty or social restrictions. In the former, capability exists; in the latter, it is denied.

¹ Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.

² Otto, H. U., Ziegler, H., & Morgan, W. (2004). Capabilities and education. *Social Justice Review*, 56(3), 236–248.

³ Alkire, S. (2002). *Valuing freedoms: Sen's capability approach and poverty reduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Sen (1992) defines basic capabilities as the minimal set of functionings essential for well-being such as avoiding hunger, morbidity, premature death, illiteracy, and social isolation. These are not just abstract philosophical categories but measurable aspects of development policy and intervention. In this sense, capabilities represent the bridge between primary resources (like income or commodities) and real human achievements. According to Dean et al. (2004), they are “the essential fulcrum between primary resources and human achievements.”⁴

IV. **Education as a Capability and a Catalyst**

Within this framework, education is recognized as both an end and a means a basic capability in itself and an enabler of other capabilities. As noted by the 2002 UNESCO Report on "Education for All," policies should be judged successful not only by statistical outputs such as enrollment or literacy rates but by how much they expand people's real freedoms and capabilities (UNESCO, 2002).⁵ Education, from a capability perspective, is more than human capital accumulation it is the expansion of agency, autonomy, and the ability to reflect, participate, and transform one's life and society.

Sen often focuses on elementary education in his discussions, emphasizing literacy as a fundamental capability. Yet the implications of the capability approach for higher education are also profound. Functionings in this context could include: being able to pursue studies, engage in academic dialogue, critically analyze societal issues, and contribute meaningfully to civic life. Capabilities, then, would refer to the freedom students have to choose among these functionings, including the ability to shape their own learning trajectories and participate in democratic discourse within and beyond educational institutions.

Hans-Uwe Otto and Holger Ziegler (2004) extend this by arguing that the capability approach foregrounds education as intrinsically valuable, in contrast to market-oriented perspectives that assess education merely by its impact on income or employment. This intrinsic view affirms education's role in shaping critical consciousness, fostering solidarity, and enabling individuals to move beyond their “sense of place” determined by birth, class, or ethnicity.⁶

V. **Beyond Resources: Conversion Factors and Inequality**

One of Sen's main critiques of resource-based or utilitarian approaches is that they assume uniformity in people's ability to convert resources into well-being. However, individuals differ greatly in their conversion factors biological, social, and environmental determinants that affect how effectively a person can transform resources into valuable functionings.

Sen (1999) outlines five such factors:

Personal Heterogeneities – Age, gender, disability, and illness influence people's needs. A pregnant woman or someone with a disability will require different, often greater, resources to achieve the same outcomes as others.

Environmental Diversities – Climate, pollution, and disease prevalence affect the cost of achieving basic functionings. For instance, living in a malaria-prone region may require additional health measures just to achieve basic health.

Social Conditions – Access to public services such as education, healthcare, and security, and the presence or absence of crime or discrimination, shape a person's real freedoms.

Relational Perspectives – Social norms and customs dictate what is necessary to "appear in public without shame." For example, being poor in a rich society may lead to exclusion from social participation due to relative deprivation.

Intra-family Distribution – Resources within families are often distributed unequally, affecting women, children, and the elderly in particular. Sen has stressed that these patterns of distribution are essential in understanding deprivation and well-being.

⁴ Dean, H., Bonvin, J. M., Vielle, P., & Farvaque, N. (2004). Developing capabilities and rights in welfare-to-work policies. *European Societies*, 6(1), 25–48.

⁵ UNESCO. (2002). *Education for all: Is the world on track?* Paris: UNESCO.

⁶ Otto, H. U., & Ziegler, H. (2004). Capabilities and education. *Social Justice Review*, 56(3), 236–248.

Hence, the same resource bundle can lead to vastly different outcomes depending on these contextual factors, making it imperative that development strategies consider actual capabilities and not just resource availability (Sen, 1999).⁷

VI. Education and Adaptive Preferences

Another profound insight from the Capability Approach is the idea of adaptive preferences. This refers to how people may internalize deprivation or inequality and adjust their aspirations accordingly. A person living in deep poverty or under oppression may declare themselves "satisfied" because they have learned not to expect more. In the context of education, this could manifest as students in marginalized communities not aspiring to higher education because they have never seen it as attainable.

This makes purely subjective indicators such as reported satisfaction or happiness insufficient for evaluating well-being. It also underlines the ethical responsibility of educators and policymakers to provide environments that foster aspiration, critical awareness, and the expansion of agency, not merely content delivery.

As Walker (2004) highlights, while enrollment figures and exam scores are useful indicators, they are inadequate to assess how well students are truly doing. A capability approach demands more nuanced and individual-sensitive evaluations that capture diverse experiences, obstacles, and aspirations. It also emphasizes human dignity, not simply utility maximization or labor market efficiency.⁸

VII. Public Reasoning and Democratic Deliberation

While Martha Nussbaum, a close intellectual partner to Sen, proposed a fixed list of ten central capabilities based on philosophical reasoning, Sen prefers a more open-ended approach. He argues that any list of functionings or capabilities must be subject to public scrutiny and democratic deliberation. People must have the freedom to determine what constitutes a valuable life in their specific cultural and social contexts.

This is especially relevant in educational settings. Curricula, pedagogical practices, and institutional goals should be shaped through inclusive dialogue involving students, teachers, parents, and community stakeholders. Education should not only impart knowledge but foster capabilities of critical thinking, agency, and democratic participation. It should be a space where students can collectively reason about justice, equality, and the good life.

This procedural aspect of the Capability Approach sets it apart from more prescriptive theories of justice or development. It respects pluralism and recognizes that values evolve over time. The capability framework is thus not a checklist but a space of inquiry a method to ask what people value, what they are able to do and be, and what stands in the way of those freedoms.

VIII. Applying the Capability and Entitlement Approaches to Education

Sen's earlier Entitlement Approach, developed in his analysis of poverty and famine, is also applicable in education. This framework conceptualizes how people gain access to essential goods (or in this case, educational resources) based on what they own and what they can exchange. Key terms like "ownership bundles" and "exchange entitlement mapping" can be reinterpreted in the academic setting.

Ownership bundles in education refer to the existing knowledge, skills, and cultural capital that students bring with them from family, community, and prior schooling.

Exchange entitlement mapping involves how educational institutions transform these bundles into valued outcomes such as degrees, skills, social mobility, or civic participation.

Thus, colleges and universities can be seen as institutions that either enable or restrict the transformation of student ownership bundles into broader social entitlements. If institutions are

⁷ Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.

⁸ Walker, M. (2004). Human capabilities, education, and social justice. *Journal of Human Development*, 5(3), 443–457.

overly exam-centric, elitist, or detached from social reality, they risk turning education into a narrow exchange of credentials rather than an expansive process of capability enhancement.

From this perspective, integrating minor research projects, social work, and interdisciplinary teaching into curricula becomes crucial. Such activities not only build functionings (e.g., research skills, collaboration, empathy) but also broaden capabilities, giving students real options in life. They challenge the commodification of education and reassert its role in human flourishing and social transformation.

Foundational ideas of the Capability Approach (CA) are essential to understand its implications for rethinking education policy and practice, especially in the context of global inequalities, dominant economic models, and evolving pedagogical paradigms. The emphasis shifts from measuring outcomes to understanding the freedom individuals have to achieve what they value, thus reshaping educational discourse around justice, inclusivity, and development.

IX. Beyond Human Capital: Reassessing Education in a Market Economy

A central critique embedded in Sen's Capability Approach is its challenge to the prevailing human capital theory, which evaluates education primarily through its economic returns. In this paradigm, education is instrumental as it provides skills and credentials that enhance an individual's productivity and employability, contributing to economic growth. While acknowledging this instrumental value, Sen (1999) insists that such a reductionist view undermines education's intrinsic and transformative roles.⁹

In capitalist models of education, particularly within Anglo-Saxon frameworks, the system is dominated by market logic, competition, and utility-maximization. University rankings, standardized testing, and output-driven funding are all reflections of this model, which aligns with neo-classical economic theories. However, Sen rejects the equation of well-being with income or utility, arguing instead that real freedom is the ability to make choices and lead a valued life should be the focal point of development.

This has significant implications for how educational policy is designed. While economic productivity is a legitimate goal, the overemphasis on cost-benefit analysis often sidelines the social, ethical, and emotional dimensions of learning. These intangible but crucial aspects are best captured through the CA, which focuses not only on what individuals achieve (functionings) but on the freedoms and opportunities (capabilities) they have to make meaningful choices.

X. Education as a Fundamental Capability

Sen's broader objective is to incorporate ethical reasoning into economic and educational evaluation. He positions education as both a basic and foundational capability. This means education is essential not only as an end in itself (e.g., being literate, understanding society) but also as a means to develop other capabilities such as political participation, health awareness, social recognition, and meaningful employment. For example, learning mathematics improves one's capability for logical reasoning, critical thinking, and problem-solving. These, in turn, enhance future capabilities: becoming an accountant, participating in economic decision-making, or contributing to civic life. Education, therefore, is not only about acquiring knowledge but about expanding the scope of life possibilities.

Sen's idea that education enhances "freedom to achieve various lifestyles" implies that public policies must address conversion factors: the personal, social, and environmental conditions that mediate the transformation of educational inputs into real achievements. This sensitivity to interpersonal heterogeneity distinguishes the CA from both human capital and rights-based approaches. Not all learners derive the same benefit from the same resources; thus, equality of access must be supplemented by equality of capability (Dean, 2004).¹⁰

⁹ Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.

¹⁰ Dean, H. (2004). Capabilities, human freedom, and the challenge of global governance. *Global Social Policy*, 4(2), 115–128.

XI. Critique of the Rights-Based Perspective

While the rights-based discourse in education emphasizes the intrinsic value of education, it often fails to translate into effective practice. Sen appreciates the normative appeal of rights but critiques the incompleteness of this framework. Simply granting rights does not ensure that individuals have the actual freedom to exercise them. For instance, a policy mandating free education may be ineffective if children must work to support their families or if the schooling environment is discriminatory. From a capability perspective, justice in education must concern itself not only with formal entitlements but also with the conditions that make those entitlements real and usable. Thus, the CA focuses not just on having a right to education, but on being able to benefit meaningfully from that right. This shifts attention toward implementation, quality, empowerment, and inclusivity, challenging institutions to bridge the gap between entitlement and achievement.

XII. Higher Education and the Ethics of Development

Sen's CA contributes a profound rethinking of higher education in particular. Unlike the narrow pursuit of labor market efficiency, higher education from a capability standpoint must:

Empower students to lead meaningful lives by developing intellectual, emotional, and civic capacities.

Foster democratic values, through critical engagement, deliberative reasoning, and pluralistic dialogue.

Redress structural injustices, by giving voice and support to marginalized groups.

Enable transformative agency, where students apply their education not only for personal gain but also to uplift others and address societal challenges.

These perspectives extend the importance of basic education to the university context, where freedom of thought, ethical development, and the search for justice become more pronounced. Sen stated that education must serve to empower individuals, enable public reasoning, and support redistributive justice. Melanie Walker (2006) elaborates this further by applying CA to higher education pedagogy. According to her, educators must go beyond delivering content and efficiency. Instead, they must raise questions such as: *What kind of persons do we want our students to become?* and *What lives do we want them to be able to lead?* These are ethical questions embedded in the very core of pedagogy (Walker, 2004).¹¹

XIII. Implications for Policy and Curriculum Design

The Capability Approach offers several concrete implications for educational planning and reform:

Curriculum Design: Should reflect both instrumental and intrinsic goals. It should incorporate interdisciplinary content, ethics, social responsibility, and democratic values.

Pedagogical Methods: Should focus on fostering agency, critical thinking, and deliberation, not just memorization or test performance.

Assessment Systems: Should go beyond exams and marks to consider broader outcomes such as student confidence, creativity, and problem-solving capacity.

Institutional Inclusiveness: Should address disparities arising from gender, caste, disability, economic background, and geography. Affirmative action policies, inclusive pedagogy, and learner-centered environments are all part of this framework.

Student Engagement: Must be participatory. Policies affecting students should be formulated with student voices and experiences as central considerations.

Such approaches make education not merely an economic input, but a life-enhancing process rooted in justice, freedom, and well-being.

XIV. Addressing Criticisms of the Capability Approach

Despite its much strength, the CA is not without criticism. Many scholars have questioned the operational viability of the approach. The most common criticisms include:

Absence of a definitive list of capabilities: Without a standard list, how can policies be designed or evaluated consistently?

¹¹ Walker, M. (2004). Human capabilities, education, and social justice. *Journal of Human Development*, 5(3), 443–457.

Subjectivity in valuation: Since individuals value different functionings, comparisons become complex and may lack objectivity.

High informational demands: Gathering nuanced data on capabilities and conversion factors is resource-intensive and context-specific.

However, these criticisms often overlook the deliberative and context-sensitive nature of the CA. Sen does not reject lists altogether; rather, he insists that capabilities must be selected through public reasoning, reflecting local values and priorities. This participatory process is itself an exercise of capability and freedom.

XV. Conclusion

Amartya Sen's Capability Approach provides a deeply ethical, people-centered framework to rethink education, particularly in the face of increasingly commodified and competitive global systems. By moving beyond narrow economic definitions of human development, the CA insists that freedom to choose a life one has reason to value should be the goal of all development policies including education.

Education is not just about accumulating skills or earning credentials; it is about building the freedom to think, participate, contribute, and thrive. It is as much about who we become as what we know. By placing capabilities at the center of evaluation, we gain a fuller, richer understanding of what it means to be educated and what it means to live well in a just society.

The future of educational policy and practice lies not in choosing between economic and rights-based models, but in integrating them through a capability lens that honors diversity, encourages agency, and pursues justice. As Sen himself says, development is ultimately about expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy, and education remains one of the most powerful means to that end.

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Tracing the legacy: emergence and evolution of the neo-vaisnavite sattras in Assam with a special focus on Ujanial Sattra

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I. Abstract

The Neo-Vaisnavism movement, led by *Srimanta* Sankardeva, emerged in Assam during the second half of the 15th century and the early part of the 16th century, transforming religious landscape of the region. Srimanta Sankardeva's efforts in propagating the Neo-Vaisnavism principle led to the formation of *Sattra* system in Assam. In Assam, the *Sattras* are vital spiritual institutions belonging to the Neo-Vaishnavite heritage, serving as hubs for culture and socio-religious activities. The *Sattras*, which are integral to Assamese life and culture, are reservoirs of the ancient religious doctrines and the artistic endeavours. Thus, the primary aim of this article is to assess the development of the Neo-Vaisnavite movement in Assam by tracing the emergence of the *Sattras*. Furthermore, the study attempts to reconstruct the history of *Ujanial Sattra*, highlighting the origins and growth of the *Sattras* to emphasize the reconstruction of local history.

II. Key Words

Local history, neo-Vaisnavism movement, spiritual institution, *Srimanta* Sankardeva, *Ujanial Sattra*.

III. Introduction

Religion, which is ubiquitous by nature, has always been one of the most powerful forces driving societal change in human society. It is noteworthy that religion has significantly transformed both societal structure and individual behavioural patterns. From its beginnings, religion has been a reflection of the social conditions of human society. Since all pain, sorrow, illness, and violence have metaphysical roots, religion has the power to bring people together (Muzaffar, 2002: 105). According to Agbiji and Swart (2015), the spiritual interpretation of religion highlights the potential of faith for teaching moral principles like truthfulness, integrity, transparency, and tolerance within a community (Agbiji & Swart, 2015:10). Taking these basic religious tenets into account, we can study the religious evolution of Assam and explore that the fifteenth century was one of the most momentous periods for Assam, which saw an all-parading socio-cultural development under the aegis of *Mahapurusha Srimanta* Sankardeva. A multitude of religious faiths and practices, including Saivism, Shaktism, and Tantrism, were practiced by different tribes prior to the advent of Neo-Vaisnavism. śiva worship was an important aspect of Hinduism until the rise of Neo-Vaisnava cult. Even Kusumbara, the father of Sankardeva and the leader of the Neo-Vaisnavite movement, worshipped śiva and could only claim Sankardeva as his son by offering a puja to the Gopesvara śiva in Sinari (Sharma, 2019: 217). Simultaneously, Shaktism was also more appealing to royal families, who were both constantly engaged in combat with foreign kingdoms and needed to possess more strength in order to sustain themselves in authority. It is also noteworthy that the growth of Neo-Vaisnavite movement, initiated by Sankardeva, was one of the most important aspects of medieval Assam. Even after the emergence of the *neo-Vaisnava* movement, some adherents of the new faith had a weakness for worshiping śiva with animal sacrifices. Some followers of the new faith retained a fondness for an animal sacrifice-based form of worship of śiva even after Neo-Vaisnavite movement emerged. On the Sankardeva *Neo-Vaisnava* fold, however, this was forbidden (Baruah, 1951:170). Before the rise of Sankardeva's *Neo-Vaisnavism*, ancient Assam was already a center of Vaisnavism, particularly the worship of Vasudeva. Puspabhadra Grant reveals that Dharmapala, an earlier king of the Salastambha dynasty, was a Vaisnavite

adherent. Moreover, the monotheistic bhakti cult, which was popularized by Neo-Vaisnavite reformers, was also familiar to some people in Assam before Sankardeva's influence. This is evident in the works of the pre-Sankardeva's poets who lived during the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, such as Hemasarasvati, Harihara-Vipra, Madhava Kandali, and Kavirantna Sarasvati (Sarma, 2019:230).

It is a fact, nonetheless, that *Srimanta* Sankardeva propagated Neo-Vaisnavism throughout Assam during the first half of the sixteenth century. The philosophical concept of Neo-Vaisnavism is fundamentally based on elements of *bhakti* (devotion) (Saikia, 2022:30). The *Neo-Vaisnava* doctrine was propagated across Assam not only by Sankardeva but also by his principal disciples Madhavdeva, Damodaradeva, and Harideva. To spread Neo-Vaisnavism among the general public, Sankardeva placed a strong emphasis on *nam-kirtana*, recitation and performing arts. These methods contributed in the unification of the diverse Assamese society. In addition to nurturing *bhakti* cults, Sankardeva dedicated himself to the promotion of the rule of law, humanity, equity, and brotherhood. It is noteworthy to mention that the Neo-Vaisnavite Movement—which is rooted in humanist ideals and popular in both the literary and creative arts—is credited with spearheading the socio-cultural renaissance in the medieval Assamese society.

Srimanta Sankardeva set up the *Sattras* and the *Namghar*, two different kinds of socio-religious organizations, in order to spread the *neo-Vaisnava* doctrine throughout Assam. As an influential, long-standing civil society organization, *Namghar* continues to strive to promote social harmony and foster relationships among the ethnic groups in Assam. The *Sattras*, in addition to the strategically located *Namghar*, are a crucial component of the Neo-Vaisnavite movement, serving as a means for disseminating the teachings of *Eka Sarana Nam Dharma* among the people, irrespective of caste or race.

IV. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to comprehensively understand the development the *Sattras* as an integral agency within the Neo-Vaisnavite movement. This research specifically focuses on the genesis and evolution of *Sattras* institutions, with a detailed study conducted in Ujanial *Sattras* located in Jorhat district. The study aims to fulfill the following objectives have been taken:

To trace the growth of the *Sattras* in order to analyses their present status.

To examine the administrative nature and functions of the *Sattras* in Assam.

To explore the founding of Ujanial *Sattras* and its enduring cultural legacy.

V. Methodology

The present study adopts an analytical and descriptive approach with a historical perspective. Both primary and secondary data have been collected for this study to meet its objective. Primary source was gathered using the methods like observation and non-participant techniques. For this research, secondary data collected from a range of sources, including books and specific articles from magazines, journals, and other publications.

VI. Discussion

The development of Assamese culture has been significantly influenced by the *Sattras* institution. In reality, the *Sattras*, one of the most important socio-cultural and religious institutions in Assam, originated with the Neo-Vaisnavite movement that spread throughout India in the 15th and 16th centuries A.D. Today, Assam is home to well over five hundred *Sattras*, many of which are connected to *Vaisnava* households. Despite having originated primarily as a religious organization for spreading Vaisnavism, the *Sattras* eventually morphed into social organization and became distinct components of Assam's cultural heritage. The *Sattras* are the physical manifestation of Neo-Vaisnavism's religious beliefs and the hub of socio-cultural practices, such as *sattriya* dance, *ankia-bhaona*, *bargeet*, etc.

VII. Emergence of the Sattras Institution

The word '*Sattras*' literally denotes 'session', 'offering', and 'resident'. In the Shatapatha Brahmana, this word was originally used to refer to 'sacrifice' (Deva Goswami, 2002). A protracted session of sacrifice carried out by sages in the Nimisa forest is referred to as a '*Sattras*' in the first chapter of the Bhagavata-purna. The word '*Sattras*' comes from the etymology of the phrases

‘*Sat+tra*’, where ‘*sat*’ signifies truth or honesty and ‘*tra*’ implies relief. *Sattra* is the location where the righteous find relief (Devi,2013:268). Hemchandra Barua was the first to use the word ‘*sattra*’ in the Assamese dictionary ‘Hemkosha’, defining it as the home of Gosain, *Mahanta*, and *Bhakat*, among other Neo-Vaisnavite scholars and devotees. During the medieval period, the term ‘*sattra*’ referred to the practice and preaching of the neo-Vaisnavite movement. In the time of Sankardeva, devotees often gathered in open spaces under trees to listen to the *Vaisnava* saints’ recitation of *savanna-kirtana*, or ‘songs of God’. Although Sankardeva laid the foundation for the *Sattras*, his successors provided them with a strong institutional foundation. *Srimanta* Sankardeva established the first *Satra* at Batadrawa in the present-day Nagaon district. Similarly, the *Barpeta Sattra*, founded by Madhavdeva, continues to attract the Vaishnavite devotees. However, after the death of Sankardeva, the *Sattras* eventually split into the four *Samhatis*. These are *Brahma Samhati*, *Kāla Samhati*, *Nika Samhati*, and *Purusha Samhati* (Roychoudhury,2000:96-101).

VIII. **Brahma Samhati**

The *Brahma Samhati* got its name probably from Damodaradeva (1489-1598), a Brahmin who founded the *Samhati*. It is interesting that due to Sankardeva’s generosity, Damodaradeva and Harideva (1493-1568) were able to come together to propagate the new cult. However, after his death, they announced their independence since they felt Madhadeva was too rigid. This section is known as *Brahma Samhati* (*Mahanta*, et.al.,2013: 238). The *Brahma Samhati* openly accepted Brahminical rituals alongside with the neo-Vaishnavite cult. This sect also consists of the *Auniati Sattra*, *Dakhinpat Sattra*, *Gadamur Sattra*, and *Kuruwabari Sattra*, which are referred to as ‘*Sari Sattras*’ or ‘*Bamunia Sattras*’.

IX. **Purusha Samhati**

The *Purusha Samhati* is regarded as the principal *Samhati* as it maintains the fundamental elements of Sankardeva’s teachings. According to them, *Srimanta* Sankardeva’s name faded from prominence after his passing, prompting the initiation of this *Samhati*. This sect includes the *Sattras* built by Sankardeva’s grandson Purusottam Thakur and Chaturbhuja Thakur (Sarma, 2019:240). Furthermore, the *Sattras* formed by Chaturbhuja Thakur's wife Kanakalata Ai and her adherents belong to the same *Samhati*.

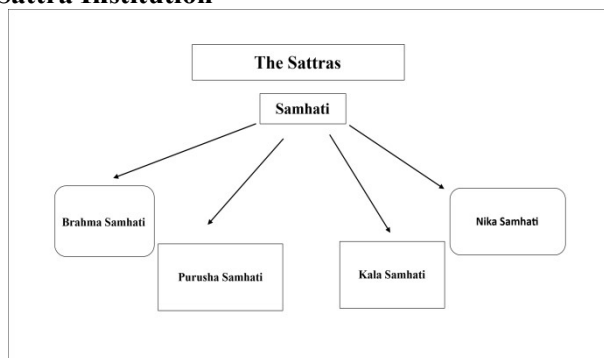
X. **Kala Samhati**

A prominent follower of Madhavdeva, Gopal Aata, founded the *Sattra* of the *Kala-Samhati*. People from lower socio-economic strata and tribal groups were brought into this sect by Gopal Aata's liberal attraction approach (*Mahanta*, et.al.,2013: 238). By establishing the *Mayamara Satra*, Aniruddhadeva, a staunch follower of Gopal Aata, revolutionized the spectrum of *Kāla-Samhati*. As a preacher, Aniruddhadeva began to spread his ideology among the people of the *Kaivarta* caste around 1601. In fact, some of Kala Samhati's *Sattras* were vital in the propagation of Vaisnavism among the people who belonged to different castes, tribes, and underprivileged sections of Hindu society (Roychoudhury,2000:101). In the latter part of the 18th century, the Misings were influenced by the *Kala Samhati* sect of neo-Vaisnavism and eventually became disciples of the *Kala Samhati*.

XI. **Nika Samhati:**

Nika Samhati refers to the *Sattras* which were founded by Mathuradas Burha Ata and Padma Ata. Within this *Samhati*, the three main *Sattras* are the Madhupur *Sattra*, the *Barpeta Sattra*, and the *Kamalabari Sattra* (Majuli) (*Mahanta*, et.al.,2013: 238). This sect was dedicated to the teachings of Saint Madhavdev and laid great emphasis on *Bhakti Sangha*.

Figure 1: Division of the Sattra Institution



The four aforementioned *Samhatis* were combined to form the *Sattras*, which progressively incorporated new traditions and practices. The Ahom kingdom granted patronage to a few of these *Sattras*. These *Sattras* consequently developed into an affluent, privileged the elite with a majestic structure.

XII. History and Culture of Ujanial Sattra: A Local History Perspective

The *Sattra* institutions of Assam have contributed greatly to the enrichment of our social and cultural life since the sixteenth century. *Ujanial Sattra* is one of the *Sattras* located in the Jorhat district of Assam. However, historical records reveal that historically the *Ujanial Sattra* did not establish in its present location. Some historical records indicate that Kanu Ata founded a *Sattra* in the southern region of the modern Sivasagar district in 1622 A.D. (Saka 1544) at the behest of Chaturbhuj Thakur, the grandson of Mahapurush *Srimanta* Sankardeva, Kanu Ata Purusha. This *Sattra* was named *Ujanial Sattra*. However, in honour of Kanu Ata, the *Sattra*'s founder, the region was subsequently referred to as Kanubari. *Sattradhikar* Kanu Ata was engaged in the preaching of *Mahapurush* Sankardeva and gave discipleship to many people from different parts of Assam. After the death of Kanu Ata, his nephew Abhaydeva succeeded him as a *Sattradhikar* of the *Ujanial Sattra*. But because of his elderly condition, the elder son Abhimanyudeva became the *Ujanial Sattra*'s *Sattradhikar* (Mahanta, 2012: 80-81). Abhimanyudeva's brother, Kamadeva, founded a *Sattra* on land owned by the *Nara* community which eventually became known as *Narabari*. The *Sattra* is now located in Shalaguri Mouza, Sivasagar. *Sattradhikar* Abhimanyudeva was succeeded by his son Ramanadeva.

During the Burmese invasion, the *Sattradhikar* of this *Sattra*, Krishnakantadeva, promptly shifted the main *Sattra* from *Kanubari* to the banks of the Kakojan river in Jorhat. Shortly thereafter, he settled at Belimukhia in the *Namti* region of the modern-day Sivasagar district, where his youngest son, Bhavaramdev established a *Sattra*. This *Sattra* came to be known as Belimukhia *Ujanial Sattra*. Meanwhile, Bapuram, the eldest son of Krishnakantadeva, settled in the Nimatighat region and founded a *Sattra* that served as the main branch of *Ujanial Sattra*. After operating for many years in Nimatighat, this *Sattra* was moved to Garmur in 1983, near the Jorhat Engineering College (Mahanta, 2012: 81).

At that time, *Sattradhikar* Padmakantadeva acquired a sizable tract of land at Teok Rajabari in the modern-day Jorhat district. The 350-year-old main throne and the main *Ujanial Sattra* were relocated to the present-day site by *Sattradhikar* Padmakantadeva's three sons, Dimbeswar, Phanindranath, and Dharmakantadeva, who also established a permanent *Sattra* there. The area, known as Namchuk Gaon is where the present-day *Ujanial Sattra* is situated. Since then, the *Ujanial Sattra* has been dedicated to spreading spirituality and preserving the cultural heritage and customs of the Neo-Vaisnavism.

Dimbeswar Goswamideva was the *Ujanial Sattra*'s twelfth *Sattradhikara* (Mahanta, 2012: 85-86). He assumed leadership of the *Sattra* from his uncle, Sonaram Goswamideva, and devoted the majority of his life to spiritual activities. Dubbed as the 'Bargosai of the *Ujanial Sattra*', Dimbeswar Goswamideva was a learned scholar who specialized in Dharmashastra scholarship. Many people gathered to hear the holy scriptures elaborated by the renowned *Sattradhikara* Dimbeswar

Goswamideva, who was well-known for his theological knowledge, *Nam-Prasanga*, and *Sattriya* songs. He was also a skilled mask designer. On December 25, 1972, he passed away. The 13th *Sattradhikara* was designated by his brother, Phanindranath Goswami. He was a *Sattriya* culture specialist. He could sing all of the *Angkiya Natak's* songs with easily. Furthermore, he was evangelizing for Sankardeva's philosophy to a variety people in the areas of Janjhimukh, Nimatighat, and Jamuguri. He died on March 24, 1988. (Mahanta, 2012: 86) The *Ujanial Sattr* is currently under supervision of *Sattradhikara* Lakhikanta Mahantadeva.

Image 1: Ujanial Sattr at Namchuk Gaon, Assam



XIII. Religious and Cultural Practices in Ujanial Sattr

It has been found that there was no such administrative office of *Sattradhikara* (head of the *Sattr* institution) at the time of the *Sattras'* foundation. During Madhavdeva's time, the *Sattr* institutions grew with the Proper administration, alongside the *Sattradhikaras*. It has been observed that the administration of *Ujanial Sattr* has been functioning autonomously. The members of *Ujanial Sattr* have their own administrative body. They make money on their own. The members of this *Sattr* had a direct stake in the efficient operation of the educational, administrative, and financial systems. It is noteworthy that *Ujanial Sattr's* contribution to the spread of moral and religious instruction as well as the organizing of cultural and religious activities is not limited to the *Sattr's* physical borders but extends far outside into the several nearby villages. On a daily basis, people visit the *Sattr* to participate in spiritual celebrations and to hear religious and moral discussions conducted there. In the context of audio-visual education, the fundamental component of the *Sattras* is equally crucial. The recitation and interpretation of the Bhagavata Purana and other sacred texts is an everyday practice in the *Ujanial Sattr*. A new genre of artistic endeavour, such as *Paalnaam*, *Borgeet*, *Ankiya Nats*, *Bhaona*, *Gayan-Bayan*, etc., has also been routinely performed by the *Ujanial Sattr*. Similarly, *Sattriya Nritya*, a classical dance is also performed in *Ujanial Sattr*. In fact, the anniversaries of the deaths of Sankardeva, Madhavdeva, and other famous *Sattradhikaras* of *Ujanial Sattr* have been honoured annually in *Ujanial Sattr*.

Image 2: Cultural Preservation at Ujanial Sattra



Source: Misra & Mahanta, 2012

XIV. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Sattras of Assam stand as enduring bastions of Neo-Vaisnavite philosophy, serving as vital conduits for the propagation of Vaisnavism and the preservation of the culture and heritage in Assam. It is noted that over the centuries, the *Sattras* have played a pivotal role in fostering social equality by embracing individuals from diverse caste and social backgrounds, thereby making to the democratization of religious practices. In fact, the *Sattras* have been indispensable in nurturing and safeguarding various cultural traditions, including music, performing arts, and classical vernacular literature, thus enriching the cultural platform of the Greater Assamese society. Although their teachings and cultural endeavors, the *Sattras* like *Ujanial Sattra* have left an indelible significance on Assamese society, shaping its ethos and identity while perpetuating the legacy of Neo-Vaisnavism for generations to come. As custodians of tradition and enlightenment, the *Sattras* continue to encourage and resonate with the spiritual and cultural aspirations of the people of Assam.

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Popular music and folk music: A study of their intermediations

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I. Abstract

Folk music is orally transmitted from one generation to the next generation. It celebrates the bonding between nature and human beings. It is also marked by the collective bonding within the community. Popular music is a later development of 20th century. It evolved among an urban populace after the industrial revolution. It is dependent upon TV, electronic mediums and social media for its survival. The paper explores the results of the interference of popular music in folk music with reference to a story entitled "Ra Bahor Sikkimikoni" written by the Assamese story writer, Mousumi Kandali.

II. Keywords

Folk culture, Folk music, Global Economy, Nature, Popular music.

Folk culture is marked by a spirit of dynamism. Although it is different from urban culture; it is constantly in a state of evolution. It is distinct from primitive culture because of a sense of sophistication and refinement that it carries. Folk culture is rich in each cultural aspect forming a variegated cultural tapestry. George M. Foster writes about folk culture in his essay, "What is Folk Culture"¹ in this manner:

Their components parts are closely interdependent, personal relationships are face to face, technology is simple and division of labor is slight. The family plays a large part in societal institutions, the sanctions which govern conduct are predominantly sacred, piety is emphasized, and ritual is highly developed and expresses vividly the wishes and fears of the people. Such a society is relatively immobile, change is slow, the ways of life form a single web of interrelated meanings and habits of members tend to correspond to custom (1953, p.160).

The practice of piety and the existence of social institutions show how dissimilar it is from primitive culture. Another significant feature of folk culture is its synergy of component parts to form a collective and cultural homogeneity. In this context, Durkheim's idea of 'conscience collective' too appears relevant. He argues how 'conscience collective' is effective in earlier societies among small social groups. According to Durkheim, in advanced and large societies it cannot be so powerful. M. J. Hawkins in his essay, "Continuity and Change in Durkheim's Theory of Social Solidarity"² elucidates Durkheim's idea about primeval societies in this way:

Durkheim describes the morphology of primitive societies as "segmental," that is, consisting of relatively undifferentiated parts linked together in a non-hierarchical manner. This structure "allows society to enclose the individual more tightly, holding him strongly attached to his domestic environment and, consequently, to traditions... In short, both the scope and the intensity of the conscience collective are closely connected with the segmental type of social organization, and the effacement of the latter leads to the erosion of the former (1979, p.157).

Alan Dundes³ explains the term 'folk' like this: "a group of people whatsoever who share at least one common factor. The linking factor may be either a common occupation or language or religion. But what is important is that a group formed for whatever reason will have some traditions which it calls its own" (1978, p.7). Yet the nature of those societies is such that the social bonding is very strong. Moreover, their rituals, festivals and occupations demand this attachment; in that sense

¹ George M Foster. "What is Folk Culture?" American Anthropologist, 55(2), 159-173, 1953. Web.

² M. J. Hawkins. "Continuity and Change in Durkheim's Theory of Social Solidarity." The Sociological Quarterly, 20 (1), 155-164, 1979.Web.

³ Allan Dundes. Essays in Folkloristics. New Delhi:Manohar Book service, 1978.

Durkheim's idea of 'conscience collective' becomes relevant. The chief occupation of these people is agriculture. They flock together for these activities and form a social bonding. Folk songs get born during these activities. They sing while performing their activities. Hence it is spontaneous. W. R. Bascom⁴ opines that because of its immediacy and spontaneity verbal art can connect to the audience instantly and profoundly. By verbal art he refers to all oral literature. He believes that in verbal art: "the aesthetic experience of the audience is simultaneous with the creative act, and the same is true of unwritten music and the dance, unless private rehearsals are held" (71). If we focus on folk literature the chief feature of it is, it is oral and once it is written it no longer remains a folk literature. Because it is oral; so it is meant to be performed and pictorial aspects of the performance too become relevant. Assamese writer, Nabin Ch. Sarma⁵ writes about the importance of the gestural aspects of folk songs and folk tales and remarks, "The act of singing of oral song possesses various styles, e. g. solo-style, ballet style and so forth. The singer also exhibits various styles, such as he holds his body tightly, his expression remains masklike, his voice is rigidly pitched, somewhat higher than his normal speaking tone. The song tells a story, perhaps one that points a moral or seeks to instruct. The mood sometimes is melancholy or nostalgic" (58). The performance enhances the engagement of the audience; yet the purpose of these performances is not amusement alone. Each folk tale or folk song carries a deep social meaning. R. Kalin⁶ views how a folk song reflects about the society where it originates. He observes that verbal art represents "the modal or typical mental content of the people in a society. These are data that deal directly with states of mind" (p. 570). Each of these songs is ingrained in the socio-cultural lives of the folk people. Russell Ward⁷ too expressed the same opinion about folksong and social environment in the essay, "Felons and Folksongs":

Folksongs rarely, if ever, give a reliable account of actual events. On the other hand, they probably give a more accurate picture of social attitudes, at any rate of those prevalent among their singers, than can be obtained in any other single way. We may learn from them not what happened, but what men thought about life and events, what forms of social behavior men admired, what they hated, and what they merely took for granted (1956, p.2).

For instance, the folk community called Rabha in Assam has a number of folk dances performed with folk songs. Each of these songs and dances talks about various social situations of the tribal community. Agriculture is the main occupation for their livelihood. As they live in hills area they do shifting cultivation. They do their agricultural works by singing together and also performing the dance called the Hamjhar dance. Dr. Gyanendra Yadav⁸ perceives this performance in this way, "It helps them to finish the work easily. In this folk dance, therefore, they take the agricultural instruments. It is known as 'Girkay' dance" (2009, p.112). Similarly there are songs which they perform and sing before going to fight with their enemies. In this way, they have multiple songs and dances with regard to many social activities. Not only Rabhas, other tribes from Assam too have a rich tradition of folk songs and dances. Malabika Baglary⁹ refers to the opinion of the Bengali writer Hemanga Biswas in the essay "*Asomor Janagostiya Samajat Prasolito Geet-Maat*" who says, "Folk songs do not have any fixed code. They do not have an instructor. It is closely connected to the region to which it belongs. Singing is of the lands, hills and valleys. The teacher is not one; the whole community" (qtd in 2025, p.16).

⁴ William R. Bascom. Contributions to Folkloristics. Meerut: Folklore Institute, 1981.

⁵ Nabin Chandra Sarma. Oral Songs of the Tribal Communities of Assam. Guwahati: Asam Sahitya Sabha, 2006.

⁶ R. Kalin. "The relationship between use of alcohol and thematic content of folktales in primitive societies." The General Inquirer: A Computer Approach to Content Analysis. Ed. P J Stones, Cambridge, Mass, 1966.

⁷ Russell, Ward. "Felons and Folksongs." Meanjin, 15(3), 282-300; 1956.

⁸ GyanendraYadav. Encyclopaedia of Indian Tribal Ethnography. New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 2009.

⁹ Malabika Baglary. "Asomor Janagostiya Samajat Prasolito Geet-Maat." Goriyosi, 32 (4), 16-19, 2025. Print.

Coming to the idea of popular culture Cambridge dictionary¹⁰ defines it in this fashion: “Music, TV, cinema, books etc that are popular and enjoyed by ordinary people, rather than experts or very educated people.” John Storey¹¹ in his *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture* notes: “What all these definitions have in common is the insistence that whatever else popular culture might be, it is definitely a culture that only emerged following industrialization and urbanization. . . . This of course makes Britain the first country to produce popular culture defined in this historically restricted way” (2021, p.10). In his book Storey provides six definitions of popular culture where he defines popular culture as being liked by everyone. He further says that popular culture is the residual part of high culture. He states that popular culture is mass produced and commercial. He describes popular culture as being produced by common people and also finds it as a site of ideological struggle between the dominant and subordinate. He also comes to the postmodern condition of popular culture where the demarcation between high and low no longer exists. So, popular culture is a comparatively recent development and its emergence is totally linked to technological advancements. Similarly, popular music is disseminated to a large audience due to technological interventions. After the industrial revolution folk music could not evolve and to a great extent was replaced by popular music. In America the Afro-American ‘ragtime’ paved the way for the growth of a popular music like ‘jazz’. Gregory D. Booth and Terry Lee Kuhn¹² in “Economic and Transmission Factors as Essential Elements in the Definition of Folk, Art, and Pop Music”, mentions the definition of popular music of *New Harvard Dictionary of Music* which defines popular music as:

Mass-disseminated music of recent centuries. The 18th and 19th centuries saw the development, chiefly in Europe and America, of a genre distinct from both folk and classical or art music. It differed from the former in being composed and notated and in developing a musical style not distinctive of a certain region or ethnic group. Though many early pieces of popular music shared general features with classical music of the day, they were briefer and simpler, making fewer demands on both performer and listener (1990, p.412-413).

This definition brings to light differences between folk music and popular music. Jack Santino¹³ in his review essay, “North America: Folk and Popular Music” refers to Andrew Lamb and Charles Hamm and expresses, “These authors state that they use the term popular music ‘in a somewhat wider sense to embrace music that, with the growth of industrialization in the 19th century, began to develop distinctive characteristics in line with the tastes and interests of the expanding middle classes (including) certain types of comic opera and dance music, as well as music covered by less specific terms such as light music” (1985, p.334).

Actually, there is no room for argument for the fact that there exist differences between folk music and popular music from the viewpoints of its origin, history, socio-cultural realities and in terms of political and economic dominions. Folk song is completely dependent upon the memory of a section of people for its survival whereas popular song survives and circulates worldwide through different technological mediums such as TV, You Tube and other social medias. However, we are in a juncture where the scope of the creation of folk song is limited because societies are largely industrialized and even in the rural scenario because of the availabilities of gadgets and internet connections music which is globally popular or popular in the urban areas reaches the villages. Hence, the environment to create folk songs, which are totally agrarian in nature, no longer exists. As a result, we find popular versions of folk music now a days. As Carl I. Belz¹⁴ writes about "folk

¹⁰ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org>

¹¹ John Storey. *Cultural Theory and Popular Theory An Introduction*. London: Routledge, 2021.

¹² Gregory D. Booth and Terry Lee Kuhn. “Economic and Transmission Factors as Essential Elements in the Definition of Folk, Art, and Pop Music.” *The Musical Quarterly*. 74 (3), 411-438, 1990. Web.

¹³ Jack, Santino. “North America: Folk and Popular Music.” *Ethnomusicology*, 29(2), 333-336, 1985. Web.

¹⁴ <https://www.commentary.org/articles/barry-gewen/the-story-of-rock-by-carl-belz-rock-and-roll-will-stand-edited-by-greil-marcus-the-age-of-rock-edited-by-jonathan-eisen>

rock," which is combination of rock 'n' roll and folk music (1967); similar blending are seen in different genres even in Assam. For instance, Assam has a folk music performance called Nagara Naam. Presently we see divergent performance of this Nagara Naam where they mix various popular songs in their performance and these performances are highly popular among the masses which are easily available through social media platforms. However, these new interventions create disjointedness with the original folk song and folk performances. As a result, the social and cultural meanings associated with that particular folk music get lost. It achieves a new cultural meaning in the new global environment. To analyse this intervention of the popular in the folk I have chosen a story written by the Assamese writer Mousumi Kandali¹⁵ entitled "Ra Bahor Sigmikoni" which can be translated as "The Gleams of the Ra Bamboo" into English.

The story talks about a folksong entitled 'Primordial Prayer' sung by a tribal woman named Momoko. She is a widow and lives in a remote village. Her husband was killed by a tiger; but there was a prohibition in their culture that when a man was killed by a tiger they should not mourn. The narrator informs, "No one should mourn for a soul seized by a tiger. Tiger is a sacred god. A person is perished at the hands of a tiger for his sins in his former life" (2010, p.153). Momoko and her village folk live in this kind of a belief system. The catastrophe and cruelty caused by nature is also accepted by some sort of mystical rationalism. In this way, they live amidst nature getting merged in it. Momoko tells, "See how the sun spreading its multiple legs is sketching the 'ra' bamboos in the sky. Look at the numerous glittering 'ra' bamboos which will be vanished in a few moments. Once the sun sets; everything vanishes" (2010, p.157).

The story is about the theft of a song sung by this woman. A musician finds this song in a museum and sells it as his own music by incorporating digitized sounds and instruments in the song in the form of a complete package. When the story begins we find two big vehicles heading towards this small village of Momoko. In one car we find reporters of a news channel who are excited to uncover the truth behind the song because this news will create sensation and will immediately increase the TRP of their channel. In the other car we find the fans and followers of the music composer who has become famous by remodeling Momoko's song. They have come to do an agreement with Momoko so that the whole matter is hushed up and the reputation of their 'guru' remains untarnished. Their plan is to give some money to Momoko and take a bite from her where she will reveal that the song is taken from her by her consent. The story provides a vivid sketch of the rural world and the urban world. The narrator introduces the song of Momoko as follows: "This song of Momoko was born in the darkness of the night. While in the light of the fireflies only the eyes of the tiger were visible, this song came out cracking open the frozen blood in Momoko's heart. Momoko delivered this song when the eyes of the tiger were dazzling, Cheng was weeping like a jackal and the moon of late evening was sighing heavily because of insomnia" (2010, p.145). On the other hand, the modern music composer transforms it into a different version to cater to the demands of the urban populace. The narrator apprises the readers: "This bare song of Momoko sung in her plain voice was clothed with the ornaments and garments of digital music... In this version produced in collaboration with the digital instruments Momoko's song got shrunk" (2010, p.151). Then the narrator observes that in the third version Momoko's song got lost in the midst of booming sounds of the musical instruments. Momoko's song is transported into a different world and is transformed into a different musical genre. The story also unfolds the huge differences in the orientation of the performers, Momoko and the popular musician. One is driven by market economy and is obsessed to increase the saleability of the product (the song). For the musician the song is a product which will help him to accumulate wealth and fame. On the contrary, Momoko is not anxious regarding her song. The song gives her solace. She discloses, "Nature will provide me with as many songs as I want. The crickets will give, the wind which blows with their open feathers among the pine trees will give, the frogs will give... I don't have dearth of songs. As I don't lack songs, what will I do with your money? You will need money to buy songs" (2010, p.156).

¹⁵ Kandali, Mousumi. 'Ra Bahor Sigmikoni'; Mockdrill (pp. 145-159), Guwahati: Banalata, 2010.

Momoko is unbothered by the attempts of negotiation made by the two parties; both the groups are ready to give a handsome amount of money to Momoko in exchange of the deals. The news channel party wants a bite from Momoko and the popular musician's fans want her to supply them with a video confessing that her song was not stolen. However, her next generation represented by her son, Hang and his friend, Somang are able to understand this money game. Hang is comparatively naive; but Somang who has witnessed the callousness of the city is smart enough to make deals with the parties. He tells Hang, "It's not compromise, it's a game plan. This is an exercise for survival... This is a temporary strategy. The actual truth will definitely come to light. We will bring out the truth; but before that we need to install ourselves firmly... Foothold! Understand? Foothold!" (2010, p.158).

The story narrates advancement of the global economy in the form of popular music into the pure terrain of the hills. It not only showcases the differences but also portrays the threats it can pose to the sanctity of folk music.

At this point we should mention that the writer acknowledges and dedicates the story to the singer of the pygmy tribe, Afunakwa. Interestingly a similar real story is alluded to in the book *Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies*¹⁶ edited by Frith Simon. They write: "The song appeared under the title 'Sweet Lullaby' and includes Afunakwa's voice singing 'Rorogwela' to a dance beat provided by a drum machine... On the first chorus Afunakwa's voice is solo; on the second chorus she is backed by digital multiplication and a studio chorus, creating a dense 'We are the world' vocal effect; on the third chorus Afunakwa's voice disappears into linguistic indistinction of an ensemble singing her lullaby. Through this progression one hears how what was once distinctly Afunakwa's world is now up for a new sharing, becoming, ultimately, a world where her voice is no longer necessary to her imagined presence" (2004, p.70-71).

III. Conclusion

The story appears to be a fictional rendering of this event. The last line of this quotation clearly demarcates the world of folk music and popular music. In the latest popular version the singer's presence is no longer necessary. However, the story by Kandali presents us with the singer's perspective who is totally unaffected by this advancements because she knows what is inherent in her cannot be seized by anyone. At the same time her next generation is not as unbothered as her; they are disturbed by the fact that their identity is under threat. They lacked the conviction like Momoko. In this context we can refer to Muad Karpeles¹⁷ opinion expressed in the essay, "The Distinction Between Folk and Popular Music". Karpeles comments: "And I would go even further and say that the creation of folk songs in an industrialized country is hardly possible. The creation of folk song belongs in the main to the pre-literate stage of mankind, when in the absence of written or printed records, or mechanical recordings, a song was not tied to a definite form, but could gradually evolve (or devolve) to suit the taste of the community" (1968, p.10). Hang and Somang cannot produce innumerable songs provided by the resources of nature. So, we can infer that folk music is in a juncture where preservation and continuation of it is a challenge. Popular music is entertaining a wide mass of people and we do not have any trouble with it. However, certain questions inevitably arise in our minds such as 'Will popular music be able to give us the spiritual solace as folk music can? When popular music will intrude upon folk music; will folk music survive? In this globalised world can folk music be preserved in its original form?'

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¹⁶ Frith, Simon; ed. *Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies*, Vol II, The Rock Era. London: Routledge, 2004.

¹⁷ Karpeles, Maud. "The Distinction between Folk and Popular Music." *Journal of the International Folk Music Council*, 1968. Web.

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Online shopping and children

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I. Abstract

Online marketing nowadays has become a useful mode of shopping among children regardless of geographical location. It offers several conveniences and choices while comparing with traditional shopping methods. Availability of internet in all the areas and the increase in the usage of Smart phones among children has widened the uses of online shopping. So usage and perception of online marketing among children is an important area to be focused. The present study aims to understand the influence of internet among children towards online shopping. Tiruvarur district in Tamilnadu is selected as the geographical area for the present study. A survey was conducted among 600 respondents selected from this geographical area using purposive sampling. It was found that Amazon is the most popular online shopping site among the children. They choose cash on delivery method as the mode of making payment. Tension free selection sitting in the home and low prices are the main factors that attract children towards online shopping. Food items and clothing are the main products that children mostly prefer to buy through online.

II. Keywords

Internet, Online shopping, Buying behavior, Traditional Shopping, Children.

III. Introduction

E-commerce is increasingly becoming popular among children nowadays due to the many advantages that are inherent in online shopping. Online shopping is becoming popular because it gives a lot of facilities to the children ranging from low prices, wide selection, time-saving and any time shopping. The Spread of internet facility and increase in the smart phone penetration among the children are the most important factors that have resulted in the online shopping. To access a wide geographical area and to reduce the cost of operation, manufacturers open web stores and sell their products through established e-commerce sites. Web stores and e-commerce sites give new experiences to children which were missing in traditional shopping. You tube, in particular, has become a big source of information and entertainment for people of all ages, including children. With the increasing availability of smart phones and other mobile devices, children now are able to access to You Tube content at their fingertips, anytime and anywhere¹.

IV. Objectives of the study

- To find out the factors motivating children towards online shopping
- To study the online shopping website used for shopping by children
- To study the frequency of doing online shopping by children
- To study the mode of payment used in online shopping by children
- To study the types of products purchased through online shopping by children
- To study the difficulties faced by children in online shopping

V. Literature review

Online shopping has become a significant part of children's buying behavior. Online shopping includes both positive and negative effects. Understanding this, it is essential to contribute valuable ideas in promoting positive use of digital media among children. Earlier research has examined the

¹ Children as consumers- a target market by Kusum Gupta, 2007.

children's buying behavior and online shopping. For instance, Patricia M. Greenfield [2009]² explored how social media platforms contribute to the development of children. She has emphasized the children's interactions with social media beyond the formal educational settings. Moreno et al [2010]³ reveals the importance of parental role in the growth of children and risky behaviors of children. Educators can complement the efforts by incorporating digital literacy programs into the curriculum, teaching the children how to navigate social media responsibly. By working together, parents and educators can create a supportive environment to help the children in developing healthy social media habits. Lemish [2017]⁴ adds that children have many unique features as a consumers. Children are sensitivity in bright colors, graphics, packing, design, animation, humor, sound effect, female and children voices. Children are attracted by stories with heroes, celebrities, popular star and sports person. Rideout, 2017⁵ questions how does a child evaluate and distinguish an information received from food marketer's website and by playing a game on his or parent's mobile phone? How does a child evaluate a candy brand sponsored advertisement on social media? R. Senthilkumar (2018) shows that people who have time to spend prefer traditional shopping due to social reasons. Rise in internet penetration, hike in the income of the people, exposure of people to electronic devices, secure online payment mechanism, return policies, and discounts offered by e-commerce sites are attracting people to online shopping.

VI. Children as consumers

Children are innocent, but they become a consumer quickly. India has the largest number of children in the world. Today's children have more decision making power than previous generations. Through the advertisements, children come to the knowledge of new product available in the market. Rise in television channels have contributed more arrival of advertisements in the television channels. There is a correlation between seeing advertisement and purchasing goods⁶. Availability and easy access to internet connectivity have accelerated the use of social networking services, particularly among children. Children are more inclined towards social networking services⁷.

VII. Food advertising and marketing channels

Food manufacturers use many channels to reach children to develop their brand loyalty and influence food product buying behavior. Children oriented marketing channels and techniques include television advertising, in-school marketing, product placements, kids club, internet, shirts and products with brand logos. The largest single source of media messages about food to children, especially younger children, is television⁸.

VIII. Research methodology

The present study is descriptive in nature and focuses on the perceptions of rural children towards online shopping in the Tiruvarur District in Tamilnadu. 300 child respondents and 300 parent respondent are selected from rural areas in Thiruvavur District using the Purposive sampling method. For collecting data self-structured questionnaire was distributed among these respondents. Tables have been used for arranging the data so collected from respondents. For testing the hypotheses framed in the study, Chi-square test has been used.

IX. Hypothesis of the Study

Following hypothesis has been framed for the present study.

Null Hypothesis (HO) There is no significant relationship between age and online shopping.

² Impact of You Tube on children's behaviors and activities by Sharoon Saleem,2022

³ Click to purchase: Social media influence on youth towards online shopping intentions by Saiful Haque, Ruchita Jain and Mohd Shahabuddin Rayeen, 2025.

⁴ Food advertising and marketing directed at children by Mary Story and Simone French, 2004.

⁵ What is taught and what is learned, Technology and information by Patricia M.Greenfield, 2009.

⁶ A content analysis of displayed alcohol references on social media by Moreno.,Williams.,Briner., and Brockman 2010

⁷ Children and television a global perceptions by Lemish D 2007

⁸ Advertising to children and teens by Rideout V 2014

Alternate Hypothesis (H₁) There is a significant relationship between age and online shopping.

Results and Discussion

Table: 1 Demographic profile of the parent respondents

Profile – parents		Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	174	58
	Female	126	42
	Total	300	100
Age	Below 25	45	15
	25-30	110	37
	30-40	99	33
	40-45	33	11
	Above 45	12	4
	Total	300	100
Educational Qualification	Up to S.S.L.C	15	5
	S.S.L.C – Plus 2	105	35
	Graduate	96	32
	Post Graduate	48	16
	Diploma and others	36	12
	Total	300	100
Occupation	Daily wages	54	18
	Govt. Employee	36	12
	Private sector employee	108	36
	Self employed	69	23
	Business/ Profession	33	11
	Total	300	100
Monthly Income	Up to Rs. 15,000	57	19
	15,000 to 25,000	114	38
	25,000 to 35,000	78	26
	35,000 to 45,000	33	11
	Above 45,000	18	6
	Total	300	100

Table 1 show that 58% of the respondents are male and 42% of the respondents are female. Persons belonging to the age group 20-30 and 30-40 are 37% and 33% respectively. 35% of the respondents have educational qualification 'Plus two or below' and 32% of the respondents have educational qualification 'Graduation'. 36% of the respondents are employed in Private sector and 23% of the respondents are self-employed. 38% of the respondents have monthly income Rs.15, 000-25,000 and 26% of the respondents have monthly income Rs.25, 000-35,000.

Table 2: Why do children prefer online shopping?

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Low prize	63	21
Variety of products	90	30
Time saving	84	28
24X7 Shopping facility	27	9
Easy information	24	8
Influence of friends	12	4
Total	300	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 shows that 30% of the respondents decided to shop online because wide varieties of products are available there. 21% of the respondents were attracted by the factor low price. It reveals that the factor 'Wide varieties of products' is the most important factor that motivated people to do online shopping.

Table: 3; Website used for shopping

Website	Frequency	Percentage
Amazon	60	20

Flipart	63	21
Myntra	30	10
Meesho	39	13
Snapdeal	42	14
Paytm	30	10
Others	36	12
Total	300	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 depicts that percentage of respondents who used Amazon and Flipkart for online shopping are 20% and 21% respectively. Flipkart was found to be the most used e-commerce website.

Table: 4 Frequency of shopping

Frequency of shopping	Frequency	Percentage
Once in 15 days	48	16
Once in 30 days	57	19
Once in 2 months	123	41
Once in 3 months	72	24
Total	300	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 4 illustrates that 41% of the respondents do online shopping once in 2 months. Only 16% of the respondents makes online shopping once in 15 days.

Table: 5: Mode of payment

Payment mode	Frequency	Percentage
Cash on delivery	126	42
UPI payment	84	28
Net Banking	45	15
Debit card	36	12
Credit card	9	3
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 5 describes that 42% of the respondents depended on 'Cash on delivery' method for making their payment. 'UPI payment' was used by 28% of the respondents.

Table: 6 Difficulties in shopping through online

Difficulties	Frequency	Percentage
Low quality	81	27
Delivery problem	54	18
Risk in sharing personal information	90	30
Low product related information	51	17
Slow internet	24	8
Total	300	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 6 shows that 30% of the respondents think 'Risk in sharing personal information and Banking details' as the problem and difficulty faced in the online shopping. 27% of the respondents think that low quality is the problem faced in the online shopping. 17% of respondents' difficulty is 'Product information on the website is not sufficient'.

Table: 7: Data for testing Hypothesis

Age	Is online shopping convenient?		
	Yes	No	Total
Below 20	31	15	46
20-30	64	48	112

30-40	67	31	98
40-50	21	13	34
Above 50	6	4	10
Total	100	111	300

Source: Primary data

Table: 8 Calculation of Chi –Square Value

Observed Frequency (O)	Expected Frequency (E)	O – E	(O – E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
31	15.33	15.67	245.55	15.67
64	37.33	26.67	711.29	26.67
67	32.67	34.33	1178.55	34.33
21	11.33	9.67	93.51	9.67
6	3.33	2.67	7.13	2.67
15	17.02	-2.02	4.01	1.98
48	41.44	6.56	43.03	6.56
31	36.26	-5.26	27.67	5.26
13	12.58	0.42	0.18	0.43
4	3.7	0.3	0.09	2.3
Total				105.54

Degrees of freedom: $(R-1) \times (C-1) = (5-1) \times (2-1) = 4 \times 1 = 4$

Table: 9 Value of Chi- Square Test

Chi Square value	D.F	P value	Table value
105.54	4	0.05	9.49

From the Table 9, it is clear that the estimated value of chi square (105.54) is greater than Table value (9.49) at 5% level. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and we can conclude that there is a significant relationship between the age and online shopping.

X. Conclusion

From the study it can be concluded that Flipkart is the most used e-commerce platform by rural people and Amazon comes as the second most important platform. Rural people motivated to do online shopping because wide varieties of products are available for purchase. Next important factor that motivated them is availability of the product at low price. Their frequency of online shopping is once in two months. Payment mode preferred by rural people for online shopping are cash on delivery and UPI payment. Rural people mainly use online shopping to buy clothes and apparel and home and kitchen equipment. Problems and difficulties faced by them in online shopping are risk in giving personal information and getting inferior quality products.

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Beyond the blackboard: use of artistic expression in chemistry education

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I. Abstract

The term "education" in modern times refers to more than only the transfer of information, skills, and knowledge. However, education goes beyond that; it also entails developing a good outlook, preserving mental health, adjusting to a new sociocultural setting, and acquiring soft and life skills, among other things.^{1,2} In Indian high schools, chemistry is taught as a general science course. However, it's been noted that chemistry is frequently seen as a challenging science. Because of this, low student retention or dropout rates are frequently seen³. Even if science and technology have advanced significantly over the past 20 years, interest in chemistry has drastically declined. Chemistry is perceived by students as a dull topic. As per Dawson (2010) Chemistry was taught using a rather conventional approach, such as lecturing or utilising a blackboard⁴.

II. Keywords: Skill, Sculpture, Approaches and technique, equity, and Knowledge, Method, art and Creativity, Viculpoints.

III. Introduction

Art is a thought-expressive language. Through artistic mediums including painting, sculpture, architecture, dance, and music, among others, one may express ideas. The study of aesthetics is a subfield of philosophy that examines the nature of art^{5,6}. It is crucial to reorganise education to an integrated learning paradigm as the digitization of education has changed the paradigm for education (Kenny, 2023). Earl Nightingale believed that being creative is a logical outgrowth of our passion⁷. Divergent thinking plays a role in creativity. Innovative thinking is a skill shared by those with high levels of creativity. According to Kasiga School, their ability to develop new things rather than having a strict cognitive process makes them unique. Teaching chemistry requires a variety of innovative approaches and techniques because the topic is primarily focused on practical applications.

The 2020 National Education Policy placed a strong emphasis on integrating science and the arts into secondary education curricula to improve students' transdisciplinary knowledge. In addition, skill enhancement courses are being offered in higher education to help with skill growth. As a result, science students can choose to take courses like beautician, while art students might choose

¹ Mantry, A. Holistic, "Multidisciplinary and Futuristic Aspects of Education in the Light of NEP-2020". Management and Expenditure on Higher Education, 163.

² Banerjee, M., & Krishnagar, N. (2023). "Implementation of NEP 2020 Curriculum: An Overview". NEP 2020: Implementation Phase.

³ Vachliotis, T., Salta, K., & Tzougraki, C. (2021). "Developing basic systems thinking skills for deeper understanding of chemistry concepts in high school students." Thinking Skills and Creativity, 41, 100881.

⁴ Dawson, S. (2010). 'Seeing' the learning community: An exploration of the development of a resource for monitoring online student networking. British journal of educational technology, 41(5), 736-752.

⁵ Marchak, D., Shvarts-Serebro, I., & Blonder, R. (2021). "Teaching chemistry by a creative approach: Adapting a teachers' course for active remote learning." Journal of chemical education, 98(9), 2809-2819.

⁶ Danipog, D. L., & Ferido, M. B. (2011). "Using art-based chemistry activities to improve students' conceptual understanding in chemistry". Journal of Chemical Education, 88(12), 1610-1615.

⁷ Kenny, N., McCoy, S., & O'Higgins Norman, J. (2023). A whole education approach to inclusive education: An integrated model to guide planning, policy, and provision. Education Sciences, 13(9), 959.

to take natural science. Additionally, inclusive education is emphasised in NEP, 2020. Under inclusive education, students from marginalised communities, vulnerable student groups, and those with special needs such as physical disabilities, mental retardation, slow learners, and so on were taught alongside pupils in regular classrooms. This promotes equity in school and cultivates a positive view for all people, irrespective of their abilities or disabilities. Thus, chemistry should be taught in these kinds of schools by integrating creativity and the arts, which will inspire the students^{8, 9, 10, 11}.

Students' engagement and comprehension of difficult ideas can be considerably increased by integrating art and creativity into chemistry education. Teachers may assist pupils visualise atomic structures, chemical processes, and molecular interactions by using visual arts to translate complex concepts into memorable and approachable representations. For instance, a creative project can have students use a variety of craft materials to create and construct three-dimensional models of molecules. This helps students understand molecular geometry and appreciate the symmetry and beauty in chemical structures. Additionally, using narrative and storytelling may make the history of chemistry come to life, helping students understand the human side of scientific discoveries. Deeper learning and retention may also be promoted through methods like making infographics on various elements or sketching reaction processes. By fusing scientific ideas with artistic expression, this method to chemistry makes the subject more approachable and engaging for a wider range of learners^{12, 13}.

IV. Role of art and creativity in Education

Enhancing engagement and Motivation Students' curiosity and excitement are naturally piqued by artistic activities, which creates a more engaging and joyful learning atmosphere. Through the integration of artistic expressions and creative projects, instructors may inspire students to take an active role in their education. Better attendance, more active involvement in class discussions, and meticulous assignment completion are frequently the results of this enhanced engagement^{14, 15, 16}.

Fostering critical thinking and problem solving skills Solving problems and critical thinking are two cognitive skills. Enhancing the cognitive abilities of kids requires these two competencies. Students' capacity for critical thought and problem solving is enhanced by art and creativity, which are focused on novelty and diverse thinking. As life-oriented curriculum was also emphasised in NEP, 2020, critical thinking is crucial from this angle as well. Critical thinking and original problem-solving are challenges posed by art and creativity to pupils. Students gain knowledge of information analysis, diverse viewpoints, and creative problem-solving techniques via arts and crafts projects including painting interpretation, sculpting, and theatrical performance. Students

⁸ Krishnaveni, R., & Purusotham, B. "Nep 2020 emphasis on Multidisciplinary and Interdisciplinary Approach".

⁹ Mantry, A. Holistic, "Multidisciplinary and Futuristic Aspects of Education in the Light of NEP-2020". Management and Expenditure on Higher Education, 163.

¹⁰ Abhinandan, M., & Yadav, M. K. "Towards a more Holistic and Multidisciplinary education with special reference to new education policy 2020".

¹¹ Mandavkar, P. (2023). "Language, Art, and Culture in NEP-2020. Art, and Culture in NEP-2020 (February 24, 2023)."

¹² Collard, P., & Looney, J. (2014). "Nurturing creativity in education". European Journal of Education, 49 (3), 348-364.

¹³ Sousa, D. A., & Pilecki, T. (2013). "From STEM to STEAM: Using brain-compatible strategies to integrate the arts". Corwin Press.

¹⁴ K., & K. (2021, June 22). "Role and importance of creativity in the classroom"| Kasiga School. Kasiga School - Kasiga School. <https://www.kasigaschool.com/blog/roleandimportance-of-creativity-in-the-classroom/>

¹⁵ Hassan, L. G., & Salihu, M. (2020). "Application of Innovative Methods to Enhance the Teaching and Learning of Chemistry". Sokoto Educational Review, 19(1), 108-122.

¹⁶ McGuire, S., McGuire, S. Y., & Angelo, T. (2015). "Teach students how to learn: Strategies you can incorporate into any course to improve student metacognition, study skills, and motivation". Routledge.

may solve complicated issues in a variety of academic fields using this method, which not only relates to art-related courses but also improves cognitive capacities generally^{17,18,19,20}.

Promoting Multimodal Learning and Multiple Intelligences Art incorporates several learning modalities—auditory, visual, and kinesthetic—and accommodates multiple learning styles and intelligences, including musical, linguistic, spatial, interpersonal, and spatial language. A wider range of intellectual abilities are developed and varied learners are supported by art education, which appeals to numerous senses. All pupils are guaranteed the chance to succeed in subjects where they have innate abilities because to this inclusion^{21,22,23}.

Cultivating emotional intelligence and empathy In psychology, emotional intelligence is a recent development. The psychologist Daniel Goleman introduced the idea of emotional intelligence. Controlling one's own emotions as well as those of others is referred to as emotional intelligence. It facilitates a person's successful environment adaption. In a similar vein, one facet of emotional intelligence is empathy. Understanding someone else's feelings that are too fantastical for one's own circumstances is a prerequisite for empathy. In the modern world, it is crucial to develop emotional intelligence and empathy throughout the formative years of education. Art and creativity may help with this. Because creativity and the arts help people think positively, integrate into society more easily, and develop a sense of self^{24,25,26}.

Encouraging interdisciplinary connection Every person now has to be knowledgeable in several disciplines since society is becoming more and more knowledge-exploding. NEP, 2020 placed further emphasis on the curriculum's inclusion of multidisciplinary subjects. Creativity and the arts promote interdisciplinary learning by allowing ideas from different academic disciplines to be combined. For example, although creating a play could combine ideas from social studies and history, making a sculpture might use physics concepts (balance and materials science). In addition to enhancing students' educational experiences, this all-encompassing method enables them to recognise the connections between many fields of knowledge and the practical relevance of their coursework 5'8'9'.

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- ¹⁷ Veerasingham, K., Balakrishnan, B., Ibrahim, M., Damanhuri, M., & Gengatharan, K. (2021). "Design thinking for creative teaching of chemistry". *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 11(3), 670-687.
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V. Objective of the study

This study aims to discover artistic strategies that can be applied in teaching chemistry. Additionally, this study encourages the teacher in knowing benefit of art integrated teaching.

Research Methodology

In conducting this study researcher has used qualitative research design. Researcher has primarily used secondary sources of data from different academic journal, newspaper article, data available in different website and government reports.

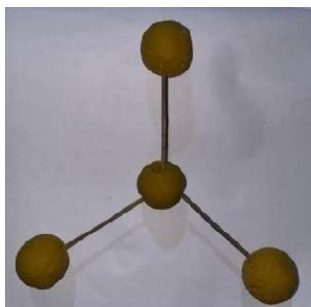
VI. Analysis and Discussion

Strategies for incorporating art and creativity in teaching chemistry

Using art and creativity can make learning chemistry easier and more interesting. When students do creative activities—like drawing reaction steps, building models of molecules, or designing infographics—they understand and remember complex ideas better. These hands-on, visual tasks help students with different learning styles and also make them more curious and motivated to learn. This approach supports deeper learning and makes chemistry more engaging. Teachers can take many steps to include creative methods in their lessons to help students learn in fun and effective ways²³. Different steps can be taken so that arts and creativity can be incorporated in teaching chemistry to the students and here are some innovative ways to integrate these elements into chemistry education.

Illustrative drawing Students should be encouraged to sketch chemical processes, such as the steps in a chemical reaction or the electron transport chain. By transforming abstract ideas into more tangible visual representations, this improves comprehension and memory retention. 5⁶,^{12,27}

Interactive models Visualising molecular structures and complicated geometries such as tetrahedral or trigonal planar molecules can be aided by building models from a variety of materials (e.g., clay, Lego, or digital 3D models). Atomic bonding and reaction can be best illustrated with interactive models^{5,6},^{12,27}.



a.

Fig: Clay modeling of trigonal planar molecule (eg. BF_3)

Chemical Storytelling Incorporate chemistry concepts into gripping stories by using storytelling techniques. To emphasise radioactivity, educators may, for example, narrate the tale of Marie Curie's discovery of radium or have the class perform a play on the periodic table in which each student plays a different element^{28,29,30}.

²⁷ Shaheen, R. (2010). "Creativity and education". *Creative education*, 1(03), 166.

²⁸ Lansangan, R., Yoma, K., Yoma, C. A., Sibug, K. P., Cabrera, R. M., Gregorio, E., & Manubay, F. R. (2021). CHEMISTORY: Integration of Creative Story Writing in Understanding Chemical Elements in Online Learning". *KIMIKA*, 32(1), 110-128.

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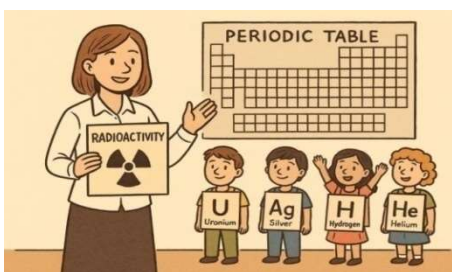


Fig1: An illustrative example of chemical storytelling as a teaching method (AI generated image)

Artistic experiment: We can include creative elements in your experiments. For example, you might educate students about pH indicators by utilising natural dyes, or you could make chemical gardens that are visually appealing. These kinds of experiments show the elegance of chemistry and its working principles^{5,6,15,31}.

Digital Simulations and Visualizations: To replicate chemical processes that are too risky, costly, or impracticable to carry out in a school lab, use applications and software. Additionally, molecular motion may be animated with digital tools to illustrate ideas like osmosis and diffusion^{15,29,30}.

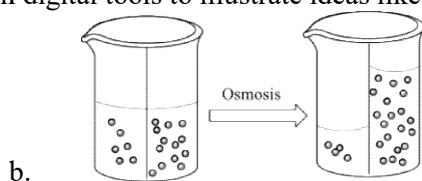


Fig: Figure showing osmosis made with the help of **Chemdraw** software

Infographics and Posters: Ask students to make posters or infographics that describe chemical topics or how chemicals are used in everyday life. Through this exercise, students improve their comprehension and creative abilities by breaking down material into its most basic components and communicating them clearly²².

Creative Writing and Poetry: Students should be encouraged to compose poetry or short tales that use topics and phrases related to chemistry. By encouraging pupils to approach chemistry artistically and symbolically, this strengthens their understanding of the topic through a variety of expressive techniques^{5,6,28,31}.

Chemistry education may become more vivid, pleasurable, and memorable by including these creative and artistic techniques. This will help students understand challenging topics and apply them in novel and creative ways.

VI. Theoretical Frameworks for Integrating Art and Creativity into Chemistry education

The use of art and creativity into chemistry education has the potential to enhance educational opportunities by offering diverse viewpoints, boosting in-depth comprehension, and advancing cross-disciplinary relationships. The smooth fusion of these seemingly disparate fields of study is guided by a number of theoretical frameworks that improve students' creative and scientific abilities. In order to include art and creativity into chemistry education, the following theoretical frameworks can be used:

STEAM Education: The integration of creativity and the arts into STEM fields, such as chemistry, is advocated by STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) education. Teachers may create interdisciplinary linkages and holistic problem-solving abilities by including creative aspects into chemistry lectures, such as narrative, design thinking, and visualisations. By

³¹ Wunsch, P. A. (2013). "Experience and the arts: An examination of an arts-based chemistry

emphasising creativity, teamwork, and practical applications, STEAM methods equip students for a wide range of 21st-century problems and professional possibilities^{13,14,32,33}.

Multiple Intelligences theory: This idea was put out by Howard Gardner and contends that intelligence is a complex construct made up of a range of cognitive capacities.

Different sorts of intelligences, including visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and interpersonal intelligences, are catered to by incorporating art and creativity into chemistry education. Teachers may capitalise on students' abilities and improve their overall learning experience by providing a variety of learning options, such as working together on multimedia presentations, sculpting molecules, or doing chemical demonstrations^{5,6,12,27}.

VII. Constructivism:

This approach places a strong emphasis on learners' active involvement in creating knowledge via their interactions with the outside world. Incorporating art and creativity into chemistry education enables students to visualise abstract topics, make mental models, and actively engage in the learning process. Students actively create their understanding of chemical concepts through creative activities including creating chemical models, producing scientific images, or painting molecular structures^{5,6,30,31}.

Inquiry-Based Learning: This method places a strong emphasis on critical thinking, problem-solving, and active discovery. Teaching chemistry with an artistic and creative bent offers students the chance to explore, experiment, and make discoveries on their own terms. Teachers foster a culture of curiosity and creativity in the classroom by encouraging students to pose questions, look into phenomena, and communicate their discoveries via creative means. Deep conceptual comprehension, experimentation, and originality are all facilitated by artistic inquiry in scientific investigation^{29,31}.

Aesthetic Engagement: The notion of aesthetic engagement emphasises the importance of emotions, aesthetics, and sensory experiences in the learning process. Teachers may boost their students' comprehension of the beauty and complexity of chemistry while also piquing their curiosity and evoking strong emotional responses by integrating art and creativity into chemistry lessons. Engaging students on a deeper level through activities like developing chemical artworks, writing music inspired by science, or organising events with a chemistry theme makes learning more memorable and meaningful^{5,28,30,31}.

Learning may be made more interesting, relevant, and accessible to a broad range of learners by integrating these theoretical frameworks into Chemistry training. Teachers who recognise the convergence of art and science enable their pupils to develop into critical thinkers, creative problem solvers, and lifelong learners in the field of chemistry and beyond.

VIII. Benefits and Impact of Art-Integrated Chemistry Education

Incorporating art into chemistry instruction has a great deal of advantages and effects that have a big impact on students' learning experiences and overall academic results. Teachers may significantly increase student engagement and change attitudes about science by introducing artistic aspects, which make the subject matter more accessible and approachable. Students who use this approach are more likely to participate fully in class and take an enduring interest in STEM subjects since it creates an enhanced learning environment. In addition, chemistry education that incorporates art fosters 21st-century transferable skills like creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving, which are vital in many facets of life and the workplace.

By offering a variety of viewpoints and entrance points into science, this pedagogical style also fosters diversity and inclusion and appeals to a wider range of students with varying backgrounds and skills. Long-term, students gain from possibilities for both personal and professional growth; they also acquire a holistic perspective on learning that links scientific research with artistic

³² Okwara, V. U., & Pretorius, J. P. H. (2023). "The STEAM vs STEM educational approach: the significance of the application of the arts in science teaching for learners' attitude change."

³³ Miller, R. (2021). "Integrating the arts and creativity in STEM education: Emerging talent

expression, as well as special abilities that are highly appreciated in the workforce. In addition to preparing students for a variety of career choices, this kind of integration enhances students' personal lives by fostering a lifetime love of the arts and science.

IX. Challenges and Future Direction

Even while it seems promising, scaling up the use of art and creativity into chemistry education presents a number of opportunities and obstacles. The greater implementation of art-integrated chemistry programmes across varied educational contexts necessitates resolving issues related to resource allocation, teacher training, and curriculum modification. Research possibilities abound in this field, with an emphasis on curriculum creation, pedagogical efficacy, and longitudinal studies to gauge the influence of innovative techniques on student learning and engagement. Policies must promote more adaptable curriculum that allow for innovative teaching techniques and allocate funds for the acquisition of essential materials and teacher professional development in order to support these innovations. In addition, improving the cooperation between teachers and outside organisations like artists, museums, and cultural centres may invigorate the curriculum and give pupils practical links to math and science. Together with facilitating the exchange of resources, these partnerships also contribute new insights and areas of expertise that may energise chemistry instruction and make it more interesting and relevant for learners.

X. Conclusion

In conclusion, examining the use of creativity and the arts in chemistry education offers a fascinating account of the transition from static, traditional teaching strategies to dynamic, integrated ones. A chemistry education that incorporates art and creativity fosters student engagement, develops critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, and serves a variety of learning styles, in contrast to traditional pedagogies that place a greater emphasis on factual information and controlled experiments. Engaging in these activities fosters empathy and emotional intelligence by fostering a deeper comprehension of scientific topics within larger humanistic settings. Notwithstanding the obstacles—such as the alleged conflict between science and art, a lack of resources, and opposition to educational reform—there are significant advantages and positive effects on students' attitudes and future paths in the workforce. Through the cultivation of a variety of transferable abilities, art-integrated approaches foster diversity in STEM disciplines. Chemistry classes may be made more approachable and entertaining by implementing techniques like the use of digital media, narrative, and visual arts. Furthermore, in order to scale these projects and reach their full potential, opportunities for professional growth and continued research are essential. Through the promotion of supporting legislation and the development of deeper relationships between educators, artists, and cultural organisations, art-integrated chemistry education may thrive and prepare students to be creative, responsible members of society.

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Bernard Williams' relativism of distance lens through Buchi Emecheta's *second class citizen*

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I. Abstract

The concept of *Relativism of Distance* in Buchi Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen* examines how temporal, cultural, and emotional distance shape the novel's interpretation and resonance. It suggests that the novel's meaning is not set in stone but rather shifts depending on the reader's cultural background, historical moment, and lived experience. By applying this to *Second Class Citizen*, this paper emphasizes the ever-evolving nature of literary meaning; acknowledge the novel's enduring relevance in conversations on immigration, gender, and racial inequality.

II. Keywords

culture, racism, gender oppression, identity conflict, alienation, relativism of distance, immigration.

III. Introduction

The Relativism of Distance, which comes under Ethical Relativism, posits that our perceptions of moral values, experience, or even literary works are impacted by our cultural and chronological distance from them. According to Bernard Williams, English Philosopher come critique, Ethical Relativism is influenced by social, historical and cultural factors rather than being absolute. So, the Relativism of Distance implies that interpretations and meanings shift depending on one's position, whether in time, place, or personal experience. According to William Bernard, the term 'Right' means 'right for a given society'. He says: 'Right for a given society' is to be understood in a functional sense; therefore, it is wrong to judge the values of another society (20)¹

This clearly asserts the inappropriateness of imposing the judgments on the values of another culture. As culture shapes morality, different civilizations develop their own moral norms, which serve to uphold their social order and way of life. Thus, Bernard's argument highlights the interconnectedness of culture and morality, illustrating how each society's values are intrinsically linked to its unique cultural framework. This understanding encourages a more nuanced approach to evaluating moral beliefs across diverse civilizations, recognizing that these norms are reflective of each society's particular needs and circumstances. Further, it suggests that it is unjust and ethnocentric to evaluate the values of another society based on one's own moral framework. This viewpoint encourages cultural understanding and tolerance by acknowledging the variety of moral convictions. Critics confront that it may also be problematic since it could justify destructive activities that infringe upon fundamental human rights.

In Buchi Emecheta's novel *Second Class Citizen*, the line "England gave Adah a cold welcome" (Emecheta 1974: 38)² powerfully encapsulates Adah's initial disillusionment upon arriving in Britain. Instead of finding the opportunities and warmth she had anticipated, Adah confronts harsh living conditions, pervasive prejudice, and a sense of estrangement. Her alienation stems from her dual estrangement of being divided between two world and fully belonging to neither. She

¹ Miranda Fricker, "I—Miranda Fricker: The Relativism of Blame and Williams's Relativism of Distance," *Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume* 84, no. 1 (May 2010): 151–77, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8349.2010.00190.x>.

² Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (Heinemann, 1994) p.38.

challenges social norms in Nigeria by pursuing an education and independence, aspirations that draw criticism and opposition.

However, as a Black immigrant and a woman, she faces discrimination when she arrives in Britain, the supposedly land of opportunity. She experiences various forms of persecution and discovers that both gender discrimination and racial prejudice reinforce the glass ceiling she had planned to shatter. In essence, she is an outsider overseas and a stranger at home. Her relocation to Britain exacerbates her problems rather than merely substituting one hardship for another. *Out of the frying pan and into the fire*, she trades the limitations of Nigerian societal expectations for the frigid indifference of British society.

Her hardships serve as a testament to the emotional and psychological toll of migration, revealing that *distance does not always mean escape, nor does arrival guarantee belonging*. Contrary to her hopes for a warm reception and new opportunities, Adah is confronted with difficult living conditions and pervasive prejudice. Such a cold reception starkly contrasts her previous experiences in ports like Takoradi, Freetown, and Las Palmas which makes her feel that “The welcome was particularly cold because only a few days previously they had been enjoying bright and cheerful welcomes from ports like Takoradi, Freetown, and Las Palmas.” (Emecheta 1974: 38)³. This sharp contrast between welcome and aggression says a lot about Adah's changing reality as she moves from places that are familiar and culturally meaningful to a hostile Britain. The *moment of indifference brings out the* Britain's cold welcome serves as a reminder that migration frequently results in a rude awakening, and the warmth of the African ports symbolizes an instant of belonging. The contrast in welcomes also highlights the psychological distance Adah experiences: Britain is a strange place where she is not only a stranger but an outsider, whereas the ports of Africa are cultural connections. Through her experiences, Emecheta illuminates the emotional turmoil that arises from the clash of cultural norms, emphasizing that migration is not merely a physical transition, but also a deeply complex emotional journey.

Adah's discomfort in the face of public affection and her reminiscences of familiar African environments reveal the profound challenges immigrants face in reconciling their cultural identities with new societal expectations. This can be seen as “Adah was stunned when he kissed her in public, with everybody looking. Oh my God! She thought if her mother-in-law could see them, she would go and make sacrifices to Oboshi for forgiveness.” (Emecheta 1974: 38)⁴ According to the Relativism of Distance, Adah's surprise at being kissed in public is not only a personal response; rather, it illustrates how cultural distance affects how people understand behaviors that may be considered normal in one group but frowned upon in another. Adah feels remorse, in contrast to her husband, who seems indifferent to the conduct. This demonstrates how, more often than not, women are held to higher cultural standards of morality and manners than males. The greater identity-negotiation difficulties that many postcolonial immigrants face while attempting to strike a balance between cultural assimilation and economic survival are symbolized by this awkward moment, a struggle poignantly captured in Adah's perception of British society, as “They looked remote, happy in an aloof way but determined to keep distance” (Emecheta 1974: 39)⁵. This statement reflects the paradox of migration, where the immigrant is physically present in a new country, yet maintains a social and emotional distance from the prevailing culture. This kind of alienation originates from unwritten laws of exclusion rather than physical barriers, where she is treated as a second-class citizen in spite of her aspirations. Women, like Adah, are kept at the outside of racial and gender hierarchies due to the structural, not just social, remoteness of others. Her relationship with her husband in this immigrant nation is no exception to these struggles, as it too is shaped by the pressures of cultural displacement, economic survival, and shifting gender dynamics in an unfamiliar society. Her husband, Francis' indifferent behavior in the British society seemed to say to her, as “It's allowed for African males to come and get civilised in England. But

³ Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (Heinemann, 1994)p.38.

⁴ Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (Heinemann, 1994)p.38.

⁵ Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (Heinemann, 1994)p.39.

that privilege has not been extended to females yet” (Emecheta 1974: 39)⁶. The indifference refers to the unsettling recognition that one is seen as unimportant or unworthy in a particular social structure. Ironically, a gendered and racially based hierarchy in British culture, which takes pride in its progressiveness, keeps African women from achieving self-sufficiency, education, and social mobility.

In Nigeria, women are often discouraged from achieving independence, since they have been expected to marry and support their husbands instead of pursuing their own interests. By reinforcing the image of women as reliant on their husbands, British colonial narratives have historically perpetuated the marginalization of African women. The enduring echoes of exclusion amidst changing societal dynamics serve as a reminder of the systemic prejudices that impact the lives of immigrant women. “Her metaphorical identification with Dick Whittington”⁷ reflects both her hopes for a brighter future and the constraints that limit her ability to realize those dreams. Adah's assertion, “She was beginning to feel like Dick Whittington,” (Emecheta 1974: 40)⁸ encapsulates her aspirations yet also reveals the constraints imposed upon her. Whittington's tale, rooted in the pursuit of prosperity, contrasts sharply with her reality, where her identity remains tethered to her husband. This juxtaposition highlights the dynamic nature of prejudice, as she navigates a landscape where her worth is continually overshadowed by societal expectations.

Adah's comparison of herself to the renowned English author Dick Whittington is a powerful illustration of the Relativism of Distance, the concept that examines how emotional, historical, and cultural distances affect how a story is interpreted. By comparing herself to Whittington, Adah conveys hope that she will also triumph over hardship in Britain. She comes with great expectations, much like Whittington, thinking that England is a place of opportunity. But, one is forced to consider this parallel in light of the Relativism of Distance. Adah is not a white English boy with access to opportunity like Whittington is. She is a Nigerian lady who experiences economic hardship, gender oppression, and racial discrimination. A Black immigrant woman in postcolonial Britain can't hope to achieve what Whittington could in medieval England. For her, the streets are laced with discrimination and exclusion rather than gold. In the tale, Whittington's cat served as a metaphor for survival and good fortune. In contrast, Adah lacks such a mythical ally. Rather, she is burdened by a dominating husband, a hostile British culture, and cultural norms that want to limit her.

Emecheta suggests that the British dream for immigrants is often unattainable, as systemic barriers hinder their progress. The immigrant experience emphasizes the systemic nature of racism that perpetuates such inequities. Housing is not merely a matter of shelter; it symbolizes a broader exclusion from social and economic legitimacy. Furthermore, Francis underscores the harsh realities that “We are all blacks, all coloureds, and the only houses we can get are horrors like these” (Emecheta 1974: 41)⁹. The difficult conditions faced by immigrants, where housing, opportunities, and dignity are all based on race. Beyond merely physical housing, his complaining about being limited to “horrors like these” represents the larger societal containment of immigrants. They are restricted just not only to poor living conditions, but also to full social acceptability, political representation, and economic mobility. The expression ‘horrors like these’ refers to both the psychological and emotional effects of forced exclusion as well as the physical degradation of the housing.

Black immigrants are caught in a cycle of hardship, in contrast to British working-class citizens who may face financial difficulties, but are not denied better homes because of their heritage. The idea that Britain is a land of opportunity, a false promise that echoes colonial rhetoric that

⁶ The Double Otherness of Black Women: Buchi Emecheta's Second-Class Citizen. *Journal of International Social Research*, vol. 10, no. 53, Dec. 2017, pp. 151–56. <https://doi.org/10.17719/jisr.20175334108>.

⁷ Richard Jones, The Story of Dick Whittington, www.london-walking-tours.co.uk/london-history/dick-whittington.html/.

⁸ Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (Heinemann, 1994)p.40.

⁹ Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (Heinemann, 1994)p.41.

previously guaranteed African subjects their position in the empire, stands in a sharp contrast this. The refusal to provide adequate living conditions for immigrants, particularly those from the very countries that sustained the empire, reflects the enduring legacy of colonialism and the systemic disregard for African lives and dignity. Emecheta further illustrates, the complexities of identity and social status within the immigrant experience in the following manner;

Then to her horror, she saw that she had to share the house with such Nigerians who called her madam at home: some of them were of the same educational background as her paid servants. She knew she had had a terrible childhood, but still in Nigeria, class distinctions were beginning to be established (Emecheta 1974: 41)¹⁰.

Adah's early reluctance to share space with Nigerians from lower socioeconomic backgrounds is also indicative of selfishness, a confined, egocentric perspective that results from privilege and little exposure to larger social issues. She could afford to stand out from the crowd in Nigeria, but migration pushes her into a situation where supporting other immigrants is required, not optional. This dislocation forces her to question: Who is she now? What is left of her identity if her prior social status is erased by migration? She realizes that her aspirations were individualistic in Nigeria; she wanted to overcome others by gaining prestige and knowledge. She learns, however, that racialized discrimination in Britain does not discriminate on the basis of class; all Black immigrants are excluded, regardless of their past accomplishments. Her viewpoint eventually changes as a result of this insight, compelling her to give up her trivial selfishness and adopt a more communal perspective on resistance and battle. Adah reflects on her husband Francis's actions through this phrase, "Oh, Francis, she wailed inwardly, how could you have done this to us? After all, we have friends who, though they may be living in slums like this, still live apart from this type of people" (Emecheta 1974: 41)¹¹. The moment of betrayal, in which her profoundly held convictions regarding identity, trust, and class distinction are shattered. Conversely, *Sea of Poppies* deftly navigates the ethical challenges faced by characters entangled in the oppressive machinery of colonialism, that has been observed by Annie in her article titled "Unravelling Ethical Narrative in Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies*" through these lines,

Sea of Poppies offers a nuanced exploration of the complex ethical dilemmas faced by the individuals navigating oppressive system, urging readers to rethink their assumptions about power inequality and collective responsibility in addressing the injustice of the past and forging a more equitable future. (310)¹²

By examining these texts through the lens of Bernard Williams's relativism of distance, one can better understand how individual experiences of betrayal, identity, and ethical responsibility are shaped by contextual distances—whether social, cultural, or historical. Similarly, in *Second Class Citizen*, Adah's experience reflects a profound horror at her new living conditions, revealing her struggle with the erasure of social distance that once separated her from this type of people. Race dissolves class boundaries in Britain, thus she now belongs to the very group she previously aimed to transcend. Adah's view of migration as an extension of oppression contrasts sharply with Francis's perception of it as a pathway to authority.

From the Relativism of Distance perspective, Francis's view can be interpreted as a response to the cultural freedoms he perceives in Britain, where he believes he can redefine his identity outside the familial and societal confines of Nigeria, as shown in these lines, "He would not have dreamt of hitting her at home because his mother and father would not have allowed it... He was free at last from his parents, he was free to do what he liked, and not even hundreds of Adahs were going to curtail that new freedom" (Emecheta 1974: 42)¹³. Even though they were limited, Nigerian communal structures provided her with some degree of safety. She is alone in Britain and has no

¹⁰ Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (Heinemann, 1994) p.41.

¹¹ Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (Heinemann, 1994)p.41.

¹² Annie G. Rose, "Unravelling Ethical Narrative in Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies*," *Amnayiki* 26 (July–Dec. 2024) p.310.

¹³ Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (Heinemann, 1994) p.42.

social or family support to protect her from Francis's mistreatment. This disparity draws attention to the gendered experience of migration, as women frequently lose what little autonomy they had while males may acquire power via distance.

Distance from home gives men like Francis more authority, eliminating customary constraints and enabling the strengthening of patriarchal domination. Distance weakens protection for women like Adah, requiring them to struggle against both traditional and contemporary tyranny, as the author projects that “the immigration authorities were making it very difficult for single girls to come to England. You were allowed only as long as you were coming to join a husband who was already there” (Emecheta 1974: 42)¹⁴. Women were institutionally restricted to household roles, which limited their capacity to pursue independent careers, in contrast to their male counterparts, who were frequently allowed admission for employment or education. These rules kept women in a loop of patriarchal reliance even in Britain, where gender equality was supposedly more developed than in Nigeria.

IV. Conclusion

In conclusion, Buchi Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen* serves as a compelling reminder that migration involves a multitude of meanings shaped by individual experiences, contexts, and social dynamics. By employing Bernard Williams's Relativism of Distance, as a theoretical framework, this analysis underscores the importance of recognizing migration as a journey that varies significantly based on who is interpreting it and their geographical, social, and cultural distance from their origins. The various experiences of Adah and Francis exemplify how distance alters perceptions of identity, agency, and power, ultimately challenging conventional narratives surrounding migration and illustrates Williams's argument that the significance of distance lies not merely in geographical terms but also in its ability to reshape an individual's identity and agency.

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¹⁴ Buchi Emecheta, *Second-Class Citizen* (Heinemann, 1994)p.42.

The interplay of Triguna: understanding personality through the Bhagavadgītā

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I. Abstract

The concept of *Triguna*, rooted in ancient Indian philosophy, offers a profound framework for understanding human personality by categorizing it into three fundamental qualities: *Sattva* (wisdom and purity), *Rajas* (passion and activity), and *Tamas* (inertia and ignorance). The *Bhagavadgītā* presents a nuanced psychological typology through the doctrine of *Triguna*, which this paper seeks to explore and critically analyze. It investigates the dynamic relationship between the *gunas* and personality traits, highlighting how the predominance of a particular *guna* significantly influences an individual's thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and actions. By providing a conceptual model grounded in the *Bhagavadgītā*, this study aims to foster a deeper understanding of human behavior and promote holistic development at both the individual and societal levels. Ultimately, it emphasizes the importance of achieving a balanced interplay among the *gunas* as a path toward self-realization and collective well-being.

II. Keywords

Triguna, Personality, Bhagavadgītā, Human Psychology, Sattva, Rajas, Tamas, Self- Realization.

III. Introduction

For centuries, thinkers and philosophers have pondered the nature of personality questioning what constitutes it, the factors that shape its development, and whether it can be consciously transformed over time. In modern psychology, personality is often examined through frameworks based on traits, cognitive tendencies, and behavioral patterns¹. Yet, the quest to understand human nature predates contemporary psychology, tracing back to ancient spiritual and philosophical traditions. Among these, the *Bhagavadgītā* offers a profound and systematic model of personality through its doctrine of *Triguna*².

The *Bhagavadgītā*, a seminal philosophical text composed in Sanskrit comprises 700 verses presented as a dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. Set against the backdrop of an impending war, the dialogue delves into questions of duty, ethics, selfhood, and the nature of reality³. One of its key contributions is the elucidation of *Triguna*, a theory that explains human behavior through the interplay of three fundamental qualities: *Sattva* (wisdom and purity), *Rajas* (passion and activity), and *Tamas* (inertia and ignorance)⁴.

According to this framework, the dominance of one or more of these *gunas* in an individual determines their temperament, worldview, motivations, and patterns of decision-making⁵. Some individuals naturally incline toward knowledge and inner peace (*sāttvic*), others are driven by ambition and restlessness (*rājasic*), while some struggle with inertia and confusion (*tāmasic*). These tendencies are not fixed, but exist in varying proportions within each person, shaping the dynamics of personality⁶.

The theory of *Triguna* offers a compelling psychological typology that remains relevant in the modern context. By engaging with this concept, we gain deeper insight into why individuals behave differently, why certain dispositions dominate in some but not in others, and how one can consciously cultivate balance and self-awareness to evolve their personality. In doing so, the

¹ McCrae, R. R., & Costa, P. T. (2003). Personality in adulthood: A five-factor theory perspective (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.

² Sharma, C. D. (2016). A critical survey of Indian philosophy (Revised ed.). Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

³ Bhagavad-Gītā. (Trans. by Eknath Easwaran). (2007). Nilgiri Press

⁴ Ranganathananda, S. (2000). Universal message of the Bhagavad Gita: An exposition of the Gita in the light of modern thought and modern needs (Vol. 3). Advaita Ashrama.

⁵ Misra, G., & Mohanty, A. K. (2002). Perspectives on Indigenous Psychology. Concept Publishing.

⁶ Paranjpe, A. C. (1998). Self and identity in modern psychology and Indian thought. Plenum Press.

Bhagavadgītā presents not only a philosophical vision of human nature but also a practical model for personal growth and transformation⁷.

IV. Characteristics of the *Guṇās*

The term *guṇa*, derived from Sanskrit, literally means "strand," "quality," or "attribute." In the classical *Sāṅkhya* philosophy, *guṇas* are conceived as the three funda constituents (*tattvas*) of *prakṛti* (primordial matter or nature), responsible for the diversity and transformation in the manifest universe⁸. In their unmanifest state, the *guṇas*- *Sattva* (harmony and illumination), *Rajas* (activity and passion), and *Tamas* (inertia and obscurity) exist in a state of perfect equilibrium. Creation, or the evolution of the universe, begins when this equilibrium is disturbed by the proximity or influence of *puruṣa* (pure consciousness), initiating the process of manifestation (*vikāra*)⁹.

The dynamic interplay of the *guṇas* forms the ontological and psychological foundation of all existence. All material and mental phenomena arise through various combinations and proportions of these three forces. They not only shape the external world but also deeply influence individual temperament, cognition, behavior, and ethical disposition¹⁰. While *Sattva* is characterized by purity, clarity, and wisdom, *Rajas* is associated with desire, effort, and restlessness, and *Tamas* with delusion, lethargy, and ignorance¹¹. These qualities are ever-present in all individuals and objects, though in differing proportions, resulting in the vast diversity of human personalities and tendencies.

The *Bhagavadgītā*, particularly in Chapter 14 titled *Guṇatraya Vibhāga Yoga* "The Yoga of the Division of the Three Guṇas", expands upon the *Sāṅkhya* conception of *guṇas* and integrates them into a spiritual and ethical framework. It describes the *guṇas* as *prakṛti-sambhavāḥ* born of nature indicating that they are not merely theoretical categories but ontological forces that determine the condition of both body and mind¹². The dominance of a particular *guṇa* in an individual's constitution shapes their worldview, emotional life, decision-making style, and moral orientation. Despite their pervasiveness, the ultimate spiritual goal *kaivalya* or liberation in *Sāṅkhya*, and *guṇātīta* (transcendence of the *guṇas*) in the *Gītā* is achieved only by transcending the influence of all three *guṇas* through knowledge, detachment, and disciplined action¹³.

a. *Sattva Guṇa*

Sattva represents clarity, balance, and inner harmony. It is associated with luminosity (*prakāśa*), purity (*nirmalatva*), and a focused, discriminative intellect. A person dominated by *sattva* exhibits qualities such as wisdom, serenity, compassion, truthfulness, and selflessness¹⁴. The *Bhagavadgītā* describes *sattva* as "illuminating and free from disease"¹⁵ *prakāśakam anāmayam*, suggesting its power to promote mental clarity and spiritual up-liftment.

Jayadayal Goyandka notes in *Tattvavivechani* that "when the quality of *sattva* is in the ascendant, the restlessness of the mind automatically disappears, and feeling disgusted with worldly pleasures, man becomes absorbed in the contemplation of the supreme spirit—Truth, Consciousness, and Bliss solidified"¹⁶. Because of its purifying nature, *sattva* leads one toward *ānanda* (joy) and *jñāna* (knowledge), though even this quality, as the *Gītā* explains, binds the soul through attachment to

⁷ Rao, K. R., & Paranjpe, A. C. (2008). *Psychology in the Indian tradition*. Springer.

⁸ Larson, G. J. (1969). *Classical Sāṅkhya: An Interpretation of Its History and Meaning*. Motilal Banarsidass.

⁹ Chatterjee, S. C., & Datta, D. M. (1984). *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy* (8th ed.). University of Calcutta.

¹⁰ Rao, K. R., & Paranjpe, A. C. (2008). *Psychology in the Indian tradition*. Springer.

¹¹ *Bhagavad-Gītā*. (Trans. S. Radhakrishnan). (1948). London: George Allen & Unwin.

¹² Goyandka, J. D. (n.d.). *Tattvavivechani: Commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā*. Gita Press.

¹³ Ranganathananda, S. (2000). *Universal message of the Bhagavad Gita: An exposition of the Gita in the light of modern thought and modern needs* (Vol. 3). Advaita Ashrama

¹⁴ *Bhagavad-Gītā*. (Trans. S. Radhakrishnan). (1948). London: George Allen & Unwin.

¹⁵ Goyandka, J. D. (n.d.). *Tattvavivechani: Commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā*. Gita Press.

¹⁶ Goyandka, J. D. (n.d.). *Tattvavivechani: Commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā*. Gita Press.

happiness and wisdom (*sukhasaṅgena baddhnāti jñānasaṅgena ca anagha*¹⁷. Notably, Lord Kṛṣṇa addresses Arjuna as *Anagha* “O sinless one”¹⁸, indicating that Arjuna, by virtue of his innate *sattva*, is capable of transcending bondage.

b. Rajas Guṇa

Rajas is the force of activity, desire, and outward motion. It arises from a constant drive toward action, ambition, restlessness, and attachment to the results of one’s efforts. It manifests through emotional turbulence, impulsivity, and a relentless pursuit of fulfillment¹⁹. The *Bhagavadgītā* identifies desire (*kāma*) and attachment (*saṅga*) as key characteristics of *raja*²⁰, and further declares desire as its offspring: “It is desire it is anger, born of the *rajo guṇa*, all-consuming and greatly harmful know this as the enemy here”²¹.

The interdependence between *rajas* and desire is often likened to the relationship between a seed and a tree. Just as the seed gives rise to the tree, and the tree, in turn, produces more seeds, *rajas* gives rise to craving and attachment, which in turn further nourish the *rajo guṇa*²². The compound term *trṣṇāsaṅgasamudbhavam*²³ reveals *rajas* as “born of craving and attachment” both as product and as cause of restless striving.

c. Tamas Guṇa

Tamas signifies darkness, ignorance, and inertia. It is characterized by delusion, lethargy, confusion, resistance to change, and moral blindness. While a minimal amount of *tamas* may be necessary for rest and stabilization, its dominance leads to stagnation, apathy, and cognitive dullness²⁴. The *Bhagavadgītā* describes *tamas* as “born of ignorance” and the force that “deludes all beings by binding them through negligence, indolence, and sleep”²⁵ (*aprakāśaḥ apravṛttiś ca pramādaḥ moha eva ca*).

Lord Kṛṣṇa warns that *tamas* robs the individual of their faculty of judgment, making them unable to distinguish right from wrong²⁶. It also induces *ālasyam* (inactivity) and *nidrā* (sleep), which together inhibit spiritual and moral development. Like the earlier analogy of seed and tree, *tamas* and ignorance are mutually reinforcing: ignorance gives rise to *tamas*, and *tamas* in turn perpetuates ignorance. As long as the soul remains under the sway of *tamas*, it remains entangled in the cycle of birth and death. Liberation (*mokṣa*) is possible only when one overcomes *tamas* by eliminating error, sloth, and delusion through disciplined self-effort²⁷.

V. Personality

The term *personality* is etymologically derived from the Latin word *persona*, which originally referred to the masks worn by actors in theatrical performances. Over time, the term evolved to denote the roles individuals play in social contexts and the behaviors they project outwardly²⁸. In contemporary psychology, personality is broadly defined as the enduring patterns of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that characterize an individual’s responses to their environment²⁹. It encompasses a range of influences, including biological factors such as genetics, neurochemical processes, and the structure of the nervous system, as well as psychological aspects like attitudes,

¹⁷ Goyandka, J. D. (n.d.). Tattvavivechani: Commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā. Gita Press.

¹⁸ Goyandka, J. D. (n.d.). Tattvavivechani: Commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā. Gita Press.

¹⁹ Rao, K. R., & Paranjpe, A. C. (2008). Psychology in the Indian tradition. Springer.

²⁰ Goyandka, J. D. (n.d.). Tattvavivechani: Commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā. Gita Press.

²¹ Bhagavad-Gītā. (Trans. by Eknath Easwaran). (2007). Nilgiri Press

²² Bhagavad-Gītā. (Trans. Swami Gambhīrānanda). (1984). Advaita Ashrama.

²³ Goyandka, J. D. (n.d.). Tattvavivechani: Commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā. Gita Press.

²⁴ Ranganathananda, S. (2000). Universal message of the Bhagavad Gita: An exposition of the Gita in the light of modern thought and modern needs (Vol. 3). Advaita Ashrama.

²⁵ Goyandka, J. D. (n.d.). Tattvavivechani: Commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā. Gita Press.

²⁶ Goyandka, J. D. (n.d.). Tattvavivechani: Commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā. Gita Press.

²⁷ Sharma, C. D. (2016). A critical survey of Indian philosophy (Revised ed.). Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

²⁸ Burger, J. M., & Allen, B. P. (2019). Personality (10th ed.). Cengage Learning.

²⁹ Feist, J., Feist, G. J., & Roberts, T.-A. (2018). Theories of personality (9th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.

aspirations, emotional tendencies, and willpower³⁰. Social environments including family, peer groups, cultural norms, and interpersonal relationships also play a crucial role in shaping personality over time³¹.

From a philosophical and cross-cultural perspective, Indian traditions provide a distinct understanding of personality. In the *Bhagavadgītā*, personality is not simply a composite of traits, but a reflection of the dynamic interplay of the three *guṇas*, *Sattva* (purity, wisdom), *Rajas* (activity, passion), and *Tamas* (inertia, ignorance) which constitute *prakṛti*, or material nature³². These *guṇas* are seen as fundamental forces that govern human behavior, cognition, and ethical orientation. The predominance of a particular *guṇa* in an individual's constitution shapes their temperament, motivations, and moral disposition³³. Unlike static Western trait models, the Tri*guṇa* framework emphasizes the fluid and transformable nature of personality, suggesting that through conscious self-effort and ethical living, one can transcend the limitations of the *guṇas* and evolve towards higher states of self-awareness³⁴.

a. Personality through the lens of Guṇās

In the Indian philosophical tradition, particularly as articulated in *Sāṅkhya* and the *Bhagavadgītā*, personality is not understood merely as a set of static traits or fixed categories. Rather, it is seen as a dynamic interplay of the three fundamental *guṇas*, *Sattva* (purity and knowledge), *Rajas* (activity and desire), and *Tamas* (inertia and ignorance) which together constitute the basic modes of *prakṛti*, or nature³⁵. These *guṇas* are present in all individuals in varying proportions, and their dominance determines the character, motivation, behavior, and emotional disposition of the person³⁶.

Unlike Western models that categorize personality into traits (e.g., the Big Five: openness, conscientiousness, extra version, agreeableness, and neuroticism), the *guṇa* model views personality as **contextually fluid** and **morally significant**. A person with a predominance of *Sattva* is characterized by calmness, clarity, compassion, and self-control often considered spiritually inclined and ethically grounded. A *Rajasic* personality is ambitious, driven, emotionally volatile, and externally focused, while a *Tamasic* individual tends to be passive, confused, and resistant to growth or change³⁷. Moreover, the *guṇas* not only shape outer behavior but also influence inner cognition and moral agency. The *Bhagavadgītā* identifies threefold variations in faith³⁸, food preferences³⁹, action⁴⁰, and understanding, all rooted in the *guṇic* constitution of the individual. Thus, even one's ethical decisions and spiritual inclinations are conditioned by the relative dominance of *Sattva*, *Rajas*, or *Tamas*. Importantly, the *guṇic* perspective on personality allows for **evolution and transcendence**. One is not eternally bound by a dominant *guṇa*; through spiritual practice (*yoga*), right action (*karma yoga*), knowledge (*jñāna yoga*), and devotion (*bhakti*), individuals can cultivate *Sattva* and eventually transcend all three *guṇas* to become a *guṇātīta* one who is liberated from the modes of material nature⁴¹.

b. Sattva-Dominant Personalities:

A person in whom **Sattva guṇa** predominates is characterized by clarity of thought, emotional balance, and a strong ethical compass. Such individuals possess a calm and focused mind, and their

³⁰ Pervin, L. A., & John, O. P. (2001). *Personality: Theory and research* (8th ed.). John Wiley & Sons.

³¹ Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Prentice-Hall.

³² *Bhagavad-Gītā*. (Trans. S. Radhakrishnan). (1948). London: George Allen & Unwin.

³³ Rao, K. R., & Paranjpe, A. C. (2008). *Psychology in the Indian tradition*. Springer.

³⁴ Ranganathananda, S. (2000). *Universal message of the Bhagavad Gita: An exposition of the Gita in the light of modern thought and modern needs* (Vol. 3). Advaita Ashrama.

³⁵ *Bhagavad-Gītā*. (Trans. S. Radhakrishnan). (1948). London: George Allen & Unwin.

³⁶ Rao, K. R., & Paranjpe, A. C. (2008). *Psychology in the Indian tradition*. Springer.

³⁷ *Bhagavad-Gītā*. (Trans. Swami Gambhīrānanda). (1984). Advaita Ashrama.

³⁸ Goyandka, J. D. (n.d.). *Tattvavivechani: Commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā*. Gita Press.

³⁹ Goyandka, J. D. (n.d.). *Tattvavivechani: Commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā*. Gita Press.

⁴⁰ Goyandka, J. D. (n.d.). *Tattvavivechani: Commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā*. Gita Press.

⁴¹ Ranganathananda, S. (2000). *Universal message of the Bhagavad Gita: An exposition of the Gita in the light of modern thought and modern needs* (Vol. 3). Advaita Ashrama.

decisions are guided more by discernment (*viveka*) and moral reflection than by impulse or desire. As described in the *Bhagavadgītā*, “When all the gates of the body are illumined by knowledge, then it may be known that Sattva is predominant” *sarvadvāreṣu dehe ’smin prakāśa upajāyate*⁴², suggesting that the rise of Sattva manifests in clear perception and luminous understanding.

Sattva-dominant personalities radiate serenity, selflessness, and compassion. Their orientation toward **inner peace, harmony, and truth** naturally inclines them towards spiritual practices such as meditation, self-inquiry, and devotion (*bhakti*). They are emotionally stable and exhibit profound empathy and kindness toward all beings⁴³. Sattvic individuals are not only seekers of **knowledge and wisdom**, but also active participants in moral and social upliftment.

Their lifestyle reflects a preference for balance and simplicity. They follow disciplined routines, engage in mindful conduct, and make health-conscious dietary choices favoring *sāttvic āhāra*, which includes fresh, wholesome, and nourishing foods⁴⁴. A Sattvic personality is also marked by altruism: they are naturally drawn to acts of **charity, service, and unconditional goodwill**, seeing such actions as expressions of their inner dharma rather than for reward or recognition⁴⁵.

c. Impact of Sattva-Dominant Personality on Society

Individuals dominated by **Sattva guṇa** significantly contribute to the ethical and spiritual advancement of society. Their calm, composed, and reflective nature fosters interpersonal harmony and reduces conflict, creating an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding. Sattvic individuals, guided by inner tranquility and moral clarity, tend to act from a sense of **compassion, fairness, and responsibility** qualities that resonate deeply in collective settings⁴⁶. Such personalities often engage in **philanthropic efforts**, community service, and initiatives aimed at the welfare of others, particularly the marginalized. Their conduct becomes a moral exemplar, inspiring others to adopt virtues such as **empathy, self-restraint, and altruism**. The *Bhagavadgītā* affirms that Sattva “binds by attachment to happiness and knowledge” *sattvaṁ sukhe sañjayati jñāne sañjayati ca*⁴⁷, suggesting that Sattvic individuals, while active in the world, are inwardly detached and motivated by higher ideals.

d. Rajas-Dominant Personalities:

Individuals dominated by **Rajas guṇa** exhibit dynamic, ambitious, and high-energy traits that make them thrive in fast-paced and competitive environments. Their lives are often characterized by a relentless pursuit of goals, desire for recognition, and attachment to outcomes. The *Bhagavadgītā* states: “Rajas is of the nature of passion, born of craving and attachment; it binds the embodied being with attachment to action” *rajo rāgātmaṁ viddhi tṛṣṇāsaṅgasamudbhavam*⁴⁸.

These individuals are driven by desire (*tṛṣṇā*) and attachment (*saṅga*), resulting in frequent emotional fluctuations in response to success and failure. A hallmark of the *rājasic* disposition is mental restlessness, often manifesting as impulsive decision-making, ambition-driven stress, and dissatisfaction with the present. Their focus is predominantly external, making it difficult to experience sustained inner peace. Despite these inner agitations, rajas-dominant personalities often possess charismatic and persuasive qualities, which make them effective leaders and motivators. They are capable of rallying others toward collective action, yet their decision-making may sometimes lack moral reflection due to the overpowering influence of ego and desire.

e. Impact of Rajas-Dominant Personalities on Society

The impact of *rājasic* personalities on society is multifaceted. Positively, their action-oriented and enterprising nature contributes to technological innovation, economic development, and institutional expansion. Their drive for achievement leads to societal growth in various sectors such

⁴² Bhagavad-Gītā. (Trans. Swami Gambhīrānanda). (1984). Advaita Ashrama.

⁴³ Bhagavad-Gītā. (Trans. S. Radhakrishnan). (1948). London: George Allen & Unwin.

⁴⁴ Goyandka, J. D. (n.d.). Tattvavivechani: Commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā. Gita Press.

⁴⁵ Ranganathananda, S. (2000). Universal message of the Bhagavad Gita: An exposition of the Gita in the light of modern thought and modern needs (Vol. 3). Advaita Ashrama.

⁴⁶ Bhagavad-Gītā. (Trans. S. Radhakrishnan). (1948). London: George Allen & Unwin.

⁴⁷ Bhagavad-Gītā. (Trans. Swami Gambhīrānanda). (1984). Advaita Ashrama.

⁴⁸ Bhagavad-Gītā. (Trans. Swami Gambhīrānanda). (1984). Advaita Ashrama.

as politics, business, and education. Rajas-dominant individuals play a crucial role in solving problems and initiating reforms through their entrepreneurial spirit and decisive leadership⁴⁹.

However, the dominance of Rajas, when unchecked by Sattva, may result in excessive materialism, competition, and consumerism, shifting the social ethos toward external success rather than inner fulfillment. The *Bhagavadgītā* describes the consequences of predominant Rajas as follows: “From Rajas arise greed, activity, undertaking of actions, unrest, and craving” *lobhaḥ pravṛttir ārambhaḥ karmanām aśamaḥ sprhā*⁵⁰. This overemphasis on external progress can marginalize spiritual and emotional well-being, leading to societal imbalance. Therefore, while Rajas-dominant individuals fuel the engine of progress, without the guiding influence of Sattva, their impact may inadvertently foster inequality, stress, and disconnection within the community.

f. Tamas- Dominant Personalities :

Individuals predominantly governed by Tamas guṇa are often characterized by traits such as ignorance (ajñāna), delusion (moha), inertia (ālayam), and sloth (pramāda). The *Bhagavadgītā* describes Tamas as: “Know Tamas to be born of ignorance, deluding all embodied beings. It binds by heedlessness, indolence, and sleep” *tamas tv ajñānajaṃ viddhi mohanam sarvadehinām; pramādālaya-nidrābhis tan nibadhnāti bhārata*⁵¹.

Tāmasic individuals typically exhibit mental dullness, lack of motivation, and emotional stagnation. They often resist change, clinging to familiar routines even when such habits hinder personal growth. Their decision-making is impaired by confusion and fear of the unknown. This cognitive and behavioral rigidity leads to difficulty in adapting to dynamic environments or seizing new opportunities.

In contemporary psychological terms, Tamas dominance has been linked with symptoms of depression, anxiety, and addictive behaviors, including overindulgence in substances like alcohol and food⁵². Such tendencies may also manifest as apathy, withdrawal, and an inclination to escape reality through excessive entertainment or intoxication.

g. Impact of Tāmasic-Dominant Personalities on Society

When Tamas predominates in a society or within its institutions, it leads to a collective stagnation marked by resistance to innovation, negligence of duties, and inefficiency in governance or administration. Social systems influenced by Tāmasic tendencies may suffer from lack of accountability, passivity in problem-solving, and decline in moral and civic responsibility. The *Bhagavadgītā* further outlines the consequences of Tamas: “When inertia, dullness, and delusion arise, Tamas is said to be predominant” *aprakāśo'pravṛttiś ca pramādo moha eva ca; tamasy etāni jāyante vivṛddhe kuru-nandana*⁵³.

Tamas, in its excessive form, can lead to institutional decay, poor leadership, and social malaise.

However, the Indian philosophical tradition also asserts that Tamas is not inherently evil it serves a functional purpose such as rest, preservation, and stillness. But it must be balanced by Sattva and Rajas for optimal individual and societal health⁵⁴. Modern spiritual psychology recommends mindfulness practices, disciplined routines, sattvic diet, and purposeful action as ways to mitigate the negative effects of Tamas⁵⁵. These interventions can help restore vitality and moral direction both at the individual and collective levels.

VI. The Path to Transcendence

In *Chapter 14 of the Bhagavadgītā*, Śrī Krishna imparts to Arjuna the profound metaphysical insight regarding the *path to transcendence (guṇātīta mārga)* a state wherein the Self (*ātman*) rises above the influence of the three guṇas: *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*. This state marks the culmination

⁴⁹ Vivekananda, S. (2005). Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda (Vol. 1–9). Advaita Ashrama.

⁵⁰ Bhagavad-Gītā. (Trans. Swami Gambhīrānanda). (1984). Advaita Ashrama.

⁵¹ Bhagavad-Gītā. (Trans. Swami Gambhīrānanda). (1984). Advaita Ashrama.

⁵² Rao, K.R. (2005). Cognitive Anomalies, Consciousness, and Yoga Psychology. Centre for Studies in Civilizations.

⁵³ Bhagavad-Gītā. (Trans. Swami Gambhīrānanda). (1984). Advaita Ashrama.

⁵⁴ Puligandla, R. (1975). Fundamentals of Indian Philosophy. D.K. Printworld.

⁵⁵ Joshi, K. (2009). Psychology: The Indian Perspective. University of Delhi Press.

of spiritual evolution, characterized by *equanimity, wisdom, and enduring joy (sukham ātmikam)*. Śrī Krishna declares that the seeker must first cultivate *Sattva*, which is luminous and purificatory in nature, and then transcend even that, as attachment to *Sattva* can also bind the soul through attachment to knowledge and happiness (*jñāna-bandha*). He states: *When the embodied being rises above these three guṇas, which are the source of the body, he is freed from birth, death, old age, and sorrow and attains immortality*⁵⁶. A *guṇātīta* one who has transcended the *guṇas* manifests certain psychological and behavioral traits. He is *undisturbed by the fluctuations* of the *guṇas* within his body and mind; their appearance or disappearance causes no disturbance. Krishna illustrates this spiritual equipoise: *He who is alike in honor and dishonor, who treats alike friend and foe, who has renounced all undertakings—he is said to have risen above the guṇas*⁵⁷. Such a person is established in the *Self (ātma-niṣṭhā)*, viewing *pleasure and pain, gold and dust, praise and blame* with equal vision. His *action is free from egoism (ahaṅkāra)*, as he perceives himself as the *non-doer*, identifying with the *nirguṇa Brahman* the formless, attributeless, eternal reality (*sat-cit-ānanda*). This state of transcendence emphasizes *self-realization (ātma-jñāna)* the understanding that the true Self is not the composite of *guṇas* but their eternal witness. As Radhakrishnan notes, the *guṇas* are “*forces of prakṛti which do not touch the Self in its essential nature; liberation arises from disidentification with these guṇas*”⁵⁸. The *Gītā* thus points toward a *non-dualistic ontology*, wherein the aspirant gradually disidentifies from *prakṛti (nature)* and aligns with *puruṣa (pure consciousness)*. The *guṇātīta* is not merely detached from the world but is actively *anchored in Brahman*, embodying *inner freedom (mokṣa)* while living amidst the world (*jīvanmukti*).

VII. Conclusion

The doctrine of *guṇas* as expounded in the *Bhagavadgītā* presents a *comprehensive framework for understanding human personality* through the dynamic interplay of *Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas* the fundamental constituents (*evolutes*) of *Prakṛti*. These three *guṇas* collectively shape an individual's *cognitive patterns, emotional dispositions, and behavioral tendencies*, there by influencing not only personal conduct but also one's broader *existential trajectory*. The *Bhagavadgītā* goes beyond mere psychological typology; it offers a *transformative path* encouraging individuals to transcend the binding influence of the *guṇas*. Through *selfless action (niṣkāma karma)*, *inner detachment (vairāgya)*, and *dedicated spiritual practice (sādhana)*, one can rise above the fluctuating forces of nature and attain the state of *guṇātīta*, where the Self abides in equanimity, wisdom, and spiritual freedom. This vision not only addresses the *ontological dimensions of human nature* but also integrates *ethical and psychological insights*, offering a model that is relevant for both ancient spiritual seekers and contemporary thinkers in fields such as *psychology, ethics, and self-development*. The doctrine of *guṇas* thus continues to resonate across disciplines, offering a *synthesis of metaphysical depth and practical guidance* for inner transformation and societal harmony.

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⁵⁶ Bhagavad-Gītā. (Trans. Swami Gambhīrānanda). (1984). Advaita Ashrama.

⁵⁷ Goyandka, J. D. (n.d.). *Tattvavivechani: Commentary on the Bhagavad Gītā*. Gita Press.

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Degrees, dreams and depression: understanding the mental health burden of youth facing employment crisis in India

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I. Abstract

In recent decades, India has witnessed a paradoxical phenomenon—while educational attainment among youth has surged, employment opportunities have not kept pace. This mismatch has created a profound crisis for India's educated youth, particularly those from lower and middle socio-economic backgrounds, who find themselves trapped between aspirations and economic realities. This paper explores the sociological and psychological dimensions of the employment crisis in India and its impact on youth mental health. Drawing from data, case studies, and theoretical frameworks, it analyzes the role of structural unemployment, credential inflation, societal expectations, and neoliberal policy frameworks in contributing to a mental health epidemic marked by anxiety, depression, and hopelessness among youth. The paper argues that without systemic reform, this crisis will continue to undermine not only India's demographic dividend but also the psychological well-being of an entire generation.

II. Keywords

Youth unemployment, mental health, education-employment mismatch, India, depression, neoliberalism, policy failure

III. Introduction

India stands at a critical juncture in its demographic and economic trajectory. With over 65% of its population under the age of 35, the country possesses a massive pool of young people who are often referred to as the potential bearers of the "demographic dividend" (Bloom, Canning & Sevilla, 2003)¹. This demographic advantage, if properly harnessed, can significantly accelerate economic development and societal transformation. However, the reality confronting millions of Indian youth is starkly different. The promise of employment and upward mobility, once seen as the natural outcome of educational attainment, is increasingly proving to be a mirage for a growing segment of the population. In recent years, India has witnessed a disturbing rise in youth unemployment, particularly among graduates, creating what many sociologists and economists now term a youth employment crisis (CMIE, 2024;)². The intensification of this crisis has exposed a widening gap between educational aspirations and employment realities. It is particularly alarming because it is not limited to the unskilled or undereducated, but is increasingly affecting well-educated, degree-holding youth. The All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE, 2023)³ reports that over 40 million students are currently enrolled in various higher education programs, yet the employment absorption rate of this educated workforce remains critically low. The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) reveals that the unemployment rate among urban youth with graduate degrees is above 23%, and even higher for women. This disjunction between qualifications and employment availability has created what is commonly referred to as credential inflation, where degrees lose their economic value due to market saturation and lack of quality employment opportunities (Brown, Lauder & Ashton, 2011)⁴.

Historically, education in India has been closely tied to social mobility and family prestige, particularly among lower and middle-class families who invest heavily in their children's education with the hope of securing stable government jobs or respectable private sector roles. The neoliberal transformation of the Indian economy since the 1990s, accompanied by privatization, digitalization,

¹ Bloom, D., Canning, D., & Sevilla, J. (2003). *The Demographic Dividend: A New Perspective on the Economic Consequences of Population Change*. RAND Corporation.

² CMIE. (2024). *Unemployment in India: Monthly Reports*. Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy.

³ AISHE. (2023). *All India Survey on Higher Education*. Ministry of Education, Government of India.

⁴ Brown, P., Lauder, H., & Ashton, D. (2011). *The Global Auction: The Broken Promises of Education, Jobs, and Incomes*. Oxford University Press.

and the shrinking of public sector employment, has dismantled these expectations (Deshpande, 2020)⁵. Government recruitment has slowed, competition has intensified, and informal and gig economy jobs have emerged as the dominant form of employment, particularly for urban youth (ILO, 2022). However, these jobs often lack social security, stability, or dignity, leaving educated youth either underemployed or in jobs that do not match their skills. This scenario results in deep psychological distress, manifesting in the form of depression, anxiety, stress disorders, and in extreme cases, suicide (ICMR, 2023;)⁶The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB, 2023) reported that over 13,000 students died by suicide in 2022, a number that includes a significant proportion of unemployed and exam-stressed youth. These deaths are not isolated events but indicative of a broader socio-economic pathology(NCRB, 2023)⁷. Mental health professionals and sociologists alike have identified a growing epidemic of psychological distress among young people stemming from joblessness, failed aspirations, parental and societal pressures, and a general feeling of helplessness in navigating the transition from education to employment (Kapur, 2021)⁸. In a society where identity is often anchored to one's career and earning ability, the failure to obtain meaningful employment is experienced as a failure of personhood, especially among men who face normative expectations of being breadwinners (Jeffrey, 2010)⁹.The mental health burden of this employment crisis is exacerbated by the stigmatization of psychological suffering, particularly in non-metropolitan regions, where mental health remains a taboo subject. Moreover, most Indian educational institutions lack professional psychological support systems, leaving youth to cope in isolation. The policy response to this crisis has largely focused on technical fixes—such as skill development programs (Skill India) or entrepreneurship schemes (Startup India)—without addressing the structural inequalities in the education-employment system or the psychosocial consequences of systemic failure .(Sen, 2020;)¹⁰

The situation for Indian youth was already precarious before the COVID-19 pandemic, but the crisis took a significantly darker turn after 2020. Prior to the pandemic, India was already grappling with high graduate unemployment, underemployment, and regional job disparities, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. The labor market was showing clear signs of saturation, especially in sectors like IT, engineering, and banking. Youth were increasingly dependent on competitive government exams, facing years of preparation with uncertain outcomes. Despite these challenges, there remained at least some optimism, rooted in the belief that persistent effort, reskilling, or migration could eventually lead to stable employment (Deshpande, 2019;)¹¹ However, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 radically disrupted this fragile balance. The nationwide lockdowns, the collapse of the informal economy, and the halt of economic activities led to massive job losses, hiring freezes, and closure of many entry-level positions Internships, campus placements, and exams were postponed or canceled, leading to a sense of suspended futures among students and fresh graduates.(CMIE, 2019)¹². A report by the International Labour Organization (2021) noted that Indian youth were among the most affected globally in terms of job losses, skill mismatch, and psychological stress due to the pandemic. (ILO, 2021)¹³.

The mental health impact of the pandemic on unemployed youth was particularly severe. Confined at home, socially isolated, and surrounded by rising illness and mortality, many young

⁵ Deshpande, S. (2020). Neoliberalism and Education in India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 55(2).

⁶ ILO. (2022). *India Employment Report*. International Labour Organization.

⁷ ICMR. (2023). *Mental Health Status of Youth in India*.

⁸ NCRB. (2023). *Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India*. National Crime Records Bureau.

⁹ Kapur, R. (2021). Psychosocial Impact of Unemployment Among Urban Youth. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, 63(4), 301–308.

¹⁰ Jeffrey, C. (2010). *Timepass: Youth, Class, and the Politics of Waiting in India*. Stanford University Press.

¹¹ Sen, A. (2020). Education, Employment, and the Crisis of Indian Youth. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 55(12).

¹² Deshpande, A. (2019). *The Employment Crisis in India*. Ideas for India.

¹³ CMIE. (2019). *Unemployment in India: A Statistical Snapshot*.

people faced acute anxiety, depression, and existential crisis. According to a 2021 survey by India's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the prevalence of depressive symptoms doubled among individuals aged 18–30 during the pandemic. The closure of educational institutions and lack of digital access also widened the rural-urban and class divides in both education and employment opportunities (UNESCO, 2021)¹⁴. Youth from marginalized communities, who were already on the fringes of the job market, experienced complete exclusion during this period. Post-COVID, the employment scenario has only partially recovered. While some urban sectors have seen growth, employment recovery has been uneven, with much of the formal sector adopting contractual, gig-based hiring, which offers low wages and poor mental health security. A significant number of pandemic-era graduates remain unemployed or underemployed, forming what scholars call a "COVID generation"—young people whose educational investments did not yield the expected life outcomes, leading to a persistent sense of betrayal, disillusionment, and hopelessness (World Bank, 2023;)¹⁵. This before-and-after pandemic divide highlights how the employment crisis has deepened both in scale and intensity, transforming from a chronic policy failure into an acute psychosocial emergency. It has further reinforced the argument that mental health outcomes are inseparably linked to structural economic realities, particularly for youth navigating the transition into adulthood amid uncertainty and instability. (Kapur, 2022)¹⁶

This paper aims to investigate this nexus of education, unemployment, and mental health, with a specific focus on how unemployment affects the mental well-being of educated youth in India. Drawing from sociological theories, empirical data, and lived experiences, it seeks to provide a comprehensive account of how the failure of employment absorption is producing a mental health crisis among youth, challenging both India's economic ambitions and its social fabric. The paper argues that youth mental health must not be treated as an individual problem, but as a structural issue linked to policy failures, social expectations, and institutional gaps. The sociological lens is critical in this analysis. The condition of India's unemployed youth cannot be understood merely in economic or psychological terms. It reflects deeper structural contradictions within a rapidly modernizing yet unequal society. Following Émile Durkheim's theory of anomie, we can interpret youth depression as a product of normlessness and goal disintegration, where the promises of success via education no longer align with the realities of the labor market (Durkheim, 1897)¹⁷. Similarly, Merton's strain theory explains how societal pressures to succeed—without legitimate means to do so—create strain and lead to mental distress or deviance (Merton, 1938)¹⁹. Furthermore, Foucault's notion of neoliberal governmentality offers a framework to understand how youth internalize failure as a personal shortcoming rather than a structural problem, reinforcing self-blame and isolation (Foucault, 1978;)¹⁸.

In addition to structural and psychological analysis, the paper also explores the gendered nature of the employment crisis. Women face unique barriers to employment, such as familial restrictions, early marriage pressure, and lack of safe work environments, which exacerbate mental health challenges. For many women, unemployment is compounded by restricted agency and invisibilization, making them more vulnerable to depression and anxiety (UNDP, 2023)¹⁹. Caste, region, and class also intersect with this crisis, as Dalit and Adivasi youth continue to face systemic exclusion from quality education and employment opportunities, despite constitutional guarantees (Teltumbde, 2020)²⁰. In sum, this paper situates the mental health burden of unemployed youth within the broader socio-economic and cultural context of contemporary India. It combines

¹⁴ ILO. (2021). Youth and COVID-19: Impacts on Jobs, Education, Rights and Mental Well-being. International Labour Organization.

¹⁵ UNESCO. (2021). COVID-19 Education Response: How India's Youth Were Affected.

¹⁶ World Bank. (2023). Employment and Resilience in Post-COVID India.

¹⁷ Kapur, R. (2022). Youth Mental Health Post-COVID: Unemployment, Anxiety and Policy Neglect. *Indian Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 38(1), 10–17.

¹⁸ Durkheim, E. (1897). *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*. Free Press.

¹⁹ Merton, R. K. (1938). Social structure and anomie. *American Sociological Review*, 3(5), 672–682.

²⁰ Foucault, M. (1978). *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction*. Pantheon Books.

quantitative evidence with qualitative insights to highlight how unmet aspirations, institutional failure, and societal pressure intersect to create a generation-wide mental health emergency. Without urgent and holistic interventions—from mental health infrastructure to employment policy reform—India risks squandering its demographic potential and producing a disillusioned, depressed, and disempowered youth population.

IV. Structural Unemployment and the Illusion of Degrees

India's youth unemployment crisis cannot be understood merely as a temporary economic slowdown or a lack of individual skillsets. Rather, it is a manifestation of structural unemployment—a persistent condition wherein the number of educated job-seekers far exceeds the economy's capacity to absorb them in relevant roles. (Rose, 1999)²¹ This disjuncture is particularly acute in the context of higher education, where degrees are increasingly failing to translate into meaningful employment, resulting in what scholars term the “illusion of degrees”—qualifications that promise social mobility but deliver precarity, stagnation, or disappointment (Brown, Lauder & Ashton, 2011)²².

a. Overproduction of Degrees and Limited Absorption Capacity

India's rapid expansion of higher education has led to an unprecedented increase in the number of graduates. According to the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE, 2023)²³, over 4 crore (40 million) students are enrolled in various undergraduate, postgraduate, and professional courses across more than 1,100 universities and 43,000 colleges. While this expansion was intended to democratize access to education and bridge socio-economic divides, it has also led to quantitative expansion without qualitative reform. Many private institutions have mushroomed with poor faculty-student ratios, outdated curricula, and weak industry linkages—producing graduates who are theoretically qualified but practically unemployable (Agrawal, 2021)²⁴. This overproduction of degrees has occurred without a commensurate increase in job creation. India's formal sector—especially public services and core industries—has not expanded at the same pace as its graduate population. As per data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE, 2024)²⁵, unemployment among graduates is significantly higher than among those with lesser qualifications. For instance, the unemployment rate among graduates in 2023 was around 23.8%, compared to 10.3% for those with secondary school education. This paradoxical situation—where the most educated youth are also the most unemployed—reveals a structural problem in the education-to-employment pipeline.

b. Credential Inflation and Devaluation of Educational Capital

A key consequence of this disconnect is credential inflation—a phenomenon where educational qualifications lose their value as they become more common. Once a symbol of elite access and assured employment, a bachelor's or even master's degree now fails to distinguish the holder in a saturated job market. As Brown et al. (2011)²⁶ argue, when everyone has a degree, the degree loses its power to guarantee differentiation. The situation in India echoes this insight, where postgraduates often compete for clerical or Group D government jobs, or take up gig work such as food delivery and online tutoring (The Hindu, 2023)²⁷. The massification of education in the absence of employment absorption mechanisms creates a form of symbolic violence, as described by Bourdieu (1986)³⁰. Degrees, which were once imbued with the promise of progress, now act as instruments of false hope. Youth internalize their failure to secure jobs as personal inadequacy

²¹ UNDP. (2023). Gender and Employment Gaps in India: A Policy Note. United Nations Development Programme.

²² Teltumbde, A. (2020). Republic of Caste: Thinking Equality in the Time of Neoliberal Hindutva. Navayana.

²³ Rose, N. (1999). Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought. Cambridge University Press.

²⁴ Brown, P., Lauder, H., & Ashton, D. (2011). The Global Auction: The Broken Promises of Education, Jobs, and Incomes. Oxford University Press.

²⁵ AISHE. (2023). All India Survey on Higher Education. Ministry of Education, Government of India.

²⁶ Agrawal, T. (2021). Skill development in India: The vocational education and training system. Indian Journal of Labour Economics, 64(2), 235–248.

²⁷ CMIE. (2024). Unemployment Rate Reports. Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy.

rather than structural failure, leading to anxiety, depression, and identity crises. This situation is particularly grim for first-generation learners from Dalit, Adivasi, or rural backgrounds, for whom a degree represents a huge investment of familial sacrifice and financial debt. (Sen, 2020)²⁸

c. Government Exam Trap and the “Aspirational Deadlock”

One of the most visible consequences of this crisis is the massive surge in youth attempting competitive government exams such as UPSC, SSC, banking, and railways. These are viewed as stable, respectable jobs offering job security and social recognition. However, the number of government vacancies has steadily declined over the years, and selection ratios are dismal. For example, in Bihar in 2023, over 10 lakh youth applied for just 400 peon-level posts, many of whom were postgraduates or engineers (The Wire, 2023)²⁹. This has created an “aspirational deadlock”—a sociological condition where millions of youth suspend life decisions (marriage, migration, employment) to prepare for exams that few will clear. These years of suspended agency—marked by intense study, isolation, and constant societal pressure—lead to mental health deterioration. Failure in exams after years of effort often results in self-doubt, shame, and depression, further aggravated by a culture that rarely acknowledges emotional suffering or structural injustice (Jeffrey, 2010).³⁰

d. Disjunction Between Skills and Market Demand

The Indian education system continues to emphasize rote learning, theoretical knowledge, and standardized testing. Despite efforts to modernize curricula, there remains a significant mismatch between the skills imparted by universities and the competencies demanded by employers. The India Skills Report (2023)³¹ found that only 46.2% of graduates were considered employable by industry standards, with major gaps in communication, problem-solving, digital literacy, and adaptability. Moreover, many job roles that have emerged in the digital economy—such as those in data science, cloud computing, content creation, or fintech—are rarely integrated into traditional university curricula, especially in public or rural institutions. This leaves graduates ill-equipped to meet contemporary labor market demands, particularly in Tier II and Tier III cities. As a result, youth either take low-paying jobs far below their qualifications or remain unemployed, creating a vicious cycle of underemployment and psychological frustration.

e. The Rise of the Gig Economy and Precarity

In response to formal sector stagnation, many youth have entered the gig economy, taking up roles as delivery agents, drivers, freelancers, or part-time service workers. While these jobs offer temporary income, they come with no job security, health insurance, or retirement benefits, and often require long hours for minimal returns (ILO, 2022)³². For highly educated youth, the experience of working in such roles—often under surveillance, algorithmic control, and public invisibility—leads to a deep sense of de-skilling and humiliation. This shift from dignified employment to survival-based labor has profound mental health consequences. It contributes to feelings of worthlessness, social alienation, and a fractured self-image, particularly when social media continues to project curated images of success, achievement, and luxury. The result is a generational condition marked by disillusionment, silent suffering, and existential despair—a crisis hiding behind statistical aggregates and policy jargon. (Srivastava, 2020)³³

f. Educational Debt and Economic Pressure

²⁸ Brown, P., Lauder, H., & Ashton, D. (2011). *The Global Auction: The Broken Promises of Education, Jobs, and Incomes*. Oxford University Press.

²⁹ The Hindu. (2023). *Overqualified and Underemployed: The Crisis Facing Indian Youth*.

³⁰ Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In Richardson, J. G. (Ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. Greenwood.

³¹ Sen, A. (2020). Education, Unemployment, and Identity: A Crisis in the Making. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 55(12), 22–26.

³² The Wire. (2023). 10 Lakh Youth Apply for 400 Peon Jobs in Bihar.

³³ Jeffrey, C. (2010). *Timepass: Youth, Class, and the Politics of Waiting in India*. Stanford University Press.

An increasingly privatized higher education sector has also meant that many students graduate with significant student debt, especially those from middle-class and lower-middle-class families. Educational loans—often taken from public sector banks—create pressure to repay soon after graduation. When employment does not materialize, youth face not only psychological distress but also financial insecurity, creditor harassment, and family tensions. This adds another layer to the emotional burden of being unemployed or underemployed with a degree that has not yielded promised returns (Kapur, 2021)³⁴. The phenomenon of structural unemployment and the illusion of degrees captures the core contradiction of India's development trajectory—an over-educated but underemployed youth population trapped between inflated aspirations and eroding economic opportunities. This mismatch is not merely an economic issue; it is a sociological and psychological emergency. It breeds mental health disorders, deteriorates social trust, and undermines democratic participation. The solution lies not in blaming youth for lacking skills or motivation, but in reforming the structures of education, labor, and governance to make degrees meaningful once again. Only then can India's demographic dividend be realized—not as a slogan, but as a lived reality. (Kapur, 2022)³⁵

V. **Psychological Impact: Anxiety, Depression, and Loss of Self-Worth (Elaborated)**

The employment crisis among Indian youth is not merely an economic problem; it is a profound psychosocial challenge. The lived experience of being unemployed or underemployed—particularly after acquiring educational qualifications—often leads to significant mental health distress. Conditions such as anxiety, depression, loss of self-worth, and even suicidal ideation have become alarmingly common among young people navigating a failed education-to-employment transition. In a culture where employment is intrinsically linked with identity, respect, and family pride, joblessness is not just a material deprivation—it is a crisis of personhood (Jeffrey, 2010;)³⁶.

a. **Anxiety and the Everyday Fear of Uncertainty**

One of the most immediate psychological effects of prolonged unemployment is anxiety, marked by a persistent feeling of restlessness, fear of the future, and emotional dysregulation. Young individuals often experience anticipatory anxiety, triggered by frequent job rejections, competitive exam failures, financial instability, and the social stigma associated with being idle. In many cases, anxiety is internalized, leading to self-doubt and overthinking. According to a 2022 study by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), more than 38% of unemployed youth surveyed exhibited symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), characterized by excessive worrying, poor concentration, and sleep disturbances. These symptoms are often worsened by the constant comparison with peers, particularly through social media platforms, where curated images of success amplify feelings of failure and exclusion (Sharma & Singh, 2021)³⁷. Moreover, the structure of job searching itself—long application processes, waiting periods, and ghosting by employers—creates a cycle of hope and despair that can destabilize an individual's psychological resilience. In the absence of emotional support systems, many youth turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms such as internet addiction, substance use, or complete social withdrawal (Kaur, 2022)³⁸.

b. **Depression and the Collapse of Meaning**

While anxiety about fears the future, depression is about losing faith in it altogether. For many educated unemployed youth, the experience of repeated rejection and social invalidation culminates in a profound sense of hopelessness and meaninglessness. Depression manifests not only as sadness but also as emotional numbness, loss of motivation, and chronic fatigue. A person may feel too

³⁴ India Skills Report. (2023). Employability Trends and Skill Gap Analysis. Wheebox & Confederation of Indian Industry.

³⁵ ILO. (2022). India Employment Report. International Labour Organization.

³⁶ Srivastava, R. (2020). Contemporary Labour Market and the Precarity of Youth Work. *Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, 63(2), 217–230.

³⁷ Kapur, R. (2021). Mental Health and Structural Joblessness in India. *Indian Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 37(2), 145–153.

³⁸ Kapur, R. (2022). The Psychological Fallout of Unemployment: Case Studies from North India. *Social Change*, 52(3), 237–249.

drained to apply for jobs, unable to get out of bed, or emotionally detached from family and friends. The NCRB's 2023³⁹ data on student and youth suicides paints a grim picture: over 13,000 suicides were recorded among students and unemployed youth, often linked to academic failures or joblessness. Many of these deaths occur in competitive exam hubs like Kota or Prayagraj, where hundreds of thousands of youth reside in isolation, spending years preparing for limited opportunities. Depression is exacerbated when individuals blame themselves for structural failures. (NCRB's 2023)⁴⁰ In line with Michel Foucault's theory of neoliberal governmentality, young people are conditioned to see their economic success as a matter of personal responsibility. When they fail, they internalize this failure as a moral or intellectual inadequacy, leading to self-stigmatization and silence. Such internalization prevents youth from seeking help, thereby worsening their mental health condition. (Foucault, 1978)⁴¹

c. Loss of Self-Worth and Identity Crisis

In a society like India, where employment is strongly tied to social status, marriageability, and masculinity, being jobless becomes a symbol of failure. This symbolic weight translates into a crisis of self-worth, where the unemployed youth begin to see themselves as burdens to their families and useless to society. (Rose, 1999)⁴² The family becomes both a site of support and surveillance. While parents may continue to provide food and shelter, they often express disappointment, compare their children to employed peers, or pressure them to settle for any job—regardless of interest or dignity. This reinforces the youth's sense of failure. Many young men describe feelings of emasculation and humiliation, especially when unable to fulfill the role of breadwinner (Desai & Kulkarni, 2021)⁴³. Young women, on the other hand, face a different kind of identity loss. While they may be more likely to be excused from economic expectations, educated unemployed women are often pushed toward early marriage, domesticity, or caregiving roles, regardless of their aspirations. This forced withdrawal from the public sphere contributes to feelings of invisibility and mental stagnation (UNDP, 2023)⁴⁴. A 2021 qualitative study by the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS)⁴⁵ found that many unemployed youth referred to themselves using terms like “waste,” “burden,” or “failure.” This language of self-degradation reflects the deep psychological erosion of identity that occurs when society measures worth primarily through productivity.

d. Social Isolation and Emotional Alienation

Prolonged unemployment also leads to social withdrawal and alienation. Youth often feel ashamed to attend social functions, meet relatives, or maintain friendships—especially when conversations revolve around jobs, marriage, and future plans. This alienation is intensified by spatial segregation; for instance, competitive coaching hubs and online job platforms isolate individuals into fragmented, competitive silos, devoid of community bonding or solidarity. This environment breeds a form of “silent suffering”—a mental health condition where individuals do not express their distress openly due to stigma, shame, or fear of being judged. In many Indian households, mental health is still seen as a weakness, and expressions of emotional vulnerability are discouraged, particularly among boys and men (Kapur, 2021)⁴⁶. Furthermore, religious or cultural coping

³⁹ Jeffrey, C. (2010). *Timepass: Youth, Class, and the Politics of Waiting in India*. Stanford University Press.

⁴⁰ Sharma, A., & Singh, R. (2021). Social Media and Psychological Distress among Unemployed Youth in Urban India. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 24(6), 718–735.

⁴¹ Kaur, M. (2022). Coping with Career Uncertainty: A Study on Mental Health of Young Adults in India. *Journal of Mental Health and Social Behavior*, 5(1), 19–27.

⁴² NCRB. (2023). *Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India*. National Crime Records Bureau.

⁴³ Foucault, M. (1978). *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1*. Pantheon Books.

⁴⁴ Rose, N. (1999). *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*. Cambridge University Press.

⁴⁵ Desai, S., & Kulkarni, P. M. (2021). Gendered Disparities in Employment and Mental Health: Evidence from Rural India. *Indian Journal of Social Research*, 62(2), 187–202.

⁴⁶ UNDP. (2023). *Gender and Youth Unemployment: Intersectional Impacts on Well-Being*. United Nations Development Programme.

mechanisms, while occasionally helpful, often fall short of addressing the depth of psychological damage. Advice like “have faith,” “be positive,” or “keep trying” may invalidate the lived pain of chronic unemployment, pushing the individual further into silence.

e. Gendered Mental Health Impacts

While both men and women suffer due to unemployment, gender significantly shapes the nature and expression of psychological distress. Young men, expected to be providers, experience emasculation and societal ridicule when jobless. They may turn to aggression, substance abuse, or withdrawal. In contrast, young women, especially in rural areas, often experience restricted mobility, increased domestic workload, or pressure to marry, which deepens their sense of loss and foreclosed futures (Desai & Kulkarni, 2021)⁴⁷. Moreover, access to mental health services is highly gendered. Female students and unemployed women often hesitate to seek help due to fears of stigma, reputation loss, or parental disapproval. A 2023 report by the Ministry of Women and Child Development noted that less than 10% of female youth in Tier-II and Tier-III towns had ever accessed mental health support, despite reporting symptoms of distress. The psychological consequences of youth unemployment in India are multifaceted and deeply rooted in sociocultural expectations, structural failures, and institutional neglect. From anxiety and depression to identity collapse and social alienation, the impact of joblessness on mental health is severe and long-lasting. This mental burden is not merely an individual issue—it is a collective failure of the state, society, and institutions to uphold the promises made to its young citizens. Addressing this crisis requires holistic interventions: integrating mental health services into employment programs, destigmatizing psychological distress, reforming educational curricula to reflect labor market realities, and fostering a culture of care and solidarity. Without such efforts, India’s youth—despite their degrees—will continue to suffer in silence, their dreams turning into depression, and their potential into despair.

VI. The Role of Family, Society, and Culture

In India, the intersection of familial structures, societal pressures, and cultural expectations plays a decisive role in shaping the youth's mental health, especially when they face unemployment. Unlike individualistic societies, Indian youth grow up in a collectivist culture where identity, aspirations, and success are often defined in relation to family and community approval (Chadda & Deb, 2013)⁴⁸. Consequently, failure to secure employment after completing higher education is not just perceived as a personal failure, but also as a source of shame for the family, affecting social status and marriage prospects (Verma & Saraswathi, 2002)⁴⁹. Family, which is usually seen as a support system, can sometimes turn into a site of psychological pressure. Many middle- and lower-income families invest heavily in their children’s education with the expectation of future financial return. As a result, unemployed graduates often experience guilt, helplessness, and anxiety when they are unable to fulfill those expectations (Jain & Singh, 2018)⁵⁰. This is particularly heightened in families where parents have taken loans or sold property to fund coaching for competitive exams or private college fees. The disappointment expressed by family members, even if unintentionally, can contribute to the youth’s declining self-esteem and internalized feelings of worthlessness.

Social comparison further intensifies this distress. Indian society places immense value on prestigious jobs, particularly in government sectors or established professions like medicine and engineering. When peers succeed while others struggle, it creates a toxic environment of comparison and inadequacy. Many unemployed youths report feelings of “falling behind in life” or becoming a burden, which are closely linked to symptoms of depression and social withdrawal

⁴⁷ Gururaj, G., Varghese, M., Benegal, V., Rao, G. N., Pathak, K., & Singh, L. K. (2016). National Mental Health Survey of India, 2015–16: Summary. NIMHANS Publication.

⁴⁸ Kapur, R. (2021). Mental Health in Times of Joblessness: A Qualitative Study among Indian Youth. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, 63(4), 302–309.

⁴⁹ Desai, S., & Kulkarni, P. M. (2021). Gendered Disparities in Employment and Mental Health: Evidence from Rural India. *Indian Journal of Social Research*, 62(2), 187–202.

⁵⁰ Chadda, R. K., & Deb, K. S. (2013). Indian family systems, collectivistic society and psychotherapy. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, 55(Suppl 2), S299–S309. <https://doi.org/10.4103/0019-5545.105555>

(Sharma & Joshi, 2020)⁵¹. Cultural scripts—such as the notion that “good degrees guarantee success” or that “failure in securing a job reflects laziness or incompetence”—exacerbate these mental health struggles. Moreover, gendered cultural expectations shape these dynamics differently for men and women. Young men often face the burden of being seen as future breadwinners and family supporters. Unemployment, therefore, threatens their masculine identity, leading to anger, frustration, or substance abuse (Gururaj et al., 2016). For women, even though increasing numbers are attaining higher education, societal norms still prioritize marriage over career. In many families, prolonged unemployment may result in withdrawal of support for further job-seeking or pressure to marry, especially if the family believes the investment has not yielded returns (Deshpande, 2020)⁵². Religion and caste also influence how unemployment is experienced. In some conservative or marginalized communities, structural barriers to employment are dismissed or attributed to fate, leading to fatalism and inaction, while others internalize the idea that their social identity inherently limits their progress. Thus, unemployment is not just an economic event but a culturally mediated psychological crisis, where family honor, social narratives, and intergenerational hopes all converge on the individual youth. Therefore, any attempt to address the mental health crisis stemming from youth unemployment must account for these deeply rooted cultural dynamics. Simply offering counseling or skill development will be insufficient unless the societal discourse around success, failure, and youth identity is also transformed.

VII. Neoliberal Policies and Institutional Apathy

The post-1991 economic reforms in India marked a significant shift toward neoliberalism, with policies that embraced liberalization, privatization, and globalization. While this model led to rapid GDP growth, it simultaneously decoupled growth from employment, giving rise to the phenomenon of "jobless growth" (Kannan & Raveendran, 2019)⁵³. Public sector undertakings (PSUs), which once provided secure employment to lakhs of graduates, began downsizing or freezing recruitment. Privatization further reduced the number of formal jobs with social security benefits, and most new employment became part of the informal or contractual sector, devoid of long-term stability. As a result, a large section of educated youth, despite holding degrees, find themselves underemployed or unemployed, leading to disappointment, frustration, and psychological instability. In tandem with economic shifts, neoliberalism has also influenced educational policy, transforming universities into spaces of market logic. Education is increasingly seen as a private investment rather than a public good. Students are encouraged to accumulate degrees and skills as "human capital" to enhance their employability, yet the job market fails to absorb this growing pool of aspirants (Tilak, 2015)⁵⁴. The aggressive expansion of private institutions, many of which offer substandard education, worsens the crisis. Graduates come out with high expectations and sometimes with educational loans, but they confront a market that values adaptability over academic knowledge, thus devaluing their formal education. This disconnect between educational qualifications and market requirements often leads to a deep identity crisis and a sense of betrayal among youth.

What further compounds this crisis is the institutional apathy of the state. Although schemes like *Skill India*, *Start-Up India*, and *Atmanirbhar Bharat* are publicized as youth empowerment programs, on-ground implementation remains weak, unaccountable, and exclusionary (Deshpande, 2022)⁵⁵. These programs often ignore structural inequalities, and rarely address the needs of those

⁵¹ Verma, S., & Saraswathi, T. S. (2002). Adolescence in India: Street Urchins or Silicon Valley Millionaires? In B. B. Brown, R. W. Larson, & T. S. Saraswathi (Eds.), *The World's Youth: Adolescence in Eight Regions of the Globe* (pp. 105–140). Cambridge University Press.

⁵² Jain, A., & Singh, D. (2018). Aspirations, parental pressure and distress among Indian youth. *Journal of Social and Economic Development*, 20(1), 120–134.

⁵³ Sharma, M., & Joshi, H. (2020). Peer comparison and job-seeking stress: A study on urban educated youth. *Indian Journal of Psychology*, 95(3), 52–68.

⁵⁴ Deshpande, A. (2020). The Covid Crisis and Women's Employment: A Gendered Analysis of India's Labour Market. *Ideas for India*.

⁵⁵ Kannan, K. P., & Raveendran, G. (2019). India's Labour Market: Challenges and Policy Response. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 54(13), 35–44.

from rural areas, marginalized castes, or economically backward families. Furthermore, mental health is not prioritized in these employment schemes. India spends less than 1% of its health budget on mental health, and there is no national program that links unemployment with psychological support services (Gururaj et al., 2016)⁵⁶. Neoliberal logic also reshapes social attitudes. By promoting the idea of individual responsibility for success or failure, it obscures systemic flaws. Unemployed youth are thus led to believe that their situation results from personal incompetence rather than structural scarcity of jobs. This shift from collective grievance to individual pathology has led to a culture of silence, stigma, and self-blame, which exacerbates mental health problems like anxiety, depression, and even suicidal ideation (Kumar, 2021)⁵⁷. The neoliberal state not only withdraws from job creation but also fails to provide institutional mental health care, leaving youth to navigate emotional turmoil alone, often without community or policy support. In essence, the neoliberal policy framework in India has amplified the disjuncture between aspirations and reality. It has produced a generation that is materially insecure, emotionally exhausted, and psychologically vulnerable. Unless the Indian state recognizes this crisis as structural—and not just as a matter of employability or skill deficits—it will continue to fail its youth, pushing them further into cycles of economic stagnation and mental health collapse.

VIII. Government Responses and Gaps

Over the past two decades, successive Indian governments have launched various initiatives aimed at addressing youth unemployment and skill mismatch. Schemes such as Skill India Mission, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Start-Up India, and Make in India have been positioned as transformative platforms for youth empowerment and job creation. While these programs aim to foster entrepreneurship, boost skill development, and attract investment for job generation, ground-level execution has remained weak, fragmented, and often symbolic (World Bank, 2023)⁵⁸. Many of these initiatives fail to reach marginalized youth in rural areas or those lacking access to digital infrastructure, leading to regional and class disparities in employment outcomes. The Skill India initiative, launched in 2015 with the goal of skilling 500 million people by 2022, has been criticized for its overemphasis on quantitative targets rather than qualitative employment outcomes. Studies show that a significant portion of those trained under PMKVY fail to secure meaningful employment or are placed in low-wage informal jobs with limited upward mobility (MoHFW, (2021)⁵⁹. Furthermore, these programs often overlook the reality that skills without job creation serve little purpose. A mismatch between training content and actual labor market needs continues to persist, pointing to poor coordination between education, training institutions, and industry requirements. When it comes to addressing the mental health impact of unemployment, government response has been largely inadequate. Although the National Mental Health Programme (NMHP) and the Mental Healthcare Act of 2017 are steps in the right direction, mental health infrastructure remains grossly underfunded and understaffed. India spends only 0.05% of its health budget on mental health—far below the global average (ICMR, (2022)⁶⁰. In rural areas, there is often just one psychiatrist per several lakh people, and services such as counseling or psychological support are nearly absent in employment schemes. Youth facing long-term unemployment are rarely screened for depression or anxiety, despite research indicating strong links between joblessness and psychological distress (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2023)⁶¹.

⁵⁶ Tilak, J. B. G. (2015). *Higher Education in India: In Search of Equality, Quality and Quantity*. Orient Blackswan.

⁵⁷ Deshpande, A. (2022). *Policy Myopia and Youth Unemployment in India: A Case of Institutional Neglect*. Centre for Policy Research.

⁵⁸ Gururaj, G., Varghese, M., Benegal, V., Rao, G. N., Pathak, K., & Singh, L. K. (2016). *National Mental Health Survey of India, 2015–16: Summary*. NIMHANS Publication.

⁵⁹ Kumar, R. (2021). Neoliberalism and Youth in Crisis: Rethinking Mental Health and Employment in India. *Journal of Critical Social Policy*, 41(3), 412–429.

⁶⁰ World Bank. (2023). *Skilling India: No Shortcut to Jobs*. Washington, D.C.

⁶¹ MoHFW. (2021). *Pandemic Mental Health Survey: India Report*.

Moreover, most employment programs lack integration with mental health services, career counseling, or psychosocial support mechanisms. The institutional silence on the emotional toll of joblessness sends a message that these are private struggles rather than social concerns. Even in urban settings, where some NGOs or universities offer mental health services, stigma and lack of awareness prevent many young people from seeking help. Without addressing these invisible wounds, employment schemes remain superficial and incomplete in their outreach. The absence of robust labor market data also hinders policy effectiveness. For example, the periodic labor force surveys often underrepresent youth in informal or gig work, and unemployment data is sometimes delayed or politically suppressed. This leads to policy interventions being based on outdated or incomplete statistics, limiting their impact. Additionally, there is no national youth unemployment strategy that holistically links education, employment, and mental health—thus missing the intersectional nature of the crisis. While the Indian government has acknowledged the problem of youth unemployment through various flagship programs, there exists a stark disconnect between policy intent and lived realities. The focus on "skilling" without parallel job creation, coupled with the neglect of psychological well-being, reflects a short-term and technocratic approach to a deeply structural and emotional crisis. To address the youth employment and mental health crisis meaningfully, India needs not just schemes, but a systemic, multi-sectoral strategy that integrates mental health, inclusive employment, education reform, and social security.

IX. Conclusion

India stands at a critical juncture where its demographic dividend—the large proportion of youth in its population—risks becoming a demographic disaster if systemic employment and mental health crises are not urgently addressed. The convergence of rising educational attainment, persistent structural unemployment, and the neoliberal erosion of job security has created a climate of despair, disillusionment, and psychological breakdown among the youth. Degrees no longer guarantee jobs, and the dream of upward social mobility has become a source of anxiety rather than hope. This gap between expectation and reality has deep psychosocial consequences, ranging from depression and anxiety to long-term feelings of social alienation and worthlessness. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated these challenges, exposing the fragility of India's labor markets, deepening inequalities, and overwhelming an already under-resourced mental health infrastructure. While government programs like Skill India and Start-Up India show a rhetorical commitment to resolving youth unemployment, their limited scope, poor implementation, and lack of integration with mental health services highlight a disconnect between policy and lived realities. The state's response has remained largely technocratic—focusing on "skills" without addressing the emotional and social dimensions of joblessness. Moreover, youth suffering from chronic unemployment often find little support from families or institutions. In a culture that places excessive emphasis on success, failure to find employment is frequently internalized as personal inadequacy rather than recognized as a systemic issue. This reinforces the stigma around mental illness and further isolates individuals in distress. Without interventions that are sensitive to both economic and psychological aspects, the employment crisis will continue to erode the self-worth, productivity, and social cohesion of an entire generation. To break this cycle, India requires a multi-pronged, inclusive strategy that goes beyond job creation to address the emotional fallout of unemployment. Mental health must be mainstreamed into youth policies, educational curricula, and employment schemes. Employment programs must focus on dignity, sustainability, and protection—not just numbers. Structural reforms in labor markets, investments in social security, targeted mental health interventions, and a culture of empathy and understanding are essential to building resilience among youth. Unless urgent and comprehensive action is taken, the country risks turning its most promising generation into its most vulnerable and disenfranchised one.

⁶² ICMR. (2022). Youth Mental Health Survey: National Findings. Indian Council of Medical Research.

⁶³ Ministry of Women and Child Development. (2023). Report on Girls' Mental Health Access in Small Towns. Government of India.

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The basics of nanotechnology: history, application, implication and future prospects

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I. Abstract

Nanotechnology, the technology of manipulating matter at the atomic and molecular level, has evolved as one of the most interesting and promising fields of the 21st century. This paper presents a comprehensive discussion on key terms and concepts used in nanoscale technology which can be the basis for understanding nanotechnology, uncovering its origins from early conceptual ideas to modern scientific achievements, and to prove that existence of nanoscience and nanotechnology in ancient era various components have been discussed.

This paper also explains the wide range of applications of nanotechnology in the various fields, like in medicine, manufacturing, computing, electronics, cosmetics, textiles construction, environmental applications, food and agriculture. In addition to this, future possibilities of nanotechnology, importance of predictions have been discussed, as predictions lead to innovation and turn assumptions into reality.

This paper, further, advocates the impacts of nanotechnology, whether it is positive or negative, on human health, the environment, and societal structures. This paper ends with the need of nanoethics, the ethical dimension of nanotechnology, to ensure that nanotechnology maximizes benefits while minimizing risks and for doing that a few recommendations have also been mentioned.

In conclusion, nanotechnology is gaining popularity in almost every field for its outstanding contribution, but they pose precarious health hazards, and other concerns like privacy and surveillance concerns, unawareness, environmental impact, societal and equity issues are equally dangerous and harmful. To acknowledge these uncertain concerns and limiting the negative outcomes of nanotechnology Ethical implication is needed.

II. Keywords

Nano, Nanoscale, Nanoparticles, Nanomaterial, Nanoscience, Nanotechnology, Atoms, Application, implication, Opportunities, Challenges, Nanoethics.

III. Introduction

"Nanotechnology has been hailed as the 'next Industrial Revolution' and promises to have substantial impacts into many areas of our lives."¹

To understand Nanotechnology first we need to understand some of the terms, that are the important terms, which can be the basic nomenclature i.e., related to certain attributes of certain systems, to eradicate confusion and support reliable and clear discussion.² These Terms are *Nano*, *Nanoscale*, *Nanoparticles*, *Nanomaterial*, *Nanoscience*, *Nanotechnology*. In order to have a clear and complete understanding let's start with these terms:

Nano: The etymological derivation of the prefix 'nano' derives from the Latin '*nanus*' that has its origin in the ancient Greek root *nan(n)os* which depicts the meaning dwarf or "little old man" that indicates "extreme smallness."³ Rather than portraying its literal meaning, the term nano does not accurately represent nanotechnology, but it has evolved into a "mega-technology."⁴ **Nanoscale:** A

¹ Fritz Allhoff, "On The Autonomy and Justification of Nanoethics." *NanoEthics* 1, no. 3, (November 2007): 185.

² *Ibid.*, 185-186.

³ Anne H. Soukhanov, *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 1992).

⁴ A P Jayanthi, Koen Beumer, Madhulika Bhati, and Sujit Bhattacharya, "Nanotechnology: 'Risk Governance' in India," *Economic and Political Weekly* 47, no. 4 (2012): 34. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41419763>.

scale of measurement that uses nanometers or microns as units of measure. Nanoscale consists of units of measure from 1 nm to 100nm (where 100nm=1 micron).⁵ **Nanometer:** an SI unit of length, where 1 nm=1 billionth of a meter (1nm=10⁻⁹m). Analogies to explain the size of nanometer in relation to the size that are more commonly known, one is, width of single hair strand is most probably equal to 50 to 80 thousand nanometers, further a nanometer compared to the size of meter is roughly of the same proportion as a golf ball compared to the size of the Earth. The particles that have their size in the range of 1 to 100 nm are **Nanoparticles**. However, this particle size is so small and undetectable to the human eye, but these particles can exhibit significantly different physical and chemical properties to their larger material counterparts. There are many different uses of nanoparticles, that includes the manufacture of scratch proof eyeglasses, crack-resistant paints, anti-graffiti coatings for walls, transparent sunscreens, stain-repellent fabrics, self-cleaning windows, and ceramic coatings for solar cells. Some examples of nanoparticles are GaN (gallium nitride), GaP, InA.⁶ **Nanomaterials:** However, nanomaterials occur naturally or can be created or produced purposefully through engineering using nanoparticles to perform a specialized function. Moreover, nanomaterials can have different physical and chemical properties that differ from their bulk-form counterparts. A common type of nanomaterial is titanium oxide, which is a mineral nanomaterial that is useful in sunscreens. Some other examples of nanomaterials are carbon nanotubes, nanocomposite, graphene, nanowire. The key difference between nanomaterials and nanoparticles is that nanomaterials, at minimum, have one external dimension in the range of 1–100 nm whereas, in nanoparticles all three directions of dimensions are on the nanoscale.⁷ When it comes to technology at nanoscale it is important to take science and technology, both, into consideration as the two are interdependent in this field and both go hand in hand. Science is related to theory and experiment, technology on the other hand is related to the development, application, and implications. Science style the basis of Technology and Technology materializes instruments, equipment, materials. Finally we can say technology has an expertise to effectuate Science. **Nanoscience** is the study of nanoscale material or science at nanoscale level whereas **Nanotechnology** is based on the manipulation, control, and integration of atoms and molecules to form materials, structures, components, devices at nanoscale level. Hence, we can say Nanotechnology is the application of Nanoscience.⁸

Nanoscience is sometimes understood the same as Material science but they are not actually. However, Material science resembles nanoscience, somewhere, as both are intrinsically synthesized in nature, but then nanoscience surpasses the boundaries of materials science by reckoning biology and biochemistry. Besides, material science was never identified as the next Industrial Revolution nor were the societal implications a serious concern in material science. There is no debate if saying vertical-oriented industrial sectors such as Aerospace, Biotech, Energy, Transportation, Health care, Telecommunications, and Information technology all that depend on materials and devices that are composed of atoms and molecules, can be upgraded by applications of nanomaterials and nanotechnology. On that account, nanotechnology is a horizontal, enabling, technology that eventually impacts and will impact all industries.⁹

IV. Historical Context

Nanotechnology which is becoming a topic of talk in recent years due to its innovations, applications, and implications, which make people think that this nanoscale technology is a recent and current innovation or practice. However, this technology is not new but a continual practice. The term Nanotechnology was introduced by a Japanese production engineer Norio Taniguchi from the Tokyo Science University, who was devoted to accuracy and precision, in 1974. Taniguchi stated-

"Nanotechnology is the production technology to get the extra high accuracy and

⁵ Gabor L. Hornyak et al., Introduction to Nanoscience and Nanotechnology (CRC Press, 2008), 5.

⁶ Ibid., 5-6.

⁷ Ibid., 6-8.

⁸ Ibid., 8-12

⁹ Ibid., 806

ultra-fine dimensions, i.e., the preciseness and fineness of the order of 1 nm (nanometer), 10^{-9} m in length. With materials, the smallest bit size of stock removal, flow, or design is one atom (generally about 1/5th of a nanometer), so the limit of fineness of materials is on the order of one nanometer."¹⁰

Though the term was coined by Norio Taniguchi, the conceptual foundation was laid way before by Richard Feynman in his famous lecture "There's Plenty of Room at the Bottom," at Caltech on December 29, 1959. In that lecture, Richard Feynman articulated that-

"I would like to describe a field, in which little has been done, but in which an enormous amount can be done in principle. This field is not quite the same as the others in that it will not tell us much of fundamental physics but it is more like solid-state physics in the sense that it might tell us much of great interest about the strange phenomena that occur in complex situations. Furthermore, the most important point is that it would have an enormous number of technical applications. What I want to talk about is the problem of manipulating and controlling things on a small scale."¹¹

Richard Feynman's prediction, in 1959, about extreme miniaturization of technology downright to the molecular size has come to the actuality now, which is formally popular as Nanotechnology these days.¹² K. Eric Drexler, later, in 1987, in his book 'Engines of creation: The coming era of nt,' describes a new form of technology which is based on molecular assemblers, through which there will be an ability to place atoms in almost any reasonable arrangement, which he called Molecular Manufacturing. Later on, in 1991, Drexler, Peterson and Pergamit published another book entitled 'Unbounding the Future: the Nanotechnology Revolution' in which they use the terms assemblers or nanobots for nano processes in medicinal applications and then after that the famous term Nanomedicine was used for the first time. But if we go further to know the history of nanotechnology we have to understand that this technology is used as accidental nanotechnology or effect since ancient and medieval period, which was an effect of artisan process, such as glassmaking and metalworking as people from that period unaware of material science, however, in contemporary period scientists intentionally, knowing, and precisely manipulate materials at atomic level with respect to their specific purpose. The Lyncurys cup, an achievement in the fourth century A.D., by the Romans is the best example to prove the presence of nanoparticles and structures in the ancient era.¹³

Earlier than that the journey started with microtechnology or the theory of atomism that was founded 2600 years ago by *Vaisheshika* school. Different schools and philosophers have contributed in the field of atomism and the progress, then, leads to nanotechnology that we are dealing with today. And It was John Dalton who in his work 'Law of multiple Proportions' claimed: all matter is made up of indivisible atoms, the atoms of a given element are identical to each other in mass and properties but different from atoms of other elements, and these atoms are capable to form the compounds by combining two or more atoms of different-different elements, the atoms are rearranged in the chemical reaction and cannot be further divided or destroyed. And this is the beginning of modern chemistry or we can say the basis of nanotechnology. The availability of components as well prove the existence of nanotechnology since the ancient era. The components include:

- Metal Colloids ('finely divided' components of catalysts, colored glasses, dyes and

¹⁰ Norio Taniguchi, "On the Basic Concept of Nanotechnology," in Proceedings of the International Conference on Production Engineering, Tokyo, 1974, 18.

¹¹ Richard P. Feynman, "There's Plenty of Room at the Bottom: An Invitation to Enter a New Field of Physics," Engineering and Science 23 (1960): 22, quoted in K. Eric Drexler, "Nanotechnology: From Feynman to Funding."

¹² Amretashis Sengupta and Chandan Kumar Sarkar, "Introduction to Nano," in Engineering Materials, Berlin: Springer, 2015, 2. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-662-47314-6>

¹³ Samer Bayda et al., "The History of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology: From Chemical-Physical Applications to Nanomedicine," Molecules 25, no. 1 (December 27, 2019): 112.

photographic materials, and, the progenitors of quantum dots. Metal implements fabrication during the Copper, Bronze, and Iron Ages surely were composed of micro- and nanosized metal particles.),

- Photography and Images,
- Heterogeneous Catalyst,
- Transistor,
- MEMS devices - microelectromechanical system,
- Oxide layers (formed on anodized aluminum to prevent corrosion, rubber component of automobile tires, titanium dioxide pigment found in white paint, chip components in computers, large synthetic biomolecules, nanoparticle slurries for polishing, molecular sieves, ceramic cells and structure, and many more),
- Thin film chemistry (a class of fabrication known as 'bottom-up' synthesis, characterized as two-dimensional materials or two-dimensional (2-D) quantum structures—a material with length and width but without any apparent thickness),
- Buckyball (The mainstream goal of buckyballs was to create long-chain carbons similar to those detected around carbon stars. Buckyballs serendipitously come to light, after the carbon vaporization with a high-powered laser and then channeling the products into a mass spectrometer, and ended as a discovery that changed the face of nanotechnology),
- Quantum dots or Artificial atoms, also known as zero-dimensional materials (0-D), are quite small, mainly less than 10 nm (used as colloidal pigment elements for wall art stone age, later ancient Egyptians add colloidal constituents into inks to give color and consistency, metal colloids in glasswork by medieval artists and craftsman, and solar conversion and development of solar cells in modern era),
- Ferrofluids,
- Zeolites, and
- Nature and natural components- Nature prevailed way before the human vision of nanotechnology. Many structures and functions exist at the nanoscale in nature, few of them stay in the form of individual nanomaterials like enzymes and others in the composed form of nanomaterials in hierarchical structures, for example, connective tissue. All living things are composed of nanomaterials whether it is the pads on a gecko's feet, the color of peacock feathers and butterfly wings, the structure of a moth's eye, the silica-based infrastructure of diatoms, the structure of abalone shells, the bone structure of parrotfish teeth, or the spider silk, protozoans, red blood cells, and even bacteria, genes, the basis of life; the structure of deoxyribose nucleic acid (DNA). Scientists sometimes, if not always, inspire from nature and innovate accordingly.¹⁴

V. Applications

Nanotechnology generates materials with new designs and developments with novel, amusing, and useful properties. These materials, then, can demonstrate new electronics, magnetic, and material behavior, and are applied to a vast array of applications in multiple fields in everyday life. The usage of nanomaterials-

- In Automobiles, for example, better fuel cells for hybrid and electric vehicles, dirt-resistant paints, anti-fog windshields/mirrors with hydrophobic nanocoatings, and ultra-strong and lightweight nanocomposite materials;
- in the Aerospace, for example, Modern aircraft and helicopters use carbon fiber composites to help reduce weight and improve fuel efficiency, additionally, combat aircraft's RADAR profiles are reduced thanks to carbon fiber composites. Another area of aerospace industry R&D is the development of aerofoils and winglets with the ability to change shape for extreme maneuverability and handling in future aircraft/space shuttles;
- in Construction, Self-repairing concrete created using nanocomposites and nanobiotechnology, easily cleanable skyscraper window glass with a coating of nanorods that can only be cleaned

¹⁴ Gabor L. Hornyak et al., Introduction to Nanoscience and Nanotechnology (CRC Press, 2008), 13–44.

- with water and no soap or surfactants;
- in Food industry nanotechnology is used in additives, and packaging, to enhance strength and barrier function;
- in the component of Polymer-based Materials, for example, tennis rackets, tennis balls, and automobile bumpers, to reduce weight and enhance strength;
- in Cosmetic products, such as, sunscreens, lotions, make-up, to improve functionality and to add antibacterial activity;
- in the Textiles, for surface treatment of fabrics, improving resistance against wrinkling, staining, and bacterial growth;
- in a Coating on windows, lenses and displays in making them surface water repellent, anti-reflective or self-cleaning;
- in Sustainable energy applications like solar panels, production of catalysts;
- in Electronics, single electron transistors (SET), carbon nanotube (CNT) field emitters, graphene field emitters, nanoscale MOSFETs, carbon nanotube (CNT) FETs, and quantum cascade lasers, are some of the examples;
- in Medicine for specialized targeted medication and functional improvement of medical devices, for example, imaging devices;
- in Information technology applications, for example, faster transistors, improved memory devices, and improved display devices; and
- in Defense, for self-monitoring, analysis, and reporting technology (SMART) uniforms for tactical and special forces, lighter and better nanocomposite helmets, and bulletproofing for security/counterterrorism personnel are major research areas in the defense sector. SMART weapons and perhaps SMART ammunition may eventually be a part of the modern militaries of the world.

Though these materials are put to good use, these properties and their underlying physical and chemical nature enable a novel interaction with biological and environmental systems. Eventually, we can say, Nanotechnology impacts every area of our world.¹⁵

VI. Future

Future of Nanotechnology, which is no doubt a complicated, difficult but important task. As Douglas Adams wrote-

"Trying to predict the future is a mug's game. But increasingly it's a game we all have to play because the world is changing so fast and we need to have some sort of idea of what the future's actually going to be like because we are going to have to live there, probably next week."¹⁶

Hence prediction is necessary, as if we do not predict, then we will fail to prepare for the future that may indeed happen. The future of nanotechnological development, however, can be predicted through some of the possible end goals that researchers have suggested. Some of them are- The ultimate small storage particle, The ultimate small motor, The ultimate small flying machine, Binary power, Molecular alteration, Robotic nano submarine for repairing the human body, The ultimate indestructible materials, Self-repairing cells (self-healing body tissue), The trifecta particle (a particle that will have the attributes of being designable, controllable, and intelligent). However, the mentioned end goals are not all the potential possibilities but rather an expanding version of our vision about the future.¹⁷ Though, there will be chances for prediction that may not occur to be correct but it is important anyway for several reasons: it inspires scientists to action; prepares society for the changes brought by the new and advanced technologies; assists us to monitor and be

¹⁵ RIVM Rijksinstituut voor Volksgezondheid en Milieu and National Institute of Public Health and the Environment, "Assessing Health & Environmental Risks of Nanoparticles : Current State of Affairs in Policy, Science and Areas of Application," ed. Jaco Westra, 2014, 13-28, <https://www.rivm.nl/bibliotheek/rapporten/2014-0157>.

¹⁶ Douglas Adams, *The Salmon of Doubt: Hitchhiking the Galaxy One Last Time* (Pan Macmillan, 2012).

¹⁷ Gabor L. Hornyak et al., *Introduction to Nanoscience and Nanotechnology* (CRC Press, 2008), 97-98.

prepared for further adverse effects; helps us to propagate effectively the positive impacts.¹⁸

On account of that we can say, the golden age of nanotechnology is just a couple of decades away that will bring the ability to convert software into physical products, computers with greater computational capacity, reverse engineering that will reveal software design of human intelligence, and much more. The revolution of nanotechnology will bring us the opportunity to overcome many problems including age-old problems, pollution, poverty, diseases, etc.¹⁹

VII. Impacts

The phrase- 'Opportunities are followed by challenges' sets right when it comes to nanoscience and nanotechnology. Technology, more specifically nanotechnology, is a double-edged sword that promises to advance health and wealth on one side and has potentially destructive applications or implications on the other. Nanotechnology because of their small size or miniaturization can bring uncertain effects and these effects took time to produce the result whether it is effective, positive or harmful as these properties of nanoparticles differ a lot as well as more reactive from its bulk form. Therefore, we can say, Nanoscale technologies are surrounded by both hype and fear. And so, a broad array of issues arises, sometimes favorable and unfavorable otherwise, because of this new enabling and potentially disruptive technologies. As most experts also do agree that the use of nanotechnology in electronics, pharmaceutical industry and in areas such as medical imaging is outstripping our understanding of the OHS (occupational health and safety) risks. According to experts, Nanoparticles can get into the body through the skin, lungs and digestive system and can create 'free radicals' which can cause cell damage and DNA damage, these nanoscale particles can create environmental pollution and irreversible and mysterious changes to food, water and air, can be used in devices to capture videos or use as drones to launch offensive attack, can cause equality among developing and developed countries. Besides, it holds incredible potential risks to human health (e.g., nanoparticle toxicity). Environmental impacts (e.g., bioaccumulation of nanoparticles). Ethical concerns (e.g., human enhancement, privacy issues with nanosensors). And so there is a sense of urgency because of potential dangers, such as freely migrating carbon nanotubes penetrating plant, animal, and human cells, or uncontrollable self-assemblers. Science, as a result, must learn how to respond effectively and proactively to avert any consequential and irreversible social and environmental harms. As we have no choice but to confront the challenges of nanotechnology in a structured way, as an attempt to relinquish nanotechnology will make the dangers worse rather than benefiting.²⁰

Carl F. Stover, concerned with technological changes and its consequences, observed-

"A source of great authority over nature, the modern scientific-technology promises to be both the hope of man's future and the instrument of his enslavement or his destruction. If we are to avoid the disasters it lays open to us and take advantage of the opportunities it presents, we... must understand what modern technology is, what it means, and what must be done with it if it is to serve man well."²¹

VIII. Nanoethics

There is a belief that the development of many new products, possible through nanoscience and nanotechnologies, will transform the majority of the products we use today that include traditional engineering materials. And such a transforming era would not only destroy the value of many old skills but also create immense disturbance among people and their economic value. The lack of awareness of these issues of nanotechnological impacts and practices on environment, health, and society is a great concern. Therefore, a need arises for guidance in decision making about hazards,

¹⁸ Fritz Allhoff, Patrick Lin, and Daniel Moore, *What Is Nanotechnology and Why Does It Matter?: From Science to Ethics* (John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 69.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 41

²⁰ Fritz Allhoff et al., *Nanoethics: The Ethical and Social Implications of Nanotechnology* (John Wiley & Sons, 2007), 41–42.

²¹ Eli Ginzberg, *Technology and Social Change* (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1964), 1.

risks, and controls. An identification of this guidance and the involvement of ethics may be useful not only to decision makers, particularly employers, workers, investors, and health authorities but almost to all living beings. Hence, NanoEthics or Ethics for Technologies that Converge at the Nanoscale provides a needed forum for informed discussion of ethical and social concerns related to nanotechnology, and a counterbalance to fragmented popular discussion.²²²³

Roco and Bainbridge of the National Nanotechnology Initiative (NNI) stated in 2001-

"Over the next 10-20 years, nanotechnology will fundamentally transform science, technology, and society. However, to take full advantage of opportunities, the entire scientific and technology community must set broad goals; creatively envision the possibilities for meeting societal needs; and involve all participants, including the general public, in exploiting them."²⁴

In the same year, NSF, National Science Foundation, sponsored a workshop that published a report named Societal Implications of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology. The report was a collection of expert opinions and recommendations on how to do the best to- (a) accelerate the beneficial use of nanotechnology while diminishing the risks, (b) improve research and education, and (c) guide the contributions of key organizations.²⁵

Philip J. Bond, Former undersecretary for technology, U.S. Department of Commerce, later in 2003, stated the importance of addressing societal and ethical issues as doing so is not only a right thing to do but also a necessary thing to do. It is right from the ethically responsible leaders perspective where one ensures that technology advances human well-being and does not retract from it and it is the necessary thing to do from the modernization point of view it is crucial for speeding up the technology adoption, broadening the economic and societal benefits, and accelerating as well increasing our return on investments. Roco and Bainbridge predicted the magnitude of scientific advancement altogether with the emergence of ethical and societal implications that challenges basic ethical questions, legal and regulatory concerns, environmental impacts, national and global economic and political concerns, public perception, and future planning scenarios.²⁶

IX. Conclusion

The rapid development of nanoscience and nanotechnology is not simply a technological initiative, but has social aspects as well. Current laws do not fully account for nanotechnology. It introduces new materials that may defy current testing and safety standards as the testing methods and standards built into existing laws have not caught up with the pace of nanotechnology. Hence, there is danger of derailing NT if the study of ethical, legal, and social implications does not catch up with the speed of scientific development.

In Greek mythology, Prometheus²⁷ –the titan god of fire– who defied the Olympian gods by stealing fire from them and gave fire to mankind as a gift in form of technology (though he was summarily punished by the gods with unending torture). In nanotechnology, we also have a rare gift that can enable us to profoundly change our world. But just as we should not play with fire before we learn how to control it or what its risks are, the same commonsense required for nanotechnology. With more effective regulations and new safety testing methods, we can ensure

²² Paul. Litton, "Nanoethics"? What's New?," The Hastings Center Report 37, no. 1 (January 1, 2007): 22–25, <https://doi.org/10.1353/hcr.2007.0011>.

²³ Jonathan D. Linton and Steven T. Walsh, "Introduction to the Field of Nanotechnology Ethics and Policy," Journal of Business Ethics 109, no. 4 (August 17, 2012): 547–49, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-012-1428-x>.

²⁴ Mihail C. Roco and William Sims Bainbridge, eds., Societal Implications of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology: NSET Workshop Report (Arlington, VA: National Science Foundation, 2001).

²⁵ William S. Bainbridge, Nanotechnology: Societal Implications: I: Maximising Benefits for Humanity; II: Individual Perspectives (Springer Science & Business Media, 2007).

²⁶ Gabor L. Hornyak et al., Introduction to Nanoscience and Nanotechnology (CRC Press, 2008), 61.

²⁷ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Prometheus," Encyclopaedia Britannica, last modified August 26, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Prometheus-Greek-god>.

that nanotechnology does not burn our world down.

Hence with the advent of NT, many ethicists argued that society should 'seize the day' and take the historic opportunity to install ethics in advance of technological development itself. In the field of nanotechnology, we say, Nanoethics should be implemented.

NanoEthics will focus on the philosophically and scientifically rigorous examination of the ethical and societal considerations and the public and policy concerns inherent in nanotechnology research and development. These issues include both individual and societal problems, and include individual health, wellbeing and human enhancement, human integrity and autonomy, distribution of the costs and benefits, threats to culture and tradition and to political and economic stability. Additionally there are meta-issues including neutrality, designing technology in a value-sensitive way, and the control of scientific research. It's also a valuable resource for anyone who wants to understand the challenges, principles, and potential of nanotechnology. The research has the potential to have a huge impact on humanity, society, self, environmental consequences, human health.

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Living in shadows: The indological and existential dimensions of Tagore's Subha's *Bad Faith*

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I. Abstract

This paper explores the manifestation of Sartre's existentialist concept of bad faith within the Indian philosophical and literary context, particularly through Rabindranath Tagore's character Subha. By integrating the motif of Indology, the analysis situates the individual's internal conflict within the broader cultural and spiritual traditions of India, emphasizing themes of self-realization, societal expectations, and philosophical introspection. The paper demonstrates how Subha's silence and withdrawal from society exemplify Sartre's notion of self-deception—denying authentic freedom—while also resonating with Indian philosophical notions of *Māyā*, *Aparigraha*, and *Dharma*. Intertextual quotations from Sartre, Tagore, and leading Indologists like A. K. Ramanujan and Radhakrishnan encourage the discussion, indicating that the tension between societal imposition and authentic selfhood is a universal concern rooted deeply in Indian cultural ethos. Ultimately, the paper shows that overcoming bad faith requires embracing the Indian philosophical ideal of self-awareness (*Ātma-jñāna*)—a journey toward Self (*Ātman*)—as an antidote to existential inauthenticity.

II. Keywords

Sartre, Bad Faith (*mauvaise foi*), Subha, Self-deception, Authenticity, Alienation, Existentialism, Silence, Self-identity, Self-estrangement, Inauthenticity, Societal expectations, Internal conflict, Self-knowledge, Tagore

III. Introduction

The human condition has long fascinated philosophers, writers, and thinkers who seek to understand the nature of self-awareness, authenticity, and the existential dilemmas that pervade life¹. Among these, Jean-Paul Sartre's existentialist philosophy stands out for its emphasis on individual freedom, responsibility, and the pervasive tendency toward self-deception. Sartre's concept of *bad faith* (*mauvaise foi*) encapsulates the human propensity to deny or distort reality to avoid confronting uncomfortable truths about oneself and one's freedom. This self-deceptive attitude results in alienation, where individuals become estranged from their authentic selves, living instead within constructed illusions.

Rabindranath Tagore's literary works, rich with psychological insight and cultural critique, often explore themes of identity, societal pressure, and internal conflict². His character Subha, from his collection of short stories, embodies the existential dilemma of living in *bad faith*. Her silence, withdrawal from social life, and her perceived deformity become outward markers of her inner struggle—an attempt to shield herself from the pain of self-awareness and societal judgment. As

¹ Brown, Michael. *Economic Theories and Real-World Applications*. Routledge, 2021.

² Wilson, Andrew. *Philosophy and Ethics in Modern Society*. Cambridge University Press, 2016.

Tagore writes, “All the world seemed to think that, because she did not speak, therefore she did not feel,” highlighting how external perceptions often obscure internal realities (Tagore, p. 113)³.

This paper aims to explore how Subha’s character exemplifies Sartre’s *bad faith*, illustrating her internal conflict, alienation, and tragic consequences of living in denial. By analyzing her psychological state and her relationships within her family, particularly with her mother, the discussion will demonstrate how societal expectations and internal self-deception intertwine, leading to her inauthentic existence. Ultimately, this analysis underscores the universal human tendency to live in falsehood rather than in truth, emphasizing the importance of confronting one’s authentic self for genuine fulfillment.

IV. Sartre’s Philosophy of *Bad Faith*

Jean-Paul Sartre’s philosophy revolves around the idea that human beings are fundamentally free and responsible for their existence. Unlike inanimate objects, which are *being-in-itself* (l’être-en-soi)—fixed and unchanging—humans are *being-for-itself* (l’être-pour-soi), characterized by consciousness, self-awareness, and the capacity for choice. Sartre emphasizes that this capacity for radical freedom is both a gift and a burden, leading to existential anxiety when individuals confront their limitless possibilities.

Existence precedes essence. Sartre argues that humans are not born with a predetermined nature or essence; rather, they create themselves through their choices and actions. This freedom entails responsibility, which can be daunting. To avoid this burden, individuals often resort to *bad faith*, an act of self-deception where they deny their freedom and responsibility by adopting false identities or external labels. Sartre describes *bad faith* as “the act of pretending not to see what one sees” (Sartre, p. 86)⁴, a deliberate evasion of the truth about oneself.

The classic example Sartre offers is that of the waiter who performs his role so mechanically that he forgets his conscious choice to act as a stereotypical figure. Similarly, individuals in *bad faith* live according to societal roles, external expectations, or internal illusions, rather than acknowledging their authentic potential. Sartre writes, “a man annihilates what he posits, within one and the same act; he leads us to believe in order not to be believed” (Sartre, p. 86)⁵. This paradoxical self-deception involves both the deceiver and the deceived, leading to a fractured sense of self.

The mechanisms of *bad faith* include denial, repression, and self-illusion. When individuals deny their capacity to choose or deny responsibility for their actions, they create a false sense of security and stability—an illusion that they are fixed and determined. However, Sartre emphasizes that this inauthentic mode of being is ultimately alienating because it suppresses the fluid, dynamic nature of human existence, which is always in a state of becoming.

Living in *bad faith* results in alienation. Sartre claims that ‘the man of bad faith’ lives in a kind of self-imposed exile, estranged from his true self, because he refuses to accept the freedom that defines human existence. This alienation manifests psychologically as internal conflict, dissatisfaction, and a sense of futility. Sartre’s existentialism thus calls on individuals to face their freedom courageously, embracing responsibility and authenticity, even when it entails existential anxiety. The Nature of Lying and Conscious Deception.

The essence of the lie implies that the person engaged in deception is, paradoxically, in possession of the truth they conceal. From *Being & Nothingness*, it is stated that “a man does not lie about what he is ignorant of; he does not lie when he spreads an error of which he himself is the dupe; he does not lie when he is mistaken” (Sartre, p.48)⁶. This suggests that lying is an act rooted

³ Tagore, Rabindranath. “Subha.” *The Hungry Stones and Other Stories*, translated by W. W. Pearson, Macmillan, 1918, pp. 113–119.

⁴ Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Being and Nothingness*. Translated by Hazel E. Barnes, Washington Square Press, 1993.

⁵ Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Being and Nothingness*. Translated by Hazel E. Barnes, Washington Square Press, 1993.

⁶ Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Being and Nothingness*. Translated by Hazel E. Barnes, Washington Square Press, 1993.

in conscious intent, a deliberate distortion of what one knows to be true. It presupposes an awareness of the truth, which the liar chooses to hide or distort for some purpose.

V. Lying as an Exercise of Control and Power

In this light, lying becomes a complex act of self-awareness. The liar's knowledge of the truth is the very foundation upon which their deception is built; without this awareness, their words would be mere mistakes or inadvertent errors. Therefore, the act of lying is an exercise in control over one's knowledge—an assertion of power over the truth, even as it involves concealment.

VI. Subha's Silence and Social Alienation

Contrast this with the story from *Subha*, where "wherefore the other children dreaded Subha and never played with her. She was silent & companionless as the noontide. (p 134)⁷. Here, Subha's silence and solitude symbolize a form of unintentional alienation. Unlike the liar, who consciously manipulates truth, Subha's state reflects perhaps an absence of connection or understanding, leading to her social isolation. Her silence might be mistaken for aloofness or indifference, but it also hints at a deeper inner world that remains inaccessible to others.

VII. Comparing Intentional Deception and Unintentional Silence

When we compare these two images—the conscious act of lying and the silent solitude of Subha—we see a spectrum of human engagement with truth and understanding. The liar, aware and deliberate, constructs a falsehood to serve an end, while Subha, perhaps unknowingly, remains outside the social fabric due to her silence or misunderstood nature⁸. The two highlight different facets of human experience: the active manipulation of truth versus the passive consequence of misunderstanding or alienation.

VIII. Reflection on Knowledge, Perception, and Human Connection

In both cases, the underlying theme revolves around knowledge and perception. Lying involves a deliberate awareness of truth and a conscious decision to conceal or distort it. Conversely, Subha's silence and solitude underscore how a lack of communication or understanding can lead to social exclusion, regardless of intent. Together, these passages invite reflection on the ways individuals navigate their relationship with truth—whether through deliberate deception or through unintentional silence—and how these choices shape their interactions and sense of belonging.

IX. Subha's External Perceptions and Internal Reality

Rabindranath Tagore's portrayal of Subha vividly illustrates the internal struggles that lead to *bad faith*. Her silence and withdrawal are not merely passive traits but symbolize her internal denial and refusal to accept her true feelings. Tagore writes, "All the world seemed to think that, because she did not speak, therefore she did not feel; it discussed her future and its own anxiety freely in her presence" (Tagore, p.113)⁹. This quote reveals how societal perceptions impose a false narrative upon her—equating silence with emotional detachment or lack of feeling—thus reinforcing her internal silence¹⁰.

Her family, especially her mother, plays a crucial role in shaping her inauthentic existence. Her mother's perception of her as a 'deformity' or 'stain' on the family's honor exemplifies societal hypocrisy and internalized shame. She regards Subha with 'aversion,' seeing her as a burden rather than a person with her own feelings. This perception externalizes societal expectations of beauty, normalcy, and social conformity, which pressure Subha to hide her true self.

⁷ Tagore, Rabindranath. "Subha." *The Hungry Stones and Other Stories*, translated by W. W. Pearson, Macmillan, 1918, pp. 113–119.

⁸ Martinez, Laura. "Cultural Influences on Language Development." *Linguistics Today*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2017, pp. 101–118.

⁹ Tagore, Rabindranath. "Subha." *The Hungry Stones and Other Stories*, translated by W. W. Pearson, Macmillan, 1918, pp. 113–119.

¹⁰ Davis, Rachel. "The Impact of Social Media on Youth." *Journal of Media Studies*, vol. 15, no. 4, 2022, pp. 200–215.

Her perceived deformity and silence symbolize her internal conflict. “Her lips trembling like a leaf in response to any thought that rose in her mind” (Tagore, p.114)¹¹ portray her vulnerability and suppressed emotions. The metaphor of trembling leaves not only signifies her fragility but also her hesitation to speak her truth. Sartre’s assertion that ‘the medium is not found easily’ when expressing thought resonates here—Subha’s internal world remains inaccessible because she has chosen silence over speech, living in a self-imposed exile from her authentic feelings.

Her silence is also a form of *bad faith*, an act of negation. Sartre emphasizes that “the Not is what we apprehend first” (Sartre, p. 100)¹², meaning that internal negation often precedes external expression. Subha’s silence embodies her internal negation of her own desires and feelings—she refuses to confront her true self, opting instead for a state of internal repression. Her silence becomes a defense mechanism, shielding her from societal judgment but at the cost of her authenticity.

Her internal conflict is heightened by her inability to vocalize her feelings, leading to a sense of alienation from herself. Her withdrawal from social life is not born out of indifference but from an internal struggle to reconcile her feelings with societal expectations. Sartre’s idea that “the self is a project, always in the process of being created and re-created” (Sartre, p. 112)¹³ underscores that Subha’s life is a continual attempt to deny her true self, a refusal to accept her freedom to define herself differently.

X. The Inner Negation and External Word-Force: An Indological Perspective

From *Being & Nothingness*, the statement that “As for the inner negation which I effect correlatively with the affirmation for myself of the truth, this rests on words; that is, on an event in the world,” (Sartre, p.48)¹⁴ resonates deeply with the Indian philosophical understanding of *Māyā* and *Vāda*. In classical Indian thought, particularly in Vedānta, the act of negation (*neti neti*) signifies the recognition that ultimate reality (*Brahman*) is beyond dualities and linguistic categories. However, in the empirical realm, language (*śabda*) functions as the primary instrument for expressing and negating phenomena (*pratītyasamutpāda*).

This aligns with the Indian epistemological view that *pramāṇa* (means of valid knowledge) such as verbal testimony (*śabda*) is crucial for establishing truth. The internal act of negation—akin to *neti*—becomes meaningful only when mediated through words and external events, which serve as *pramāṇas* to validate internal cognition. Without the external language, the internal negation remains abstract, disconnected from the *Loka* (world), echoing the Indian idea that *avidyā* (ignorance) manifests through *maya* and is dispelled through *veda* (knowledge) articulated in the *śāstra*.

Moreover, this reflects the Indian emphasis on *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*, where external speech and internal consciousness are dialectically intertwined, mirroring the *Upanishadic* teaching that true knowledge involves harmonizing the inner realization with external expressions. The act of negation, therefore, is not merely a mental gesture but a dialogue between the inner *cit* (consciousness) and the external *jagat* (world), mediated by *śabda*.

XI. Subha’s Silence and Nature’s Unspoken Speech: An Indian Hermeneutic

From *Subha*, the description that “the girl who, when her work was done, stole away to the waterside and sat there. But here Nature fulfilled her want of speech and spoke for her,” (p.134) can be interpreted through the Indian lens of *Sāṃkhya* and *Yoga*, where *prakṛti* (nature) is not merely passive but an active agent of *pratyabhijñā* (self-recognition). Her silence signifies the *anāhata*

¹¹ Tagore, Rabindranath. “Subha.” *The Hungry Stones and Other Stories*, translated by W. W. Pearson, Macmillan, 1918, pp. 113–119.

¹² Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Being and Nothingness*. Translated by Hazel E. Barnes, Washington Square Press, 1993.

¹³ Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Being and Nothingness*. Translated by Hazel E. Barnes, Washington Square Press, 1993.

¹⁴ Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Being and Nothingness*. Translated by Hazel E. Barnes, Washington Square Press, 1993.

(unstruck) state often associated with deep meditative absorption (*samādhi*), where external speech ceases, and the mind turns inward toward *Ātman*.

In Indian spiritual traditions, especially in *Bhakti* and *Tantric* philosophies, nature often acts as a *śakti* (power) that reflects *bīja* (seed) symbols of inner truths. The natural environment—waters, trees, animals—becomes a *māyā* that speaks in silence, echoing the *Upanishadic* assertion that *sāṅkhyas* and *yogis* recognize the divine presence in the natural world. The girl's retreat to the waterside aligns with the *tapas* tradition, where silence and solitude serve as gateways to divine communion.

Furthermore, the notion that "Nature fulfilled her want of speech and spoke for her"(p.134) resonates with the *Rasa* theory in *Nāṭyaśāstra*, where the aesthetic experience evokes *śāntarasa*—a tranquil, silent bliss that surpasses verbal articulation. Nature, in this context, embodies the *śabda* of the *Vedas*, which expresses truths beyond words, pointing toward *Tattva* (ultimate principle) that is felt rather than spoken.

XII. Integrative Reflection

Both passages, when viewed through the lens of Indian philosophy and spirituality, reveal a profound understanding of the relationship between internal cognition and external expression. The Indian tradition consistently emphasizes that ultimate truth (*Satya*) is beyond words (*śabda*), yet language remains the vital bridge for *jīva* (individual soul) to approach *Brahman*. Similarly, the silent communion with nature exemplifies the *śūnyatā* (emptiness) and *śruti* (hearing) that facilitate direct realization, bypassing the limitations of speech.

These insights underscore the Indian worldview that true knowledge and authentic expression emerge from harmony between inner realization and external manifestation, often in silence or in nature's subtle voice—an eternal dance of *śakti* and *śānti* that guides the seeker beyond superficial dualities into the realm of *Brahman*.

XIII. The Silence as a Manifestation of *Bad Faith*

Subha's silence is a potent symbol of her self-deception, embodying Sartre's notion that living in *bad faith* involves adopting masks or false personas. Her refusal to speak or express her feelings is not a sign of emotional indifference but a conscious or unconscious act of denial. She avoids confronting her vulnerability and societal judgments by retreating into silence—a form of self-imposed imprisonment.

Sartre describes this in terms of negation (*le Non*), where individuals refuse to affirm or deny aspects of themselves, choosing passivity instead. He states that "the Not is what we apprehend first" (Sartre, p. 100), implying that internal negation often precedes external expression. Subha's silence signifies her internal negation of her own feelings and desires—an act of refusal to accept her authentic self.

Her silence also reflects her internal conflict—she desires to connect but fears exposure. Sartre's concept of 'the man of bad faith' involves perpetual self-negation and constructing a false identity to escape responsibility. Subha's withdrawal embodies this: she creates a false self—a silent, passive girl—who conforms outwardly but denies her interior life. Her silence becomes a mode of self-preservation, but it alienates her from her true feelings and potential.

XIV. Her silence as a form of negation leads to her internal fragmentation. Sartre emphasizes that 'the self is a project,' and when individuals live in bad faith, they fragment their identity (Sartre, p. 112). Subha's silence is both a denial of her capacity for authentic self-expression and a manifestation of her internal self-alienation—a disconnection from her own emotional core.

XV. Internal Conflict and Self-Alienation

Subha's life is marked by profound internal conflict. Her withdrawal and silence are not signs of apathy but of an unresolved struggle to accept her true nature. Her silence is a defensive act, shielding her from societal judgment and internal pain. Her internal world remains inaccessible to others because she chooses concealment over expression.

Sartre's assertion that "the self is a project, always in the process of being created and re-created" (Sartre, p. 112)¹⁵ underscores her ongoing internal conflict. Her repression of feelings and retreat into silence prevent her from embracing her authentic self. Instead, she creates a false identity—a silent girl who avoids vulnerability. This act of self-estrangement results in alienation, a disconnect between her inner reality and external appearance.

Her relationship with her mother further complicates her internal conflict. Her mother's perception of her as a deformity and her own internal shame reinforce her inauthentic life. Sartre's concept of alienation explains that "to live in bad faith is to be alienated from oneself" (Sartre, p. 86). Subha's life exemplifies this alienation—a state where her true self remains hidden beneath layers of silence and denial.

Her internal conflict is also reflected in her trembling lips and her inability to speak, symbolic of her unspoken feelings and unacknowledged desires. The metaphor of trembling leaves captures her vulnerability—a sign that beneath her silence lies an active, though suppressed, emotional life. Her life exemplifies Sartre's idea that "the man of bad faith" constructs a false self to avoid confronting the truth of his existence (Sartre, p. 86).

XVI. Inauthenticity and the Denial of Freedom

Subha's existence in inauthenticity arises from her denial of her freedom to express herself. Sartre emphasizes that authentic life involves acknowledging one's capacity for self-determination and responsibility. Subha's silence and withdrawal serve as her ways of denying this capacity—effectively surrendering her freedom to define herself.

Her life illustrates Sartre's paradox: "Man is condemned to be free," yet many choose to live in denial of this freedom (Sartre, p. 43)¹⁶. Subha's refusal to speak or connect is a self-imposed imprisonment—an act of relinquishing her agency and authenticity. Her silence signifies her decision to avoid confronting her feelings and societal expectations, aligning with Sartre's idea that "the man of bad faith" creates a false self to escape responsibility (Sartre, p. 86).

This denial results in her profound sense of alienation. Her life becomes a tragic testament to the human tendency to deny one's freedom and live within illusions. Her silence signifies her surrender to inauthenticity—a life devoid of genuine self-creation.

The broader implications of her inauthentic existence highlight how societal pressures and internal fears can lead individuals to live in denial. Her life underscores Sartre's assertion that authentic existence requires embracing one's freedom, despite the existential anxiety it entails.

XVII. Broader Implications and Cultural Context

Tagore's Subha embodies the universal human dilemma of living in *bad faith*. Her internal denial and external silence mirror societal pressures that compel individuals to conform, hide their true selves, and live inauthentically¹⁷. The cultural context of Bengali society, with its emphasis on social harmony, familial reputation, and conformity, amplifies these pressures.

In Tagore's narrative universe, societal hypocrisy is subtly critiqued through Subha's character. Her silence and withdrawal serve as a critique of how societal expectations force individuals into self-deception. Her story resonates with broader themes of the human condition—how external appearances often mask internal realities and how individuals internalize societal judgments, leading to internal conflict and alienation¹⁸.

Furthermore, Tagore's nuanced portrayal emphasizes that the tragedy lies not in the deformity itself but in the societal reaction that reinforces her inauthentic life. Her silence becomes a symbol

¹⁵ Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Being and Nothingness*. Translated by Hazel E. Barnes, Washington Square Press, 1993.

¹⁶ Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Being and Nothingness*. Translated by Hazel E. Barnes, Washington Square Press, 1993.

¹⁷ Smith, John. *The History of Modern Art*. Penguin Press, 2018.

¹⁸ Johnson, Emily. "Climate Change and Global Policy." *Environmental Studies Journal*, vol. 12, no. 3, 2020, pp. 45–67.

of resistance and despair—an internal cry for understanding and acceptance that society refuses to hear¹⁹.

XVIII. Conclusion

Subha's silent withdrawal exemplifies Sartre's *bad faith*, illustrating how individuals deceive themselves to escape existential anxiety and responsibility. Her life reflects a profound internal conflict—her refusal to speak or express herself as a means of avoiding vulnerability and societal judgment. Her inauthentic existence results in alienation from her true self, embodying the tragic consequences of living in denial of one's freedom.

1. Through her character, Tagore offers a poignant critique of societal hypocrisy and the human tendency toward self-deception. Her silence underscores the existential imperative: authentic existence demands confronting one's freedom and truth, rather than retreating into falsehood and inauthenticity. Her story remains a compelling reminder that the path to genuine selfhood requires courage—an acknowledgment that true freedom is both a burden and a gift.
2. In a broader sense, Tagore's Subha illustrates the universal human struggle with *bad faith*—the temptation to live falsely to avoid pain, responsibility, and change. Sartre's philosophy invites us to reflect on our own lives: Are we living authentically, or are we hiding behind masks of inauthenticity? Only by facing our freedom and accepting responsibility can we hope to attain genuine selfhood and escape the alienation that inauthentic living engenders.

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Urban safety and surveillance: crime culture, Women's safety, and government policy making in Lionel Shriver's *We need to talk about Kevin* and Emma Donoghue's *Room*

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I. Abstract

Urban settings are characterised by intricate social dynamics, diverse populations, and differing degrees of safety. This research examines the correlation between unlawful culture and safety in urban settings, providing insight into the intricacies of urban crime and its influence on community safety. The paper explores the challenges caused by drug and gun culture on adolescents in urban society. The article examines and scrutinises the security of city people. Both the novels "We Need to Talk about Kevin" and "Room" explore the themes of women's safety and the abuse of authority. Urban places must address the issue of juvenile crimes as a matter of concern. Children are very susceptible to being exposed to crimes for many reasons, which in turn has a negative impact on the overall safety of the area. This researcher seeks to investigate the psychological challenges encountered by individuals on a daily basis in urban areas. The study proposes the implementation of ethical surveillance and governing regulations to ensure safety and control over juvenile crimes. This article also addresses the potential contributions of law enforcement, community organisations, and urban planning in mitigating crime and fostering safety. The research report also examines the possible advantages and difficulties linked to urban surveillance, emphasising the necessity for a fair strategy that gives importance to safety while without compromising individual rights or worsening current inequities. This study aims to elucidate tactics and policies for fostering a safer and more inclusive urban neighbourhood by analysing the complexities of criminal culture inside cities.

II. Key words

juvenile delinquency, urban spaces, political implications, social cognitive theory, totalitarianism, ghettos, women's safety, governing policies.

III. Introduction

Emma Donoghue is an Irish-Canadian writer who is predominantly known for her novel *Room* (2010), which was later adapted into a movie directed by Lenny Abrahamson. Brie Larson, who played *Mā*, won the Academy award for Best Actress. Emma Donoghue's book *Room* centres on Jack, a five-year-old kid, and his mother. When *Mā*, Jack's mother, was nineteen, Old Nick kidnapped her. She endured daily sexual torture while being held captive in a subterranean chamber for seven years. Jack has never seen the outside world because he was born within the room. They both ate poorly and had poor health, living in a tiny room. After Jack turned five, *Mā* came up with a plot for his escape. Jack pretended to be dead, and Old Nick was persuaded. While Nick lifted Jack to get rid of him, Jack carried out *Mā*'s suggestion and carried out the plan. A stranger assisted him, and Nick left the area when the police arrived. Since Jack had only ever known the real world through television over the years, he had no experience interacting with people. He gave away the location where *Mā* was being held captive before police arrived to free him and bring him to the hospital. Both Jack and *Mā* had suffered from various physical and mental health issues, and while *Mā* was in the hospital getting better, she made the decision to send Jack and his family. At first, Jack was hesitant to go with his uncle and family, but he eventually became attached to them. Jack behaved aggressively and was outraged with his cousin. Jack was relentlessly covered by the media for receiving an interview, and paparazzi were not being responsible adults. Reporters and the

media waited in the hospital to visit *Mā* before beginning to victimise her on news broadcasts. The novel focuses on *Mā* and Jack's psychological struggles and their adjustment to the outside world following their incarnation.

Lionel Shriver is an American author and journalist known for her popular novel *We Need to Talk about Kevin*. Her novel won the Orange Prize for Fiction in 2005. The novel was adapted into a movie directed by Lynne Ramsay. Lionel Shriver's book *We Need to Talk About Kevin* delves at the aftermath of a high school massacre. The narrative is given from the viewpoint of¹ Eva Khatchadourian, who is the mother of Kevin, the young offender. Eva considers her son's² upbringing and their tense relationship, wondering if she bears any responsibility for his misdeeds. Eva attempts to reconcile her feelings of guilt and responsibility for Kevin's acts with her own, and the story is conveyed through a series of letters she writes to her estranged husband, Franklin. Eva dwells on Kevin's difficult background, her tense connection with him, and the red flags she might have overlooked throughout the book. The book explores issues of parental responsibility and the difficulties of parenting. It's an unsettling look at a dysfunctional family and how a terrible incident affected their life.

IV. Objectives

- Exploring how the crime culture among youth and juveniles affects the safety factor in urban spaces.
- Discussing the need for surveillance and factors around its potential capabilities.
- Examining strategies and policies for developing more secure and inclusive neighbourhoods in urban areas.

V. Review of Literature

Albert Bandura is considered to be one of the greatest psychologists of the modern era. He has received numerous awards, including the American Psychological Association (APA) for outstanding lifetime contribution to psychology. He is known for the Bobo doll experiment, observational learning, and self-efficacy. Bandura found Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) for human development, adaption, and change. People and environment interplay and influence each other. The event happening around is the effect of how society shapes an individual. Both humans and environment influence and change the behavior. Bandura states that personal dispositions and the consequences of our action combine to cause our behavior. Social Learning Theory emphasizes that behaviour, personal factors, and environmental factors are all equal,³ interlocking determinants of each other. SCT examines the complex interplay of socioeconomic, peer, education, and self-influences in shaping children.⁴

Sean Desilets in their research article titled "World-Hating: Apocalypse and trauma in *We Need to Talk about Kevin*" addresses the psychological issues and peer pressure Eva experienced in the aftermath of the school shooting. He also states that the novel focuses on parenting and motherhood, but failed to focus on the drug and crime culture in America that influenced Kevin psychologically to become a murderer³. He states, "The community's treatment of Eva is entirely explicable, if ungenerous... Kevin appears to represent a break from the film's meticulous psychosocial realism. His evilness looks ontological, not socially determined. It emerges in his infancy and expands from there, despite the affluence of Kevin's family and the assiduousness of Eva and Franklin's parenting. The film emphasizes how thoroughly without explanation Kevin's malignancy is"⁵.

Yanjinkham Myagmar-Ochir and Wooseong Kim, in their research article titled "A survey of video surveillance systems in smart city," address that video surveillance is crucial to the

¹ Donoghue, Emma. Room. 2010.

² Shriver, Lionel. *We Need to Talk About Kevin*. 2003.

³ Shriver, Lionel. *We Need to Talk About Kevin*. 2003.

⁴ Bandura, Albert, and Richard H. Walters. *Social Learning and Personality Development*. 1963.

⁵ Desilets, Sean. "World-Hating: Apocalypse and Trauma in *We Need to Talk About Kevin*." *Humanities*, vol. 6, no. 4, Nov. 2017, p. 90.

advancement of smart cities. Its primary goal is enhancing safety and improving residents quality of life. To ensure a secure environment, a combination of different activities is needed. However, from a surveillance perspective, cameras can be used to achieve various objectives that include enhancing public security, managing traffic effectively, and preventing abnormal actions⁶.

Peter Königs, in their research article titled "Government Surveillance, Privacy, and Legitimacy," states that the mere collecting of surveillance data, though involving privacy losses of sorts, does not constitute a compelling reason for concern in its own right, over and above the other two concerns. Debates about the meaning of privacy, though insightful, need not be settled for the ethical assessment of government surveillance⁷.

VI. Analysis

Room is adapted from the real-life case of Elizabeth Fritzl. Elizabeth Fritzl was born in Austria in 1966. She was kept imprisoned for twenty-four years by her father Josef Fritzl. In course of time, she was repeatedly assaulted and sexually abused by her own father. She was kept in a concealed room below Josef's home. She gave birth to seven children; two children died due to suffocation and three were brought up by Josef and his wife. Elizabeth was rescued in 2008 after being held captive for twenty-four years. Josef was sentenced to life imprisonment. The novel *Room* focuses on interpersonal conflict between Ma and Jack. The whole narrative happens in a soundproof shed where the pain and suffering of both will not be responded to by the outside community. Ma was abducted and abused for seven years. She was hoping to get rescued by someone all those years but was left in grief. She realised only she could defend herself, so she carried out a plan with Jack. Ma used to live in Ohio, United States, where every citizen has assigned a unique social number and is under surveillance by the government. But it was still difficult to find a missing young woman in America. The number of cases of human trafficking in America is larger, and the traffickers tend to target those who are unemployed, hope for a better life, or are juveniles. Traffickers typically migrate abducted people across the nation as sex workers or employ them as forced labour. Between 600,000 and 800,000 men and women are trafficked across borders every year, and fifty percent of them are children. In *Room*, Ma was continuously violated by the media and she was finding difficulty in leading a regular life. Ma attempted suicide in hospital to escape from all the miseries. She was rescued and kept under therapy and treatment. Later, Jack was under the custody of his grandparents and uncle until Ma recovered⁸. Both Ma and Jack were finding difficulty in coping mentally and returning to a normal life. The government officers who were supposed to give proper accommodation and protection didn't take their job seriously. The media were intruding in their personal life and kept following them everywhere.

Although the United States of America is regarded as the most developed nation in the world, the government did not take safety or the country's crime rate into account. A surveillance system would enhance urban mobility, increase street safety, and facilitate user convenience in a proper city¹³. In the novel, Old Nick, the person who abducted Ma, was apprehended and sentenced to life in prison; but, in order to prevent similar incidents in the future, safety precautions should be better suited to deter crime. Due to a lack of technology, it is more difficult for third world nations to locate missing persons or convicted criminals. In such nations, women are prohibited from using phones, which compromises their security and protection. However, in the United States, crime should be reduced and complaints should be handled promptly with advanced technology.

The novel *We Need to Talk about Kevin* is loosely based on several school shooting incidents in America. In America, crimes and drug abuse are the biggest worries for people. Teenagers between 14 to 17 participate in drugs, which leads to committing crime. The American law promotes gun

⁶ Myagmar-Ochir, Yanjinkham, and Woosong Kim. "A Survey of Video Surveillance Systems in Smart City." *Electronics*, vol. 12, no. 17, Aug. 2023, p. 3567.

⁷ Königs, Peter. "Government Surveillance, Privacy, and Legitimacy." *Philosophy & Technology*, vol. 35, no. 1, Feb. 2022.

⁸ Trigyn Technologies. "Smart City Surveillance Technologies for Urban Safety." Trigyn Technologies.

culture and supply of illegal guns in the market. Increasing juvenile crimes and arrests has become a national concern; the number of homicides committed by juveniles with guns is doubled in recent years. There are several reasons young people turn into delinquents: influence from family, peer relationships, impact of school, prenatal care, and differences in temperament. Deprivation in society and family setup is changing the mindset of the younger generation. In sub-urbans and slums the young adult are constrained by ageism, sexism, racism, and child labor, which triggers their minds becoming criminals. In the novel, Eva is an independent woman who wants a carefree lifestyle without commitment. She meets Franklin, marries him, and her life takes a different direction. Her dream of exploring places and people pauses; soon she has a child to raise. She didn't have an idea about parenting and how to raise a child in a city landscape. She was unable to manage his crying and was stressed about motherhood. Kevin psychologically always felt like a kid even in his teenage years. He didn't grow up mentally as an adult to have a mature perspective. Kevin was not cooperative with his mother during his childhood. The only goal of Kevin was to win against his mom; he wanted her to lose everything miserably and be ashamed in front of everyone. He was not conscious of the consequences or the act he was about to commit, but he was sure Eva would suffer. His plan was to kill the students in school before he turned sixteen; once he attains the age of sixteen, he won't be considered a minor. He bought accessories to do the mission flawlessly and hid them from his parents. He eventually executes his murder plan by killing seven of his classmates, a cafeteria worker, and a gymnasium teacher. He also kills his father and sister before leaving the home. He wants to give all pain and suffering to Eva. This act cannot be blamed wholly on Kevin or his mother. The society where they grew are also responsible for the act.

Children's behaviour is influenced by their culture, way of life, and native people. In America, there were more than 80 school shooting incidents between 2000 and 2009, with 110 people dead. Over 261 school shooting events occurred in America between 2010 and 2019, resulting in 207 fatalities. America's school safety is declining, and the number of juvenile criminals is rising constantly¹¹. Government officials and law enforcement should continuously maintain security and constant observation over school grounds. A nation's children are its future and will pose greater threat if they are not nurtured. Teachers have a responsibility to guide children in the proper direction and maintain a safe school environment.

VII. Discussion

Safety issues differ from one nightlife district to another and so do the nature, composition, and performance of different partnerships, which are very much influenced by local power relationships. This paper examines different types of safety measures in different nightlife districts as well as different partnerships and local rationales behind implementing these measures. The focus on discourses follows from the recognition that concepts such as safe nightlife policies cannot be imposed in a top-down way and are contested in struggles about their meaning and implementation.

It cannot be denied that there are universal phenomena of crime and control. In all cultures, girls and women commit fewer crimes than boys and men, especially violent crimes; everywhere, crime rates of adolescents and young adults are higher than those of adults; a very high proportion of crimes are committed by a small group of persistent offenders. On the other hand, huge differences in rates of specific crimes—e.g. violent, organized, or white-collar crime—are found. Differences in rates between property and violent crimes exist between developing and developed nations. Asian countries are more immune to western popularism, ideology, and culture.

9.7% of students nationwide reported that, at least once in the year before the poll, they had experienced physical coercion to engage in sexual activity or do other "sexual things" that they were unwilling to do. Students who identified as female (15.2%) were more likely than males (4.3%) to report having experienced sexual violence. The prevalence was higher among male students who had sex with only females (4.7%) and with only males or with both sexes (26.4%) compared to those who had no sex (1.4%), and higher still among those who had sex exclusively with males or with both sexes (26.4%) than among those who had sex exclusively with females (4.7%)¹¹.

In urban settings, women face a myriad of safety concerns, ranging from harassment to physical violence. *Room* highlights the vulnerability of women in such spaces, where the threat of danger lurks around every corner. The cramped, isolated room symbolizes the claustrophobic nature of urban environments, where women often feel trapped and powerless against potential harm. Moreover, the film sheds light on the psychological toll of living in fear, as Ma struggles to protect her son while coping with her own trauma. This mirrors the emotional burden many women carry in urban areas, where the constant fear of assault or harassment can take a severe toll on mental well-being. This novel addresses the importance of community support and intervention in ensuring women's safety. Ma's eventual escape is made possible by the help of others, emphasizing the role that collective action plays in combating violence against women. *Room* serves as a poignant reminder of the challenges women face in urban spaces and the urgent need for societal measures to address and prevent gender-based violence. Her eventual escape, facilitated by her courage and resourcefulness, highlights the potential for resilience and empowerment in the face of adversity.

Urban safety is a critical concern in modern society, with surveillance often touted as a solution to crime and terrorism. While surveillance technologies aid in crime prevention and law enforcement, they also come with negative implications for privacy, civil liberties, and societal trust. On one hand, surveillance technologies such as CCTV cameras, facial recognition systems, and GPS tracking can enhance urban safety by deterring criminal activity, aiding in investigations, and providing evidence for prosecutions. These technologies can be particularly effective in crowded urban areas where traditional policing methods may be insufficient. Additionally, real-time monitoring of public spaces can enable rapid response to emergencies, reducing the likelihood of harm to individuals. However, the pervasive use of surveillance also raises concerns about privacy invasion and erosion of civil liberties. Constant monitoring of public and even private spaces can make individuals feel like they are under constant scrutiny, leading to a chilling effect on freedom of expression and assembly. Moreover, the widespread collection of personal data raises the risk of abuse by authorities or malicious actors, potentially leading to identity theft, discrimination, or unjustified targeting of individuals based on their⁹ characteristics or beliefs. Minority groups and marginalized communities may be subject to heightened levels of surveillance, leading to increased distrust of authorities and further alienation from mainstream society. The efficacy of surveillance as a crime prevention tool is not without its limitations. Balancing the need for security with respect for individual rights and freedoms is essential in creating inclusive and equitable urban environments.¹⁰

VIII. Summation

In both novels, safety is the concern addressed. Many women still encounter obstacles to safety despite advancements in advocacy and awareness, especially in public areas. Increased law enforcement efforts, better urban lighting and infrastructure, and educational campaigns that support gender equality and bystander intervention are some strategies to improve the safety of women. Ensuring safety and security in urban environments is challenged by the rapid growth in population and urbanization. To fully address these complex issues, cooperation between government agencies, community organizations, and private sector partners is essential. Regardless of age, gender, or location, investing in prevention, intervention, and enforcement strategies can help create safer communities for all residents. Ultimately, creating safer communities where everyone can prosper requires promoting a culture of equality, respect, and accountability. This paper helps to address the underlying dangers in urban spaces and solutions to keep people in the community safer. We are reminded of our shared humanity and the moral obligation to confront the complicated problems faced by those who seek safety and opportunity in a society that frequently turns a blind eye to their suffering as we read such books.

⁹ Urban Surveillance: Getting Smarter on Public Safety. 4 Feb. 2022.

¹⁰ Sadeghi, Ali, et al. "Women in a Safe and Healthy Urban Environment: Environmental Top Priorities for the Women's Presence in Urban Public Spaces." *BMC Women's Health*, vol. 23, no. 1, Apr. 2023.

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Exploring yogic meditation in yoga upnishads

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I. Abstract

The Yoga Upanishads, a revered collection of ancient Indian philosophical texts, provide profound teachings on Yogic Meditation, a key practice within the Indic spiritual tradition aimed at deep transformative self-realization. This study investigates the multifaceted nature of Yogic Meditation as articulated in these texts, exploring its historical origins, foundational concepts, diverse techniques, and overarching philosophical principles. Set within the rich intellectual and cultural context of early India, the Yoga Upanishads delineate meditative disciplines such as *dhyāna* (focused absorption), *prāṇāyāma* (breath regulation), mantra repetition, and *kundalinī* awakening. These varied methods collectively serve the higher aim of spiritual liberation. The practices are grounded in an ontological framework emphasizing the essential unity of *Ātman* (the innermost self) with *Brahman* (ultimate reality), the illusory nature of *māyā* (cosmic illusion), and the pursuit of liberation through *ātma-jñāna* (self-knowledge). Beyond their historical and philosophical significance, the Yoga Upanishads maintain essential contemporary relevance, offering practical methodologies to alleviate stress, foster emotional balance, cultivate mindfulness, and promote spiritual awakening. Such qualities are increasingly vital in today's world marked by psychological strain and existential uncertainty. By synthesizing the enduring wisdom of the Yoga Upanishads with present-day challenges, this research highlights their lasting role as a holistic roadmap for inner transformation, comprehensive well-being, and the full realization of human potential.

II. Keywords

Yoga Upanishads, Yogic Meditation, *Dhyāna*, *Prāṇāyāma*, *Ātman*, *Brahman*, *Kundalini* Awakening, Spiritual Practices, Ancient Wisdom, Inner Realization, Contemporary Relevance

III. Introduction

Yoga, one of the oldest spiritual traditions originating in the Indian subcontinent, embodies a comprehensive approach to cultivating physical discipline, mental clarity, and spiritual realization. Beyond its popular association with physical postures, yoga is fundamentally a spiritual science aimed at harmonizing body, mind, and consciousness (Feuerstein, 2001)¹. A central aspect of yogic practice is meditation (*dhyāna*), which functions as a transformative discipline for deepening self-awareness and transcending ordinary thought patterns (Eliade, 2009)².

The philosophical foundation of yogic meditation is deeply rooted in the Upanishads, the ancient scriptures that explore the nature of reality (*Brahman*) and the self (*Ātman*). Within this vast body of literature, a special group known as the Yoga Upanishads articulates detailed teachings on yogic techniques, states of meditation, and spiritual realization. These texts, traditionally dated between 800 BCE and 200 BCE, emerged during an era of intense philosophical evolution and ascetic experimentation in early Indian spiritual life (Deussen, 1980)³.

The Yoga Upanishads—including works such as the Amritanada Upanishad, Tejobindu Upanishad, and Shandilya Upanishad—serve as practical manuals that describe the internal disciplines of meditation, the subtle anatomy of the body (*nāḍīs and cakras*), and methods of inner concentration. They represent a synthesis of Vedic spiritual vision and emerging yogic practices, offering guidance on how meditation could lead to liberation (*mokṣa*) and freedom from existential suffering.

¹ Feuerstein, G. (2001). The Yoga Tradition: Its History, Literature, Philosophy and Practice. Hohm Press.

² Eliade, M. (2009). Yoga: Immortality and Freedom. Princeton University Press.

³ Deussen, P. (1980). Sixty Upanishads of the Veda. Motilal Banarsidass.

This paper undertakes a scholarly exploration of Yogic Meditation as expounded in the Yoga Upanishads, focusing on their historical context, central concepts, and practical methods of inner discipline. By analyzing their philosophical insights and meditative techniques, this study seeks to illustrate how these ancient texts continue to provide relevant guidance for contemporary spiritual seekers. In particular, it will be argued that the teachings of the Yoga Upanishads retain profound significance in addressing the psychological and spiritual challenges of the modern world, offering a pathway toward holistic well-being and inner transformation.

Ultimately, this research endeavors to illuminate the enduring wisdom of the Yoga Upanishads, demonstrating how their meditation practices provide not merely a historical relic of spiritual thought but a living, timeless resource for self-realization and human flourishing.

IV. Historical Context

The Yoga Upanishads arise from the expansive corpus of ancient Indian spiritual literature, rooted in a milieu marked by intense philosophical inquiry and ascetic experimentation. To understand these texts, it is essential to situate them within the broader cultural ethos of ancient India, a world in which sages (*ṛṣis*) and ascetics sought liberation (*mokṣa*) through meditation, austerities, and contemplative practices.

The period between c. 800 BCE and 200 BCE is often described as part of the Axial Age, a transformative epoch during which spiritual and philosophical traditions flourished across Eurasia (Jaspers, 1953)¹. In India, this age witnessed the rise of heterodox movements such as Jainism, founded by Mahāvīra, and Buddhism, founded by Gautama Buddha. Alongside these developments, the orthodox Vedic tradition underwent significant internal evolution, culminating in the composition of the Upanishads, which reoriented focus away from ritual sacrifice (*yajña*) toward meditation, self-knowledge, and metaphysical speculation.

The Yoga Upanishads represent a specialized subset within this tradition. While the early prose Upanishads such as the Bṛhadāraṇyaka and Chāndogya articulated foundational philosophical doctrines concerning the self (*ātman*) and ultimate reality (*brahman*), the Yoga Upanishads, composed somewhat later, concentrated on the techniques of yogic discipline and contemplative practice. These texts, transmitted orally through the *guru-śiṣya paramparā* (teacher-disciple lineage), became invaluable manuals for practitioners seeking experiential knowledge beyond intellectual speculation.

The historical context of the Yoga Upanishads is also inseparable from the renunciatory traditions that characterized Indian religious life during this time. Ascetics (*saṃnyāsins*, yogis, and forest-dwellers) withdrew from social life and engaged in solitude, austerity, and meditation as vehicles for attaining spiritual realization. In particular, the Nath yogis and later tantric practitioners integrated and preserved many of the disciplines outlined in the Yoga Upanishads, ensuring their continued transmission and adaptation across centuries (White, 1996)².

In essence, the Yoga Upanishads embody the synthesis of Vedic metaphysics, Axial-Age ascetic inquiry, and practical yogic discipline. They reflect the ethos of ancient India's spiritual ferment—one in which contemplation, renunciation, and meditation were privileged avenues leading toward self-realization and union with the divine. These texts remain not merely historical documents but enduring repositories of esoteric wisdom, offering timeless guidance on the yogic path of inner transformation.

V. Key concepts of Yogic Meditation

Yogic Meditation, as articulated in the Yoga Upanishads, integrates philosophical vision with practical methods designed to facilitate inner transformation and ultimate realization of the self (*ātman*). Far from being a singular method, it encompasses a constellation of interrelated disciplines that cultivate concentration, regulate life-force energy, and awaken latent spiritual potential. Several foundational concepts structure its practice; each elaborated with precision in the Yoga Upanishads.

¹ Jaspers, K. (1953). *The Origin and Goal of History*. Yale University Press.

² White, (1996), *The Alchemical Body: Siddha Traditions in Medieval India*. University of Chicago Press.

a. Dhyāna (Meditation)

At the core of Yogic Meditation lies *dhyāna*, or sustained contemplative absorption. Defined as the focused concentration of the mind upon a single object—whether the breath, a *mantra*, or an inner visualization—*dhyāna* enables transcendence of ordinary cognitive fluctuations (*vṛttis*) and the emergence of heightened self-awareness. The *Dhyānabindu* Upaniṣad emphasizes meditation as the “direct means” to realizing the supreme self, describing it as a discipline that stills thought and reveals the substratum of pure consciousness.

b. Prāṇāyāma (Breath Regulation)

The practice of *prāṇāyāma*, or conscious regulation of the breath, is indispensable in yogic meditation. According to the Yoga Kuṇḍalinī Upaniṣad, *prāṇāyāma* purifies the subtle energy channels (*nāḍīs*) and harmonizes the circulation of *prāṇa* (vital energy) in the body. By mastering breathing cycles of inhalation (*pūraka*), retention (*kumbhaka*), and exhalation (*recaka*), practitioners cultivate inner stability and clarity, preparing the mind for deeper meditative absorption.

c. Mantra Meditation

Repetition of mantras—sacred syllables or formulas imbued with vibrational potency—is another vital element described in the Yoga Upanishads. For instance, the *Nāda Bindu* Upaniṣad prescribes *mantra* recitation to stabilize mental focus and awaken *nāda* (inner sound), regarded as an entryway into subtler dimensions of consciousness. *Mantra* meditation not only purifies mental impressions but also attunes the practitioner to the fundamental vibratory essence of the cosmos.

d. Kuṇḍalinī Awakening

A distinctive theme of several Yoga Upanishads is the doctrine of *kuṇḍalinī*, the dormant spiritual energy said to reside at the base of the spine. Through meditation, *mantra* recitation, and visualization, practitioners seek to stir this latent potency and direct it upward through the cakras (energy centres), culminating in union with the highest consciousness. The Yoga *Kuṇḍalinī* Upaniṣad and Śaṇḍilya Upaniṣad elaborate on this ascent as a transformative process, resulting in expanded awareness and mystical realization.

e. Inner Silence and Witness Consciousness

The texts also stress the cultivation of inner silence (*mauna*) and the development of witness consciousness (*sākṣī-bhāva*). By observing thoughts and emotions without identification, the practitioner transcends the fluctuations of the ego and realizes the imperishable aspect of the self (Signe Cohen, 2019)¹. This inner detachment releases the mind from bondage to transient phenomena, fostering clarity and equanimity.

f. Samādhi (Union with the Divine)

The ultimate aim of Yogic Meditation is *samādhi*, a state of complete absorption in pure consciousness. In this realization, the dichotomy between subject and object dissolves, yielding an awareness of oneness with universal reality (*brahman*). The Tejobindu Upaniṣad describes *samādhi* as the highest form of meditation, wherein the yogi experiences unconditioned bliss (*ānanda*) and transcends individual identity.

Thus, the key concepts in the Yoga Upanishads reveal Yogic Meditation as a multifaceted discipline—integrating breath control, contemplative absorption, sound vibration, mystical energy awakening, inner silence, and ultimately, transcendental union. Together, they provide both a metaphysical framework and a systematic practice for seekers aspiring toward self-realization and liberation.

VI. Techniques of Yogic Meditation

The Yoga Upanishads outline a diverse set of meditative techniques designed to discipline the mind, purify consciousness, and uncover the true nature of the self (*ātman*). These methods represent both philosophical depth and practical applicability, offering seekers pathways suited to their spiritual disposition and level of readiness. Rooted in oral transmission within ascetic lineages,

¹ Signe Cohen, (2019), *The Upanishads: A Complete Guide*, Routledge.

these practices emphasize concentration, breath-awareness, sound, and dissolution of the ego as vehicles for cultivating self-realization (Mallinson & Singleton, 2017)¹.

a. Trāṭaka (Gazing Meditation)

Trāṭaka, or steady gazing, involves fixing one's attention on a single external or internal point—such as a candle flame, a sacred symbol, or even an image of the deity. By holding the gaze without distraction, the practitioner develops one-pointed concentration (*ekāgratā*) and clarity of perception. The Hamsa Upaniṣad and later Yogic texts suggest that *trāṭaka* refines inner vision and prepares the practitioner for deeper meditation by stabilizing restless thought patterns.

b. Ānāpānasati (Breath Awareness)

Although most systematically associated with Buddhist traditions, the method of breath mindfulness (*ānāpānasati*) is implicitly aligned with the breath-awareness practices prescribed in several Yoga Upanishads. For instance, the Dhyānabindu Upaniṣad underscores the observation of natural breath as a gateway to stabilizing the mind and cultivating present-moment awareness. Anchoring attention to the inhalation and exhalation reduces *citta-vṛttis* (mental fluctuations), creates inner tranquility, and facilitates progressive absorption (*dhyāna*).

c. Nāda Yoga (Yoga of Sound)

Nāda Yoga, the “yoga of inner sound,” emphasizes immersion in subtle auditory vibrations heard within deep meditation. The *Nāda* Bindu and Amṛta Nada Upaniṣads identify the inner sound (*anāhata nāda*) as a guiding thread that leads the practitioner beyond external sensory distractions into deeper layers of consciousness. By attuning to these subtle vibrations or internal resonance, the yogin transcends surface-level thought and enters profound stillness where mystical insight arises.

d. Laya Yoga (Yoga of Dissolution)

Laya Yoga, described in texts such as the Tejobindu Upaniṣad, focuses on the dissolution (*laya*) of the individual consciousness into the supreme universal essence. This meditative practice often employs visualization, rhythmic breathing, and *mantra* repetition to dissolve karmic impressions (*saṃskāras*) and egoic identifications. Through systematic inner absorption, the limited self merges with pure consciousness, resulting in freedom from duality.

e. Japa (Repetition of Mantra)

Japa—the repetition of sacred *mantras*—features prominently in the Yoga Upanishads as a vital discipline for mental purification and concentrated awareness. The *Jābāla Dārśana* Upaniṣad prescribes *mantra* recitation as a practice for invoking divine grace and stabilizing the mind. Whether performed aloud (*vācika japa*), whispered (*upāṃsu japa*), or mentally (*mānasa japa*), the rhythmic repetition of *mantras* aligns the practitioner with higher planes of consciousness.

f. Ajapa Japa (Spontaneous Mantra)

A more advanced form of *mantra* practice described in the Hamsa Upaniṣad is *Ajapa Japa*—the effortless awareness of the *mantra* that synchronizes naturally with the rhythm of breath. Unlike intentional recitation, the *mantra* seems to arise spontaneously with inhalation (*so 'ham*) and exhalation (*hamṣa*), symbolizing the eternal identity of the self with the supreme reality. This “*mantra* of the breath” dissolves into silence, leading the yogin to subtle states of absorption and inner awakening.

The techniques of Yogic Meditation outlined in the Yoga Upanishads reveal a comprehensive meditative science encompassing concentration (*trāṭaka*), breath awareness, sound (*nāda*), dissolution (*laya*), and *mantra* practices (*japa* and *ajapa japa*). Together, they demonstrate the Upanishadic vision of meditation not merely as a single method but as a progressive system for awakening inner faculties, transcending egoic limitations, and realizing the eternal self.

¹ Mallinson, J., & Singleton, M. (2017). *Roots of Yoga*. Penguin Classics.

VII. Philosophical understandings of Yogic Meditation

The practice of Yogic Meditation, as articulated in the Yoga Upanishads, is not merely a method of concentration but is embedded in a profound philosophical worldview concerning the nature of reality, consciousness, and liberation. These texts inherit the metaphysical vision of the Vedic-Upanishadic tradition while integrating yogic disciplines as transformative tools to realize ultimate truth (Olivelle, 1998)¹. Central to their teaching are several key philosophical concepts that provide the framework for understanding the significance and purpose of meditation.

a. Ātman (The Inner Self)

At the very heart of the Yoga Upanishads is the doctrine of the *Ātman*, the innermost essence of the individual, which is eternal, unchanging, and beyond sensory or mental limitation. The true self is distinguished from the transient ego (*ahaṁkāra*) and body-mind complex. Meditation is prescribed as the direct means of realizing the identity of the *Ātman* with the universal principle of existence. The Amṛtabindu Upaniṣad declares that one who meditates upon the self as distinct from the body and mind perceives the “supreme light” of consciousness.

b. Brahman (Universal Reality)

Closely aligned with the concept of *Ātman* is *Brahman*, the absolute and formless ground of reality. The Yoga Upanishads affirm the classical Upanishadic dictum *tat tvam asi* (“That Thou Art”), proclaiming the essential unity of individual consciousness with *Brahman*. Through deep meditation, practitioners transcend dualities of subject–object and experience *Brahman* not as an abstract principle but as living reality. In this realization, the boundaries of individuality dissolve, revealing pure non-dual awareness (*advaita*).

c. Karma and Saṁsāra (Law of Cause and Effect and Rebirth)

The Yoga Upanishads also adopt the doctrine of *karma*, the principle that every action has corresponding consequences shaping future experiences. This karmic cycle, when coupled with *saṁsāra* (the cycle of rebirth), binds beings to perpetual suffering. Meditation is extolled as a path to transcending karmic residue by purifying impressions (*saṁskāras*), attenuating desires, and ultimately liberating the practitioner from rebirth. The Śāṇḍilya Upaniṣad explicitly connects meditation with the cessation of karmic bondage and the attainment of freedom.

d. Māyā (Illusion)

Another foundational principle is *Māyā*, the cosmic illusion that obscures the unity of reality by projecting multiplicity and diversity. The phenomenal world, according to the Yoga Upanishads, is not ultimate but a veil over *Brahman*, sustained by ignorance (*avidyā*). Meditation serves as the means to pierce this veil, enabling the practitioner to perceive the substratum of unity underlying all appearance. As the Tejobindu Upaniṣad asserts, realization of the supreme truth dawns only when the illusions of the senses and the mind are transcended.

e. Sat-Cit-Ānanda (Existence–Consciousness–Bliss)

The intrinsic nature of *Brahman* is described as *Sat-Cit-Ānanda*—absolute existence (*sat*), pure consciousness (*cit*), and unbounded bliss (*ānanda*). These qualities serve as philosophical markers of ultimate reality and also as experiential landmarks of successful meditation (Radhakrishnan, 1992)². In meditation, seekers progressively experience these dimensions—first as luminous self-awareness, then as consciousness freed of limitation, and finally as blissful absorption in divine truth.

f. Ātma Jñāna (Self-Knowledge / Self-Realization)

The culmination of Yogic Meditation in the Yoga Upanishads is *ātma jñāna*, or self-realization. Unlike intellectual knowledge, this is direct experiential insight into one’s essential nature as pure consciousness beyond all dualities. The Dhyānabindu Upaniṣad affirms that meditation is the path to knowledge that “destroys ignorance” and unveils the self as identical to *Brahman*. This realization constitutes *mokṣa* (liberation)—freedom from illusion, *karma*, and rebirth, and abiding in eternal awareness.

¹ Olivelle, P. (1998). The Early Upaniṣads: Annotated Text and Translation. Oxford University Press.

² Radhakrishnan, S. (1992). The Principal Upanishads. Harper Collins.

Taken together, these philosophical insights show that Yogic Meditation is not an isolated practice but an integrated spiritual discipline arising from a non-dual worldview. The Yoga Upanishads define meditation as the direct path to uncovering the true self (*Ātman*), realizing its unity with *Brahman*, transcending the cycles of *karma* and *samsāra*, piercing the veil of *Māyā*, and resting in *Sat-Cit-Ānanda*. The philosophical underpinnings of these texts thus form both the foundation and the goal of Yogic Meditation: liberation through self-realization

VIII. Contemporary Relevance of Yogic Meditation

In today's world, marked by heightened stress, mental health challenges, and existential uncertainty, the teachings of Yogic Meditation preserved in the Yoga Upanishads hold striking contemporary significance. While composed in antiquity, these texts articulate insights and practices that directly address the psychological, emotional, and spiritual concerns of modern individuals. Their enduring wisdom provides both a philosophical framework and practical tools for cultivating inner well-being, resilience and spiritual growth.

a. Stress Reduction and Mental Health

Modern research in psychology and neuroscience confirms what the Yoga Upanishads long emphasized: meditation can calm the mind, reduce stress, and enhance overall well-being (Davidson & Goleman, 2018)¹. Techniques such as breath regulation, *mantra* repetition, and mindfulness awareness, highlighted in texts like the Dhyānabindu Upaniṣad, resonate strongly with contemporary therapeutic approaches. Practices of *prāṇāyāma* and *mantra japa* have been scientifically validated as effective for reducing anxiety, mitigating depression, and improving emotional regulation (Khalsa & Davidson, 2019)². For individuals navigating the pressures of work, relationships, and social obligations, these practices provide accessible methods to restore inner peace and clarity.

b. Mindfulness and Present-Centered Awareness

A central theme in Yogic Meditation is the cultivation of awareness of the present moment, akin to what is now widely recognized in psychology as mindfulness. The Upanishadic focus on witnessing thoughts without attachment (*sākṣī-bhāva*) aligns with modern cognitive-behavioural and mindfulness-based stress reduction frameworks (Kabat-Zinn, 2005)³. In an era of digital overload, where attention is fragmented, these practices create a sanctuary of presence, allowing practitioners to disengage from constant mental chatter and cultivate clarity, groundedness, and deeper connection to life.

c. Emotional Regulation and Self-Management

The Yoga Upanishads prescribe disciplines such as *mantra* meditation, visualization, and breath awareness to stabilize emotions and transcend impulsive reactivity. Contemporary clinical studies parallel these teachings by demonstrating that regular meditation enhances activity in brain regions responsible for emotional regulation, empathy, and self-control. This equips practitioners not merely to cope with difficulties but to cultivate qualities of compassion, balance, and equanimity that are essential for navigating the complexities of modern life.

d. Spiritual Awakening and Self-Realization

Beyond psychological benefits, the Yoga Upanishads frame meditation as the path to *ātma-jñāna* (self-realization) and liberation from conditioned existence. In a world increasingly dominated by materialism and superficiality, these teachings remain profoundly relevant by pointing seekers toward inner depth and meaning. Through contemplative practices such as self-inquiry (*ātma-vicāra*), *kuṇḍalinī* awakening, and *ajapa japa*, practitioners transcend egoic identity and open to a realization of their essential unity with universal consciousness (*Brahman*).

¹ Davidson, R. J., & Goleman, D. (2018). *Altered Traits: Science Reveals How Meditation Changes Your Mind, Brain, and Body*. Avery.

² Khalsa, Sahib & Rudrauf, David & Davidson, Richard & Tranel, Daniel. (2015). The effect of meditation on regulation of internal body states. *Frontiers in Psychology*.

³ Kabat-Zinn, J. (2005). *Coming to Our Senses: Healing Ourselves and the World Through Mindfulness*. Hyperion.

e. Community and Collective Connection

Finally, the Upanishadic emphasis on shared learning within the *guru-śiṣya paramparā* (teacher-disciple lineage) finds resonance in contemporary forms of *sangha* (spiritual community). Group meditation sessions, retreats, and global mindfulness initiatives foster connection, solidarity, and mutual support in increasingly fragmented societies. Such collective practices not only enhance individual commitment but also promote inclusivity and shared spiritual growth, transcending divisions of culture, religion, and nationality.

The Yoga Upanishads remain profoundly relevant for contemporary society, offering a synthesis of philosophy and practice that addresses both the psychological strains and spiritual longings of modern life. By integrating their teachings into daily living, individuals can cultivate stress resilience, mindful presence, emotional stability, and spiritual awakening, contributing to a more compassionate and harmonious world. These texts thus serve not only as ancient repositories of wisdom but also as practical guides for navigating the challenges of the 21st century with balance, clarity, and purpose.

IX. Conclusion

The Yoga Upanishads stand as enduring testaments to the depth of India's spiritual and philosophical heritage, offering profound insights into the transformative power of Yogic Meditation. Composed in the crucible of ancient inquiry and ascetic experimentation, these texts continue to illuminate the timeless human quest for self-understanding, liberation, and connection with the divine.

This paper has undertaken a comprehensive exploration of Yogic Meditation as preserved in the Yoga Upanishads. We began with the historical context, situating the emergence of these texts amidst the intellectual ferment of ancient India and the rise of both orthodox and heterodox traditions. We then examined the key concepts—from *dhyāna* (meditative absorption) and *prāṇāyāma* (breath regulation) to *mantra* meditation and *kuṇḍalinī* awakening—that together form the foundation of Upanishadic meditation practice.

Building upon these principles, we analyzed the techniques of Yogic Meditation prescribed in the texts, such as *trāṭaka* (concentrative gazing), *nāda yoga* (sound meditation), *laya yoga* (dissolution), and the practices of *japa* and *ajapa japa*. Each of these methods provides practitioners with distinct, yet complementary, pathways for cultivating inner stillness and transcending mental conditioning.

We further explored the philosophical underpinnings of these practices, delving into central ideas such as *Ātman* (the eternal self), *Brahman* (the ultimate reality), *karma* and *saṃsāra*, the veil of *māyā*, and the experiential realization of *sat-cit-ānanda* (existence-consciousness-bliss). These philosophical foundations establish meditation not merely as a psychological discipline, but as a direct means of awakening to ultimate truth and liberation (*mokṣa*).

Finally, we considered the contemporary relevance of the Yoga Upanishads. In an era characterized by mental strain, material excess, and spiritual restlessness, the meditative disciplines described in these texts offer scientifically validated means of reducing stress, cultivating mindfulness, strengthening emotional resilience, and fostering a deeper sense of interconnectedness. Their wisdom provides a timeless prescription for holistic well-being, guiding seekers to balance the demands of the outer world with the inner pursuit of tranquility and self-realization.

In essence, the Yoga Upanishads are not relics of a distant past but living guides to the inner landscape of human consciousness. They remind us that meditation is both a personal discipline and a universal journey: a path leading inward, toward the realization of the self, and outward, toward a greater harmony with the world. By embracing their teachings, modern seekers can embark on a transformative journey of self-discovery, spiritual awakening, and union with the eternal reality that lies at the heart of all existence.

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The interplay of infidelity and infertility in Manju Kapur's *Custody*

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I. Abstract

Marriage is a custom to persuade societal, physical, psychological, and financial necessity of male and female. To sustain a stable relationship, marriage is the fundamental deed that balances the correlation through sexual activities, which otherwise may cause social interruption. Nowadays, the so-called modern women effortlessly substitute their husband and their family in the name of liberation and emancipation. This liberty of modern women shreds their families physically and psychologically. Simultaneously, this action not only erodes the happiness of the couple and family but also well it distresses the lives of their children. The separation of the parents leads the children to undergo mental commotion often results in insecurity, unprotected, exasperation, hesitation, hopelessness, sadness, and self-hatred. The paper seeks to present the complexity of divorce, which extremely disturbs the growth of their children, with the reference to Manju Kapur's *Custody*.

II. Keywords

Marriage, Social Interruption, Emancipation, Hopelessness, Insecurity and Divorce.

III. Introduction

In the 20th century, one of the most significant happenings was the change in the roles of women from the 'Old Women' to the 'New Women', permitting them more freedom for their fulfilment and happiness both in private and public life. This shift in the roles of women led the way to an increase in the divorce rate and the rise in the desolation of children and families.¹ Property can be passed down through marriage. Marriage was often a business deal involving property, rank, and women; love was virtually ever a factor. Aside from being a vehicle for transfer and procreation, women had no other identity. Over time, society evolved into a more sophisticated, economically driven society. Men took control of the home since they had the most influence in such a setting. On the other hand, women were much more oppressed and made to dwell in men's shadows. The division of labour and roles of gender was therefore made more permanent. We relegated women to the home while males became the primary wage earners. Women started looking after the old and children. Scriptures claim that a woman might only rise in social standing—now and in the future—by caring for now and in the future—by taking care of her family. It is more firmly accepted that women must leave their patrilocal households after marriage.

Marriage is a major part of everyone's life. It gives an opportunity that cultivates selflessness while nourishing their family. The physical, social, psychological, cultural and financial needs of males and females are merely satisfied by this legal union. Marriage is considered a lifelong commitment that binds the couple to eternal marital bliss. In the current scenario, there are lots of issues that the couples are undergoing in their conjugal life. The inconvenience with in-laws, domestic violence, tiresome activities of a spouse, financial issues, lack of intimacy, infidelity and boredom are the most common issues that married couples are facing in the postmodern period. While these problems among the couples elevated, the partners sought legal separation.

¹ Betsey Stevenson and Justin Wolfers, "Marriage and Divorce: Changes and Their Driving Forces," *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, vol. 21, no. 2, Apr. 2007, pp. 27-52,.

Conventionally, women were the primary ones to hold the stability of their families.² Though they were enduring various difficulties, they could maintain the equilibrium in the family as well as in society. But presently, the divorce rate has been radically increased as the stability is gradually crumbled among the women. The children of the divorced parents go through various agonizing discord. Subsequently, the parent's separation forces the children to struggle socially, physically, emotionally, psychologically as well as academically. They crave affection, love, care, protection, and assurance from their parents. Eventually, this leads the way to isolation, friendlessness, emptiness, self-loathing, dreadful, sorrow, uncertainty and lack of confidence in society when their parents fail to show concern for them. In this way, Manju Kapur's novel *Custody* evidently portrays the melancholy of the divorce, which spreads gloominess to the family and the children of the departed parents.

IV. Author and her works

Manju Kapur is a familiar contemporary Indian writer and a Professor of English Literature at Delhi University. She was born in 1948 in Amritsar. She completed her Undergraduate degree at Miranda House University College her PG at Dalhousie University in Halifax, and her MPhil at Delhi University. Kapur's potential and experience in teaching are distinctly evident in all of her novels.³ Her first novel 'Difficult Daughters', was a notable bestseller in India, the United States, and England. 'Difficult Daughters' won the Commonwealth Prize for the Eurasian region in 1999. Her second novel 'A Married Woman' was published in 2003, It is a seductive plot of love, goal, purpose and passion. Kapur's third novel 'Home' (2006), portrays the family life of Banwarilal. The next novel is 'The Immigrant' published in 2009. 'Custody' is the last novel of Kapur published in 2012.

All of her novels depict the ambition, wish and hope of the typical middle-class woman. The setting presented in all these novels is based on city life in nature. Kapur portrays the different features of the human predicament in all of her novels. She also shows intense thought in representing the common people's lives, about the various consequences they are facing in their routine. Family Friction has been acknowledged as the primary issue of her novels.

V. Infidelity and its consequences

Infidelity focuses on the disloyalty initiated in a marriage or in a relationship, which extremely disrupts the peace of the family. The Extra-marital relationship makes the other loyal one shocked, traumatised, isolated, and confused. After-effects of adultery might include divorce, separation, or protracted periods of animosity and disagreement within the home. Children's emotions regarding security, academic achievement, and general well-being can all be negatively impacted by these interruptions.

Ana Nogaes, a clinical psychologist as well as the writer of "Parents Who Cheat: How Children and Adults are Affected When Their Parents Are Unfaithful", asserts that growing up in a home where infidelity exists has long-lasting effects on children's perceptions of love relationships and their willingness to believe other people.⁴ According to Nogaes' study, 75% of children still have resentment towards their parent who cheated on them, 80% claim that the affair has changed their perspective on interpersonal relationships, and 70% claim that the affair has reduced their overall level of trust in other individuals.

Manju Kapur's fifth novel 'Custody' (2011) is the predominant example of infidelity, the disintegration of the Family and the imbalance found in the Children's behaviour.⁵ Kapur portrays the life of Raman and Shagun, a married couple who relished an honoured life with their two children. Arjun, eight-year-old elder son and Roohi, three-year-old daughter. The novel moves

² R. K. Tandon, *Status of Women in Contemporary World* (1998), 112.

³ Ram Sharma, *Rise of New Women: Novels of Manju Kapur* (2013), 5.

⁴ Ana Nogaes, *Parents Who Cheat: How Children and Adults Are Affected When Their Parents Are Unfaithful* (Simon and Schuster, 2010), 45.

⁵ Manju Kapur, *Custody* (Random House India, 2011), 45.

around an upper-middle-class family in Delhi. Raman is a hardworking person, who is employed as a Marketing Executive in an MNC, the Brand. Their peace is shattered into pieces when Raman's new boss, Ashok Khanna arrives in their life. Both Ashok Khanna and Shagun become infatuated with each other and that progress to an extra-marital affair. Raman's work schedule drives him to frequent business trips most of the weeks which stay away from his family. Thus, Shagun grasped this moment and became enraptured with Ashok Khanna. Certainly, this is a way to notice her self-reliant and self-contained.

According to Indian society, committing adultery is considered as a misdeed and that person is not accepted by the society and even their own family rejects them. Eventually, this state made them panic and led them into stagnancy. Without considering these societal mores, Shagun took a valiant conclusion of quitting a conjugal relationship with her husband, Raman. Shagun refuses to accept her as a responsible homemaker. When her husband determines her love affair, she has to choose what she wants in her life. Shagun is a conceited woman who leaves her children with her mother while she spends her time with Ashok on weekends. She does not regret lying to her mother and her husband. She claimed the wristwatch belonged to her mother in response to Raman's question about it.

Shagun's adultery evoked feelings of betrayal in him, which simultaneously broke her trust in her and proceeded to the legal separation. ⁶Shagun outwardly seeks fulfilment and freshness from her lover, who treats her with respect and affection in the whole sense. Shagun took her husband all the possible steps to grant a mutual divorce approval, which eventually led to litigation by claiming and earning the visiting rights of her children and leaving the rights of parental authority over the children to her husband. Thus, Shagun continues to indoctrinate her kids against their father.

Among all the characters in the novel, the life and the habitual routine of the children are crumbled after their parents' divorce. Certainly, the breakup of the marriage breaks down and disintegrates the structure of the family. Through Arjun and Roohi, it is demonstrated how a perfect childhood can be ruined by a parent's self-conceit and expectations working on a child's impressionable mind. Without taking into account the children's welfare, Shagun confronts to attain her desires because she has been annoyed and repressed by the male-controlled society since she was a child. ⁷However, the truth still stands that the two innocent children's lives were destroyed by the shady domestic dispute. Between two mothers, two homes, two different places and two nations, they both were torn. But Shagun does not understand her family's degradation or care about societal legitimacy.

Kapur skilfully handles the plot by shedding light on the children's regard in such a ruined marriage. Kapur says:

"And here I have been thinking that although none of the characters come out wholly shining, you do sympathise with them all! Misery, anxiety, and tension do bring out the worst in us- that would apply to any conflictive situation. Where children are concerned, one's deepest feelings are at stake, and provokes all kinds of extreme behaviour."

Kapur highlights the emptiness that contemporary families feel in this acquisitive world, and it is pitiful to discern the couple in the book growing apart from one another. ⁸More significantly, the two helpless children have been ruptured apart from their parents both physically and emotionally. Shagun's infidelity is the root cause of all these issues. The primary cause of this family's disintegration is her self-centredness. Before stepping over the line into extramarital affairs, she should have considered the welfare of her family and kids.

⁶ Kapur, 112.

⁷ Kuntal Beniwal, "Indian Society, Infertility, and Infidelity in Manju Kapur's Fiction Custody," *Revista GEINTEC*, vol. 11, no. 4, July 2021, pp. 1751-57.

⁸ Kapur, qtd. in Maheswari, "The Tale of Disintegration of Marriage and Family in Custody of Manju Kapur," *International Journal of English Research*, vol. 3, no. 4, July 2017, p. 10.

VI. Infertility and its consequences

Infertility is the inability of a male or female to conceive as a result of a problem with either partner's reproductive system. Primary or secondary infertility can occur. When a person is completely unable to conceive, that refers a primary infertility. When someone has already given birth but is no longer able to, it is known as secondary infertility. The social effects of infertility on infertile couples are profoundly negative, especially for the women who are more likely to experience domestic abuse, divorce, social accusation, downturn, anxiety, emotional stress and self-distrust.⁹ In Indian culture, infertility is viewed as a woman's issue, and she is held responsible for her inability to procreate. She is expected to begin a family as soon as she marries, and if she does not, she is blamed for failing to fulfil her role as a responsible wife and frequently receives criticism from her in-laws, relatives and society.

Due to the close link between getting married and having children, people who experience fertility issues are more likely to get divorced. According to studies, there may be a connection between divorce and infertility. Infertility causes emotional hardship for both men and women on an individual basis. The communication between partners can be hampered by infertility, which can also result in depression and detachment. This seclusion eventually leads them to get divorced.¹⁰ Kapur's portrayal of one such character in this novel undergoes the stigma of Barrenness that ends up in the judicial separation.

Despite not being particularly attractive, Ishita is wise, compassionate and generous being. She marries Suryakant and lives a happy life, adjusting to her new family and quickly becomes everyone's favourite. Ishita's romantic world swiftly falls apart as soon as Suryakant and her in-laws learn that she cannot give birth. Ishita feels low and psychologically twisted because of incurable barrenness despite the numerous terrible and tedious medical therapies she goes through. The family and society stigmatise and chastise Ishita for being infertile, calling her "defective" and "empty", which causes her to endure extreme distraught.

When her husband abandoned her, she became wholly disintegrated. He failed to demonstrate himself as a real husband. He views her infertility as an individual bodily issue and he thoroughly disregards her to brawl against the family and society. Ishita searched the entire cosmos and the earth for bearing a child and attempted every method of conception. However, fate fully turned the tables on her and revealed that she was incapable of conceiving a child because of a severe fallopian tube blockage. At this point, she wanted her husband to understand her and be there for her; his abandonment left her feeling utterly betrayed. Ishita was kicked out of her in-laws' home while her husband, who formerly could not imagine living without her, was ready to grant her a divorce. Her life becomes dismal and lonely after the divorce, and that has left her feeling miserable, isolated and guilty about her life's failures. Ishita was unable to move on with her life, while Suryakant happily re-established his relationship with another woman. Her parents provide her a considerable encouragement to regenerate her life after the challenging and miserable experience of wedded life. Her neighbour, Mrs. Hingorani, offers her a job, teaching slum children in her school.¹¹ Ishita has confidence after working with Mrs. Hingorani and her NGO. The brightness of her face makes her father pleased.

VII. Discussion

The novel "Custody" explores the intricacies of modern family dynamics and patriarchal society. It portrays contemporary women who strive to liberate themselves from the confines of domestic life to forge their paths. The well-educated female characters exhibit independent thinking, enabling them to boldly challenge societal norms that seek to constrain them with patriarchal rules and regulations. In the modern era, the relentless pursuit of wealth often leads individuals to ruin. Society must also recognize that infertility is neither a sin nor an intentional act by a woman. "Custody" clearly conveys that a woman who is unable to bear children deserves respect and equal

⁹ Beniwal, 1753.

¹⁰ Stevenson and Wolfers, 38.

¹¹ Kapur, 189.

treatment. Kapur critiques the notion that individualism should supersede familial duties. Traditional values and morality should not be discarded in the quest for personal freedom. Marriage, as an institution, must be regarded as sacred to preserve the values for future generations. This book shows us that having unrealistic expectations for a marriage may destroy a couple's lives by preventing them from spending quality time together. It can also cause miscommunication between partners, which can hurt their children. In life, money is necessary, but it is not everything. A good woman should not view her husband as merely a money-making machine to ensure a prosperous existence, but a husband should likewise prioritize the needs of the family before his financial advantage. One has to be able to strike a balance between obligation and desire. In the end, it demonstrates that acceptance and adaptability lead to a pleasant and satisfied existence and are the means to achieve an enriching life.

VIII. Conclusion

To conclude this paper in Mithu Banerji's words, "Kapur's book reveals the unimagined uncertainties of matrimony. The wife's sense of suffocation, the husband's fear of loneliness and the constant shifting of the children the commodities, from one home to the other, are evoked with painstaking sincerity." ¹²Here both Shagun and Ishita experienced distinct challenges following their divorce. Even though Shagun enjoyed every material blessing after her divorce, Kapur conveyed her on-going quest for her Children's love. In particular, Shagun was unable to obtain custody of her kids, permitting the parental rights to Raman. In the second instance, Ishita endured severe physical and mental agony during her judicial dissolution, and it took her five years to recover from that failure. Despite being Roohi's stepmother, Ishita fought with their biological mother for custody. She goes to any extent to acquire Roohi's affection. Though every character in the novel deteriorates immensely after being divorced, here Kapur vividly depicts the two helpless children who were ripped physically, emotionally and socially between their parents. Kapur has brilliantly portrayed the agony of defenceless children, the intricacies of life, and various structures of values throughout this conflict of egos. Therefore, Kapur reflected the grief of the family's disintegration through Shagun and Ishita.

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¹² Mithu Banerji, "Review of Custody by Manju Kapur," The Guardian, 27 Feb. 2011,.

Exploring the identity and self-reflection in Paul Auster's *THE NEW YORK TRILOGY*

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I. Abstract

This research paper delves into the presence of autobiographical elements in Paul Auster's *The New York Trilogy*. This novel is renowned for its intricate narratives. It analyses how the author's own life experiences and literary influences shaped the characters, themes, and narrative structures of this novel. It intricately examines the themes of identity and self-reflection through the lives of its protagonists. It delves into the complexities of personal identity, existential crises, and reality. It explores in prompting the nature of identity formation and the consequences of introspection on individual consciousness. It aims to highlight the exploration of human mind and the elusive quest of self-understanding. This paper uncovers the identity and self-reflection in examining the author's use of metafiction and intersections between fiction and reality.

II. Keywords

Identity, self-reflection, journey, quest

III. Introduction

American literature reflects the diverse cultural, social, and historical contexts of literary movements, genres, voices of the United States. It started with the Native American Oral Traditions to contemporary works and delves into the modern complexities, periods, movements, landscapes and the impact on society. American literature has evolved with the interplay of tradition and innovation. It reflects the nation's identity and cultural landscape. It continues to provoke thought, creativity, experience, voices, moralistic themes, challenges, individualism, intuition, nature, social hierarchies, economic forces, disillusionment, fragmentation, racial injustice, quest for equality, immigration with deeper insights into the complexities of American Society. It captures the struggles, triumphs and transformation of its people, rooted in a complex history of colonization, immigration and cultural exchange.

Contemporary American literature reflects the 21st century where it stands at the intersection of tradition and innovation. It emerges as a vibrant reflection of the multifaceted identities and experiences in the wake of globalization, technological advancement and shifting socio-political climates. Few contemporary writers are Toni Morrison, Don DeLillo, Jennifer Egan, Jonathan Franzen, and Colson Whitehead deals with the common themes of identity and belonging, freedom and individualism, nature and the environment, social injustice and inequality, conflict and consequences and American dream.

IV. Author and his Works

Paul Auster was born in Newark, New Jersey on February 3, 1947 and died on April 30, 2024. He was a contemporary American writer, novelist, memoirist and filmmaker. His books have been translated into more than forty languages. His works include *The New York Trilogy* (1987), *The Moon Palace* (1989), *The Music of Chance* (1990), *The Book of Illusions* (2002), *Oracle Night* (2003), *The Brooklyn Follies* (2005), *Man in the Dark* (2008), *Invisible* (2009), *Sunset Park* (2010), *Winter Journal* (2012), and *4321* (2017). He was graduated from Columbia High School in Maplewood and completed his UG and PG in English at Columbia University in 1970. Then he moved to Paris and chose his career as a French translator in literature. He translated and edited *The Random House Book of Twentieth – Century French Poetry*. He translated the works of French writers, Stephane Mallarme and Joseph Joubert. He continued to work on poems, essays and

memoir. His debut *The Invention of Solitude*, a memoir was an acclaimed work published in 1982. Followed by this, he published a three- fold novellas in 1987, titled *The New York Trilogy*, composed with a detective genre. It is a postmodern novel with detective form to address identity, space, language, uncertain future and coincidence. He was a filmmaker and received *The Independent Spirit Award for Best First Screenplay* for *Smoke* and *Blue in the Face*. Then, he wrote novels, biographies and history. He received nominations for the International Dublin Award and shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize. He acted as Vice President and Board of Trustees in PEN American Center from 2004 to 2009. His style of writing was confessional, suspense, with autobiographical plots. The characters in his novel confront from hallucination and provides with suspense. He died of cancer at the age of 77.

Paul Auster's *The New York Trilogy* transcends into the conventional detective story by intertwining elements of autobiography with existential and postmodern themes. His narrative style blurs the boundaries of the author, narrator and character among readers. It prompts readers to question the distinction between truth and fiction. It explores the theme of identity, language, reality, alienation, and the search of meaning through interconnected narratives. In *The New York Trilogy* the characters often mirror author's own introspective journey and philosophical inquiries through writers and detectives. The journey of the detectives explores with their existential quest in finding their identity.

Auster in this Trilogy offers insights into his own literary journey. It portrays the existential inquiries of identity and solitude to gain deeper understanding of author's life experiences and concerns. The author uses his original name in the *City of Glass*, shows his interest in reflecting the fragmented identities and postmodern world. Paul Auster uses his pen names, Peter Stillman, Daniel Quinn, unnamed narrator to connect to the inner world of desires and how life changes completely from upside down. He attempted to let his inner world outside and focused on the perception. The protagonist in each play took up the role of another person. This happens because the protagonists is a writer, act as detectives, impersonates and takes up the mannerisms of the character. They even conceal their own identity. *The New York Trilogy* contains references of the author. In the *City of Glass*, the main character impersonates a detective named Paul Auster, is the author himself.

V. An Overview of the New York Trilogy

The New York Trilogy is a series of novels collected into a single volume originally published sequentially as *City of Glass* (1985), *Ghosts* (1986), and *The Locked Room* (1986) is a postmodern interpretation of detective and mystery fiction. It explores various philosophical themes. It takes place in the New York City. The writer of this book reveals himself as the narrator covering three unconventional mysteries. In *City of Glass*, Daniel Quinn is the writer of detective novels. He lost his wife and son. He received late- night call from a man called Peter Stillman. Peter Stillman mistakes Daniel Quinn for a private detective called Paul Auster. Daniel feels lonely and curious about mystery, decides to impersonate Paul Auster. Peter Stillman was in emergency to protect his son from his father, who was to be released from a psychiatric hospital. Peter and his wife fear that his father planning to murder their son. Peter's incoherent speech shows that his father has abused him for years. He kept him locked in room for experiment. Daniel's mission is to watch Peter Stillman's family, thus followed Stillman's father everywhere after his release from hospital. He wandered around New York, collecting detailed actions in red notebook. When he come to know that Stillman's father disappears from hotel, he rushes to contact the real detective, Paul Auster, to get his help to solve the case. But, Auster is a writer, not a detective. Daniel calls Peter, but the line was always busy. So, in order to prohibit Stillman entering into Peter's house, Daniel stayed outside for months loses his former life and his sense of himself. He receives call from Auster, who informed him that Stillman died of suicide and the case is closed. He visited Peter's apartment and found out that the room was empty. He remains in a dark room and writer in his notebook until he runs out of pages.

In *Ghosts*, the man named Blue is a detective, works at Brown's office. Blue was hired by White to watch over a man named Black. Blue just wanders around his neighbourhood, spending time in

reading and writing. Blue lost interest in this case over time and quest to understand the purpose behind it. He suspected that Black and White are the same person decided to approach him in disguise. He learns that Blue is writing a book and confronts him. He admits that he sets Blue, for his experiment. They fight with each other, leaving Black unconscious. He too his manuscripts and reads the book completely and then left the room.

In *Locked Room*, a person named Fanshawe, who was the childhood friend of the narrator disappeared. Fanshawe had a wife named Sophie and their one month old son, Ben. He was a writer whose manuscripts were not published. He wishes to publish his books but he disappeared. Sophie decided to fulfil her husband's wishes. If this attempt to publish the books fails, she decided to destroy the books. By narrating the circumstances of her life to the narrator, the narrator falls in love with Sophie. The narrator and Sophie begin a relationship, convincing that her husband is dead. The narrator shows Fanshawe's book to an editor, finds the manuscripts are worthy of publication, publishes and succeeded. Fanshawe writes letter to the narrator asking him to marry Sophie and consider him as dead and declares he would be dead within seven years. And, a note of warning, states that the narrator attempt to search for him or else he will kill him. The narrator marries Sophie. The editor asks the narrator to write Fanshawe's biography. He uses this chance to locate him. Fanshawe lives in a room in Boston, which remains locked. The narrator didn't get chance to see Fanshawe but receives a red notebook contains details of his disappearance and everything he wants to know. The narrator asks more question to Fanshawe but he didn't answer, reads the red notebook but understands a little of it. Then, he returned to New York and dumped the pages of the notebook in trash.

VI. Exploration of Identity and Self-Reflection

The protagonist's quest for identity and meaning navigates the author's own personal transformation and experiences. Auster's use of pseudonyms and alter egos reflects his exploration of different facets of his own identity and literary persona. He shows both the autobiographical and societal concerns in his postmodern detective fiction *The New York Trilogy*. In *City of Glass*, Daniel was a writer of detective novels. He receives repeated calls from Stillman junior in order to protect his son from his father. Out of curiosity and loneliness, he decides to impersonate as the real detective Paul Auster. Daniel follows Stillman senior seriously. He completely immersed in the mission of protecting the Stillman's family. When he found out that he lost Stillman senior, he loses himself. Then, he contacted the real detective Paul Auster for help. He even called Stillman junior and stayed outside of his apartment for several months. Daniel explores multiple identities: as a writer, a detective, and someone loses himself in the identities he creates. He blurs his own identity and obsessed with the idea of Peter Stillman senior's experiment on language and identity, mirroring his own struggle to define himself.

He was looking for an identity that was all his own, a persona that could not be connected to others. He was looking for a shadow that would not blend into other shadows.¹

Daniel attempts to understand himself and the world around him. His confusion and the search of meaning reflected in his narratives. Daniel's journey unfolds the solitary life and introspective nature on Self- reflection.

In *Ghosts*, Blue was assigned a job by White to watch over Black. Blue sends weekly reports and when days run, he started to lose his patience. He disguised as a homeless man. He suspects Mr. White's intention and identity. Blue's interactions with the other characters and his own actions are often a reflection of his inner turmoil and quest for self- identity. He grapples with his own identity as he navigates through various personas and roles in life. His journey is marked by introspection and contemplation, as he tries to make sense of his past and understand his place in the world.

Whole days go by when he doesn't even bother to look through the window or follow Black onto the street. Now and then, he even allows himself to make solo expeditions, knowing full well that during the time he is gone. Black will not

¹ Auster, *The New York Trilogy*, 86.

have budged from his spot. How he knows this remains something of a mystery to him, but the fact is that he is never wrong, and when the feeling comes over him, he is beyond all doubt and hesitation. On the other hand, not all moments are like these.²

In *Locked Room*, an unnamed narrator becomes obsessed with the life and disappearance of his friend, Fanshawe, who is also a writer. He delves deeper into Fanshawe's work and also his personal life. He helped Fanshawe's wife, Sophie in publishing the manuscripts. He falls in love with Sophie assuming Fanshawe was dead. He begins to grapple with his own identity and purpose under his friend's name. The narrator took up different roles of writer, friend and husband forgetting his own identity. Fanshawe's writings are a journey of self- discovery and understanding, revealing layers of identity.

He began to understand that everything in his life up to now had been an elaborate dress rehearsal, a mere prelude to this final metamorphosis.³

The narrator's search for Fanshawe and managing his literary aspects prompts him to reflect deeply on his own life choices, ambitions, and moral decisions. His inner struggles and uncertainties on receiving the letter reflect to contemplate their own identities and moral standings.

VII. Conclusion

This paper attempts to explore the identity and self- reflection in Paul Auster's *The New York Trilogy*. It is a profound journey into the complexities of human existence and the search for meaning in a fragmented world. The frustration and despair through characters shows how deep they were lost in their own mind, is quite a challenging experience. Each story starts with a wrong phone call and ends with open endings. Through the intertwined narratives of detectives and their elusive cases, Auster delves into the intricate layers of identity, revealing how perception shapes reality and eventually how individuals quest for meaning their own sense of self. The author shows the power of self-reflection, a compelling portrayal of the search for identity amidst the complexities in contemporary world.

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² Auster, *The New York Trilogy*, 153.

³ Auster, *The New York Trilogy*, 222.

Echoes of trauma in *Night* and *The Accident* by Elie Wiesel

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I. Abstract

Trauma is like quicksand, the harder the victim tries to come out or erase it from memory, the faster they get engulfed. There is a ray of hope rather a vent for trauma victims when they share their haunting memories through writings. In this regard, Literature serves as a platform for representing lived experiences, emotions, and haunting memories that are coloured by pain and trauma. Trauma, a disruptive experience can ruin emotional stability and perception of an individual or a group. Trauma has ethical, sociological, and political dimensions making its study a much needed and useful literary endeavor. Literature has become the bedrock on which the entire learning, reflections, and development rest on. Trauma studies traces its genesis to 1990s, where extreme experience unfathomable by the limits of language and even ruptures meaning altogether found a scope. Trauma studies is losing its importance due to the lack of contemporaneity. This research attempts to reinstate the importance of understanding trauma and draws greater attention to representations of extreme experience like holocaust, racial discrimination, rape, abuse, and social ostracization in the novels chosen for the study which is pertinent to our times of social upheaval and world wars that have changed the entire fabric of human character. The novel by Elie Wiesel who shares his lived experience as a holocaust survivor, paint a true and moving picture of trauma in the Jewish ghetto and brings to light the ugly side of racism, war and genocide.

II. Keywords

Literature and Trauma, Holocaust, Memory, Ghetto, Representation, Wars, Ostracization, Genocide, Trauma Studies.

III. Introduction

Trauma leaves a lasting impression on people and society, reverberating throughout generations and leaving an unbreakable scar on the human mind. This research project tries study and ruminate on the after effects of trauma in the lives of holocaust survivors in particular and people who undergo abuse in general by analysing the select novels of Elie Wiesel, who has painted the true picture of the horrible darker side of humanity during the Second World War. The study employs insights offered by Sigmund Freud and Cathy Caruth, two significant trauma theorists to unravel the intensity of the trauma and its reverberations. Caruth's highlights the communal and collective aspects of traumatic events, building on the groundwork established by Freud's research on the complexities of psychological trauma.

Sigmund Freud, a pioneer in psychoanalysis, unveiled the complex layers of the human mind, in his seminal work, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920)¹. Freud's trauma theory posits that traumatic experiences rupture the normal functioning of the psyche, giving rise to a state of shock and dissociation. He introduced the concept of the "repetition compulsion," wherein individuals, unconsciously driven by the need to master the traumatic event, find themselves entangled in a cycle of reliving and re-enacting the trauma. Freud's emphasis on the individual's internal psychic processes laid the groundwork for understanding how trauma reverberates within the individual's mind and shapes their subsequent experiences.

Cathy Caruth broadened the scope of trauma theory in her seminal book *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996)², building on Freud's seminal work.

¹ Freud, Sigmund. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Vol. 18. London: 1920.

² Caruth, Cathy. *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.

Caruth expands and explains the idea of "traumatic delay," which states that the entire impact of the trauma may not be processed right away, challenging the traditional linear narrative of trauma. According to Caruth, trauma throws off the linear passage of time, causing a rift between the experience and understanding of the trauma. This delay affects not only the individual but also group memory and historical consciousness, influencing the stories told by entire communities. Shoshana Felman and Cathy Caruth are two prominent theorists who have contributed to the study of trauma in literature and culture. Caruth's theory of trauma emphasizes the ways in which traumatic experiences disrupt our usual ways of understanding and processing events, leading to a state of delayed, fragmented, or "unworked-through" understanding.

Caruth also emphasizes the importance of listening to the stories of trauma survivors, arguing that the process of telling and retelling their stories is an important part of the healing process. In her view, the telling of traumatic stories can help survivors to work through their experiences and begin to integrate them into their sense of self.

IV. Trauma in Literature

Holocaust novels have their distinguished place in Literature for their ability to portray the harrowing experiences of individuals who lived through one of the darkest periods in human history—the Holocaust. The Holocaust, which occurred during World War II, was the systematic genocide perpetrated by Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime and its collaborators, resulting in the mass murder of six million Jews, as well as millions of other innocent people, including Romani people, Poles, Soviet POWs, disabled individuals, and others. Taking cues from Caruth's theory of trauma, we learn that it is important to gain an understanding of trauma since this complex and ongoing process involves both the individual and broader cultural contexts. Trauma has been a recurring theme in literature for centuries, and it is often used to explore the ways in which traumatic experiences affect individuals and societies. Some of the ways that trauma has been depicted in literature include:

- a. **Flashbacks and Memories:** Literature on trauma most often employs Flashback and Memories technique to depict traumatic experiences. These can be triggered by specific events, such as returning to the site of a traumatic event or encountering a person who was involved in the trauma.
- b. **Fragmentation and Disassociation:** Trauma can cause individuals to feel disassociated from their own experiences, and this is often depicted in literature through fragmented narratives, disjointed language, or shifting perspectives.
- c. **Guilt and Shame:** Survivors of trauma often struggle with feelings of guilt or shame, and this is another common theme in literature. Characters may feel responsible for the traumatic events they experienced, or they may feel ashamed for not being able to prevent them.
- d. **Loss and Grief:** Trauma can also result in profound loss and grief, and this is another common theme in literature. Characters may grieve for lost loved ones or for the loss of their own sense of self.
- e. **Coping and Healing:** Many works of literature also explore the ways in which individuals cope with and heal from trauma. This can include seeking therapy, turning to religion or spirituality, or finding solace in creative pursuits.

Overall, the depiction of trauma in literature allows authors to explore the complex and often devastating effects of traumatic experiences on individuals and societies. Through their depictions of trauma, these works of literature offer insights into the human experience and can help readers to better understand and empathize with those who have experienced trauma.

The Holocaust was a catastrophic event in world history that took the lives of millions of Jews and other minority groups during World War II. The trauma of the Holocaust is deep and long-lasting, and its effects can be felt not only by those who directly experienced it but also by their descendants and future generations.

Holocaust trauma can manifest in various ways, including but not limited to:

Psychological Trauma: Survivors of the Holocaust often suffer from psychological trauma that includes symptoms such as anxiety, depression, nightmares, flashbacks, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Social Isolation: Survivors of the Holocaust often experience social isolation as a result of the trauma they endured. Many may feel disconnected from their families, friends, and communities, and struggle to form new relationships. **Guilt and shame:** Holocaust survivors may experience feelings of guilt and shame related to their survival, especially if they lost loved ones during the Holocaust. **Physical health problems:** Survivors of the Holocaust may be at increased risk for a range of physical health problems, including heart disease, diabetes, and certain types of cancer. **Intergenerational trauma:** The trauma of the Holocaust can be passed down through generations, affecting the children and grandchildren of survivors. This intergenerational trauma can manifest in a variety of ways, including anxiety, depression, and difficulty forming relationships.

It's important to note that the effects of Holocaust trauma can vary widely among individuals and families. Some survivors may experience resilience and post-traumatic growth, while others may struggle with the lasting effects of trauma for the rest of their lives. It is crucial that we acknowledge and support survivors and their descendants, and work to prevent such atrocities from happening again.

Elie Wiesel's works share his personal experience of the Holocaust, and the trauma he endured during his imprisonment in Nazi concentration camps. The trauma reverberations of his experiences can be seen throughout his writing, including his memoir "Night"¹ and his novels such as *Dawn* and *Day*.

One of the most significant ways that trauma reverberates in Wiesel's work is through his depiction of the psychological impact of the Holocaust on survivors. Wiesel's characters often struggle with feelings of guilt, shame, and survivor's guilt, and they are haunted by the memories of the atrocities they witnessed and experienced. In *Night*, for example, Wiesel's protagonist, also named Elie Wiesel, struggles to reconcile his faith with the horrors he witnesses in the concentration camps, and he is haunted by the memory of his father's death.

Wiesel's work also investigates the concept of memory and its connection to trauma. Many of his characters struggle to reconcile their recollections of the Holocaust, and they frequently debate how to remember and memorialize the atrocities of the Holocaust in a way that is both truthful and dignified. Wiesel's novels *Dawn* and *Day* both examine the issue of memory and its relationship to trauma in different ways, with "Dawn" focusing on memory as a kind of struggle against oppression and "Day" examining memory as a means of coming to terms with previous pain.

Lastly, the issue of evil in the world, or theodicy, is another topic that Wiesel addresses in his writing. A recurring topic in Wiesel's literature is his doubt about the existence of a just and compassionate God as a result of his experiences during the Holocaust. For instance, Wiesel's protagonist in *Night* wrestles with the notion that God could permit such atrocities to occur and comes to the conclusion that God has abandoned him and the other Holocaust victims. Overall, the trauma reverberations of Elie Wiesel's experiences during the Holocaust are a central theme in his writing. Through his depictions of the psychological impact of trauma, the theme of memory, and the problem of evil, Wiesel's work explores the profound and lasting impact of the Holocaust on survivors and the world as a whole.

The echoes of trauma runs throughout Elie Wiesel's work *The Accident*. The novel circles around Eliezer, a Holocaust survivor who is troubled by his tragic experiences and strives to cope with them. The work depicts echoes of trauma in several ways, including Eliezer's dreams and flashbacks. Throughout the narrative, Eliezer experiences vivid dreams and haunting memories about his time in concentration camps, which frequently leave him feeling overwhelmed and disoriented. The narrative also contains frequent flashbacks to Eliezer's time in the camps, emphasizing the depth of the suffering he experienced. Another way that trauma is explored in the novel is through the character of Lieberman, a survivor of a different kind of trauma - the loss of his

¹ Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. Translated by Stella Rodway, Hill and Wang, 1960.

family in a car accident. Like Eliezer, Lieberman is deeply affected by his experiences, and he struggles to come to terms with the loss of his loved ones. The novel draws parallels between the trauma of the Holocaust and the trauma of Lieberman's loss, suggesting that all forms of trauma have lasting effects on those who experience them.

The novel also unravels the theme of guilt, which is often a common emotion for survivors of trauma. Eliezer, for example, feels guilty for having survived the Holocaust while so many others perished. Lieberman also feels guilty for his role in the accident that killed his family. These feelings of guilt are a common response to trauma, as survivors often struggle to make sense of what has happened to them and why they were spared while others were not.

The Accident portrays the story of a holocaust survivor struggling to come to terms with his life after World War II. The main character is a journalist whose experiences during the holocaust have left him, like many others, with a strong sense of despair and self-hate, making him impossible to find any satisfaction in life. Despite the efforts of his girlfriend and others, he finds himself withdrawing from life. The title of the novel refers to an accident that occurs when he is hit by a cab, while on his way to the theatre. This accident triggers a series of memories that take the reader for a journey through the protagonist's psychological and emotional struggles as he grapples with his urge to end his life while simultaneously recovering from a near-death experience. The original French title of the book was *Le Jour*¹ (Day), and it follows the author's two previous works: *Dawn and Night*.

Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel wrote the novel, which was published in 1961. The main character, who is without a name throughout the bulk of the novel, is a journalist living in New York City. *The Accident* tells the tale of how the protagonist finds himself in the hospital after being hit by a cab while walking to the theatre one night with his girlfriend, Kathleen. He is badly injured and spends the next several weeks recovering in the hospital. The protagonist in the hospital bed, remembers his first encounter with Kathleen, whom he first met while living in Paris, years earlier. Kathleen speaks French with a strong American accent; she is not a holocaust survivor. Still, she is struggles with trauma like the main character.

Kathleen, born in America, escaped the holocaust, whereas our protagonist has lived through it. Still, the guilt the protagonist feels at being left alive while so many perished is somehow akin to the guilt Kathleen feels at having been born in a place where she managed to escape it altogether. History has left them both bereft of any sense of normalcy. His own first-hand experiences with fear, persecution, torture, death and humiliation have left the protagonist unable to take at face value the more humane and beautiful aspects of humanity, so maimed is he emotionally and psychologically by the brutality of the holocaust. It is not only his suffering that has left him bereft. He is struggling to come to terms with his own actions in the face of such brutality.

As for Kathleen, she is acutely aware of the suffering of millions just like the protagonist, suffering that she escaped not because of who she is, but simply because of where she was born. This causes her to experience a level of guilt not unlike the guilt her boyfriend experiences. The main character's guilt, both at surviving the holocaust and at his own reaction to it, causes him to feel a sense of despair coupled with such intense self-loathing that he finds it difficult to embrace life. In the course of the novel, it comes out that the protagonist is actually aware of the presence of the cab that is careening towards him on the night of the accident. In fact, he is not only aware of it. He allows it to hit him.

The reason for the protagonist's seemingly incomprehensible willingness to welcome his own death is brought out in the preface to the novel. After the holocaust, Wiesel tells us, many of the Jewish children in Poland were unable to embrace life. "They had known how to fight hunger, conquer fear, and outmanoeuvre the myriad perils that had plagued them during the reign of Night. But once the world had more or less returned to 'normal,' they gave up."² The painful awareness of the extent to which the horrors of the holocaust had depleted them, coupled with the feeling that

¹ The work *The Accident* has an alternate title 'Day' by Elie Wiesel.

² Wiesel, Elie. "Preface" *The Accident*. Hill and Wang, 1973.

they had been both vanquished and stigmatized, left them feeling so completely alone that they no longer had a reason to live. Such appears to be the fate of the protagonist in the novel.

As the protagonist while recuperating in the hospital, revisits his past as a holocaust survivor which tortures him with feelings of guilt and anguish over the death of his grandmother, sister and parents. He recalls the painful memory of him being abandoned on a train platform while he watched his family being hauled away. The realisation that he survived while countless others perished haunts him and makes things worse. He feels ashamed by the behaviour he resorted to when the brutality he was subjected to brought him to the point where he was willing to sacrifice others to ensure his own survival.

In the end, the protagonist realises, with the help of an artist friend, that he has failed the very people he loved most by living in the past, rather than embracing his own future. In a symbolic gesture of great emotional impact, he watches as his dearest friend, also a survivor, takes the portrait he has painted of our protagonist and burn it. In that moment, our protagonist realizes that the empty soul, represented by the portrait, is being murdered right before his eyes - not to bring death, but to release him from the guilt and shame that has kept him from embracing life. The pile of ashes left by the burned effigy of the protagonist will now set him free to become whole again. He no longer has to kill himself. He has already done it. Now he can release his own ashes into the cold night air where they will mingle with his grandmother's, and perhaps this will provide the release that will finally allow him to live again

Overall, *The Accident* is a powerful exploration of trauma and its effects on individuals. Through its depictions of dreams, flashbacks, guilt, and the parallel traumas of the Holocaust and Lieberman's loss, the novel emphasizes the lasting impact of trauma on those who experience it. *The Accident* is a short story by Elie Wiesel that follows the character of Elisha, a Holocaust survivor, as he navigates a new life in post-war Paris. The story begins with Elisha accidentally hitting a woman with his car while driving home from work. The woman, who is identified only as Madame, is injured in the accident and Elisha takes her to a hospital. As he waits for news about her condition, Elisha reflects on his life as a survivor of the Holocaust and the guilt and responsibility he feels for having survived when so many others did not.

Elisha's thoughts are interrupted by the arrival of Madame's husband, who is furious with him for causing the accident. The two men argue, with Elisha trying to explain that the accident was an honest mistake, but Madame's husband remains angry and blames Elisha for his wife's injuries. As the story unfolds, Elisha's guilt and sense of responsibility become increasingly palpable. He visits Madame in the hospital and begins to form a bond with her, seeing in her injuries a reflection of his own suffering as a survivor of the Holocaust.

In the end, Elisha learns that Madame has died from her injuries, and he is left to grapple with the weight of his guilt and his sense of responsibility for her death. The story is a poignant exploration of survivor's guilt and the challenges of living with the legacy of trauma. (bookrags.com/)

Elie Wiesel has brought out a gripping story that picturises the pangs of trauma in his famous novel *Night*, a memoir that recounts his experiences as a young Jewish boy during the Holocaust. The book follows Wiesel's journey from his hometown of Sighet, Transylvania, to several concentration camps, including Auschwitz and Buchenwald.

As a teenager, Wiesel and his family were rounded up and sent to Auschwitz, where they were separated and sent to different sections of the camp. Wiesel was forced to work in a series of gruelling jobs, enduring hunger, cold, and abuse from the guards and other prisoners. Throughout the book, Wiesel struggles to maintain his faith in God in the face of the horrors of the Holocaust. He witnesses countless atrocities, including the death of his father, and experiences profound feelings of despair and hopelessness.

Despite these struggles, Wiesel emerges from the Holocaust with a sense of hope and a commitment to bearing witness to the atrocities he witnessed. *Night* is a powerful account of the human capacity for cruelty and resilience in the face of unimaginable suffering, and has become a seminal work in Holocaust literature. Incidents that leave a lasting memory fuelling trauma load the pages of the novel: the hanging scene in the novel where a young boy is caught attempting to

steal during the chaos of a bombing raid. As a punishment, he is sentenced to death by hanging: "The three victims mounted together onto the chairs. The three necks were placed at the same moment within the nooses. 'Long live liberty!' cried the two adults. But the child was silent." (*Night* 62). The silence is not out of a calmer mind but the reverberation of trauma that has muted all senses to an extent where the boy does not know how to react. He was silenced by the events than the punishment and torture inflicted.

V. Conclusion

Elie Wiesel reflects on the hanging and its aftermath, justifying that such cruelty changed his perspective on the world: "Behind me, I heard the same man asking: 'Where is God now?' And I heard a voice within me answer him: 'Where is He? Here He is—He is hanging here on this gallows . . .'" (*Night* 62). This horrific event serves as a powerful illustration of the degrading cruelty that Elie Wiesel and other Holocaust victims experienced. The young boy's hanging provides a striking example of the moral and spiritual difficulties that individuals facing such severe conditions must overcome.

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Sacred spaces, social values and traditional practices of karbi people in north-east Bhārat

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I. Abstract

North-Eastern region of Bharat is the homeland of many tribal groups. The tribes of this region have different languages, traditions, culture, beliefs etc. Among them, the Karbi tribe is one of the indigenous, ethnic and third largest tribes primarily inhabiting the districts of Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong district of Assam. These districts follow different administrative system as government of India had given autonomous status under sixth schedule of Indian constitution on 17th November, 1951 and on 23rd June, 2016. The culture, tradition, customs, beliefs and values are very unique comparison to another tribe of Bharat. Karbi people traditionally follow animism, that means giving importance to natural elements like rivers, mountains, trees and animals. They also strongly believe in rituals, as it is a part of their culture which have been followed since ancient times. Therefore, this paper aims to explore the social values, rituals and practices performed by Karbi tribe people of North east Bharat. Findings of the study reveal that the rituals or festivals followed by Karbi culture are Chojun or Swarak Puja which is performed to please the deities and spirits, seeking blessings for the family's well-being, prosperity and protection from illness, Chomangkan, which is the biggest and expensive festival performed specially for death person or can be said as funeral ritual. This ceremony lasts for four days and four nights), Shekarkli which includes Peng (it is performed for peace at the home), Rit-Karkli (for a good harvest), Vowurmatha (good health and harmony within the community or family), Rongker (particularly performed for a village to get rid of disease for the year) etc. The Karbi tribe people also place significant importance on their culture as cooperatively working together in the community and participating in any social and cultural events. So, present study is adopting qualitative approach of research selecting Higher Secondary school students as sample for collecting data. At the completion of this research, it is expected to draw many significant findings on the sacred spaces, social values and traditional practices of Karbi people who are working as agent for sustainability of this mother earth.

II. Keywords

Culture, Rituals, Practices and Social Values.

III. Introduction

The North-East region of Bharat is the home of various indigenous tribal groups. These tribal groups have unique culture, languages, food habit, traditional beliefs which are completely different from one another tribe. As, all the indigenous tribe has different characteristics, one of the unique tribes of North-East region is Karbi tribe. They are known as the third largest indigenous tribe in Assam, who mainly inhabit in hilly areas specially in Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong districts. These areas are often referred to as Karbi-dominated districts. These two districts follow different administrative system as government of India had given autonomous status under sixth schedule of Indian constitution on 17th November, 1951 and on 23rd June, 2016. Karbi Anglong district, covering an area of 10,434 square kilometers, is the largest district in Assam. It shares its eastern boundary with Golaghat district, while its western side is bordered by Morigaon district and a portion of the state of Meghalaya¹. Karbi tribe people are scattered in many places of North-East Bharat, particularly in different districts of Assam like Golaghat, Nagaon, Sonitpur, Morigaon, orth

¹ Hansepi, L., & Laisram, R. (2022). Karbi Women and Environmental Conservation. Grassroots Journal of Natural Resources, 05(03), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.33002/nr2581.6853.050301>

Cachar (presently Dima Hasao) and Kamrup district. They are known as *Amri-Karbis*¹. According to their folklore, the original homeland of Karbi people was on the mountain peaks. There are two different views regarding the origin of the name "Karbi". The first view says it comes from the ords "Thekar kibi", which means a social ritual of purifying a newborn baby. Another view, shared by a writer of Karbi Anglong says that it comes from "*Me akar kibi*". Here, "*Me*" means fire, "*Akar*" means spark and "*Kibi*" means to keep it. This refers to the old tradition of preserving fire in the hearth, which later came to be known as "Karbi". The Karbi tribe was earlier known as "*Mikir*". The word "*Mikir*" was given by the British after Treaty of Yandaboo, as an easier way to refer to the tribe. But, the Karbi's themselves prefer the name Karbi, which is connected to their cultural and linguistic identity².

The social values prevalent in the Karbi tribe are very different in comparison to other tribes of Assam. It is fact that, Karbi people are hill dwellers, as they lived in forests surrounded by nature. They were indoctrinated to believe in the principles of animism due to the specific conditions of their surroundings. Animism means, it is a belief that natural objects, thick forests, plants, animals and even the elements like rivers, waterfalls and mountains have spirits or souls. The Karbi people worship both demons and deities and treat them with equal respect. They also believe that life exists in many things around them, like stones, trees, forests and even the air. To please the gods, goddesses, demons and evil spirits, they perform animal sacrifices. As said by Das (2022)³, that Karbi people are not allowed to setup a village near streams. It is their belief that misfortunes and diseases are caused by evil spirits if a group of people or a person live on hilltops and in streams. Another important part of Karbi religion is ancestor worship, especially during rituals like *Thi Karthi* or *Mosera* (a traditional Karbi ceremony that takes place after a person's death). In their funeral rites, the Karbis celebrate both death and life. They believe that the soul of the deceased cannot reach its final destination without mourning and wailing. After doing this only, the soul can travel back to the ancestral village. This journey is not considered going to heaven or hell, but rather a return to the village of their ancestors. The Karbi tribe people also place significant importance on their culture as cooperatively working together in the community and participating in any social and cultural events. In present, when disputes or disagreements arise in Karbi society, that are typically resolved through discussions or meetings led by respected local leaders or group like Karbi Students' Association (KSA).

According to Bey (2009)⁴, Karbi people are not atheists, neither Hindus nor Christians. They strongly believe in the existence of God and usually worship to godhead. But they don't worship in temples, shrines or idols. They generally worship their surroundings like big rivers, mountains, thick forests, waterfalls and even sun and moon are worshipped as divine beings. The essential items for worshipping the divine include fowls, goats, he-pigs, rice beer, wine, dry gourd shells and plantain leaves. However, they follow their own religion and traditions, which have been part of their society since the beginning. Bey said that, their faith and worship practices were established by three legendary persons: *Hemphu* (creator of the universe), *Mukrang* (protector of human beings) and *Rasinja* (mother earth). These persons played an important role in the well-being of the Karbi tribe. Because of them, the Karbi's proudly call themselves *Hemphu Mukrang Aso*, which means sons of *Hemphu* and *Mukrang*. Karbi people said that they are inhabitants of the hills, who lived in dense forest and isolated places which are difficult to reach who live in plains. As they live in hills, they practice jhum or shifting cultivation for their livelihood and in present time also agriculture remains the main occupation. In their culture, they participate many religious festivals like *Chojun* or *Swarak*, *Chomangkan*, *Shekarkli*, *Vowurmatha*, *Rongker* etc.

¹ Das, J. (2022). Festivals of the Karbis: An Introduction. In Glimpes of Karbi Literature and Culture. Ujjal Borah, Pragya, Mediahype publication.

² Bey, M. S. (2019). In The Karbi Belief. Karbi Lammet Amei, Diphu.

³ Das, J. (2022). Festivals of the Karbis: An Introduction. In Glimpes of Karbi Literature and Culture. Ujjal Borah, Pragya, Mediahype publication.

⁴ Bey, M. S. (2019). In The Karbi Belief. Karbi Lammet Amei, Diphu.

Therefore, this study will help to understand the Karbi culture and its unique way of life, including their traditional practices, religious beliefs, festivals and community values.

IV. Significance of the study

Karbi people have a unique and rich cultural identity. They follow animism, which means believing all things in nature, such as animals, plants, rivers, mountains, stones and even the air, have a spirit or soul. Karbi people worship both deities and demons and perform animal sacrifices to honour them, because believing such rituals bring well-being and prosperity to their community. In their culture, rituals are a significant part of their lives, performed for various reasons such as the well-being of the community, good harvests, peace, prosperity, good health and success. Sacred spaces, such as forests, are not only spiritual but also essential for the community's daily needs. They also give special importance living in harmony with nature, respecting nature, use limited resources as per their needs. The Karbi people practices sustainable methods for their livelihood, such as jhum cultivation, water conservation method, use traditional tools made from bamboo and wood and conservation of forests. Researchers observed that Karbi people have different way of life, traditional beliefs and practices, Social Values such as cooperation within the community, respect for elders, respect for nature and the importance of rituals.

This research study will help to understand the significance of Social Values, traditions, their way of life, their society's structure and how they maintain peace and order in their society. It will also help to promote sustainable practices in modern society.

Hence, this study will explore and give a clearer understanding of how Karbi people perceive the world around them.

V. Objectives of the study

Present study is based on the following objectives-

- To explore the traditional ecological practices of Karbi people in sacred spaces in North East Bharat.
- To understand the social values of Karbi Higher Secondary school students.
- To understand the social and ecological practices of Karbi people that are involved in conservation of environment in North East Bharat.

VI. Delimitation of the study

The present study is delimited to Karbi boys and girls students of Higher Secondary schools of Karbi Anglong district, Assam. The researcher has selected 3 schools purposively from 3 Blocks i.e., Samelangso, Howraghat and Langsomepi, which consists of 36 students of class XII.

VII. Method used in this study

This study employs a qualitative research approach following semi-structured interviews to gain an in-depth understanding of the Karbi participants involved in the study. Therefore, primary data were collected through semi-structured interview schedule using an audio recorder.

VIII. Population and sample of the study

The current study focuses on Karbi boys and girls studying in Higher Secondary schools in the Karbi Anglong district, Assam. This district comprises of seven educational blocks. For this research, 3 Higher Secondary schools were selected out of 10 from three educational blocks. The population size for the study is 178 Karbi students. From this population, 20% Karbi students, i.e., 36 were selected as the sample for the study. Out of these 36 Karbi students, 18 boys and 18 girls were purposively selected. Hence, purposive sampling technique was employed to gather in-depth and relevant data.

IX. Tool used in the study

A self-constructed semi-structured interview schedule on Social Values was used by the researcher to collect the relevant data. The interview schedule consists of Seven components which are Tolerance, Equality, Participation, Accountability, Freedom, Dignity and Nature concern. It was administered on 10+ 2 Class students. Opinion of five academic experts of related areas were collected for checking content validity of the tool.

For, the variable Traditional Practices, data were collected through observation method.

X. Analysis of qualitative data

To analyze the qualitative data, observation method and thematic analysis technique were used. For thematic analysis technique, the researcher first transcribed the audio recordings into text, then coded the raw data into a structured format, identified themes, and interpreted the data.

XI. Analysis and Discussion

Objective 1: To explore the traditional ecological practices of Karbi people in sacred spaces in North East Bharat.

The Karbi person, an indigenous tribal group has a rich tradition of ecological practices that are an essential part of their culture and daily life. These traditions show their close connection with nature and their sustainable way of living. The following are their ecological practices-

- a. **Jhum cultivation:** It is also said as *Ara Kheti*. Jhum cultivation is one of the important traditional farming methods for earning a livelihood among the Karbi people. Rice is the main crop grown in jhum fields. There are variety of crops grown in the field like cereals, vegetables, pulses, maize, sesame, oilseeds, spices, ginger, black pepper, broom, turmeric, pineapple, mango, banana, sugarcane, tapioca, orange, mausambi, and fiber crops. Karbi people while selecting lands for jhum cultivation, they have certain religious beliefs. They perform specific rituals and celebrate festivals before starting jhum farming and during the harvest also. It is believed that these traditions will bring good fortune and ensure successful farming. *Rongker* is one of the major spring time annual festivals celebrated every year at the beginning of New Year from 5th January or 5th February. During this festival, the elder male performs the *Rongker* rituals to protect the community from diseases and natural disasters for the whole year. Women are not allowed to enter the worship area during the festival¹.
- b. **Traditional tools:** The Karbi people use various traditional tools in their daily lives. These tools are often handmade and crafted from natural materials especially with bamboo and wood. Bamboo has always been an important part of Karbi culture. Some the tools used in agriculture, festivals, home, making clothes are *Chohu* and *Mucham* (bamboo craft used during the ritual *Chojun* puja), *Seh* (bamboocraft to prepare local alcoholic drink), *Langthe* (bamboo tubes used in chojun for distributing drinking water), *Vo-um* (cage made from bamboo), *Lumphlak* (spoon), *Nopak abe* (Knife handle), *Haak* (used to carry vegetables, fruits and other forest products), *Laanghan* (glass), *Cheng* (drum), *Muri* (wooden flute), *Pangche* (bamboo flute), *Kachivur Aterang* (weaving machine), etc².
- c. **Weaving:** As mentioned by Bhattacharjee (2015)³, Karbi people make various traditional hand-made clothes. They use different material instruments made of bamboo and fiber tools for weaving. The traditional weaving machine known as *Kachivur Aterang* in Karbi language is mainly used by Karbi women to weave these clothes. The tools and materials used in the *Kachivur Aterang* are as follows:
 - **Harpi:** Made from wood called *dok-kichu* in Karbi. It is used to weave (*keteng*) the cloth.
 - **Thihu:** A belt worn around the waist while weaving.
 - **Thening:** Two barrels used to tighten the weave and help in folding the cloth.
 - **Adang:** It is made of bamboo and used to keep the cloth even and maintain its parallel breadth.
 - **Hi-i akaibong:** Small bamboo sticks used for changing the layer of the thread woven.
 - **Thelangpong:** Two parallel sticks used to create design layer.
 - **Uvek:** A tool used to hold and tighten the layers of the cloth.

¹ Sarkar, R., & Bora, A. K. (n.d.). Role of Karbi people in practicing Jhum cultivation in Karbi Anglong district, Assam. Journal of Xi'an Shiyu University, Natural Science Edition, 17(2), 68–88.

² Teron, R & B, S.K. (2012). Traditional uses of bamboos among the Karbis, a hill tribe of India. The Journal of the American Bamboo Society, 25(1), 1-8. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/306016794_Traditional_uses_of_bamboos_among_the_Karbhis_a_hill_tribe_of_India

³ Bhattacharjee, S. (2015). Significance of Natural Resources in material culture: A Study on the Karbis of Karbi Anglong, Assam. Humankind, 11, 117-143.

- **Honthari:** A bamboo stick used to roll up the thread.
- **Honthari langpong:** A hollow barrel used as a cover for the *honthari* bamboo stick.
- d. **Water conservation:** In the Karbi hills, water mostly comes from small streams, rivers and waterfalls. Traditionally, Karbi women gather water using a long bamboo tube called a *langpong*. The bamboo tubes are specially prepared by removing the inner part to make a long, hollow tube, which is then carried in a traditional basket called an *ingtong*. They collect only as much water as needed and avoid waste to make the practice sustainable. Water conservation was an integral part in Karbi folklore and rituals. The Karbi people often perform rituals and ceremonies to honour water sources like rivers, streams and ponds to protect and preserve them. These rituals include prayers and offerings, such as animal sacrifices or gifts like banana plantains and tobacco¹. Water is also used to solve various problems, such as illness, personal problems, family issues and unfinished tasks. A traditional ritual like *Vur Kamatha* is conducted by local priests. In this ritual, water is sprinkled around the house with the belief that it will bring positive energy².
- e. **Animal husbandry:** Hansepi & Laisram (2022)³, described that the Karbi people, especially women, have a strong tradition of animal husbandry, primarily focusing on pigs, goats, cows and chickens. Swine farming is important in Karbi society because it is connected to their farming method, called shifting cultivation. The pigs are fed with leftover crops and other agricultural waste. The animals are kept in bamboo sheds and their waste is used as manure for farming. Goats manure helps improve soil quality, while poultry and duck farming also play a key role in their economy. The animals are mainly fed with locally available resources like maize, rice, and wild taro leaves. The Karbis also raise cows mainly for farming purposes, not for milk, as dairy farming is rare among them. They also don't consume beef. Most of the food for the cows, as well as other animals, comes from the forest, which helps keep their farming practices sustainable and environment friendly.
- f. **Traditional Settlement Pattern:** The traditional house of the Karbi people is called a Tsang-ghar. Before the construction starts, a bamboo pole is set up and left for three days and three nights. If there are any bad signs or evil effects, they will be noticed; otherwise, it will be regarded as a positive sign of good luck. Typically, a Tsang-ghar is 50 feet long, 15 feet wide and 6 feet tall. It has three main sections-
 - **The outer zone:** In this zone, space (*Fak-boy*) was made to keep the food vessel for the domesticated pig, an open area for seating guest (*Marh*), a place to store firewood (*Theng Roirai*) etc.
 - **the inner zone :** A room is made for a newly married couple known as (*Ingdeng*), a sleeping room for adolescent girls (*Tibhung*), sleeping place for widows or grandmothers (*Pang honthu a tibung*), place to store the iron tools used for animal sacrifice (*Nokchek*) etc. At the same time, outsiders are not permitted to enter the inner zone of the hut.
 - **The rear zone:** This area is located at the back of the hut. It is typically used for specific purposes such as storage or other family-related functions⁴.

XII. Objective 2: To understand the Social Values of Karbi Higher Secondary School students.

In order to find out the Social Values of Karbi Higher Secondary students, data were collected from 36 Karbi students through a semi-structured interview process. The collected data were transcribed

¹ Hansepi, L., & Laisram, R. (2022). Karbi Women and Environmental Conservation. Grassroots Journal of Natural Resources, 05(03), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.33002/nr2581.6853.050301>

² Kalita, K. (2024). Karbis use water to heal illness, resolve family disputes: Scholar. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/spotlight/isb-executive-educations-leadership-with-ai-programme-empowers-leaders-to-transform-operations-through-technology/articleshow/112280654.cms>

³ Hansepi, L., & Laisram, R. (2022). Karbi Women and Environmental Conservation. Grassroots Journal of Natural Resources, 05(03), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.33002/nr2581.6853.050301>

⁴ Bhattacharjee, S. (2015). Significance of Natural Resources in material culture: A Study on the Karbis of Karbi Anglong, Assam. Humankind, 11, 117-143.

and systematically analysed using the thematic analysis method. The findings were categorized and presented in one theme:

a. Religious Practices

Religious practices of Karbi people are based on dichotomous belief which means worshipping both demons and deities (*Hi:i- Arnām*). They believe that life exists in many things around them, such as stones, trees, forests and even the air. To please the gods, goddesses, demons and evil spirits, they perform animal sacrifices and various rituals for good health, peace and success. They are as follows-

- **Chojun or Swarak puja**

Chojun or *Swarak puja* is performed to seek blessings from deities and spirits. In this ritual, the priest invokes the household spirit and guardian spirits for the family's prosperity, crop productivity and protection from diseases. During the puja, deities like *Shar*, *Barithe*, *Arnām* and *Arni* are worshipped. *Hemphu*, the supreme god in Karbi folk religion is also worshipped. This ritual is conducted three times over a span of three years. In this puja, a family choose a place near their house for the rituals and honour both gods and spirits, the Devil *Hii-i* and other smaller gods are also worshipped. An important part of the ritual is drinking a special rice beer called *Horpo*, which is made using a unique sieve called 'sih'. A special basket known as *horhak* is also used during the ritual. Family members and relatives are invited to join the event and their blessings are requested. Some of the participants said-

Participant 1: *"I believe that Chojun Puja should be performed because it is an integral part of our culture. To preserve our traditions, it is important to continue this practice, as it brings good health and success".*

Participant 2: *"Chojun Puja should be performed very carefully otherwise if any mistakes is done then it may negatively impact the family. It could lead to mental health issues or other consequences".*

- **Chomangkan**

Chomangkan is the largest and most expensive festival of the Karbi tribe. This festival is dedicated to honoring the dead. It is a funerary or death ritual performed after cremation to ensure the eternal peace of the departed soul. The purpose of *Chomangkan* is to seek blessings for the deceased. As Karbi people believe that man soul is eternal and goes to the land of ancestors (*Chom Arong*). The soul is reborn as a baby within the same *kur* (clan) to which the deceased originally belonged. The festival lasts for four days and four nights. *Chong Chingnang* and *Nimso Kerung* ceremonial dances are performed to honour the dead. Here, the entire community without any formal invitations can participate in the festival. One participant said-

Participant 1: *"It is believed that a deceased person goes to the land of ancestors only if their family members perform this ritual otherwise, the deceased person cannot achieve Mukti (liberation)".*

- **Shekarkli**

Participant 1: *"Shekarkli ritual is performed to honor forefathers and seek blessings for good health, success, happiness, financial prosperity. This ritual is conducted once a year".*

Participant 2: *"Shekarkli ritual includes various sub-rituals like Peng, performed for peace at the home, Rit-Karkli, for a good harvest, Vowurmatha, for good health and harmony within the community or family and Rongker".*

Participant 3: *"Rongker is a major community festival of the Karbi people, celebrated at the beginning of the new year. It is a ritual to worship deities for the well-being of the village, good harvests and protection from diseases and natural disasters".*

Participant 4: *"In this festival only men can participate in the rituals. women are not allowed to participate in the worship area but can take food offerings".*

Participant 5: *"The festival involves sacrificing animals like goats, pigs and chickens to please the gods. Another kind of Rongker is also called as Wofong Rongker and this festival is held after every five years".*

Therefore, in modern times, it has been observed and understood through semi-structured interviews, how Karbi people preserve their culture by following their traditional ecological practices, conservation of environment and performing various rituals to ensure the well-being and prosperity of the community as a whole.

XIII. Objective 3:

To understand the social and ecological processes of Karbi people that are involved in conservation of environment in North East Bharat.

Karbi people have a close relationship with the environment. It is because they depend on natural resources like forests, rivers and soil for food, water and shelter. Their traditional beliefs teach them to respect nature as a source of life and prosperity. The traditional ways to conserve the environment are as follows-

- a. **Conservation of Forests:** Forests are the primary source of resources for the daily lives and survival of the Karbi people. The forests are not only a source of food, but provide materials like wood and bamboo for shelter, tools, different plants for medicine and fuel. The Karbi people's livelihoods are completely depends on these forests. They believe certain parts of the forest are sacred and should be protected. This respect for the forest is based on their cultural and social norms. While the Karbi people rely on the forest for survival, they practice sustainable harvesting. Karbi women traditionally prepare food using a firewood stove made of mud and collect firewood from nearby forests. However, they are not allowed to cut branches from trees, they only collect dried wood. They prevent over-hunting of animals, over-harvesting of plants and ensure that the entire forest remains healthy and use only what they need. The Karbi people believe that the trees in the forest belong to a territorial deity called *Longri Arnam*, who protects all life in the forest. They perform an annual ritual called *Inglong ase* to honour this deity and only then they feel safe to gather firewood and other forest products¹. So that, according to them this practice helps to prevent deforestation of the forest and maintain the balance of the ecosystem. During the interview one Karbi students said that-
“*I encourage the practice of sacrificing domestic animals such as cows, goats, hens, pigs and ducks as part of rituals for good health and success and sacrificing domestic animals should be consumed by all community. This practice is a part of our culture and has been followed since ancient times. However, it should be performed responsibly and only, when necessary*”.
- b. **Conservation of Medicinal Plants:** Plants are a primary part of the Karbi people's lives. Leaves are the dominant plants that play an important role in preparing traditional medicines and help to cure various health diseases. As Karbi people live close to forests, they face diseases like malaria, jaundice and diarrhoea and rely on medicinal plants for treatment. Their healing practices follow up with both traditional medicine and rituals, such as chanting and worship. For making the traditional medicine, they first pray to the deities or Gods and ask permission by offering them betel leaves and areca nuts, and then only pick parts of different medicinal plants from the groves². According to the survey report by Baidya, Thakur & Devi (2020)³, found that there are 106 medicinal plants, used by Karbi healers for treating different types of diseases such as Fever, Cough, Tonsil, Asthma, Gastric problem, Jaundice, Stomach pain, Mensuration cramps, Stomach ulcer, Dysentery, Ringworm, Skin diseases, Piles, Constipation, Sinus, Intestinal Infection, Blood pressure, Blood purifier, Blood clotting, joint pain and muscle stiffness, Diabetes, Uterus contraction, Wound, Poisonous bites, Hypertension, dog and snake bite, Pneumonia, urinary problem etc.

¹ Hansepi, L., & Laisram, R. (2022). Karbi Women and Environmental Conservation. Grassroots Journal of Natural Resources, 05(03), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.33002/nr2581.6853.050301>

² Barua, K. N., & Baruah, B. (2021). Traditional ecological knowledge of Karbi tribe of Assam with emphasis on health care system. International Journal of Herbal Medicine, 9(6), 08–15.

³ Baidya, S., Thakur, B., & Devi, A. (2020). Ethnomedicinal plants of the sacred groves and their uses by Karbi tribe in Karbi Anglong district of Assam, Northeast India. Indian Journal of Traditional Knowledge, 19(2), 277–287.

It was also observed during the interview session, Karbi students said that-
 “Before taking any medicine or seeking medical treatment, a religious ritual like ‘Sang kelang’,
 should be performed to identify the disease affecting the person”.

XIV. Educational and Social Implications

Present research work is not only to collect relevant information about traditional practices and social values of Karbi people, but also to provide important recommendations to educational administrators, teachers, curriculum planners and other stakeholders. The educational implications of this study are-

The administration of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) should encourage young Karbi learners to conduct research studies on their own Karbi culture and literature.

More books are to be written in Karbi language as well as in Assamese, English and Hindi. The existing Karbi literature must be translated to English emphasising on quality works so that, non-Karbi communities learn and explore about Karbi folklore, history, traditions and environmental practices.

The Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) should take serious responsibility of promoting tourism to attract visitors from other states.

XV. Conclusion

The Karbi people of North-East Bharat have a unique culture, social values, traditional beliefs, that are deeply connected to nature. This study shows how they practice traditional ecological knowledge in their sacred spaces which shows how they live in harmony with the environment. Sacred spaces like forests are not just only spiritual but also important for the community's daily needs. The Karbi people also practice various traditional rituals, such as *Chojun*, *Chomangkan*, *Shekarkli*, *Rongker*, *Sang kelang*. By performing these rituals, they show respect for their ancestors, love for nature and preserve their cultural identity. These traditions also bring the community together and encourage responsible use of various resources.

This research shows how the Karbi people's traditions teach us about living sustainably and protecting both culture and the environment. Their way of life is a valuable example of how communities can balance nature and progress in modern times.

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Socio-centric versus Ātman-centric perspectives: daya Krishna's *Theory of Civilisation*

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I. Abstract

The present paper aims to explore the theory of civilisation propounded by one of the most daring and original contemporary philosophers of India, Daya Krishna. Social philosophy has scarcely occupied the minds of contemporary Indian philosophers. However, Daya Krishna is the solitary figure who was profoundly concerned with society and its pressing problems. Daya makes a distinction between civilisation and culture. Civilisation is the outcome of humans' intellectual or cognitive quest for finding the meaning of their life and their surroundings. In contrast, culture embodies humans' symbolic engagements, concerned with images, myths, and rituals. Each civilisation displays certain distinctive traits. Daya Krishna delineates certain distinctive features of the western and Indian civilisation, which he characterises as socio-centric and Ātman-centric. The Socio-centric perspective is exemplified in the Western culture, while Indian civilisation represents the Ātman-centric perspective. Daya Krishna argues that each perspective emerges from the way we conceive the society and its relation with the individual, with each perspective giving rise to a particular kind of predicament, which he portrays as Socio-centric and Ātman-centric predicaments. These predicaments need to be averted by the self-reflexive social philosopher's commitment to her value-presuppositions.

II. Key Words

Society, Socio-centric and Ātman-centric perspectives, Socio-centric predicament, value-neutrality.

III. Introduction

The philosopher Daya Krishna was singular among the Indian philosophers in that society was one of his most fundamental philosophical concerns. He conducted profound philosophic enquiries about the society, the state and civilisations. The present paper is concerned to explore critically his ideas about the Society and Civilisations. In his books "Social Philosophy: Last and Future" in (1969) and "Civilisations: Nostalgia and Utopia" in (2012), Daya Krishna considered the nature of the society and civilisation. In the former book, Daya seemed to employ the term civilisation and culture interchangeably. However, in the latter treatise, he postulated the distinction between the two, namely culture and civilisation. To Daya Krishna, civilisation marked the transformation of humans from merely being biological creatures into trans-biological beings. Daya Krishna contended that the history of civilisation was the history of human beings; it was a history of creating a world of meanings, a world of significance, a world in which the cosmos, the natural and the biological - was transformed into something that was not biological, that was not natural.¹

Daya Krishna sought to differentiate culture from civilisation on the ground that civilisation entailed humanity's intellectual enterprise which manifested itself into conceptual categories that humans employed to make sense of themselves and their natural and social orders, whereas culture was concerned with images, symbols, and myths and legends.² According to Daya Krishna, civilisations were based on writing. Further, civilisation marked the transition orality to textuality, hence cultures were pervasive but the civilisations were few.³

Having made a distinction between civilisation and culture, he went on to capture what was distinctive to a culture or civilisation. He found that each civilisation displayed a particular way of conceiving society and its relationship to the individuals who composed it. He professed that Western civilisation/culture and Indian civilisation/culture embodied two distinct perspectives on

¹ Daya Krishna, *Civilisations: Nostalgia and Utopia* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2012), 52.

² *Ibid.*, 72.

³ *Ibid.*

society and individuals. He characterised those perspectives as Socio-centric and *Ātman*-centric perspectives which, led to their respective predicaments called Socio-centric and *Ātman*-centric Predicaments. In this paper, I wish to provide an exposition of Daya Krishna's philosophical excursion in the domain of civilisation. Further, I will offer some criticism where I think, Daya Krishna went astray and I will join issues with his exclusive emphasis on the concept of freedom.

IV. The Social Epistemology

Daya Krishna reflected upon the nature of enquiry about society and the individual. Society was a peculiar kind of reality which was radically different from nature. Society did not exist independently of the way we thought about it. Daya Krishna supposed that the way we conceived of society shaped society in that direction. The study of nature was radically different from the study of society. The way we conceived of nature did not seem to affect the natural processes themselves. On the contrary, the independence of natural processes from knowledge was the precondition for the seeking of truth in that realm. But we couldn't possibly make this claim about the society and human beings. The way we conceived of society and humans, determined the way society and humans would come to be. Thus, Daya Krishna did not subscribe to be positivist social science which dominated the field during his times. Daya Krishna seemed to be influenced by the hermeneutic method perfected by Hans Gadamer. This way of social enquiry rejected the explanation model that prevailed the social sciences. Rather, they proposed understanding model which thought of the social enquiry as value laden and enquired into the social location of the enquirer and her value presupposition. Consequently, for Daya Krishna, social inquiry was inescapably value-laden. Then how is the objectivity of social inquiry to be secured? Daya Krishna was convinced that being value-laden did not make social inquiry subjective and solipsistic. The kind of objectivity the social philosopher aspired to lay in making one's value suppositions explicit. A social enquires had to be aware of her value-commitments and assume the consequences of those value presupposition. Social inquiry was essentially self-reflective, unlike the natural science investigations which were solely objective.

V. The Two Conceptions of the Society : Socio-Centric and *Ātman* Centric

After reflecting upon the methodological questions in the domain of social philosophy and social science, Daya Krishna delineated the two contrasting ways in which society could be conceived. The conception of society in which society was conceived as the last term in terms of which everything was to be judged was called the "Socio-centric" perspective on society. On the other hand, another conception of society, which viewed the society not as the ultimate term of reference but as an intermediary term, was characterised by Daya Krishna as the "*Ātman*-centric" perspective.⁴

In the Socio-centric conception, the individual was viewed as a social animal. She achieved her humanity only through the social and cultural tradition in which she had grown, and which alone made her a human being, as distinct from a biological creature.

To put it more analytically, the socio-centric perspective on society presupposed ontological holism, which emphasised the ontological primacy of society. A person's humanity was regarded as derived from her sociality, and it was the process of socialisation that humanised her in the strict sense of the term. Furthermore, as a corollary of this conception, the individual was deemed ephemeral, who came into being and passed away. What endured was the society of which she was a member.

In contrast, in the *Ātman*-centric perspective, which was exemplified in the Hindu culture, a human being was fundamentally viewed as a transcendent being, whose sociality was considered only a contingent feature, which did not define her. On Daya Krishna's view, in the *Ātman*-centric perspective, society was ultimately secondary.⁵ Humans were essentially a-social, or rather trans-social in nature. The relationship with the other, which was fundamental in the socio-centric perspective, was thus secondary too. As the *Ātman*-centric perspective regarded a human being as

⁴ Daya Krishna, *Civilisations: Nostalgia and Utopia* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2012), 13.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 15.

essentially metaphysical or transcendental being, the relationship which this perspective privileged was the relationship between the two It is namely, the relationship between the empirical self and the supreme transcendental Self. As Daya Krishna put it:

“At another level, they may be conceived of as referring to the self as object and the self as the subject. At still another level, the problem may be posed in terms of the identity of a being that is essentially conscious, or rather the identity of consciousness itself.”⁶

It is to be underscored here that Daya Krishna invoked the concept of the ideal type to make a case for his insightful observations on the society and the individual. He averred that the two perspectives, namely the Socio-centric and *Ātman*-centric perspectives and their alleged exemplification in the Western and the Indian culture respectively were to be taken as ideal type constructions and though they approximated to a great extent to the historical reality, they might not exactly correspond to them. The ideal type constructs were an epistemological tool to apprehend the empirical, social and political reality.

VI. The Two Predicaments

As we asserted at the outset that the two way of conceiving society engendered the two undesirable consequences or avoidable situations which Daya Krishna characterised as the two predicaments, in this section, we will consider those two predicaments in their all ramifications.

The socio-centric predicament emanated from viewing the human individual as having nothing in herself which she did not owe to the society. This predicament sought the justification for each of a person's act in terms of its social consequences. The predicament lay in supposing the individual to be burdened with responsibility not just for herself but for the society also. In the eyes of Daya Krishna, the Greek, the Christian, and the Communist versions embodied the Socio-centric predicament, which was premised on the sense of responsibility for the whole society and the consequent guilt if one failed to live up to this vision. Curiously, Daya did not disentangle the socio-centric predicament involved the Greek culture. He would rather focus on the Christian and the Marxist versions of this predicament. Jesus Christ's sacrifice to redeem the humanity from the sin committed by Adam constituted the paradigmatic example of socio-centric perspective and consequent predicament which lay in having guilt ridden consciousness. Furthermore, To Daya Krishna, Marxism exemplified the secular version of socio-centric predicament. According to Daya Krishna, this secular version of socio-centric predicament exhibited an ineluctable sense of remorse on failing to achieve the end of social change.⁷

One would imagine that Daya Krishna's understanding of Marxism is deficient on this count, for though Marxism instantiates the socio-centric perspective on the society as it devolved the responsibility of bringing about the social change on the historical class, say, for example, the bourgeois is obligated to usher humanity in the capitalist society. Similarly, it is the industrial proletariat who is to alter the society in the direction of socialism. However, to impute guilt consciousness on the subject of historical change for failing in its historical role is to miscomprehend the Marxist theory of knowledge. Marxism is primarily concerned with objective changes in the productive forces and the consequent changes in the production relations. What takes place at individual consciousness is none of the concern of Marxism, However it be, Daya Krishna exhibited profound insight and ingenuity in laying bare the undesirable consequences of socio-centric predicament. The principal blemish of the socio-centric predicament is that the completely secularised view of humans as social animals divested of all transcendental faith reduced them to what society made them to be and at another level what it permitted them to be. Differently put, the socio-centric predicaments annihilates human autonomy and creativity.

Let us now turn our gaze to the *Ātman*-centric predicament born of the *Ātman*-centric perspective. *Ātman*-centric predicament consists in devaluing the realm of the social and the moral. The *Ātman*-centric predicament also involves the belittling of the objective and the external world. The Hindu

⁶ Ibid., 16.

⁷ Daya Krishna, *Civilisations: Nostalgia and Utopia* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2012), 15.

hierarchy of values privileges the spiritual or the transcendental self, which is succinctly captured in the saying “For the sake of transcendental self, one should relinquish the whole world.”⁸

This dictum signifies that one ought to abjure the whole nexus of social, moral, and political network as well as the world of things that is instrumental to the satisfaction of one’s biological needs. The outcome of this way of conceiving the society is nondevelopment of natural science and technology. Though Daya Krishna did not mention or allude to this outcome of the *Ātman-centric* perspective’s devaluation of the external world, but it is implied in his denunciation of the predicament engendered by the *Ātman-centric* perspectives. When Marx asserted that India didn’t have history what he intended was that the Indian had not refined their productive forces.⁹

Daya Krishna, however, was more concerned with laying bare the undesirable social moral consequences born of the *Ātman-centric* perspective. As a critical insider, Daya Krishna offered more exhaustive treatment to predicament induced by the *Ātman-centric* perspective. The active concern with the human other, which constituted the heart of the moral situation, thus was minimized into leaving the other to work out her own destiny. This is a telling observation made by Daya Krishna. If one contemplates the prevalence of the practice of untouchability and caste hierarchy, one can not but concur with the thesis propounded by Daya Krishna. The Hindu tradition not merely condoned the injustices of caste and patriarchy but also proffered the Shastric justification of it. It took an encounter with socio-centric West which made the Indians take note of these inhuman aspects of the Hindu way of life.

Furthermore, the denigration and the relegation to a secondary place of human relationship with the embodied other with all its attendant obligations in the world of actions resulted in the enervation of the society. Here, Daya was alluding to the political enslavement which came about when confronted with a people who represented the socio-centric way of life and world. In this regard, Daya Krishna made an immensely insightful point. He affirmed that it was not only hedonistic or aesthetically oriented life which weekend the society but also the spiritualist way of living the life.¹⁰ When a society’s best minds are prone to pursue the trans-social ends which necessitates an active withdrawal from the world and its institutions, the society is liable to be taken over by those who are interested only in their own gain or by those who are bent on transforming the world in world in the image of their own good. Thus, the immoralists within and the messiahs without rule the social realm alternatively. These observations of Daya Krishna ring true when we reflect on the pre-modern Indian society and find that amorality of *Dharmaśāstras* and the political conquest of India by the socio-centric people were the norms rather than the rule.

Thus, Daya’s social philosophy entails voluntarism as it asserts the social philosophers’ choice of conceiving the society one way or the other shapes the society in that direction. In other put differently, Daya’s social ontology and epistemology is anti-positivistic in the sense that it denies to social sciences the kind of objectivity found in natural science. In the following section, we will offer some critical observations on this essay of Daya Krishna.

VII. Criticism

The first criticism concerns the methodological individualism or voluntarism entailed by Daya’s socio-political philosophy. In effect, the kind of freedom of choice Daya assigns to the social enquirers with respect to the conceptualisation of society, is conditioned by the multifarious circumstances in which the enquirer is situated. Further, the way society evolves itself generates certain ideas and perspectives which a socially situated philosopher has to contend with. The point we want to derive home is that kind of free choice of conceptualising the society that Daya ascribes to the social enquirer may be not be available in actuality.

Secondly, one may object to Daya Krishna subsumption of Buddhism into the Hindu tradition. The Śramanic and Vedic traditions that compose the Indian civilisation have always been at

⁸ Daya Krishna, *Civilisations: Nostalgia and Utopia* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2012), 18.

⁹ Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1960). *The Collected Works of Marx and Engels* (Vol. 9). Progress Publishers, Moscow

¹⁰ Daya Krishna, *Civilisations: Nostalgia and Utopia* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2012), 20.

variance at both the philosophical and social level. The Śramanic tradition affirms the religious and social inequality of humans, whereas the Vedic tradition propounds what Dr. Ambedkar called the graded inequality in the religious, social, and economic spheres.

Thirdly, It would appear that Prof. Daya Krishna subscribed to the received interpretation of Gautama Buddha's renunciation of the world. The received interpretation asserts the Buddha renounced the world on seeing an old man, an ailing man and a dead man. However, the studies conducted by such profound scholars as Dharmanand Kosambi and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar demonstrate that the reason for the Buddha's renunciation lay in his social concern. Dr. Ambedkar, in his magnum opus, put forward the thesis with a great deal of plausibility that Siddhartha became a recluse in order to find a cure to the evil of social conflict.¹¹ In fairness to Daya Krishna, it must be acknowledged that he shows some reluctance in subsuming Buddhism into the "*Ātman-centric*" perspective, when he says that Buddha's renunciation did not fit well with the *Ātman-centric* perspective, for the Buddha relinquished the world at the sight of the suffering of the world.¹²

Daya Krishna was optimistic that one could get rid of the shadow cast by two predicaments. He thought that the possibility of action presupposed the possibility of avoiding the evils spawned by the two contending perspectives on society. Daya would say "freedom" was the supreme value whose actualisation entailed the possibility of transcending the Socio-centric and *Ātman-centric* predicaments. For Daya, freedom or autonomy remained most significant value for the society as well as the individual. But this assertion puts him squarely in the liberal-political tradition, which privileges freedom in opposition to equality. In effect, freedom and equality are oppositional categories. Augmenting one's freedom could diminish the freedom of the other. For instance, the freedom of contract of the owner of the means of production diminishes the freedom of the worker, who is compelled to sell her labour power to the owner. Therefore, equality must be equally valuable category, if not more significant, at par with the category of freedom, which Daya Krishna so valourises.

VIII. Conclusion

Daya Krishna raised rather fundamental questions and issues with regard to social philosophy. It would seem he regarded with suspicion the positivist tradition of social science inquiry. He was convinced the nature of enquiry in the natural science and social sciences was quite distinct. The knowledge of the nature was objective, for the natural reality existed independently of the knower, whereas social science enquiry was not realistic in the natural science sense, for the way social enquirer conceived of the social reality shaped the reality in that way. Daya Krishna obviously, was influenced by the phenomenological and hermeneutical methods of doing social sciences. We would imagine that he did subscribe to subjectivist bias of understanding approach conversely propounded by the hermeneutical school of Hans Gadamer et al. Conversely, he admitted the possibility of the measurement of freedom. He argued for the construction of Utopias by the scientists which actualised the ideal of freedom. Here, he seems to affirm the positivist framework of social sciences. In conclusion, as far as his social epistemology is concerned, he sought to synthesise both the positivist and anti-positivist methodology. Based on these assumption, he delineated the two perspectives and the predicaments. He brilliantly brought about consequences of conceiving the society in one way or the other. His diagnosis of the problem is pertinent. Particularly, the way he brought out the devaluation of the moral and the social realm in the *Ātman-centric* perspective is worth acknowledging. Agreeing with Daya, we may urge the need to preclude the both Socio-centric and the *Ātman-centric* predicament, but this cannot be accomplished by merely foregrounding the concept and the value of freedom in bourgeois sense. The two values that would undergird our utopia construction would be "freedom" and "equality" and how they can be meaningfully reconciled.

¹¹ B. R. Ambedkar, *The Buddha and His Dhamma* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2011), 20.

¹² Daya Krishna, *Civilisations: Nostalgia and Utopia* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2012), 17.

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Confluence and contradiction: The role of Buddhism in early India's socio-economic history

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I. Abstract

This paper explores the intricate and symbiotic relationship between religion and the economy during the second urbanisation of ancient India (6th century BCE). It argues that the emergence of new urban centers, agricultural surpluses, and expanding trade networks produced a mercantile elite whose social and economic aspirations were not fully met by the Vedic order. Buddhism, with its ethical emphasis on non-violence (*ahimsā*), adaptability, and organisational discipline, became a religious and institutional framework that both facilitated commerce and redefined socio-political alignments. The Buddhist *saṅgha* not only benefited from merchant patronage but also operated as a parallel socio-economic body, mirroring republican traditions while contributing to political legitimacy. Furthermore, innovations in irrigation, guild based organisation of artisans and traders, and the development of long-distance trade routes fostered economic expansion, with Buddhist institutions acting as cultural and commercial mediators across regions. By examining textual evidence and historiographical debates—from Kosambi's materialist framework to Thapar's kinship class analysis and Sharma's focus on surplus appropriation—the paper demonstrates that Buddhism was not merely a spiritual alternative but also an institutional force embedded in the political economy of the time. The study concludes that this interdependence of religion and economy did not fundamentally dismantle social hierarchies but did harmonise diverse groups, allowing Buddhism to serve as both a moral compass and a vehicle of cultural integration within early Indian civilisation.

II. Keywords

Buddhism; Second Urbanisation; Economy; Trade Networks; *Saṅgha*; *Āhimsa*; Guilds; State Formation; Ancient India; Historiography

III. Introduction

The history of ancient India is marked by a continuous dialogue between material conditions and religious transformation. The sixth century BCE, often described as the period of the second urbanisation, witnessed not only the expansion of agriculture and trade but also the emergence of new religious and philosophical traditions. Traditional Vedic rituals, bound to kinship hierarchies and sacrificial practices, proved inadequate for addressing the needs of newly rising classes of merchants, landowners, and artisans. In this context, Buddhism emerged as both a spiritual and socio-economic force. Its doctrines of *āhimsa*, ethical conduct, and renunciation resonated across different social strata while simultaneously legitimising and facilitating commercial exchange. The Buddhist *saṅgha*, supported by mercantile patronage and organised along collective principles, grew into a powerful institution parallel to the political state. Moreover, Buddhist monasteries strategically located along trade routes fostered cultural transmission and economic stability, integrating religion with commerce and politics. Historiographically, scholars such as Romila Thapar, D.D. Kosambi, and R.S. Sharma have emphasised that the interplay of surplus production, class formation, and religious ideology shaped the contours of this period. This paper, therefore, examines the complementarities of economy and religion during the Buddhist era, highlighting how Buddhism functioned not only as a belief system but also as an essential component of early Indian statecraft and socio-economic organisation.

IV. Kinship, Class and the State in Early Indian Society

The Indian subcontinent presents a complex fusion of social structures. Romila Thapar has argued that describing Vedic society merely as a “tribe” is both imprecise and inadequate. For her, what require closer attention are not only kinship ties but also the mechanisms that controlled economic resources, power, and status. Thapar's analysis traces a progression: beginning with kin groups and lineages, moving toward genealogical hierarchies, and ultimately giving rise to social divisions that crystallized into classes¹

¹ Thapar Romila, *A History of India*, Vol. 1, Reprint Penguin Books, London, 1966, p. 18.

The expansion of civilization into the Gangetic plains accelerated this process, providing fertile ground for the emergence of states. Lawrence Krader defines the state as a political authority that functions through designated officials within a territory, deriving its revenue on an impersonal basis, and integrating social groups with distinct ritual roles and economic functions¹. Yet, in the context of the second urbanisation, this framework requires modification. It was not merely kinship, lineage, or class that structured authority—religious groups, particularly those of the heterodox traditions, increasingly acted as a revolving factor in the execution of state power.

V. **The Complimentary of Economy, Religion and Polity in the Second Urbanisation**

The sixth century BCE became the embryonic stage for new currents of thought in which economic and religious segments functioned as complementary forces, mutually shaping society. Politics, in this framework, was balanced through the interplay of economy and religion, with religion often emerging as the “cradle master” that governed and legitimised other features of the era.

The second urbanisation carried imprints of the first, yet it was distinguished by more substantial social transformations. Whereas the first urbanisation had limited breakthroughs, the second unfolded as a cyclical process of alteration, marked by new equations in the political, economic, and religious spheres. Unlike the earlier phase, the second urbanisation elevated itself by producing durable shifts in social organisation and ideological outlooks.

Politically, the new order was a byproduct of human capacity to wield authority when material conditions provided sufficient means of sustenance. Economically, the surplus generated by agriculture met the basic needs of society and enabled more complex forms of organization. Land ownership, concentrated in the hands of a few, created further stratification and gave rise to new classes that connected rural producers with expanding urban centers. The marketplace emerged as a living reality, becoming the axis that conjoined every aspect of social, political, and religious life.

VI. **Republican States, Trade and the Buddhist Saṅgha**

The eastward advancement of settlement and state formation in the sixth century BCE generated novel impulses not only on the religious front but also on the political. One significant development was the emergence of republican states (*gana-saṅghas*), whose organizational framework in many ways paralleled that of the Buddhist *saṅgha*. The *saṅgha* itself functioned as a collective body with shared decision-making, ethical foundations, and institutional discipline, which made it a highly effective organisation². This resemblance, coupled with its accessibility to wider social groups, helped popularize it among the masses.

The Buddhist *saṅgha*’s core competence lay in its ethical and organisational model, which stood in contrast to the ritual-centered institutions of the Vedic tradition, long associated with the ruling elite. Its social base was strengthened by the patronage of wealthy merchants and traders—those who controlled the flow of goods and generated significant revenue. This mercantile class, increasingly vital to the state’s fiscal structure, became receptive to the ideology of the *saṅgha*. The ruling elite, in turn, recognized the importance of these groups, which were both taxpayers and influential supporters of the Buddhist order.

The rise of the *Mahājanapadas* and their capitals provided fertile ground for these dynamics. As major centers of commerce, they became hubs where trade and ideology intersected. The revival and expansion of trade routes were closely intertwined with the religious preaching of Buddhism and Jainism, both of which patronised trading communities. In this way, religious institutions not only offered moral legitimacy but also facilitated the cultural and economic expansion of trade networks. This paper, therefore, examines the origins of early trade centers and the role of religion—particularly Buddhism—in constructing and sustaining them as integral parts of the socio-political fabric of early India.

¹ Sharma R.S., From Kin to Class, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 20 No. 22, June 1, 1985, pp. 960-961.

² Jayswal K.P., Hindu Polity, Bangalore, 1936, pp. 42-47.

VII. Water Management, Irrigation and the Expansion of Urban Centers

By the middle of the first millennium BCE, the Indian subcontinent witnessed the rise of several urban centers, marking a distinct phase of growth compared to the first urbanisation. While the introduction of iron technology has often been emphasised as the principal factor behind this transformation, it would be reductive to attribute urban expansion solely to metallurgy. Equally significant were the more advanced use of water bodies and the development of conservation techniques.

The Rig-Veda itself provides evidence that Vedic farmers possessed a sophisticated understanding of water management, including the “water–plant relationship.” One hymn compares rainfall to the “semen of clouds,” which, upon entering plants, enables flowering and fruiting. Such imagery reflects an agrarian awareness of the natural cycles of fertility and growth. Alongside this conceptual understanding, practical innovations in irrigation—through canals and wells—were already in use. Farmers extended irrigation beyond river courses, drawing water from catchment areas in the hills and channeling it through canals to distant fields.

This mastery of water resources laid the foundation for surplus production, which in turn created the basis for new social and economic configurations. Agricultural labourers worked the fields while others transported surplus grain and goods to emerging urban markets. What began as a village economy during the Vedic period gradually expanded into larger trade centers, facilitating the shift from rural subsistence to urban exchange networks.

The political dimensions of irrigation further shaped regional trajectories. In South India, rulers not only promoted the construction of irrigation structures and embankments but also supported decentralised management, encouraging local participation in resource control. In contrast, North Indian rulers placed greater emphasis on state or state-owned management of irrigation activities, centralising control over agricultural production. These differing approaches reflect not only ecological variations but also distinctive political ideologies in early Indian state formation¹.

The emergence of agricultural labourers marked a new pattern of relations of production, commonly framed in historiography as the peasant mode of production. Land was primarily owned by *gahapatis* and *kutumbins*, with the *Sumaṅgala-Vilāsinī* and the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* providing evidence of their association with cultivation and landholding². The expansion of irrigation-based resource generation further intensified monetisation, compelling landless peasants to sell their labour to these landowners. Terms such as *dāsa*, *karamakara*, and *porisa* were employed to denote these agrarian workers. This agrarian economy, dominated by *gahapatis*, *Brahman-gahapatis*, and *khattiyas*, relied on paying labourers in cash or kind while simultaneously maintaining close ties with religious institutions. The Buddhist *saṅgha*, as a body of non producers, sustained itself on surplus donations redirected by landowners—resources that in principle derived from the labour of agricultural producers. In line with D.D. Kosambi’s formulation, this illustrates how the peasant mode of production was structured through surplus appropriation, while R.S. Sharma emphasizes that the control of such surplus consolidated new class hierarchies³. The social dimension of this economy was thus marked by exploitation, where the lower strata, deprived of their rightful produce, were ideologically bound by concepts such as *ahimsā* that legitimized subordination. Yet, this very discontent fostered a turn toward heterodox traditions like Buddhism and Jainism, which drew support both from marginalized groups and from mercantile patrons. By aligning itself with producers and traders, the *saṅgha* strengthened its institutional position, gaining recognition from ruling elites and reshaping the socio-economic and religious landscape of the second urbanization.⁴

¹ Bhattacharya Pranab Kumar, Irrigation and Agriculture in Ancient India, Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, Vol. 73, 2012, pp. 18-34.

² Ray Himanshu Prabha, Early Maritime Contacts between South and Southeast Asia, Journal of Southeast Asian Studies, Vol. 20, No. 1, March, 1989, pp. 42-54.

³ Mandal Krishna K., The Nature of Agrarian Labour in early historic India (c. 600 B.C. to 300 B.C.), Proceedings of Indian History Congress, Vol. 61, Part One: Millennium, 2000-2001, pp. 93-102.

⁴ Majumdar, R.C., Corporate Life in Ancient India, Calcutta University Press, Calcutta, 1920, pp. 42-46.

The question arises as to how swiftly the merchant class found stability within Buddhism and what factors facilitated this alignment. The answer lies in the pre-existing guild system, where merchants, traders, and artisans were already organized into disciplined and systematic associations. These guilds operated with defined rules and laws, earning recognition and endorsement from rulers, and their internal structures contributed to the development of legal systems and courts of justice, even though the ruler retained the final authority in verdicts. Such organizational strength enabled the mercantile class to establish itself as a crucial pillar of society¹. Yet, Brahmanism sought to restrict their expansion by stigmatizing overseas travel as ritually impure, thereby curtailing long-distance maritime trade. In contrast, Buddhism actively encouraged commerce across seas, with monks often accompanying traders on voyages, transforming mercantile exchange into a channel of cultural expansion².

Waterways not only supported agricultural prosperity but also served as vital arteries of commerce. The Ganga Yamuna plains offered safer and more efficient transport compared to overland routes, while the great *uttarāpatha* trade route connected the Buddhist heartland of Magadha with Taxila via Mathura. In later centuries, this network extended southwards, linking Ujjain, Vidisha, Sanchi, and Bharhut, and further to the seaports of the Western Ghats. These nodes of commerce were frequently clustered with Buddhist sites, underscoring the close relationship between trade and religious expansion. The Buddha himself recognized the economic and political importance of cities, choosing to preach in prominent trade centers. In the *Mahāparinibbāṇa Suttanta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, when *Ānanda* urged him to attain nirvāṇa in a grander city than the modest *Kusinārā*, the Buddha silenced him by recalling the ancient glory of *Kusāvātī*, thereby elevating the symbolic importance of the site chosen for his *mahāparinibbāṇa*³.

This interlinks age between commerce and religion has also been a focal point in modern historiography. R.S. Sharma emphasized that guilds functioned as nuclei of surplus extraction and redistribution, binding traders to both state and religion, while K.A.N. Sastri highlighted their institutional autonomy and role in cultural transmission across regions⁴. Together, these interpretations suggest that the mercantile support of Buddhism was not merely devotional but structural—providing the economic backbone that sustained monastic networks and simultaneously embedding Buddhism within the political economy of the second urbanisation.

VIII. Buddhism, Ahimsa and Social Reception

The ethical attributes taught by Buddhism—most notably *ahimsā* and the renunciation of familial attachments as impediments to liberation—resonated across different strata of society in distinctive ways. The doctrine of *ahimsā* particularly appealed to the lower-income groups who, dependent upon cattle as their primary asset, were freed from the economic and ritual burdens of Vedic cattle sacrifice. For these groups, Buddhist teachings provided both practical relief and spiritual hope: while complete freedom from the cycle of rebirth might remain distant, adherence to karmic discipline promised the possibility of a more prosperous life in future births.

At the same time, Buddhism's popularity among merchants and artisans strengthened the culture of *Dāna* (charity), furnishing the *saṅgha* with a sustainable monastic base. The ethic of *ahimsā* also indirectly facilitated trade and agricultural expansion by discouraging inter-tribal warfare, thereby ensuring safer conditions for both economic and social life. Thus, while the mercantile elites—gahapatis and setthis—benefited materially from stable networks of exchange and gained prestige

¹ Bopparachchi Osmund, Indian Ocean Trade through Buddhist Iconographies, Bille Franck, Mehendale Sanjyot, Lanton James W. (ed.), The Maritime Silk Road: Global Connectivities, Regional Nodes, Localities, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam, 2022, pp. 245-251.

² Neelis Jason, Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks: Mobility and Exchange within and beyond the Northwestern Borderlands of South Asia, Brill, Leiden, 2011, pp. 197-217.

³ Law Bimala Churn, Geography of Early Buddhism, London, 1932, pp. 14-15.

⁴ Sastri, K.A. Nilakanta, A history of South India from Prehistoric Times to the Fall of Vijaynagar, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2003.

as patrons, the political authorities experienced a sense of relief as Buddhism helped mediate internal conflicts¹.

IX. Conclusion

The Buddhist journey cannot be separated from its cultural and commercial entanglements. Monastic donations grew steadily as a result of expanding donor networks, linking urban guilds and rural producers in a shared religious economy. Yet scholars remain divided in their interpretations of these offerings: some frame them as part of a “moral economy,” reflecting genuine piety, while others view them as instances of a “trading religion,” whereby spiritual merit and commercial legitimacy became intertwined. From this perspective, the Buddha himself has been metaphorically described as a “caravan leader,” guiding both spiritual seekers and mercantile communities across the uncertain terrain of existence. However, while Buddhism elevated new elites—especially merchants, guild leaders, and monastic authorities—it offered less tangible socio-economic mobility for the lower income working strata. For these groups, the promise of karmic betterment remained largely spiritual, postponing material transformation to the realm of the next life. In this way, Buddhism conjoined diverse segments of society, harmonizing their coexistence, yet without fundamentally overturning existing hierarchies of wealth and labour.

The evidence examined demonstrates that Buddhism’s trajectory in early India cannot be separated from the socio economic currents of the second urbanisation. Far from being a purely spiritual doctrine, it became deeply entangled with agricultural surplus, irrigation-based production, urban markets, and the expanding networks of long-distance trade. Merchants, guild leaders, and *gahapatis* not only provided the financial resources that sustained monastic institutions but also found in Buddhist ethics a legitimising framework for their economic and social ambitions. The *saṅgha* thus emerged as a unique institution—neither the state nor a purely religious body, but a parallel economic organisation capable of influencing politics, trade, and culture. At the same time, this integration was not socially neutral. While elites and mercantile classes gained prestige and spiritual merit through *dāna*, the peasantry and landless labourers often remained confined within structures of exploitation, their contributions mediated through the surplus controlled by landholders. Buddhism offered them ethical solace and the hope of karmic improvement, but not an immediate restructuring of material hierarchies. In this sense, the Buddhist economy both reflected and reproduced existing inequalities even as it softened their impact by offering new channels of patronage, charity, and moral legitimacy. Historiographically, the study highlights the need to view Buddhism not simply as a counter to Brahmanical ritualism, but as a formative partner in the making of India’s political economy. As Kosambi and Sharma emphasised, surplus appropriation and class formation provided the material foundations, while Thapar and Sastri underscored the transformation of lineage into state and the role of autonomous institutions. Synthesising these perspectives allows us to recognise that religion in this period was not an isolated cultural phenomenon but a dynamic participant in economic reorganisation. Ultimately, Buddhism’s endurance and wide appeal lay in this very symbiosis: it offered ethical coherence to new elites, ideological solace to producers, and administrative utility to rulers. In bridging these domains, it contributed decisively to the shaping of early Indian civilisation. To fully appreciate the Buddhist era, therefore, one must understand it not only as a spiritual awakening but also as a moment of institutional innovation—where faith, economy, and polity converged to create a resilient model of social integration that left a lasting imprint on the subcontinent’s historical trajectory.

¹ Thapar Romila, Ethics, Religion, and Social Protest in the First Millennium B.C. in Northern India, *Daedalus*, Vol. 104, No. 2, Wisdom, Revelation, and Doubt: Perspective on the First Millennium B.C., Spring, 1975, pp. 119-132.

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Pain of being Woman: A critical study of Theodore Dreiser's Jennie Gerhardt

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I. Abstract

This paper analyses the selfless life of Jennie Gerhardt, the female protagonist of Theodore Dreiser's *Jennie Gerhardt*. Despite being victimised by societies outside forces, she comes out on top in the end and has an optimistic outlook on life. She is a poor young woman in the novel. She meets Senator Brander while working in a Columbus, Ohio hotel, and he falls deeply in love with her. He expresses his desire to marry her and assists her family. Jennie gives herself to him, appreciative of his kindness. Regretfully, she becomes pregnant when the Senator passes away. After giving birth to Vesta, a girl, she moves to Cleveland to work as a lady's maid in a wealthy household. As a result, she meets the son of a successful manufacturer, Lester Kane. Because of his generosity and strong will, Jennie falls in love with him. She travels to New York with her kid, leaving her behind. Unaware that Jennie has a kid, Kane wants to wed her but, fearing his family's displeasure, chooses to make her his mistress instead. Despite Jennie's admission that Vesta is her daughter three years later, they cohabitate well in Chicago. After his father passes away, Kane learns that he will not receive a significant portion of the family business unless he dumps Jennie, despite his refusal to give in to pressure from his family to do so. When they travel to Europe together, Kane starts to show more interest in Letty Gerald, a member of his own social class, than in Jennie. Jennie is the one who insists that they part ways after hearing the provisions of the will. After supporting her, Kane marries Letty and returns to his previous social standing. Despite adopting two orphans and losing her daughter to typhoid, Jennie still loves him. Kane gets sick. He assures Jennie that he still loves her, and she takes care of him till he passes away while quietly grieving at his funeral.

II. Keywords

Woman, Victim, Society, Pain, Identity, Family, Life, Victim, Love, Power

Theodore Dreiser, the major American literary figure of the twentieth century, is deeply concerned with the welfare of humanity. The American dream captivated most of the youth of his era. When they faced numerous obstacles to achieving their goals, their hopes and objectives became pointless. Through his works, he compassionately highlighted the suffering of his fellow humans and did everything in his power to address their issues.

The impact of social and economic circumstances, in *Jennie Gerhardt*, continues to shape people's lives to this day. The deciding variables are depicted well, even though it does not resemble a naturalistic novel in the slightest. Jennie Gerhardt is tossed to the rhythms of both internal and exterior forces, emerging as an impotent angel beating its bright wings in the nothingness. Despite all her hardships, Jennie has no resentment towards life. The novel tells the tale of a young girl who is lively and attractive but is defeated by life's forces.

Jennie is victimised by the misfortune of her lowly birth and is shunned by society in part because of her nobility and her readiness to give her life for her family and others. For instance, her seducers do not cynically move with her and put her away, demonstrating that the forces that defeat her are neither malevolent nor cruel. The idea that all human life is deflected from its goal and self-control by the haphazard forces of nature is the result of these forces, which are rather incidental and inevitable. According to Dreiser, Jennie is neither overwhelmingly sinned against nor does she commit any sin.

The eldest of six children from a hard-working, impoverished German family in Columbus, Ohio, Jennie Gerhardt was a lovely and moral eighteen-year-old who had to take over the duties of "her sick father, glassblower Mr. Gerhardt" (12)¹. Senator Brander was there when Jennie and her mother were compelled to work at a nearby hotel. For the gracious Senator Brander, they did the washing. The Senator, who was fifty-

two, was fascinated by Jennie. She gave herself to the Senator out of gratitude after he spared her brother Sebastian from jail for stealing coal from the railway. Senator Brander pledged to marry Jennie after being enchanted by her goodness, beauty, and charm. However, he passed away unexpectedly while visiting Washington.

Jennie found out she was pregnant while left alone. When her father, who was now in better health, left to find work in Youngstown, the more compassionate mother permitted her to return to the house despite her father's strict Lutheran insistence that she go. Vesta is the name Jennie gave to her daughter. The family relocated to Cleveland in search of employment at Sebastian's recommendation. There, Jennie found work as a maid in Mrs. Bracebridge's home while her mother took care of Vesta. Lester Kane, the son of a wealthy carriage manufacturer and one of Mrs. Bracebridge's guests, thought Jennie was enticingly beautiful. Jennie was able to fend off his attempts when he attempted to woo her. Mr. Gerhardt lost both of his hands after being hurt in a glass-blowing accident. Once more, the family was in dire need of money, so Jennie accepted Lester's offer to help her family. The fee was for her to become his mistress, accompany him to New York, and then let him place her in a Chicago flat.

Despite her love for Lester, Jennie was aware that he had no plans to wed her because his family would be appalled by such a union. However, she once more compromised her morals since she believed her family needed the assistance that was being offered. Lester handed Jennie's family money for a house when she became his mistress. However, Jennie was hesitant to inform Lester that her daughter, Vesta, existed. Lester and Jennie relocated to Chicago and made it their home. Despite Jennie's claims to the contrary, her family started to assume that she and Lester were not married. A few years after Mrs. Gerhardt's passing, Jennie relocated Vesta to Chicago and boarded the kid in the home of another woman. Lester found out about Vesta's existence one evening when Jennie was called because she was very sick.

Lester's father gave Robert his portion of the estate in trust when he passed away because he still thought that his son's relationship with Jennie and his carelessness were to blame. Lester had three options: he could leave Jennie and keep all his money; he could marry Jennie and keep only \$10,000 a year for the rest of his life; or he could keep things the way they were, knowing that he would forfeit his portion of the money if he did not leave Jennie or marry her within three years. "Lester paused like he always did. While travelling around Europe with Jennie, they encountered Mrs. Letty Pace Gerald, a stunning and successful widow who had once been Lester's childhood sweetheart and still harboured affection for him" (92)¹. Meanwhile, Robert had gradually pushed Lester into a supporting role and turned the carriage industry into a monopoly. Lester made the decision to try to build an independent future for himself and Jennie after he got back to Chicago. He lost a lot of money that he had invested in a real estate transaction.

Lester re-established himself in the family business and wed Mrs. Gerald. Vesta, a thirteen-year-old girl who was already displaying a considerable deal of sensitivity and talent, passed away from typhoid fever six months after Lester had left Jennie. After relocating to the city, Jennie, who went by Mrs. Stover, adopted two orphans. After five years, Jennie embraced her quiet life even though she was still in love with Lester. Despite the fact that she had never been able to really control experience, she was finally able to deal with it in whatever terms it presented itself to her. Lester sent for Jennie one evening after suffering a heart attack while in Chicago on business; his wife was in Europe and would not be able to go to Chicago for three weeks.

Lester was cared for by Jennie during his final illness. He admitted one day that he had always loved her and that it had been a mistake to allow the pressures of family and business to drive him away. His last admission that he should never have abandoned her, according to Jennie, suggested a spiritual unity and gave her something she would cherish for the rest of her life. After Lester passed away, Jennie came to the realisation that she should be made to endure several years that could not bring her any new excitement or promise of salvation, but may instead force them upon her as had the years before. She realised there was nothing else she could do, so she was determined to accept her loneliness.

Lester's coffin was loaded onto the train, and Jennie went to see it. At that moment, she became even more aware that man was merely a rigid being who was manipulated by external factors. Neither evil nor degeneracy, not virtue, beauty, or moral value, could save man. Man just gave in and did the best he could give his character, the society he lived in, and the economic forces at his disposal.

Man's willpower cannot overcome the might of the outside forces. The second attempt in Dreiser's canon, *Jennie Gerhardt*, provides evidence of how these pressures inevitably affect the heroine. The forces of life beat Jennie, a lovely, energetic young girl. She is a selfless being willing to give her life for her loved ones and other members of the community. However, she is victimised by the accident of her lowly birth and shunned by society.

¹ Dreiser, Theodore, *Nennie Gerhardt*. R. R. Donnelley and Sons Company, 1911, p. 92.

Dreiser's personal experience served as the basis for the novel's topic. Dreiser's mother is exactly like Mrs. Gerhardt, and Mr. Gerhardt is a perfect replica of Dreiser's father. Even to the extent that Mr. Gerhardt passes away in Jennie's care, just as Mr. Dreiser did in Mame's, Jennie's story is a hybrid of Dreiser's sisters, Mame and Sylvia. She got pregnant like Jennie while having an affair with a powerful politician and lawyer from Terre Haute who lavished her with money and assisted in Paul's release from prison for forging the check, just as Senator Brander frees Bass from prison. Like the novel, these incidents occur between 1879 and 1880, when Mame, like Jennie, is eighteen years old. Dreiser added the Sylvia story, which essentially relates to the Jennie-Lester Kane plot, to these incidents. Like Jennie, Sylvia had an affair with Don Ashley, who came from one of the best families in Warsaw.

Despite being pregnant, Ashley left her because his family disapproved, just like Lester Kane's family did. The Columbus Hotel serves as Jennie's pivotal beginning. She is exposed to a wider variety of life at the hotel. "Her senses were being affected by the grandeur of the world" (46)¹.

Jennie is "happier in the garden or forest where" colour was not wasted upon her, where "every sound and sight were welcome to her because of their beauty," (98) and more touched by the delicate curves of nature. She is also more sensitive to life's "song" (99)². In a society full of materialism and selfishness, she is an idealistic and selfless girl. She should "incline her head and listen" to the birds in the field until the entire spiritual character of what she saw and heard beat with her own huge heart. She should also respond to the beauty of nature and be one with it. Dreiser appears to be constructing a dream figure of the ideal woman - one who will stick by a guy without expecting anything in return - by making Jennie so selfless. Any traditional woman could not or would not be like Jennie. "To be all in all to one man is not something I would expect" (722)³. Jennie never truly leaves the family, even though she is prepared to break the rules.

Jennie aspires to become a mother and a wife. Ironically, she finds the home and family to be the most fulfilling of her dreams during the years she lived out of wedlock with Lester Kane, making them the most traditional years of her life. A society that adheres more to the letter of the law than its spirit condemns her. The most civilised brains cannot and will not entertain a vibrant, strong, chemical, and crude side of life that lies beneath the respectable exterior of social convention.

Dreiser's own sisters, Mame and Sylvia, are the subjects of Jennie's story; she is a perfect example of her genuine personality, particularly when that tendency clashes with Puritan society. Dreiser's protagonists ended up being the victims of options that are illusions, or alternatives that are not really alternatives at all. His characters end up as victims of their circumstances, which reflected Dreiser's overall perspective on humanity. In Dreiser's novels, random events lead to circumstances that highlight the fundamental characteristics of each character. Every character has a destiny within of them.

There is a mechanical continuity to every event in *Jennie Gerhardt*. The hotel where Jennie meets Senator Brander is where she would have gone to work if Mr. Gerhardt had not been "unstrung by his misfortunes" (171)⁴ Jennie could have avoided asking Mr. Brander for assistance and, consequently, her idea of Vesta, if Bass had not been apprehended while stealing coal at that very moment. Had Senator Brander not passed away before he could wed her, she would have been spared the humiliating fallout from this. Once more, if Mr. Gerhardt had not been severely burned in a factory accident, the family may have fought on.

Feeling compelled to make a sacrifice, Jennie consents to live with Lester Kane for the second time in a secret meeting in exchange for his financial assistance. There is little doubt that this relationship could not be concealed for very long. However, if Lester had not been hesitant to wed Jennie after learning that she had an illegitimate kid, things could have gone differently. Additionally, things might have gone differently if Lester's sister Louise had learnt that Lester and Jennie were living together after their father passed away rather than before, which would have prevented Archibald Kane from changing his will. Lester refers to the current situation as a "devilish trick of luck" (231)⁵.

Lester loses some of his money on a failed investment when his real estate deal is ruined by the relocation of a meat packing company. He now meets Letty Pace Gerald, a long-time lover who is widowed after her husband passed away from pneumonia four years after they were married, leaving her a fortune accumulated via stock market and banking investments. These things happen before Lester leaves Jennie, which is a sad occurrence made worse by Vesta's death from typhoid. In Dreiser's literature, chance acts as a catalyst, exposing the essence and enduring qualities of each character, which ultimately explains their destiny. These

¹ Dreiser, Theodore. *Jennie Gerhardt*. R.R. Donnelley and Sons Company, 1911.p. 46.

² Ibid. p. 99

³ Ibid. p. 722

⁴ Dreiser, Theodore. *Jennie Gerhardt*. R.R. Donnelley and Sons Company, 1911. p. 171.

⁵ Ibid. p. 231

random events, which are common in Dreiser's novels, serve as the foundation for the outside forces that cause the protagonists to crumble beneath their exterior. As a result, in Dreiser's works, these random events serve as exterior forces. Following Vesta's passing, Lester informs Jennie that "we are all pawns"(45)¹. We are influenced by events beyond our control, much like a chessman.

Dreiser's conviction in "a mechanistic force that works beyond man's Ken" is made clear by this metaphor. Everything may be reduced to its chemical components, as he stated himself. "There was something else behind the surface appearance of things" (46)². For Dreiser's characters, the conclusion is in the beginning as they discover their true selves. The scenario and the character both naturally lead to the conclusion. They are destined to behave in the ways that they do due to their temperament and the circumstances that surround them. They are subject to the rules of probability that control temperaments in their society, as well as the chemic pull of temperament and their basic nature.

The actual sufferer of the effects of the outside forces is Jennie. She deserved better because she fulfilled her obligations. Women are bought and sold in all of Dreiser's novels. Jennie is a victim of both society and time's unstoppable forces. Dreiser's love for his mother was greater than his love for anyone else. He was always looking for women who would adore him and show him all the feelings of a mother when she passed away in 1890. Dreiser's person is constantly lost and adrift in the city. Only a portion of his innately emotional character can be saved, and he hopes to give it spasmodic expression. He wants to be there, not be independent, to push some impassioned identity rather than to fulfil himself by adventure like the Romantic Hero.

Dreiser praised the victory of feminine instinct against the dangerous social forces in *Jennie Gerhardt*. One might see the dramatization of Edenic innocence in Jennie's extraordinary personality. The clash between her innate innocence and the moral ambiguity of the civilised world, where her altruistic love, compassion, and tenderness gain her power and she demands everyone's attention in a quiet, passive manner, is the novel's dramatic action.

Dreiser asserts that Jennie's goodness is inexplicable. She is not allowed to act on her own initiative. Individual will be impeded by economic and social factors. Wishes can be freely expressed, but they cannot be fulfilled. Good intentions do not always translate into successful outcomes in a Dreiserian environment. Conventional punishment does not apply to what is considered evil. Because traditional ethics do not reflect a true understanding of social relations, they are therefore invalidated. They do not make up the real forces that promote social cohesiveness and govern how civilised people behave. Blaming someone for circumstances that are out of his control would be pointless.

Jennie is not a woman who commits sin. She is decent, lovely, kind, responsible, and compassionate towards other people. Lester Kane was thought to have been extremely unlucky not to have married her. Up until now, one has been compelled to accept the existence of a spiritual truth that transcends the flaws and vices of reality. When Dreiser creates Jennie, his message is successful. His Jennie is a beautiful creation with an uncomplicated heart that can withstand unending adoration. Dreiser's most valuable creation is Jennie. Her hardships are so genuine that the reader is acutely aware that the novel's most notable aspect is the sadness of her life.

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¹ Dreiser, Theodore. *Jennie Gerhardt*. R.R. Donnelley and Sons Company, 1911. p. 45.

² Ibid. p. 46

Colonial forestry, naval shipbuilding, railways and the nilambur teak plantations: transformations in Malabar's Forests (18th–19th Century)

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I. Abstract

The forests of Malabar underwent a profound transformation between the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, shaped by the twin forces of British naval expansion and colonial forestry experiments. This article traces the trajectory of forest use from the establishment of the Bombay shipbuilding industry in the mid-eighteenth century to the creation of the Nilambur teak plantations in the nineteenth century. The Napoleonic Wars intensified demand for teak, a timber prized for its durability and resistance to decay, leading to the East India Company's monopolization of Malabar's forests. Conservancy measures curtailed local access and introduced centralized administration, while commercial networks linked Indian contractors and European firms to imperial shipyards. By the mid-nineteenth century, large-scale deforestation spurred colonial authorities to experiment with plantation forestry. Under the guidance of H.V. Conolly and Chathu Menon, the Nilambur teak plantations became a landmark in the global history of scientific forestry, combining silvicultural expertise with financial profitability. This article argues that the history of Malabar's forests reveals the ecological costs and social dislocations of colonial forestry, as landscapes once embedded in local economies were reconstituted as strategic assets of empire.

II. Keywords

Malabar forests, Nilambur teak plantations, colonial forestry, naval shipbuilding, Railway, East India Company, scientific forestry

III. Introduction

The transformation of South India's forests under colonial rule represents one of the most consequential ecological and social shifts in the region's history. The Malabar forests, famed for their extensive teak resources, were central to this process. Teak (*Tectona grandis*), celebrated as the "king of timbers," had long been valued across South Asia for temple architecture, palatial construction, and durable domestic use. With the advent of British colonial expansion, however, its significance extended far beyond local economies, becoming indispensable to the imperial navy and the commercial networks of the East India Company.

The defeat of Tipu Sultan in 1792 marked the entry of Malabar into Company rule and opened its forests to unprecedented levels of survey, mapping, and extraction. The naval demands of the Napoleonic Wars further intensified the urgency of securing reliable timber supplies, driving the establishment of monopolies, restrictive conservancy regimes, and contractual networks linking local contractors to global markets. Yet by the early nineteenth century, signs of ecological depletion prompted the colonial state to pursue new strategies, culminating in the establishment of the Nilambur teak plantations from the 1840s onward.

This article examines the transformation of Malabar's forests across two interrelated phases: the era of naval expansion and forest monopolization (c. 1790–1820s), and the rise of plantation forestry in Nilambur (c. 1840–1870s). Drawing on contemporary reports, administrative records, and secondary scholarship, it highlights how the intersection of strategic, commercial, and ecological imperatives reshaped Malabar's landscapes. The analysis proceeds in five sections. The first explores naval expansion and the early exploitation of Malabar's forests. The second examines the structures of monopoly, conservancy, and commercial contracting. The third focuses on the Nilambur teak plantations as an early experiment in scientific forestry. The fourth evaluates the financial, social, and ecological impacts of these developments. The fifth focuses on impact of railway expansion in Malabar. The conclusion reflects on the enduring legacy of colonial forestry in Malabar and its place in global environmental history.

IV. Naval Expansion and the Early Exploitation of Malabar's Forests

The establishment of the British shipbuilding industry in Bombay in the mid-eighteenth century marked a turning point in the utilization of India's forest resources. The rise of Napoleon Bonaparte and his threat to British interests in India underscored the need for a powerful naval presence. In 1800, the launch of the Cornwallis at the Bombay Dockyard demonstrated the feasibility of constructing large warships in India, and Malabar's teak was quickly identified as the timber of choice for this enterprise.¹

Teak's strength, resistance to rot, and natural oil content made it especially suited for warship construction, with qualities superior to European oak. A single 74-gun warship required nearly 1,000 mature teak trees, underscoring the vast scale of demand. The forests of Malabar, particularly those of Nilambur, Walayar, Kollamkode, and Nedunganad, became primary sites of extraction.² The Chaliyar River provided an efficient transport artery, allowing felled logs to be rafted downstream to Beypore and onward to Bombay.

The defeat of Tipu Sultan in 1792 facilitated the East India Company's control over these resources.³ Governor-General Wellesley ordered extensive surveys, with Captain John Johnson's 1804 report mapping forests across northern and southern Malabar. These surveys categorized teak into grades by age and size, with "first-sort" trees—aged sixty to one hundred years—designated for shipbuilding. From the outset, colonial forestry was thus shaped by naval imperatives and geared toward maximizing extraction for imperial needs.

V. Monopoly, Trade Networks, and Conservancy

The strategic value of Malabar's forests soon led the East India Company to assert monopoly rights. In 1806, unauthorized extraction was criminalized, and Captain Joseph Watson was appointed Conservator of Forests, marking the birth of centralized forest administration in India. Watson's responsibilities included regulating felling, supervising trade, and enforcing penalties.⁴ Proprietors were pressured to surrender customary rights in exchange for limited compensation, while local communities found their traditional uses of forests—grazing, fuel collection, small-scale timber cutting—criminalized.

To secure steady supplies, the Company relied on a network of Indian and European contractors. Figures such as Bayon Chhacooty and Chacora Moussa in Malabar and firms like Forbes & Company in Bombay acted as intermediaries, mobilizing labor, elephants, and river transport to move logs to the coast.⁵ Despite these efforts, shortages of large trees were already evident by 1807, reflecting the rapid pace of overexploitation. Prices were kept artificially low by the Company, diverting profits to naval construction while leaving contractors and proprietors dissatisfied.

The scale of deforestation was immense. A single warship demanded hundreds of tons of teak, leading to widespread clearing of old-growth forests. Reports highlighted the ecological consequences: soil erosion, biodiversity loss, and declining water tables. Alarmed, some officials advocated conservation. Alexander Bell promoted replanting schemes, though these were driven primarily by strategic concerns rather than ecological sensibilities. The conservancy system itself generated resistance, with landlords and villagers opposing the curtailment of their rights. By 1823, the experiment in conservancy was abandoned, and free trade was briefly restored. Yet the logic of state intervention and centralized control had been firmly established, paving the way for more systematic experiments in the decades to follow.

VI. The Nilambur Teak Plantations and Scientific Forestry

By the mid-nineteenth century, the ecological depletion of Malabar's teak forests compelled the colonial government to adopt new strategies of resource management. The Nilambur Valley, with

¹ Interview with Lathika Mohan, Staff, Teak Museum Nilambur, on 15th May 2024.

² Captain John Johnson, Military Engineer to Francis Warden Report, Secretary to Government of Bombay, 5th September 1805, p. 26

³ Interview with Shinu Varghese, Staff, Teak Museum Nilambur, on 15th May 2024.

⁴ Interview with Lathika Mohan, Staff, Teak Museum Nilambur, on 15th May 2024.

⁵ Interview with Usha KP, Staff, Teak Museum Nilambur, on 15th May 2024.

its fertile soils, abundant rainfall, and proximity to river transport, was chosen as the site for experimental teak plantations. In 1840, H.V. Conolly, Collector of Malabar, proposed the establishment of plantations to replace forests that had been “vanished through private carelessness and rapacity”⁶

The early years were fraught with difficulties. Teak seeds proved stubborn to germinate, leading to failed attempts involving fire, water soaking, and manual husking.⁷ Conolly’s consultation with botanical experts eventually yielded success. Dr. William Roxburgh’s 1843 recommendation—sowing seeds at the onset of the monsoon in shaded beds with decayed straw—became the foundation of plantation practice. By 1845, 50,000 seedlings were raised successfully, marking a breakthrough in silvicultural experimentation.⁸

From 1843 onwards, systematic planting expanded steadily. By 1874, the Nilambur plantations covered approximately 2,730 acres, averaging 91 acres annually over three decades. These plantations were among the earliest state-managed forest plantations in Asia and a landmark in the history of global forestry.⁹ The role of Chathu Menon, often hailed as the “Father of Indian Teak Plantations,” was critical: between 1842 and 1862, he oversaw the raising of over one million saplings.

The geographical setting of the Nilambur Valley facilitated the success of this project. Surrounded by hills, enriched by alluvial deposits, and watered by the Chaliyar and its tributaries, the valley offered ideal conditions for teak growth. The Calicut–Nilambur–Wayanad road further enhanced connectivity, allowing timber to be transported efficiently to coastal markets.¹⁰

VII. Financial, Social, and Ecological Impacts

Most forests in Malabar were privately owned, with the Nilambur Valley largely belonging to the Nilambur Tirumulpad, a powerful landlord unwilling to part with land that might compete with his own timber interests. The plantations were established largely because a religious institution owning temple lands in the valley was in need of funds and sold land blocks that proved ideal for planting. Nevertheless, local opposition and landlord influence posed significant challenges.¹¹

Initially, planting was confined to riverbanks west of Nilambur. When these areas were exhausted, operations shifted eastwards in 1853, though mistakes were made in including lateritic hill tracts, where teak failed.¹² From 1857–62, more suitable lands were developed, and by 1863 the government forester Mr. Hugh Cleghorn Ferguson introduced scientific forestry methods learned in Perthshire, Scotland. Between 1863–69, about 619 acres were planted, though unhealthy sites attempted in 1870–71 had to be abandoned. Subsequent acquisitions, including at Amarapalam, ensured continuity of expansion.¹³

The Nilambur plantations were not merely ecological experiments; they were economic enterprises designed to ensure profitability. By 1872, the total investment in the plantations amounted to Rs. 2,29,000, of which Rs. 1,01,000 had been recouped through thinnings. Annual maintenance costs of Rs. 5,000 were offset by revenues of Rs. 10,000, making the plantations financially viable.¹⁴ Thinnings supplied poles and saplings for local markets and exports to the Persian Gulf, where demand for durable timber was strong.

Silviculturally, the plantations demonstrated the feasibility of managing teak as a monoculture crop. Initial densities of 1,100 trees per acre were reduced to about 150 after thirty years, with final

⁶. Conolly HV, Report to the Government of Madras on the Establishment of Teak Plantations in Malabar, 1840, Madras Government Press.

⁷. Interview with Lathika Mohan, Staff, Teak Museum Nilambur, on 15th May 2024.

⁸. Conolly HV, Letter to the Board of Revenue 1845, Madras Archives

⁹. Interview with Shinu Varghese, Staff, Teak Museum Nilambur, on 15th May 2024.

¹⁰. Interview with Usha KP, Staff, Teak Museum Nilambur, on 15th May 2024.

¹¹. Bernaards S Cohn, Colonialism and its form of Knowledge, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1997, p.50

¹². Ibid, pp.86-87.

¹³. Interview with Shinu Varghese, Staff, Teak Museum Nilambur, on 15th May 2024.

¹⁴. George MP, Teak Plantation of Kerala, 1962, pp.285-286

felling projected at eighty years and yields of around fifty mature trees per acre. These methods reflected the influence of European forestry practices, particularly those introduced by Mr. Hugh Cleghorn Ferguson in the 1860s, who adapted lessons from Scotland to Indian conditions.

Yet the social and ecological costs were significant. The land for plantations was acquired through negotiations with religious institutions and landlords, displacing customary users and reducing communal access to forest resources. Local resistance reflected resentment at the exclusionary nature of plantation forestry, which privileged state revenue over subsistence needs. Ecologically, the replacement of diverse forests with teak monocultures simplified ecosystems, reduced biodiversity, and altered hydrological cycles. The very success of the plantations thus embodied the contradictions of colonial forestry: financial gain and silvicultural innovation achieved at the expense of ecological diversity and social equity.

VIII. Railways, Forests and Colonial Transformation in Malabar

One of the enduring contributions of European industrial science was the invention of the locomotive. In colonial India, the railway system played a decisive role in integrating the subcontinent's economy. From the mid-nineteenth century, railways connected local centers, facilitated mobility, and promoted economic activities such as trade, commerce, and industry. In South India, the introduction of railways drastically reshaped the industrial landscape, with direct consequences for timber, plantations, tiles, and paper industries.

Before the railway era, South India was known for its cottage industries. The construction of the railway network demanded enormous resources: millions of bricks for stations, bridges, viaducts, and embankments; large quantities of metal for tracks; and extensive timber for sleepers. Beyond construction, the railway facilitated the movement of machinery, raw materials, and finished products, as well as the transport of labor. For the British, however, the principal aim of introducing railways was to expand trade. Cotton, raw materials, and especially Malabar timber were exported to Britain, where teak and hardwood were used for shipbuilding and architectural purposes.¹⁵

Thus, while the railway system expanded industrial activity, it simultaneously enabled large-scale extraction of India's natural resources, reinforcing the colonial pattern of economic exploitation and wealth drain.¹⁶

One of the principal reasons for forest depletion in the nineteenth century was railway expansion. British engineers, in their efforts to construct and maintain the lines, required vast amounts of timber—not only for sleepers but also for locomotive fuel. Early engines consumed enormous amounts of firewood, and workshops, bridges, and stations demanded bricks and timber in unprecedented volumes. The forests of India were searched and exploited for sleepers and fuel, often under the supervision of timber contractors.

When forests were declared “reserved” for government and commercial use, forest-dwelling communities were dispossessed of their customary rights. This displacement triggered resistance, as local populations opposed colonial encroachment. The situation was particularly acute in regions rich in hardwood species such as teak. The Malabar teak forests, already depleted by naval demand prior to railway construction, were further exploited in the nineteenth century. By the 1870s, as Malabar teak resources declined, attention shifted to Burma. Similarly, the Himalayan forests suffered depletion as the Indo-Gangetic railway lines expanded.

The Madras Railway relied heavily on firewood, intensifying the pressure on forests in the presidency. The colonial state reserved forests not for ecological preservation but to ensure a steady supply of fuel and sleepers for railways. Thus, the rhetoric of “protection” in forestry policy masked a system of imperial extraction.

The economic role of the railway in India shifted during the world wars. By the early twentieth century, the railway system, initially privately owned, had largely come under state control. With

¹⁵ Interview with Usha KP, Staff, Teak Museum Nilambur, on 15th May 2024.

¹⁶ Bourne A.R, Nilambur Valley working plan for the period from 1917-18, Vol.I, Madras, 1917., P.118

World War I, the railways were mobilized to serve military needs, leaving them in disrepair by the war's end. The Second World War further crippled the system, as rolling stock was diverted to the Middle East and workshops converted into munitions factories.

The Shoranur line under the Madras Railway was one such case, repurposed for military demands.¹⁷ After independence in 1947, the fragmented system of forty-two separate networks was consolidated into Indian Railways. In Malabar, the Nilambur–Shoranur line, originally built to transport teak, was reconstructed for both timber and limited passenger use, reconnecting the region's forest wealth to coastal ports.¹⁸

Discussions about a railway connection to Calicut began as early as 1832, but it was only with the formation of the Madras Railway Company in 1845 that the project gained momentum. The earliest railway activity in South India started in the 1830s, with short lines laid for transporting granite. The first commercial line from Royapuram to Arkonam opened in 1856. Plans soon emerged to extend the line westwards, linking Madras to the Malabar coast.

Although Calicut was considered, the terminus was fixed at Beypore due to the relative ease of terrain. Beypore, historically an important port, thus became the first railway terminus in Kerala. In 1861, the line connecting Beypore to Tirur was inaugurated. The British had two principal objectives: military mobility and trade expansion. Troop movement during uprisings, such as the Mappila Revolts, was greatly facilitated, while the abundant spices and timber of Malabar were efficiently extracted.

According to Logan, the extension of the line beyond Beypore faced difficulties, but trade and passenger movement in Calicut increased significantly after railway expansion. By 1888, the railway length in Malabar stood at 99 miles, marking the end of the first phase of development.

In the twentieth century, rail development in Malabar continued with the Calicut–Mangalore line (1904), the Nilambur–Shoranur line (1927), and the Palghat–Podanur line (1931). Military considerations were central to these projects, especially after the Mappila Revolt of 1921, which prompted the extension of railways into Ernad. While some lines served economic purposes, particularly for timber transport, others reflected the colonial state's priority of military control over social or local economic development.¹⁹

By the 1930s, road density in Malabar remained stagnant, while rail density increased. Railways enabled the export of raw materials and long-distance troop deployment, but investment in local road and water transport lagged. Thus, the railways in Malabar epitomized the colonial state's priorities: imperial extraction and military mobility, rather than balanced regional development.

IX. Conclusion

The history of Malabar's forests in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries illustrates the entanglement of strategic, economic, and ecological forces under colonial rule. Initially, the East India Company's naval imperatives drove large-scale exploitation of teak, transforming Malabar into a critical supplier of shipbuilding timber for the Bombay Dockyard. The defeat of Tipu Sultan in 1792 opened these forests to systematic surveys and administrative control, while the Napoleonic Wars accelerated demand for durable timber. The immense quantities required for warship construction underscored the strategic value of Malabar's teak but also revealed the ecological costs of intensive extraction.

To secure supplies, the Company asserted monopoly rights, created restrictive conservancy regulations, and relied on a network of Indian and European contractors. These measures marginalized traditional proprietors and curtailed communal access to forests, generating resistance and contestation. Although the conservancy system was briefly rolled back in 1823, the underlying logic of state control and resource centralization persisted. Teak's exalted status as the "king of

¹⁷. Innes.C.A, Madras District Gazetteers on Malabar, Vol.I, 1905, Madras 1951, p.108

¹⁸. Banerjee.P.K, One hundred years of Indian forestry, Vol.II, Forest Research Institute, Dehradun, 1961, p.5

¹⁹. Interview with Lathika Mohan, Staff, Teak Museum Nilambur, on 15th May 2024.

timbers” ensured that its exploitation remained central to both colonial policy and global trade networks.

The Nilambur teak plantations, established from the 1840s under H.V. Conolly and Chathu Menon, marked a new phase in this trajectory. As one of the earliest experiments in scientific forestry in Asia, the plantations demonstrated the colonial state’s capacity to mobilize silvicultural expertise and transform landscapes into managed monocultures. By the 1870s, they had become financially viable, providing steady revenues through thinnings and promising long-term yields. Yet their establishment also reflected the displacement of local rights, the consolidation of landlord influence, and the ecological simplification of diverse forest ecosystems into teak-dominated stands.

Taken together, the naval expansion of the eighteenth century and the plantation forestry of the nineteenth century reveal a continuum of colonial strategies: from extraction and monopoly to conservation and scientific management. In each phase, the imperatives of empire—whether military or commercial—overrode local ecological knowledge and communal rights. The forests of Malabar, once integral to local economies and cultural life, were reconstituted as strategic assets serving imperial interests.

The history of railways in Malabar demonstrates how colonial infrastructure projects were rarely neutral or purely developmental. Although railways stimulated industrial growth and facilitated mobility, they primarily served the strategic and economic interests of the British Empire. The demand for timber and fuel to sustain railway construction and operation accelerated deforestation, altered forest ecosystems, and marginalized forest-dependent communities. At the same time, the railway system enhanced the colonial state’s military capacity, enabling rapid troop movement during uprisings such as the Mappila Revolts.

By the early twentieth century, rail expansion in Malabar had created new economic linkages with coastal ports and global markets, but this came at the expense of balanced regional development. Investments in road and water transport were neglected, and the benefits of connectivity were unevenly distributed. The Nilambur–Shoranur line, built largely for timber extraction, exemplifies how the colonial transport network was aligned with imperial priorities rather than local needs.

The legacy of this transformation endures. Nilambur teak continues to be celebrated globally, yet its prominence is inseparable from the histories of dispossession and ecological change that accompanied colonial forestry. By integrating the narratives of naval timber demand, monopoly administration, and plantation development, this article underscores how the making of colonial forestry in Malabar was not merely a technical project but a profound restructuring of landscapes, economies, and societies.

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OBC empowerment through education: The unfading contribution of Arjun Singh

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I. Abstract

The Article 340 of the Indian Constitution empowers the President to form a commission to study the conditions of Other Backward Classes (OBCs). Based on this, the Mandal Commission was set up on January 1, 1979, led by B.P. Mandal. It recommended several steps for OBC upliftment, including 27% reservation in government jobs and education. In 1990, Prime Minister V.P. Singh's government implemented 27% job reservation. Later in 2006, HRD Minister Arjun Singh played a key role in extending this reservation to centrally funded higher educational institutions. This helped make higher education more inclusive for OBC communities.

II. Keywords

Mandal Commission, Reservation, V.P. Singh, Arjun Singh, Higher Education, OBC Empowerment.

III. Introduction

The Constitution of India incorporates several provisions aimed at promoting the welfare of socially and educationally disadvantaged communities. While Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) have long been recognized as historically marginalized groups, a significant section of the population—positioned at the lower rungs of the caste hierarchy but not classified as SCs or STs—has also experienced persistent social and educational deprivation. To address the concerns of these groups, Article 340 was placed in the constitution of India. The article 340 states “The President may by order appoint a Commission consisting of such persons as he thinks fit to investigate the conditions of Socially and educationally backward classes within the territory of India and the difficulties under which they labour and to make recommendations as to the Steps that should be taken by the Union or any State to remove such difficulties and to improve their condition and as to the grants that should be made for the purpose by the Union or any State and the conditions subject to which such grants should be made, and the order appointing such Commission shall define the procedure to be followed by the Commission”¹.

The first Backward Classes Commission, led by Chairman Kaka Saheb Kalelkar, was constituted on January 29, 1953, by the President of India. The commission included 11 members and later presented a report identifying 2,399 backward castes or communities across the country. However, disagreements arose among the members regarding key aspects, such as using caste as the primary criterion for determining backwardness and the emphasis on economic factors. Due to these differences, the Central Government did not approve the report, and it remained unimplemented².

The Congress-led central government after the rejection of the Kakasaheb Kalelkar Commission did not establish any other commission to investigate the condition of the backward classes. The political landscape shifted in 1977 when the first non-Congress government assumed power under Prime Minister Morarji Desai. This administration instituted the Second Backward Classes

¹ The Constitution of India. Article 340, Government of India: Legislative Department, Ministry of Law & Justice, 2024, pp- 200. <https://legislative.gov.in/constitution-of-india/>

² Maheshwari, Shriram. The Mandal Commission and Mandalisation: A Critique. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1991, pp- 20

Commission, commonly referred to as the Mandal Commission, chaired by Bindeshwari Prasad Mandal. The commission comprised four other members: Diwan Mohan Lal, R.R. Bhole, K. Subramanian, and L.R. Naik. In its methodology, the commission employed eleven distinct criteria to identify socially and educationally backward castes, ultimately classifying 3,743 castes as backward. Some major recommendations of the commission were as:-

- Candidates from Other Backward Classes (OBCs) recruited based on merit in open competition should not be counted against the 27% reservation quota for OBCs.
- The 27% reservation quota for OBCs should also apply to promotion quotas at all levels.
- Any unfilled reserved quota should be carried forward for three years before being de-reserved.
- The reservation scheme should apply to all public sector recruitment under both Central and State Governments, as well as nationalised banks.
- Private sector enterprises that receive government financial assistance should follow the same recruitment reservation guidelines.
- The reservation scheme should also be extended to universities and affiliated colleges.
- The 27% reservation of seats should be implemented for OBC students in all scientific, technical, and professional institutions operated by both Central and State governments. States that have already reserved more than 27% of seats for OBC students will not be affected by this recommendation ³.

IV. OBC reservation in Central Government Services

The Mandal Commission submitted its report on December 31, 1980, but by then the Janata Party government had already fallen. When the Congress came back to power, it neither accepted nor rejected the report and kept it aside throughout the 1980s. The recommendations were finally taken up in 1989, after the National Front government led by V. P. Singh came to power.

On 7 August 1990, Prime Minister V.P. Singh announced in Parliament the government's decision to implement the Mandal Commission Report, which recommended reservations for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBCs) in government jobs. The notification was issued on 13 August 1990 by the Department of Personnel and Training, extending these benefits to SEBCs in central government services and public sector undertaking ⁴. The announcement sparked widespread protests, including violent demonstrations and self-immolations, particularly in northern India.

The decision also caused political turmoil. The Janata Dal, the ruling party at the time, faced internal divisions as many members opposed caste-based reservations. Similarly, the BJP's efforts to foster Hindu unity along religious lines were challenged as caste divisions became more prominent. While the Communist Party of India (CPI) supported the reservations for backward classes, the CPI(M) argued that economic status, rather than caste, should be the basis for affirmative action ⁵. The Congress Party initially opposed the Mandal recommendations but, after returning to power in 1991, introduced two key changes: an additional 10% quota for economically disadvantaged upper-caste individuals and the inclusion of economic criteria within the 27% reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) ⁶.

Later, the Supreme Court upheld the 27% OBC reservation while introducing the "creamy layer" exclusion to prevent benefits from going to the affluent within these groups. However, it struck

³ Report of the Backward Classes Commission. New Delhi: Government of India, Vol I & II, 1980, pp.57 - 60

⁴ Government of India, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Department of Personnel and Training. "Office Memorandum of V.P. Singh Government, No. 36012/31/90—Estt (SCT)". New Delhi, 13 Aug. 1990.

⁵ Singh, Gopal & Harilal Sharma. Reservation Politics in India: Mandalisation of the society. New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publications, 1995, pp – 94,95,96

⁶ Ibid, pp- 97,98

down the 10% quota for economically weaker sections among upper castes, reinforcing the focus on caste-based rather than purely economic reservations⁷.

V. **The Demand for OBC Reservation in Higher Education in the Post-Mandal Era**

The policy of seat reservation in educational institutions had been introduced earlier in several peninsular states, followed by other regional governments, though not yet adopted at the national level. The post-1990 period witnessed intensified demands from political leaders for the expansion of Other Backward Classes (OBC) reservations in central higher education institutions. Among them, Mulayam Singh Yadav prominently emphasized this demand during a state-level OBC convention held at Lucknow's historic Begum Hazrat Mahal Park on Dec.19, 1999. He argued that while OBCs constituted 54% of Uttar Pradesh's population, they were granted only 27% reservation, a disparity that necessitated an increase in quotas to reflect their demographic share. Additionally, he called for the extension of reservation benefits across all sectors, including government employment, education, and the judiciary, to ensure equitable representation for all marginalized communities⁸.

The Indian National Congress (INC), after losing successive national elections from 1996 onward, sought to redefine its political agenda. In the 2004 election manifesto of the United Progressive Alliance, a coalition led by the Congress, the party promised to guarantee "full equality of opportunity," particularly in education and employment, for marginalized communities. This commitment explicitly included Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, and religious minorities, signaling a policy shift toward inclusive welfare measures⁹.

Then after, HRD Minister Arjun Singh in 2005 introduced the 104th Constitution Amendment Bill to implement OBC quotas in educational institutions. After parliamentary approval, President Kalam nearly withheld assent before finally signing it into law on January 20, 2006¹⁰. This became the 93rd Constitution Amendment Act, marking a major shift in India's affirmative action policy. The 93rd Constitutional Amendment Act has amended Article 15. In article 15 of the Constitution, after clause (4), the following clause shall be inserted, namely (5) as; "Nothing in this article or in sub-clause (g) of clause (1) of article 19 shall prevent the State from making any special provision, by law, for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes in so far as such special provisions relate to their admission to educational institutions including private educational institutions, whether aided or unaided by the State, other than the minority educational institutions referred to in clause (1) of article 30"¹¹.

It has paved the way for implementing 27% reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in central government-funded educational institutions. Arjun Singh, serving as India's HRD Minister on April 5, 2006, made the significant announcement that this quota system would be enforced across premier academic establishments including central universities, IITs, IIMs, AIIMS and other top-tier professional colleges, with implementation scheduled post the state assembly elections in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Puducherry, Assam and West Bengal¹². This move came to be widely referred

⁷ Hasan, Zoya. "Other Backward Classes and the politics of reservations in India: Past and present". WIDER Working Paper, No. 2022/119, 2022, ISBN 978-92-9267-252-2, The United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER), Helsinki, pp- 5.

⁸ "Mulayam for 54 pc OBC Quota," The Tribune, 20 December, 1999. <https://www.tribuneindia.com/1999/99dec/20/nation.htm#2>

⁹ United Progressive Alliance. National Common Minimum Programme of the Government of India. Government of India, May 2004.

¹⁰ Kaur, Harpreet & Suri, R.K. Reservation in India: Recent Perspective in Higher Education. New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2009, pp- 99

¹¹ Rao, K. Madhusudhana. "The Constitutionality of the Constitution's Ninety- Third Amendment Act 2005." International Education and Research Journal, Vol. 5, no. 6, June, 2019, pp- 11.

¹² Damodaran, Abhilash, and Samridha Neupane. "The Politics of Reservation in Contemporary India – Special Emphasis on OBC Reservation Debate". Working Paper, SSRN: Social Science Research Network, July 2007, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.998447>

to in the media as ‘Mandal II’, reflecting its alignment with the broader objectives of the Mandal Commission’s recommendations. Arjun Singh’s proposal to extend OBC reservations to prestigious central institutions was perceived as an effort to address the unmet goals of the original Mandal agenda, reinforcing the commitment to social equity in higher education.

The decision to implement 27% reservations for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in centrally-funded higher education institutions provoked organized student resistance. However, demonstrations were significantly less violent than 1990s anti-reservation agitations. The most vocal opposition emerged from upper-caste medical students at metropolitan institutions and unaffected colleges, who organized under the Youth for Equality banner¹³. These protesters demanded the policy’s withdrawal, arguing against further caste-based quotas in education. Despite growing resistance, the UPA government, under HRD minister Arjun Singh’s leadership, stood firm on implementing the reservation.

Then after, on 28 May 2006, the government established an oversight committee to formulate a framework for implementing the 27 percent reservation for Other Backward Classes. The committee, chaired by Veerappa Moily, recommended that the reservation policy be introduced simultaneously in all centrally funded institutions, including the IITs and IIMs, beginning in the academic year 2007-2008. It proposed immediate implementation in humanities courses, while suggesting a gradual rollout over two to three years for technical and professional institutions such as the IITs, NITs, and IIMs. For instance, the IITs were to increase reservations by approximately 9 percent each year, the NITs by about 13.5 percent, and certain IIMs (such as Ahmedabad, Bangalore etc) by varying percentages in successive years¹⁴.

However, the Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Arjun Singh, opposed this phased approach. Instead, he advocated for the complete and immediate enforcement of the 27 percent OBC reservation across all higher educational institutions in a single stage.

VI. Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Act, 2006

The Oversight Committee also endorsed the proposal to implement a 27% reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in higher education. In alignment with this recommendation, the then Minister of Human Resource Development, Arjun Singh, presented the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Bill, 2006, in the Lok Sabha on August 25, 2006. It describes that “to provide for the reservation in admission of the students belonging to the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and the Other Backward Classes of citizens, to certain central educational institutions established, maintained or aided by the Central Government, and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto”¹⁵. The bill stipulated 27% reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in all academic programs across Central Educational Institutions, applying this quota to the total sanctioned intake capacity in each discipline. The legislation received presidential assent on 3 January 2007, thereby bringing it into full legal effect.

VII. Supreme Court Judgement in favour 27% OBC reservation

The Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Act, 2006 was contested before the Supreme Court of India in the case of Ashoka Kumar Thakur v. Union of India. In its landmark judgment delivered on 10 April 2008, the Court upheld the constitutional validity of the legislation, which mandated a 27% reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in admissions to Central Higher Educational Institutions, including premier institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs). However, the Court stipulated that the benefits of this reservation policy should not extend to the ‘creamy layer’ within the OBC

¹³ Kaur, Harpreet & Suri, R.K. Reservation in India: Recent Perspective in Higher Education. New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2009, pp- 104, 105

¹⁴ Government of India. “Final Report of the Oversight Committee on the Implementation of the New Reservation Policy in Higher Educational Institutions”. Oversight Committee chaired by M. Veerappa Moily, Planning Commission, Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2006, pp. 31 to 35

¹⁵ Government of India. The Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Bill, 2006. Bill No. 76, Lok Sabha, introduced 25 Aug. 2006

category, ensuring that the provision targeted only the socially and educationally disadvantaged sections¹⁶.

VIII. Representation of OBCs still after 27% Quota in Higher Education Institutions

While comprehensive data on OBC faculty appointments across all central universities from April 2020 to March 2023 is unavailable, insights can be drawn from two prominent institutions. At the University of Delhi, OBCs accounted for 43% of newly appointed professors (3 out of 7), 29% of associate professors (7 out of 24), and 30% of assistant professors (60 out of 202). Jawaharlal Nehru University showed a similar trend for junior faculty, with OBCs comprising 30% of assistant professors (20 out of 64) and 27% of associate professors (15 out of 55), though representation at the professor level was lower at just 8% (4 out of 49). However, other elite institutions lag significantly behind. In IITs and IIMs, OBC representation remains critically low—just 3.18% across all teaching levels, with less than 0.1% occupying professor and associate professor positions¹⁷.

According to a Parliamentary panel report in March 2025, 56.18% of professor-level positions remain vacant across IITs, IIMs, NITs, IISERs, and central universities, and 28.56% of all sanctioned teaching posts are unfilled overall; among these, 1,521 OBC-reserved posts (out of 3,652) remain vacant¹⁸. Furthermore, during the mission-mode faculty recruitment drive (Sept 2021–Sept 2022), 1,439 reserved vacancies were identified, but only 449 (~30%) were filled by SC/ST/OBC candidates in IITs and central universities¹⁹. These data highlight a persistent challenge: despite legal mandates, the implementation of reservation policies in faculty recruitment remains weak, especially at senior academic levels.

IX. Conclusion

The Mandal Commission's 1980 recommendations led to 27% OBC reservation in central government jobs in 1990 under Prime Minister V.P. Singh, but the proposal for educational institutions was delayed. Later, OBC leaders in North India demanded reservation in education, and Congress, which initially opposed it, supported it in its 2004 agenda. After coming to power, the Congress-led government under HRD Minister Arjun Singh announced 27% OBC reservation in central educational institutions in 2006. Despite protests, it was implemented in 2008. However, its enforcement, especially in faculty recruitment, has been inconsistent, showing the need for stronger implementation measures.

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¹⁶ Ramaswamy, B. *Backward Class in India*. New Delhi: Centrum Press, 2014, pp- 149

¹⁷ Gupta, Anish. "The Representation of OBC in Faculty Recruitment in HEIs," *The Hindu*, 27 Oct. 2023. <https://www.thehindu.com/data/the-representation-of-obc-in-faculty-recruitment-in-heis-data/article67445884.ece>

¹⁸ Fareeha, Iftikhar. "56% Professor Positions at IITs, IIMs, NITs, IISERs Lying Vacant, Says Parliamentary Panel Report." *ThePrint*, 30 Mar. 2025, <https://theprint.in/india/education/56-professor-positions-at-iits-iims-nits-iisers-lying-vacant-says-parliamentary-panel-report/2570586/>

¹⁹ Lakshman, Abhinay. "Only 30% of SC, ST, OBC Faculty Vacancies Filled at IITs, Central Universities in a Year: Centre." *The Hindu*, 22 Dec. 2022, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/only-30-of-sc-st-obc-faculty-vacancies-filled-at-iits-central-universities-in-a-year-centre/article66289565.ece>

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Manu's Insights on Time: An astrological exploration

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I. Abstract

The concept of "time" has intrigued humanity since the dawn of civilization and is deeply embedded in ancient texts like the Rigveda and Atharvaveda, which discuss its components such as day, night, months, years, and cosmic cycles. The Vedic literature, along with ancillary texts like the *Vedāṅgas*, *Brāhmaṇas*, and Upaniṣads, provides profound insights into time's essence, particularly through *Vedāṅga* Jyotish. This early science of time integrates astronomy and astrology, emphasizing the role of time in Vedic rituals and sacrifices. *Vedāṅga* Jyotish evolved into three main branches: *Siddhānta*, *Samhitā*, and *Horā*. Among *Smṛti* texts, the Manusmṛiti holds a notable position in astrological discourse, bridging cosmic principles with human life. Distinguished by its Bhargavi tradition, Manusmṛiti offers unique perspectives on time measurement and its moral implications, reflecting Sage Bhṛigu's philosophical legacy. The six *Vedāṅgas* comprise *Shiksha*, *Kalpa*, *Vyākaraṇa*, *Nirukta*, *Chhandas*, and *Jyotisha*. Each *Vedāṅga* generally maintains an intrinsic interconnection with the others, and *Jyotisha* and *Kalpa* are no exceptions to this rule. *Jyotisha*, being the science of time, is evidently related to every other *Vedāṅga*. Among the 18 pioneering sages of *Jyotiṣaśāstra*, *Maharshi Manu* is prominently included (Narada Smṛiti, 1/2–3), and the significance of the Manusmṛiti among *Smṛti* texts is well established. Hence, the discussion of the concept of time (*Kāla-tattva*) in the Manusmṛiti, as pronounced by Maharshi Manu, emerges as a natural process. This research paper undertakes a thorough analysis of the concept of time (*Kāla-tattva*) in the Manusmṛiti from the perspective of *Jyotiṣaśāstra*.

II. Keywords

Vedāṅga, Triskandha jyotisha, Concept of Time, Months, *Kalpa*, Cosmic Time (*Yuga* and *Kalpa* Cycles), Astrological Chronology, Bhārgavi Tradition, Divine Day and Night, Ritual Time, Ethical Dimensions of Time.

III. Since the beginning of human civilization, the concept of "time" and its variodeterminants have consistently been subjects of curiosity and contemplation. Not only is this evident in human civilization, but also in the world's oldest literary creation, the *Rigveda*, which holds a prestigious position. This scripture extensively discusses the concept of "time" and its various components, such as day and night, the sun, the moon, years, months¹, dates, the past, the future, and the present, exemplified by references like "*Āhah ca Krishnam āha arjunam ca vivartate rajasī*."² Additionally, the *Atharvaveda*'s *Kāla Sūkta*³ contains a collection of mantras that are of great significance for time-related discourse.

The Vedic scriptures, along with auxiliary texts like the *Vedāṅgas*, *Brāhmaṇas*, *Āraṇyakas*, and *Upaniṣads*, provide ample descriptions of the essence of time. Among independent texts that deal with the philosophy of time, the earliest can be considered the literature associated with *Vedāṅga Jyotish* (astronomy and astrology). In this context, the Yajurveda-related *Yajusha Jyotish*⁴, a *Vedāṅga* text, states that the Vedas were revealed for the purpose of sacrifices, which are entirely dependent on time. Hence, this scripture is regarded as a science of time, asserting that one who understands Jyotish truly comprehends the rituals.

Not only in Jyotish (astronomy) but also in other *Vedāṅgas*, such as *śikṣā* (phonetics), *Kalpa* (ritual), *Vyākaraṇa* (grammar), *Nirukta* (etymology), *Chhandas* (prosody), and *Jyotish*, references to

¹ Rigveda: 10/85/5

² Rigveda: 6/9/11

³ Atharvaveda: 19/53/5

⁴ Yajusha Jyotish: Mantra-3

time-related concepts are prevalent. However, the foundational Vedāṅga of time calculation, *Jyotish*, developed significantly over time and evolved into three main branches: *Siddhānta*, *Samhitā*, and *Horā*⁵.

Each of these branches focuses on distinct topics: *Siddhānta* (also referred to as "*Gaṇita*" or "Mathematics"): This branch⁶ encompasses calculations from minor errors to cosmic epochs, seasonal determinations, planetary motion, monthly computations, planetary risings and settings, retrograde motion, solar and lunar eclipses, planetary conjunctions, orbits, magnitudes, geographical distinctions, longitude, latitude, Earth's rotation, gravitational forces, and astronomical constants. *Samhitā*: This branch discusses topics such as land assessment, directional corrections, excavation, construction of water reservoirs, selection of auspicious timings, meteorology, rain forecasts, celestial phenomena, earthquake predictions, omens, physiognomy, gemology, and various other aspects⁷. *Horā*: This branch is dedicated to determining auspicious or inauspicious outcomes of events based on planetary positions, dates, constellations, and their interrelations at specific times. It includes detailed discussions on signs, divisions such as *Horā* and *Navamsha*, planetary strengths, qualities, metal elements, auspicious combinations, life expectancy, and various yogas.

Jyotish has retained its significance in Indian culture through the ages. Despite the passage of time, its relevance and utility have been affirmed by scholars in diverse disciplines, including Ayurveda, literature, grammar, etymology, architecture, agriculture, legal studies, mathematics, ethics, and history, among others. In the tradition of such disciplines, the *Manusmṛiti*, an essential text of *Dharma Shastra*, holds a prominent place in astrological discussions. While not an independent treatise on Jyotish, it frequently references astrology due to its connection with human life. Within the tradition of Smṛiti texts, a distinction exists between *Mahasmṛiti* and *Anusmṛiti*. *Mahasmṛiti* refers to the six *Vedāṅgas*, including Jyotish. *Anusmṛiti*⁸ includes texts like *Manusmṛiti*, *Yajñavalkya Smṛiti*, and *Vishnu Smṛiti*. Among these, the *Manusmṛiti* stands out for its detailed discussions on time and its relevance to human life. Manusmṛiti's classification into four traditions—*Bhārgavi*, *Nārādiya*, *Bārhaspatya*, and *Āṅgīrasi*—has been recognized by scholars, with the *Bhārgavi Manusmṛiti* being the most well-known, often referred to simply as Manusmṛiti. This scripture is referred to as the "*Bhārgavi Manusmṛiti*" because it was received as teachings from *Svayambhuva Manu* and expounded by Sage *Bhrigu*⁹. Its association with Sage *Bhrigu* and its discourse on cosmic processes make it a unique source for discussions on time and its measurements.

IV. Time Calculation in Manusmṛiti and Major Astronomical Texts

The *Manusmṛiti* posits that the creation of the universe began with Lord Narayana's resolve. First, water was created from His own being. When He placed a seed into this water, it transformed into a golden egg, radiant like the sun. From this egg emerged Brahma, who then created the entire universe, including time, its divisions, constellations, and planets: "*Kālaṁ kāla-vibhaktīś ca nakṣatrāṇi grahāṁs tathā*."¹⁰ In the *Surya Siddhanta*, time is classified into two types: *Destructive time* (*Sṛṣṭi-Saṁhāra-Kartā Kāla*): Responsible for creation and destruction. *Measurable time* (*Kalanātmaka Kāla*): Used for calculations. "*Lokānāmantaḥkṛt kālaḥ kālo 'nyaḥ kalanātmakaḥ*."

In the "*Sūrya-Siddhānta*," presented in the form of a dialogue between *Sūrya* and *Mayāsura*¹¹, the definitions of "gross" (*sthūla*) and "subtle" (*sūkṣma*) time are articulated. It is explained that time units such as *prāṇa* (breath) are categorized as "*mūrta*" (tangible), while time units like *truṭi* (a very minute measure) are designated as "*amūrta*" (intangible).

Focusing on measurable time, *Surya Siddhānta* elaborates further, dividing it into: *Gross time* (*Sthūla or Mūrta*): Tangible and measurable, such as respiration and *Subtle time* (*Sūkṣma or Amūrta*): Intangible, such as infinitesimal moments.

⁵ Narada Samhita: 1/4

⁶ Brihat Jyotish Sara: 1/17

⁷ Prashna Marga: 1/8

⁸ Mahabharata: Shanti Parva, 200/30 (Commentary by Acharya Neelkantha)

⁹ Manusmṛiti: 1/59-60

¹⁰ Manusmṛiti: 1/24

¹¹ Surya Siddhanta: 1/4

V. Time Units in Surya Siddhanta

The text defines various units of time:

- **Vinadi:** Equal to six breaths of a calm and healthy person.
- **Nadi:** Sixty Vinadis.
- **Nakshatra Day**¹²: Sixty Nadis.

From such units, calendars like *Pancāṅga*¹³ are constructed, based on *Tithi* (date), *Vāra* (weekday), *Nakṣatra* (constellation), *Yoga*, and *Karāṇa*.

VI. Time Units in Manusmṛiti

The *Manusmṛiti* provides a slightly different method. In the *Manusmṛiti*, it is stated that 18 *nimeṣas* (the time it takes to blink an eye) constitute one *kāṣṭhā*. Thirty *kāṣṭhās* make one *kalā*, and thirty *kalās* form one *muhūrta*. Finally, thirty *muhūrtas* constitute one *ahorātra* (day and night). This is explained as follows:

“*Nimeṣā daśa chāṣṭau ca kāṣṭhā triṃśat tu tāḥ kalāḥ ।*

Triṃśat kalā muhūrtas syād ahorātram tu tāvataḥ ।।”¹⁴

The Manusmṛiti attributes the division of day and night to the sun: “*Ahorātre vibhajate sūryo mānuṣa-daivike.*”

VII. Lunar Month and Year

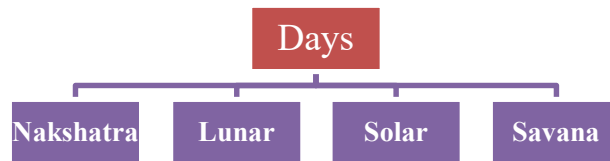
After describing the concept of *ahorātra* (day and night) and the various time measurements within it (*nimeṣa*, *kāṣṭhā*, *kalā*, *muhūrta*, etc.), the author of the *Manusmṛiti* introduces the structure of the *Chandramāsa* (lunar month). It is explained that the *Chandramāsa* consists of two fortnights: the *Kṛṣṇa Pakṣa* (waning phase) and the *Śukla Pakṣa* (waxing phase). This *Chandramāsa* is referred to as the *ahorātra* of the ancestors (*Pitṛs*), where the *Kṛṣṇa Pakṣa* represents their day and the *Śukla Pakṣa* represents their night. Thus, it is evident that the *Kṛṣṇa Pakṣa* is considered the day of the ancestors, while the *Śukla Pakṣa* is regarded as their night¹⁵. A similar statement regarding the foundational lunar cycle of the ancestors’ time is also found in the text *Siddhanta Shiromani*¹⁶.

Twelve such months form a **year**, divided into: *Uttarāyana*: Six months of the sun’s northern journey, representing the gods’ day and *Dakṣiṇāyana*: Six months of the southern journey, representing their night¹⁷.

A human year equals one divine day-night cycle, with *Uttarāyana* as the gods’ day and *Dakṣiṇāyana* as their night.

VIII. Four Types of Days and Months in Sūrya Siddhānta

- The Sūrya Siddhānta recognizes four types of days:
- **Nakshatra Day**
- **Lunar Day (*Chandratithi*)**
- **Solar Day (*Sauradin*)**
- **Savana Day**



¹² Surya Siddhanta: 1/11-12

¹³ Daivajna Kamadhenu: 1/Panchanga Nirṇaya, Page 20

¹⁴ Manusmṛiti: 1/64

¹⁵ Manusmṛiti : 1/66

¹⁶ Siddhanta Shiromani: 1/19

¹⁷ Vashishta Samhita: 2/2

From these arise four corresponding months: Nakshatra Month, Lunar Month, Solar Month and Savana Month. Each month comprises 30 corresponding days. From these months, four types of years emerge¹⁸:

- **Nakṣatra Year:** 12 *Nakṣatra* months.
- **Lunar Year:** 12 Lunar months.
- **Solar Year:** 12 Solar months.
- **Savana Year:** 12 Savana months.

IX. Divine Time and Larger Units

The **Solar Year** is used for larger cosmic calculations, called the **Divine Day-Night** (*Divya Ahoratra*):

- **1 Solar Year = 1 Divine Day-Night.**
- **360 Solar Years = 1 Divine Year.**

Among the four types of years, the *Saurya Varṣa* (solar year) is specifically adopted for calculations related to *Kalpa* and other cosmic epochs. It is stated that a solar year consists of 12 solar months and is also referred to as a "Divine Day-Night" (*Divya Ahorātra*): "*Māsair dvādaśabhir varṣaṃ divyaṃ tad ahu ucyate*". The implication is that each six-month period corresponds to either the *Uttarāyaṇa* (northern solstice) or the *Dakṣiṇāyana* (southern solstice). These periods constitute the day and night of the gods (*Devas*) and demons (*Asuras*). During *Uttarāyaṇa*, it is considered the day of the gods and the night of the demons, whereas during *Dakṣiṇāyana*, it is the night of the gods and the day of the demons¹⁹.

X. Yugas (Epochs) and Cosmic Time in Manusmṛiti

A single solar year is equivalent to one *Divine Day-Night* (*Divya Ahorātra*), and 360 solar years (or *Divya Ahorātras*) constitute one *Divine Year*: "*Tat ṣaṣṭiḥ ṣaḍguṇā divyaṃ varṣaṃ āsureva ca*". Based on these *Divine Years*, *Manusmṛiti* establishes other cosmic time scales, such as *Yuga*, *Mahāyuga*, *Manvantara*, and *Brahma's Day-Night*. According to this framework, 12,000 *Divya Years* constitute one *Yuga* of the gods, also known as a *Chāturyuga*²⁰. The *Chāturyuga* comprises four distinct ages: *Satya Yuga* (*Krita Yuga*), *Tretā Yuga*, *Dvāpara Yuga*, and *Kali Yuga*. These Yugas combine to form a **Mahāyuga (Great Epoch)**. The durations of these ages are further detailed as follows:

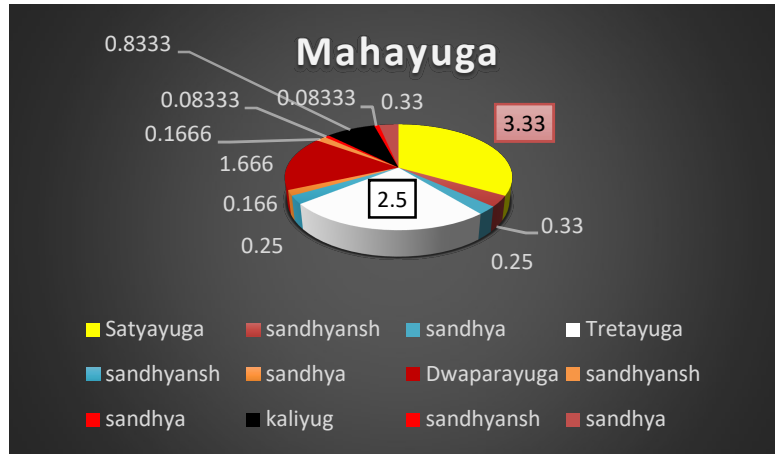
Yuga	Core Years	Dawn (Sandhya)	Dusk (Sandhyansha)	Total Years
<i>Satya Yuga</i>	4,000	400	400	4,800
<i>Tretā Yuga</i>	3,000	300	300	3,600
<i>Dvāpara Yuga</i>	2,000	200	200	2,400
<i>Kali Yuga</i>	1,000	100	100	1,200
Total	-	-	-	12,000

These calculations provide a comprehensive framework for understanding cosmic cycles, time divisions, and their significance in both *Manusmṛiti* and astronomical texts like *Surya Siddhanta*.

¹⁸ Brihaspati Samhita: 25/5

¹⁹ Jyotirvidabharanam: 1/17

²⁰ Manusmṛiti: 1/71



The *Sūrya Siddhānta*²¹ also provides a description of the durations of *Yugas* (epochs) similar to that in the *Manusmṛiti*, but with a significant difference: in the *Sūrya Siddhānta*, this subject is elaborated in a more detailed mathematical framework:

*"Yugasya dasamo bhāgaś caturtridvekasamguṇaḥ,
Kramāt kṛtayugādīnām ṣaṣṭhāṁśaḥ sandhyayoḥ svakaḥ."*

This means that the tenth part of a *Chāturyuga* (a set of 12,000 divine years), which equals 1,200 divine years, is multiplied by 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively, to calculate the durations of *Satya Yuga*, *Tretā Yuga*, *Dvāpara Yuga*, and *Kali Yuga*. The sixth part of the durations of these epochs represents the combined periods of dawn (*Sandhya*) and dusk (*Sandhyansha*) for each epoch. In the *Manusmṛiti*, the concept of divine ages (*yugas*) is also described, where it is stated that the collective span of four human *yugas*—referred to as the *Chāturyuga*—is considered a single age of the gods. This divine age comprises 12,000 divine years²². Even with the mathematical clarity provided in the *Sūrya Siddhānta*, there is no fundamental difference in the *Yuga* measurements described in the *Manusmṛiti* and *Sūrya Siddhānta*.

XI. Mahāyuga and Larger Time Units

Following the Mahāyuga, the *Sūrya Siddhānta* introduces an even broader time scale known as *Manvantara*. According to this text: One *Manvantara* equals 71 *Mahayugas*. At the end of each *Manvantara*, there is an interstitial period (*Sandhikāl*) equivalent to the duration of a *Satya Yuga* (4,800 divine years). During this period, the earth is submerged in water. In Puranic and astrological calculations of time, the existence of 14 Manus is mentioned. However, among these, *Maharishi* Manu specifically names six Manus in his composition *Manusmṛiti*: *Svarochisha*, *Uttama*, *Tamasa*, *Raivata*, *Chakshusha*, and *Vaivasvata*²³. There are 14 Manus in total, and the intervals between them form 15 *Sandhis*. Together, these periods make up one *Kalpa*, equivalent to 1,000 *Mahāyugas*. The *Sūrya Siddhānta* states:

*"Ittham yugasahasreṇa bhūtasamhārakārakaḥ,
Kalpo brāhmahaḥ proktaḥ śarvarī tasya tāvatī."*

Thus, a *Kalpa* constitutes one day of *Brahma*, with an equally long night. This arrangement of **Brahma's Day-Night Cycle** (*Brahma Ahoratra*) is also affirmed in the *Manusmṛiti*:

*"Tadavai yugasahasrāntam brāhmaṇaṁ puṇyam ahar viduḥ,
Rātriṁ ca tāvatīmeva te 'horātravido janāḥ."*²⁴

In the *Manusmṛiti*, *Ācārya* Manu states that when the creator *Brahmā* is awake, that is, during *Brahma's* day, the world remains active and functional. Conversely, as soon as *Brahma's* night begins

²¹ Surya Siddhanta: 1/15-17

²² Manusmṛiti : 1/71

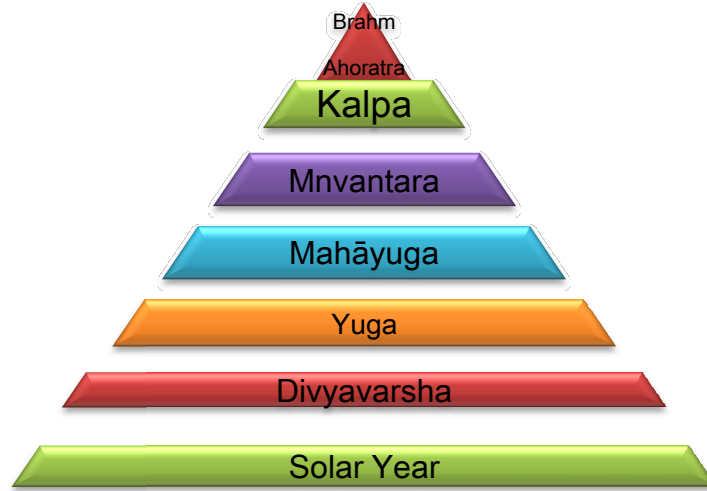
²³ Manusmṛiti : 1/63

²⁴ Manusmṛiti: 1/73

and he goes into slumber, the entire world dissolves²⁵. This concept is also supported in the *Mahasiddhanta*, which states that during Brahma's night, planets, constellations, celestial beings (both gods and demons), and living worlds are destroyed, while Brahma's day brings about the creation of living beings and all realms²⁶.

a) Brahma's Year and Lifespan

Based on the *Brahma Ahorātra*: One year of *Brahma* equals 720 *Kalpas* (360 days and 360 nights). The *Sūrya Siddhānta* further calculates *Brahma*'s lifespan to be 100 Brahma years. This immense time scale encapsulates the grand cosmic cycles described in the *Sūrya Siddhānta* and *Manusmṛiti*, offering a profound understanding of time from both mathematical and mythological perspectives.



Despite the theoretical alignment in the time-calculation systems described in the *Sūrya Siddhānta* and the *Manusmṛiti*, their narrative styles exhibit considerable differences. While the *Sūrya Siddhānta* emphasizes the mathematical aspects of time calculation, the *Manusmṛiti* focuses more on the practical applications of time measurement, presenting them with greater clarity and relevance. These differences in style are evident across various contexts.

b) *Ahorātra* (Day-Night Cycle) and Time Units In discussing the nature of *Ahorātra* (day-night cycle) and time measurements, The *Sūrya Siddhānta* places special emphasis on the mathematical determination of the four types of *Ahorātra*. The *Manusmṛiti*, however, not only explains the measurements of *Ahorātra* but also highlights their immediate utility:

"*Ahorātre vibhajate sūryomānuṣadaivike.*

*Rātriḥ svapnāya bhūtānām ceṣṭāyai karmaṇām ahaḥ.*²⁷"

This means that the division of day and night for humans and gods is governed by the sun, where night is intended for rest, and day is allocated for various activities and responsibilities.

XII. Explanation of Chaturyuga (Four Epochs)

A similar distinction is observed in the context of *Chāturyuga* (the four epochs). The *Sūrya Siddhānta* states that the total duration of a *Cāturyuga* or *Mahāyuga* is 12,000 divine years. The division of these years among the *Satya Yuga*, *Tretā Yuga*, *Dvāpara Yuga*, and *Kali Yuga* is governed by the *Dharma Pada* system:

"*Kṛtādīnām vyavastheyam dharmapādavyavasthayā.*"

However, the *Sūrya Siddhānta* does not elaborate on the term *Dharma Pada* itself. In contrast, the *Manusmṛiti* explicitly explains that during the *Satya Yuga*, *Dharma* (righteousness) stands firmly on all four pillars—penance (*tapasyā*), knowledge (*jñāna*), sacrifice (*yajña*), and charity (*dāna*). With

²⁵ Manusmṛiti : 1/52

²⁶ Mahasiddhanta, Madhyama Adhyaya, 17

²⁷ Manusmṛiti: 1/65

the progression into *Tretā Yuga* and subsequent epochs, the rise of theft, falsehood, deceit, and other vices leads to the gradual erosion of one pillar of *Dharma* in each *Yuga*. The *Manusmṛiti* also details the human lifespan in each epoch: 400 years in *Satya Yuga*, 300 years in *Tretā Yuga*, 200 years in *Dvāpara Yuga*, and 100 years in *Kali Yuga*²⁸. In the *Manusmṛiti*, it is stated that *Brahmā* Himself creates the entire universe and, by withdrawing one period of time (the *ṣṛṣṭi-kāla*, or the period of creation) into another (the *pralaya-kāla*, or the period of dissolution), ultimately becomes reabsorbed into His own essence. The text enumerates the names of the fourteen Manus described in the *Paurāṇic* system of cosmic chronology: *Svārociṣa*, *Uttama*, *Tāmasa*, *Raivata*, *Cākṣuṣa*, *Vaivasvata*, *Sāvarṇi*, *Dakṣa-Sāvarṇi*, *Brahma-Sāvarṇi*, *Dharma-Sāvarṇi*, *Rudra-Sāvarṇi* (also known as *Raucya*), and *Indra-Sāvarṇi* (also known as *Bhoutya*). The decline of these successive pillars is identified as the fundamental cause of the transition from one *yuga* (epoch) to another. *Ācārya* Manu further explains that in the *Satya Yuga*, *tapas* (austerity) was regarded as the essential manifestation of *dharma*; in the *Tretā Yuga*, *jñāna* (knowledge); in the *Dvāpara Yuga*, *yajña* (sacrifice); and in the *Kali Yuga*, only *dāna* (charity) remains as the surviving form of righteousness. With the advancement of material wealth and worldly knowledge, one stage of *dharma* is lost with each successive *yuga*. The *Manusmṛiti* attributes the decline of *dharma* primarily to the proliferation of theft, falsehood, and deceit in human conduct.

XIII. The impact of the *Sūrya Siddhānta* and other astrological texts on the thoughts and perspective of Maharshi Manu.

The above descriptions highlight that the time-calculation methods presented by *Maharishi* Manu in the *Manusmṛiti* are significantly influenced by the *Sūrya Siddhānta* and other astronomical texts. Being a text primarily concerned with the mathematical aspects of astronomy, the *Sūrya Siddhānta* gives precedence to the quantitative framework of time measurement. Conversely, as a text rooted in the tradition of *Dharma śāstra* (ethical and moral codes), the *Manusmṛiti* accords greater importance to the practical and ethical dimensions of time calculation.

XIV. Conclusion

A harmonious study of both the astrological texts and the *Manusmṛiti* can provide a more profound understanding of the subject of time calculation. Each text complements the other, with one excelling in mathematical precision and the other in ethical and practical applications. Together, they form a holistic perspective on the intricate system of ancient Indian chronometry. The exploration of time (*kāla-tattva*) in the *Manusmṛiti* reveals a profound synthesis of cosmological insight, ethical philosophy, and astrological precision within the framework of ancient Indian thought. While texts like the *Sūrya Siddhānta* focus primarily on the mathematical and astronomical dimensions of time, the *Manusmṛiti* transcends these calculations by integrating temporal order with moral and social order (*dharma*). For Manu, time is not a passive continuum but an active, divine principle that regulates the rhythm of cosmic creation and human conduct alike. The divisions of time—from the smallest measurable units such as *nimeṣa* and *muhūrta* to the grand cosmic cycles of *yuga*, *manvantara*, and *kalpa*—symbolize both the cyclicity and sacredness of existence. The *Manusmṛiti*'s cosmological framework mirrors the structure of the *Sūrya Siddhānta* yet reinterprets it through the ethical lens of *Dharma Śāstra*. Time here serves a dual function: it measures cosmic processes and simultaneously governs the moral evolution of humanity across successive ages. Each *yuga* marks not only an astronomical epoch but also a gradual decline in virtue and life span, underscoring Manu's belief in the interdependence of cosmic and ethical order. This integration of metaphysical and moral temporality distinguishes the *Manusmṛiti* from purely astronomical treatises.

²⁸ Manusmṛiti: 1/83

Thus, the study of time in the Manusmṛti reflects an advanced philosophical system wherein cosmology, astrology, and *dharma* converge. It presents time as the unifying thread that links the macrocosm with the microcosm—the divine with the human. By harmonizing astronomical precision with ethical intentionality, Manu offers a holistic vision of temporality that continues to resonate with both spiritual and scientific inquiry. In essence, the Manusmṛti transforms the measurement of time into a meditation on cosmic order, moral responsibility, and the eternal rhythm of creation..

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Gender biases in lexicography: some reflections on select dictionaries and corpora in Hindi and Spanish

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I. Abstract

For the majority of learners and new learners in any given language, recourse to dictionaries (both online and offline) and corpora still remain one of the most sought after tools. It is not a coincidence that for many the learning or knowledge of a language is premised upon knowing how many words a person has mastered. What always underlies this firm belief is the conviction about the unbiased or innocent nature of such resources. Most take it for granted that dictionaries do not contain any biases, whatsoever, with respect to gender, race, class etc. and that they always convey what is 'objective' and 'truth'.

A critical look at what words the dictionaries contain and, more importantly, what they choose to exclude reveals, however, that they always potentially contain biases prevalent in the society and time producing them. This article will look at how this biased nature can be seen in the sphere of gender where, the article argues, entries in dictionaries perpetuate rather than challenge hierarchical inferiority women are subjected to as per the dominant social relations of power. This is evident in the fact that many occupation-related terms coined for women are still missing from dictionaries. This article examines select Hindi and Spanish dictionaries and corpora in order to bring out certain specific instances of gender biases which these resources demonstrate.

II. Keywords

Dictionary, corpora, language, technology, critical lexicography, Hindi, Spanish, gender inequality, hierarchy, representation

III. Introduction

The relevance of dictionaries has remained constant from ancient times to the present. Dictionaries are used in language teaching, developing technical vocabulary, content creation, and various language technology applications. Their utility will continue in the era of multilingualism and technology. A dictionary is defined as a systematic collection of words, their meanings, and grammatical categories. There are various types of dictionaries, such as thesauruses, antonym dictionaries, etymological dictionaries, pronunciation dictionaries, usage dictionaries, monolingual dictionaries, bilingual dictionaries, multilingual dictionaries, dialect dictionaries, online dictionaries, and e-dictionaries. Creating a dictionary is a time-consuming and labor-intensive process. It involves several stages. The first stage involves outlining the dictionary, which depends on the intended purpose. The compilation of content is done according to the purpose, followed by the selection of entries. The lexicographer must be very careful while selecting entries. It is the lexicographer's decision which words should be included in the dictionary and which should not. The second stage involves structuring the entries. This includes determining the headword, pronunciation, meaning, definition, usage, etymology, etc. This is the main function of a dictionary, and the lexicographer spends most of their time on this. In the third stage, the dictionary entries are arranged in a systematic order.

The symbols and signs used in the dictionary are also finalized. In the process described above, the lexicographer must also consider the social aspects of the language. C.C. Berg (as cited in Zgusta, 1971, p. 197), offers a very concise take on the matter:

"A dictionary is a systematic and ordered list of those socialized linguistic forms that are collected from the speech behavior of the language-speaking community, and whose explanation by the lexicographer is such that a competent reader can understand the independent meaning of each form and become aware of its collective function and characteristics¹."

¹ Zgusta, L. (1971). *Manual of lexicography*. De Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111349183>

This definition makes it clear that a dictionary has a direct and deep connection with society. During dictionary compilation, entries are included for all words, even those whose use is considered inappropriate in society. Words that are becoming less common are also included. Words that have recently started being used are also included. It is naturally expected that a dictionary will present all the word forms in use during its time. But the reality is somewhat different. Furthermore, ongoing research in this area also shows that dictionaries sometimes perpetuate societal inequalities by giving linguistic expressions of existing notions and definitions widespread acceptance.

Here, the propositions emerging in the field of critical lexicography are useful for us. Expanding on Kachru and Kahane's (1995) perspective¹, it is particularly relevant to add that words are not free from certain biases; rather, they are influenced by factors such as ideology, power, and politics. With this premise, critical lexicography examines dictionaries of different languages. Regarding the specific context chosen for this article, both Hindi and Spanish often use only masculine nouns for professions or occupations. Furthermore, even when a feminine form of a particular profession exists, the masculine form is often considered the standard. Additionally, the plural forms of these nouns always refer to the masculine plural. It has also been observed that the Hindi suffix *वाली* *wali* (indicating that a woman can also perform the given task) is not used in the descriptions of these words. This research paper attempts to highlight these gender-related issues in dictionaries of Hindi and Spanish. The selection of Hindi and Spanish for this study was based on certain factors, including some fundamental similarities between the two languages. First, both languages belong to the broader Indo-European language family. Another similarity, particularly relevant to this article, is that both languages have grammatical gender for nouns, whereby most if not all nouns are classified as either masculine or feminine. Another noteworthy point is that in both languages, when a feminine or masculine noun is used in a sentence, the verb (in case of Hindi) and the adjectives (in both Hindi and Spanish) used in that sentence also change according to the gender of that particular noun. Furthermore, both languages, in various ways, reflect similar gender inequalities in their respective societies, particularly the marginalization of women, some aspects of which will be studied in detail in this article.

IV. Gender : A Social Construct Perpetuated in and Through Language

Gender is socially constructed. Family, society, and other socio-economic structures determine distinctions based on a child's sex. These distinctions include clothing, behavior, social roles, status, identity, and responsibilities. Thus, gender is constructed and practiced as per the societal 'norms' prevalent at a given time. It can also be seen that the constant emphasis on feminine and masculine attributes reinforces gender stereotypes. Here, there always are prescriptions or social norms which dictate what men can do and what women can do. The dominant and mass-circulated representations of these gender stereotypes slow down the process of men and women reversing their roles.

The impact of gender stereotypes is also seen in various aspects of language. In fact, one can safely say that it is in the sphere of language where meanings are made and exchanged that the stereotypes and biases perpetuating gender binaries get normalized. It then extends to the sphere of culture where especially mass-culture products (advertisements, films, songs etc) capitalize on existing gender binaries for commercial gains.

In the case of language specifically, we see that while women are advancing in every field today, dictionaries in Hindi still assume that words like 'organizer (आयोजक)', 'translator (अनुवादक)', 'chairman (अध्यक्ष)', 'actor (अभिनेता)', and 'examiner (परीक्षक)' are exclusively for men.

Perhaps that is why dictionaries do not have separate terms for female counterparts, nor do they use the suffix *वाली* '*wali*' (meaning 'female') in their definitions, especially with regard to those in Hindi. The following sections will attempt to explain these gender-related issues in dictionaries

¹ Kachru, B. B., & Kahane, H. (Eds.). (1995). *Cultures, ideologies, and the dictionary: Studies in honor of Ladislav Zgusta* (Lexicographica. Series Maior, Vol. 64). Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag.

through detailed discussion of some examples. Such cases abound in the context of Spanish as well where, as we will see later in the article through our critical examination of select references, the generic terms for professions and group-denominating words are always masculine and masculine plural.

V. Gender Dynamics in Hindi Dictionaries

When we examine words in a given dictionary, we find that from the entry to the definition, the dictionary is not gender-neutral; it is imbued with gender bias. This can be explained with a few examples: In Hindi dictionaries, all words related to professions are listed only in their masculine form, such as 'अध्यक्ष' (chairman), 'अभिनेता' (actor), and 'परीक्षक' (examiner). However, the feminine forms, such as 'अध्यक्षा' (chairwoman), 'अभिनेत्री' (actress), are absent. Furthermore, the word 'वाली' 'wali' (meaning 'female counterpart') is not used in the definitions, which implies that being male is a prerequisite for any profession or occupation. The only explanation for this is the influence of patriarchal power and ideology in dictionary compilation. Only male-centric words are included in the dictionary. For example:

Monolingual Dictionary

आयोजक : [सं-पु] आयोजन करने वाला।

Organizer: [noun-masculine] One who organizes.

This dictionary does not have a separate word for the female counterpart, nor does the definition of 'organizer' include the word 'वाली' 'wali'.

Bilingual Dictionary

Gujarati-Hindi Dictionary

Words like 'अध्यक्ष' (chairman), 'अध्यापक' (teacher), 'अभिनेता' (actor), and 'परीक्षक' (examiner) are present, but the feminine forms like 'अध्यक्षा' (chairwoman), 'अध्यापिका' (teacher-female), and 'अभिनेत्री' (actress) are not included.

Marathi-Hindi Dictionary

Words like 'अध्यापक' (teacher), 'अधीक्षक' (supervisor), and 'अनुवादक' (translator) are present, but the word 'अध्यापिका' (female teacher) is not. Also, the word 'वाली' 'wali' is not used in the definitions of 'अधीक्षक' and 'अनुवादक', which would indicate that women are equal participants.

There are many more examples of nouns and adjectives in Hindi dictionaries that exclude female participation, such as:

जानकार: जाननेवाला

Knowledgeable person: One who knows

रसोइया [सं. पु]: खाना बनाने वाला

Cook [noun, masculine]: Person who prepares food

वैमानिक [सं-पु]: विमानचालक

Aviator [noun, masculine]: Pilot

वैयाकरण [सं-पु]

Grammarian [noun, masculine]

वैज्ञानिक [सं-पु]

Scientist [noun, masculine]

व्याख्याता [सं-पु]

Lecturer [noun, masculine]

वकील [सं-पु]

Lawyer [noun, masculine]

वक्ता [सं-पु]

Speaker [noun, masculine]

वास्तुकार [सं-पु]
 Architect [noun, masculine]
 पत्रकार [सं-पु]
 Journalist [noun, masculine]
 प्रतिभागी [सं-पु]
 Participant [noun, masculine]
 प्रवक्ता [सं-पु]
 Spokesperson [noun, masculine]
 प्रशिक्षक [सं-पु]
 Trainer [noun, masculine]
 प्रशिक्षणार्थी [सं-पु]
 Trainee [noun, masculine]
 प्रस्तुतकर्ता [सं-पु]
 Presenter [noun, masculine]
 प्रस्तोता [सं-पु]
 Host [noun, masculine]

Thus, we see that feminine words related to professions are completely absent. One might argue that since these words haven't been created, how can they be included in the dictionary? However, this argument cannot be used to ignore the contribution of women. With time, girls/women have also progressed, and today they have equal participation in society. There is no field where women have not ensured their presence. Women hold high positions, they work as translators and actresses. But the absence of words representing them in the dictionary reflects gender-based stereotypes.

VI. Gender Biases in Spanish Language Dictionaries and Corpuses

In the context of the Spanish language, encompassing Spain and much of Latin America, and Hindi, referring to the Hindi-speaking regions of India, certain fundamental gender biases and inequalities have persisted, which are reflected in both languages and their dictionaries. Just like in Hindi-speaking societies, women in Spanish-speaking societies have also been confined to specific roles. Both societies, in their core structure, have been deeply patriarchal, feudal, and hierarchical, with multiple layers of exploitation. Clearly, these dynamics, arising from different historical, political, and economic factors, manifest in distinct ways. However, in both societies, women have been generally perceived primarily as homemakers, subservient to men, and dependent on their guidance and protection. They have been considered morally inferior, impure, unintelligent, and weak compared to men.

A large portion of literature written in Spanish has reinforced these stereotypical, unrealistic images of women, where either their positive roles are absent or any role they do have revolves around these stereotypes. Beyond literature, this patriarchal attitude towards women is also predominantly evident in dictionaries. The most prominent example is the Spanish language dictionary, known by its Spanish abbreviation DLE (*Diccionario de la Lengua Española*). An analysis of the DLE and some other dictionaries yields significant findings relevant to our study. These findings reveal how these dictionaries, considered authoritative worldwide for the Spanish language, fail to adequately represent women and their roles. Firstly, this is seen in the omission of certain words, particularly those related to professions. For example, the masculine word *profesor* (professor) is considered the base word, while the feminine *profesora* is seen as its variant.

The bias in favor of the masculine form becomes even more evident when discussing plural words, where the masculine plural form is used without exception. For instance, when we want to say that many professors teach at this university, the Spanish language uses the masculine plural form *profesores*, not the feminine plural *profesoras*. In this way, this particular usage of words effectively erases the presence of women from our vocabulary. This issue is not limited to the print or digital versions of these dictionaries. The linguistic world they create, where women are either

absent or only represented by feminine word forms, extends to the vast corpus of the Spanish language. For example, in the CORPES XXI corpus, searching for *profesor* yields all forms of the word, both masculine and feminine, singular and plural (*profesor*, *profesora*, *profesores*, *profesoras*). However, searching for *profesora* only returns the feminine singular and plural forms (*profesora*, *profesoras*).

Another way in which Spanish dictionaries diminish the role of women is evident in the process of creating new words. Both the need to create them and their resulting form, reveal the underlying biases in this phenomenon. For example, Spanish society has used the feminine noun *modista* for centuries to refer to those who create custom-made garments, and this term has traditionally been included in dictionaries. This reflects the social reality that women have always been primarily responsible for designing and making these special garments, especially those for women.

Now, in recent times, with more and more men entering this profession, dictionaries have coined the masculine form *modisto* for male fashion designers. This raises the question: if, in the case of *professor*, the masculine form is considered the base word and the feminine form *profesora* is its variant, as is generally accepted, why isn't the same rule applied to *modista*? Why can't the feminine form *modista* be considered the base word and the masculine form *modisto* its variant?

We see the same thing with another common word, *enfermera* (nurse). For years, in Spanish-speaking societies, this feminine word has been used to refer to a female nurse, reflecting the social reality and experience that this role has traditionally been held by women. Then, as more men entered the nursing profession, the masculine form *enfermero* was coined, but again, the existing feminine form *enfermera* was not given the status of the base word.

Thus, the practice of downplaying or even erasing women's roles is evident in the specific ways occupational terms are used. Similarly, the use of certain words tends to limit women's roles to specific tasks. For example, in newspaper reports about feminist movements, the term *las feministas* is always used, where *las* is the plural of the feminine definite article *la*. This implies that a feminist is necessarily a woman; there is no possibility of a male being considered a feminist.

VII. Gendered online spaces : E-Dictionaries and Machine Translation

If we assume that a feminine word might not be in the dictionary, then there is no particular problem. The user's human brain will automatically understand the meaning of words used in a feminine context. However, the matter doesn't end there in the current era. Today, we are in the age of technology. New applications of language technology are constantly being developed, whether it's machine translation, online dictionaries, or something else. These applications are not yet so advanced that they can understand that women can also perform certain tasks. As a result, gender bias is emerging in machine translation, and the translations are also incorrect, for example:

English sentence

They are playing cricket.

They are applying henna.

Teacher is going to class

Hindi sentence

वे क्रिकेट खेल रहे हैं।

वे मेहंदी लगा रही हैं।

शिक्षक कक्षा में जा रहा है।

In the above examples, the masculine forms of the verb (e.g., 'are playing', 'is going') are used for activities like cricket and professions like teacher. While the feminine form is used for the activity of applying henna. This clearly reveals how the gender-bias of those preparing corpus for such online/machine translation tools creep into the system to produce such distorted, gender binary and problematic division of activities which, in principle, are open to any gender.

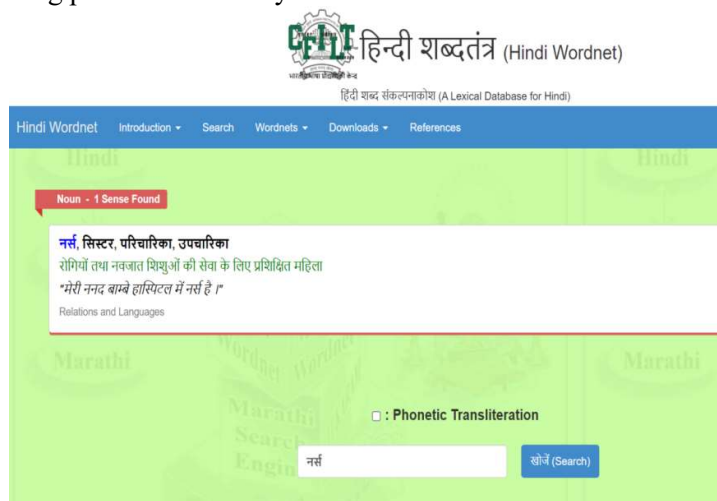
In the context of the Spanish language, this paradox is seen in the translation of sentences from another language. Even if a word in the source language sentence does not indicate a male, its Spanish translation uses a masculine word. For example, consider the Spanish translation of the English sentence 'they are playing'. The translation is 'ellos están jugando', where 'ellos' is indeed used for 'they', but it is the plural form of the masculine pronoun 'él' (he). That is, while the English 'they' does not indicate a specific gender, 'ellos' is a masculine pronoun. This is recurrent issue in Spanish machine/online translation, a clear extension of the same seen for centuries in dictionaries/grammar primers etc., where for a group, the masculine plural is taken to be the

common denominator. For example, if one were to refer to a group of students which contain both males and females (and also those identifying themselves as third gender) one will have to use *losestudiantes* which is the masculine plural form of the singular masculine noun *estudiante* meaning both male and female student. Those with enough gender sensitivity do try to make the distinction there by using both masculine plural definite article *los* and feminine plural definite article *las*, but such instances are few and the prevalent practice is to use only the masculine plural definite article *los* for the whole group.

VIII. Online Dictionaries and Lexicons

English-Hindi online dictionaries also list words that are masculine. For example:

- Driver: चालक (m), driver, संचालक (m), गाड़ीवान (m), कोचवान (m), चलानेवाला (m), वाहनचालक (m).
- Pilot: driver (m), pilot (m), operator (m), guide (m), leader, captain (m), aviator, helmsman, navigator, seafarer, aircraft operator, airman, flyer, navigator.
- Professor: teacher (m), professor (m)
- Player: player (m), actor (m), athlete, performer, musician (m), gambler (m), sportsman, card player, gambling person.



(Image-1)



(Image-2)

The above examples clearly show that technology today is once again exhibiting the same stereotypical mindset. Even in the age of technology, it is difficult to accept that women are equal participants. Women are also operating trains, airplanes, etc. Women are contributing equally in all fields, whether academic or sports. Gender stereotypes exist in natural language processing, and it is possible that the dictionaries used also maintain the same indifference towards feminine words.

The feminine forms of words related to professions may not be included in the dictionary, and their definitions do not give due importance to women. As a result, feminine words are absent.

IX. Conclusion

This article is an attempt at a detailed, critical analysis of dictionaries. This analysis has been approached from a specific perspective: the gender bias evident in dictionaries. Through the analysis of selected dictionaries of Hindi and Spanish, two languages geographically distant but sharing some socio-cultural and linguistic similarities, this article raises some questions in this context. The most important question is: do dictionaries merely record words and are they free from any kind of social bias in doing so, or is it not so simple, and do dictionaries reinforce many socio-cultural biases present in language? This article attempts to show how Hindi and Spanish dictionaries perpetuate gender disparities and contradictions that have existed in their societies until today. We have seen how half of the world's population, which is now ensuring its presence in every field, is either completely absent or relegated to a very limited role as the feminine form of a masculine root word. This linguistic expression of gender inequality is evident from dictionaries and lexicons to machine translation. Therefore, linguistic changes and innovations are needed in the dictionary compilation process to reflect women's presence in various aspects, including occupational terminology.

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Psychoanalytical perspective of Trans Women indentity

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I. Abstract

In contemporary times, the voices of transgender individuals are gradually emerging within the framework of a binary gender society. While much of the existing research concentrates on aspects like physical transition, discrimination, and the pains and humiliations associated with gender diaspora, this research paper specifically centers on the psychological transformation experienced by transgender women. The researcher endeavours to articulate arguments that highlight the potential for discovering gender identity through psychoanalytical observations. The primary focus of this research is derived from Janat Mock's text, titled "Redefining Realness." Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytical theory is employed to intricately analyze the presented findings.

II. Key Words

Trans Women, Gender Identity, Mirror Stage, 'I' formation.

III. Jacques Lacan and the Mirror Stage Theory

Being the first person to interpret Sigmund Freud's writings, French psychiatrist Jacques Lacan gained international recognition.¹ He was born in Paris, France on April 13, 1901, and died there on September 9, 1981. Following his medical degree in 1932, Lacan spent the most of his career as a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst in Paris. He helped to introduce Freudian theory to France in the 1930s, but it wasn't until 1953 that he began presenting regular seminars at the University of Paris that he gained recognition. He rose to prominence in France after his essays and lectures were published in *Écrits* in 1966. He founded and administered the Freudian School of Paris, which he directed from 1964 until it was closed in 1980 due to a lack of rigorous adherence to Freudian concepts.

Psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan postulated the 2nd "mirror stage," sometimes known as the "mirror phase," as a developmental stage. Lacan describes the mirror stage as taking place between the ages of six and eighteen months. It is during this time that we start to actively participate in the systems of signs (language, culture, conventional behaviour, etc.) and begin to recognize oneself as individuals, complete and distinct from the others around us. The mirror stage signifies the emergence of the psyche and the Subject, or the "I," as well as our journey into the Imaginary and Symbolic domains. Developmental psychology of Henri Wallon is the source of Lacan's mirror stage. Wallon explained that humans are born earlier than other animals and need up to eighteen months of growth before they can walk, stand, grasp items, or comprehend their body in its entirety in relation to its surroundings. Wallon noticed that while human infants continued to be attracted by the images, young animals, such as chimpanzees, quickly lost interest in them or attempted to attack them. Lacan postulated that a kid acquires knowledge of its body and identity through perceiving a depiction of the self and understanding oneself as others do.

IV. Physical and Mental Transformations

The inquiry into the root cause of gender transformation dates back to ancient times, with Herodotus, often regarded as the Father of History, being the earliest known figure to engage in this discussion. Herodotus attributed what he termed the 'Scythian illness' to a divine rationale.

¹ Jacques Lacan (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). 24 Dec. 2022, plato.stanford.edu/entries/lacan

² ---, editor. The Cambridge Companion to Lacan. book, Cambridge UP, 2003, www.cambridge.org/9780521807449.

According to his account, the goddess Venus, angered by the desecration of her temple at Ascelos, imposed a transformative punishment on the Scythian males and their descendants, changing them into women as a divine consequence for their transgressions. Janice G. Raymond delved into psychoanalytical studies on transsexualism in her research work titled "The Transsexual Empire."

Janice G. Raymond registered some of the psychoanalytical study on transsexual in her research work *The Transsexual Empire*. In an examination of nine cases involving male-to-constructed-female transsexualism, psychotherapist ³Robert Stoller has undertaken significant work in formulating psychological theories on the origins of transsexualism. Stoller concludes by drawing a parallel between male transsexualism and the traditional mother-child bond that emerges in the context of a deteriorating marriage. According to Stoller's depiction of clinical scenarios, mothers in these instances were frequently dissatisfied individuals who, since childhood, harboured aspirations to be men. In their married lives, they exhibited commanding and domineering traits, and Stoller attributes this to a pronounced case of Freudian penis envy. Stoller posits that these mothers use their child as a surrogate for the desired phallus. Contrary to the typical male developmental stage of individuation following separation from the mother, Stoller observes that the transgender youngster does not undergo this process, lacking the development of masculinity and the anticipated fear of castration as proposed by Freud.

There are reports suggesting that the fathers of transsexual individuals were passive, rarely leaving their homes, and having minimal presence when they did. Stoller notes a weak father-son bond and asserts that fathers had little influence over their sons. In these circumstances, the mother turned to the child for ongoing fulfilment, directing her complete attention to him and fostering identification through continuous physical contact such as holding, hugging, carrying, and snuggling. Stoller contends that this intense mother-son symbiosis led the child to perceive himself as a female, despite biological evidence to the contrary. This symbiotic relationship occasionally persisted until prepubertal years. Stoller concludes that the early development of a fundamental feminine gender identity impedes the boy from conforming to culturally prescribed masculine norms based on his findings from the clinical case studies (70).

In her memoir, Janet Mock reflects on her parents' tumultuous relationship, stating, "He and mom usually yelled from behind their bedroom walls, something we adapted and grew accustomed to." This vivid depiction highlights the challenges Mock faced in her upbringing and emphasizes the normalization of conflict within her family dynamic. And she happened to face quiet problems with her sister Cori due to her boyfriend. By comparing the test results of Robert Stoller with Janet Mock's registered incidents, it appears that both share similarities. Janet was more passionate about her mother than her father. Right from her young age, Janet was under the care of her mother and grandmother, as her dad was often absent despite having a job. Mock cited that her dad was very strict and furious. Another notable concern is the detachment between her dad and mother, which may have led her to become a complete woman. Even though biological components dominate the chances for transformation, we cannot ignore the possibilities of psychological causations, as discussed by Robert. The researcher thinks that these incidents from Mock's life are the outer layer formations of her man-to-woman transition. From here on, we can discuss the core or central part of the transformation, which means the 'I' formation.

V. Formation of 'I' From 'Others'

The formation of the outer layer is contingent upon one's consciousness or unconsciousness. In the construction of the self, specifically the formation of the "I," this process is inexorably linked to consciousness. Janet aspired to personalize her identity, harbouring the ultimate desire to embody the essence of a complete woman. However, the specific archetype of womanhood that she envisioned for herself remains unclear.

Mock recounted a noteworthy incident from her school days wherein students were prompted to articulate their future aspirations. As expected, responses ranged from aspiring lawyers, doctors, police officers, to teachers. In a departure from the conventional, Janet, then identified by the name Charles, unhesitatingly expressed her desire to become a secretary. Remarkably, this declaration occurred when she was merely an eight-year-old boy.

³ Raymond, Janice G. *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-Male*. 1994

She elucidated her choice with the reflection, "I chose it as my grown-up job because I understood it to be a women's job. In nearly all the films or series I watched, I noticed that every man of importance had a secretary, an attractive, efficient keeper of his schedule" (37). It is noteworthy that, at the tender age of eight, Janet lacked the cognitive capacity to comprehend arbitrary and stereotypical depictions of women. Her perception of women was, unsurprisingly, shaped by societal influences, and as a young child, she articulated what she had gleaned from her experiences.

Humanity's structure is replete with imitation and evolution, as individuals often emulate their predecessors. One's individuality becomes contingent on the societal construct shaped by conventions and culture. Janet was drawn to the "secretary character" as her true self, without contemplating elements such as wearing sarees associated with Indian women. This underscores the pivotal role that language, culture, and tradition play in shaping an individual's personality. In line with Lacanian philosophy, one observes the 'self' in relation to the 'other.' Another profound revelation from Janet Mock delves into her psychological 'I' formation:

⁴"I see Belle clearly now, spinning on that dance floor in her golden gown as everyone looked on. I yearned to grow to be as beautifully bookish as Belle" (77).

This statement elucidates Mock's perception of the 'I' through the character of Belle. Mock cherished Belle's golden gown and envisioned herself adorned in a similar manner. She expressed her discontent with watching "Beauty and the Beast" solely because of her profound admiration for the character Belle. Belle, portrayed by Emma Watson, is a young and beautiful girl who captures the affection of a prince in the form of a beast. The characters of Belle and the beast embody masculine and feminine qualities, respectively. Janet's admiration for Belle stemmed from shared similarities, such as their affinity for reading. Janet, having developed her reading habit from her mother, desired a love akin to that between Belle and the beast. She derived her sense of 'self' from the 'other' (Belle). Despite feeling the presence of femininity within herself, she adopts 5⁵ gender performativity based on external influences.

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A comparative study of academic achievement between Male and Female higher secondary students of Assam

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I. Abstract

Academic achievement continues to be a critical indicator of educational progress and intellectual development among students. Gender-based patterns of achievement have been widely discussed in the Indian context, where socio-cultural expectations, learning environments, motivational orientations and access to academic support differ subtly by gender. The present study seeks to compare the academic achievement of male and female Higher Secondary (HS) first-year students in Government Higher Secondary Schools of Kamrup (Metro) district, Assam, using their High School Leaving Certificate (HSLC) Examination scores as a standardized measure of prior scholastic performance. A sample of 300 students (150 male and 150 female) was selected using stratified random sampling. Descriptive statistics and an independent samples t-test were employed to analyse the mean differences in academic achievement. The findings indicate a statistically significant difference between male and female students, with female students demonstrating comparatively higher academic achievement in the HSLC examination. The results are interpreted in relation to psychological, sociological and educational research, highlighting the continuing relevance of gendered educational patterns in Assam. Implications for educators, curriculum planners and policy makers are discussed to promote equitable academic development across genders.

II. Keywords

Academic achievement, gender difference, male and female, higher secondary students.

III. Introduction

Academic achievement is regarded as a multidimensional construct that encompasses cognitive growth, acquisition of knowledge, mastery of academic tasks and the capacity to apply learned skills in practical contexts. It functions not only as a personal indicator of student performance but also as a broader institutional and societal benchmark for educational progress. In the Indian education system, academic achievement at secondary and higher secondary levels is especially valued because it serves as a decisive determinant for academic progression, career selection and social mobility.

The state of Assam, like many other regions of India presents a dynamic educational landscape where traditional socio-cultural structures increasingly intersect with modern aspirations. Despite considerable improvements in school enrolment and gender parity, emerging empirical trends suggest notable patterns in achievement differentials between male and female students. Numerous educational surveys and scholastic assessments conducted in recent years have revealed that female students often outperform their male counterparts in board examinations, particularly in Assam. However, the underlying dynamics of such differences remain insufficiently explored.

The transition from secondary to higher secondary education marks a crucial developmental stage, characterized by increasing academic specialization, identity formation and career decision-making. HSLC examination scores represent the first major standardized academic milestone and form the foundation for future educational pathways. Therefore, analyzing gender differences at this level provides meaningful insights into early academic patterns that may shape later outcomes.

Within this context, the present study endeavours to compare the academic achievement of male and female Higher Secondary first-year students in Kamrup (Metro), a district known for its educational diversity and institutional density. This study employs a rigorous comparative design to determine whether significant gender-based differences exist and to contribute to evidence-based educational understanding in Assam.

IV. Objectives of the Study

- To determine the academic achievement of Higher Secondary first-year students in Government Higher Secondary Schools of Kamrup (Metro) district.
- To compare the academic achievement between male and female Higher Secondary first-year students.

V. Research Questions

- What is the level of academic achievement (HSLC percentage scores) among male and female Higher Secondary first-year students of Government schools in Kamrup (Metro)?
- Is there a significant difference in academic achievement between male and female students at this level?

VI. Hypotheses

- Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference in academic achievement between male and female Higher Secondary first-year students of Kamrup (Metro) district.
- Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant difference in academic achievement between male and female Higher Secondary first-year students of Kamrup (Metro) district.

VII. Review of Related Literature

Gender differences in academic achievement have attracted sustained scholarly attention at global, national, and regional levels. Research conducted across varied cultural and educational contexts has yielded complex and sometimes contradictory findings, influenced by educational environment, parental expectations, student motivation and socio-cultural norms.

International studies frequently report that female students tend to perform better in language-based subjects, whereas male students may demonstrate relative advantage in mathematics and science-related domains (Hyde & Linn, 2006; Guiso, Monte, Sapienza & Zingales, 2008). However, recent meta-analyses suggest that such differences are diminishing over time due to increasing educational equality and pedagogical reforms (Voyer & Voyer, 2014).

In the Indian context, educational surveys conducted by NCERT, UDISE+, and the Annual Status of Education Report consistently indicate that girls have increasingly surpassed boys in academic performance at the school level. Scholars such as Rani (2016) and Choudhury (2020) attribute this trend to greater academic diligence among girls, heightened parental aspirations for daughters due to shifting socio-cultural expectations and higher self-regulatory learning behaviors observed among female students. On the other hand, boys are often reported to face higher peer-related distractions, social expectations to demonstrate assertiveness and lower sustained academic engagement (Garg & Gupta, 2019).

Studies conducted in Assam specifically show a similar pattern. Research by Dutta (2017) and Hazarika (2021) found that female secondary students in several districts consistently secured higher average marks in board examinations than male students. These studies identified differential time investment in studies, familial encouragement and classroom engagement patterns as contributing factors.

However, while the existence of gender differences has been documented, comparative studies using standardized measures and stratified sampling at the Higher Secondary entry level remain limited, especially within Kamrup (Metro), a district with high educational competition and diversity of schooling patterns. The present study fills this research gap by systematically comparing male and female academic achievement using HSLC examination scores as a uniform measure and applying inferential statistical analysis to test significance.

VIII. Significance of the Study

The present study holds considerable significance for multiple stakeholders in the educational system, particularly within the context of Assam. As academic achievement forms the foundational criterion for further educational selection and career advancement, understanding its gender-based variations is essential for fostering equitable learning environments. The findings of the study provide empirical evidence regarding the performance patterns of male and female students at the Higher Secondary entry level, which is a critical transitional stage in the academic trajectory of learners.

Firstly, the study contributes to educational research by offering updated, region-specific data on gender differences in academic achievement. While national-level patterns have been frequently documented, localized district-level analyses remain limited. The insights generated

here enrich the broader discourse on academic performance trends in Northeast India and are especially valuable for comparative regional educational planning.

Secondly, the study holds pedagogical significance. By highlighting gender disparity in academic performance, the research signals the need for teachers to adopt gender-responsive instructional strategies. If female students consistently outperform male students, differentiated classroom supports such as study habit training, motivational reinforcement and structured learning routines may be necessary to enhance male academic outcomes without compromising female learners' progress.

Thirdly, the findings are meaningful for school administrators and educational policy makers. Evidence-based policy formulation relies on accurate assessment of student performance trends. The results of this study can aid in designing targeted intervention programs, guidance and counselling services, academic mentoring and monitoring systems that specifically address identified academic gaps between genders in Government Higher Secondary schools.

Fourthly, the study provides insight for parents and community stakeholders, reinforcing the importance of supportive home learning environments. Recognition of gender-based learning patterns can strengthen parental involvement, academic encouragement and expectations that foster improved scholastic outcomes for both genders.

Finally, the study bears social significance. As Assam undergoes transitions in socio-cultural attitudes toward gender roles and educational aspirations, understanding how these shifts translate into academic performance is essential. The findings emphasize the continuing necessity to cultivate inclusive, balanced learning environments where both male and female students can achieve academic excellence.

IX. Methodology

Research Design: The study employs a Descriptive and Comparative Research Design, aimed at comparing two naturally occurring groups (male vs. female) on the basis of academic achievement.

Population: The population includes all students enrolled in Higher Secondary first-year classes in Government Higher Secondary Schools of Kamrup (Metro) district.

Sample : A sample of 300 students was selected, comprising: 150 Male students and 150 Female students

Sampling Technique : Stratified Random Sampling was used to ensure balanced representation of both genders.

Source of Data : HSLC examination scores were collected from institutional academic records with administrative permission.

Statistical Techniques

- Mean and Standard Deviation (SD)
- Independent Samples t-test to compare mean achievement scores
- Level of significance considered at 0.05,

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Academic Achievement

Gender	N	Mean academic achievement	Standard deviation (SD)
Male	150	71.42	6.85
Female	150	75.96	7.14

The results presented in Table 1 indicate a clear difference in the academic achievement of male and female Higher Secondary first-year students based on their HSLC examination percentage scores. The mean academic achievement score of male students is 71.42 with a standard deviation of 6.85, whereas the mean score of female students is 75.96 with a standard deviation of 7.14. This shows that, on average, female students have performed academically better than male students.

Table 2: t-test Showing Difference in Academic Achievement Based on Gender

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	p-value (0.05)	Interpretation
Male	150	71.42	6.85	4.67	298	0.000	Significant
Female	150	75.96	7.14				

The calculated t-value = 4.67, which is greater than the critical value at 0.05 significance level, and the p-value < 0.05. Therefore, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted. This indicates a statistically significant difference in academic achievement between male and female students, with female students outperforming male students.

X. Major Findings

- Female students demonstrated a higher average HSLC percentage score than male students.
- The difference in academic achievement between male and female students was found to be statistically significant.
- The findings indicate a consistent gender advantage in favor of female students at the Higher Secondary entry level in Kamrup (Metro).

XI. Discussion

The findings of the present study are consistent with previous empirical research conducted in Assam and other Indian states, which similarly report higher levels of academic consistency and examination performance among female students. This trend may be explained by several interrelated factors. Female learners often demonstrate stronger academic discipline, greater perseverance, and reduced susceptibility to peer-related distractions. Additionally, the increasing parental and societal emphasis on female education driven by evolving socio-cultural aspirations appears to further enhance their academic commitment. Psychological research also supports the observation that female students exhibit higher levels of self-regulated learning, contributing to sustained academic achievement. In contrast, male students may experience comparatively greater social pressure to engage in non-academic or extracurricular pursuits, higher exposure to peer influence and a tendency toward less structured study habits. These interpretations are in consonance with the findings of Rani (2016), Dutta (2017), and Hazarika (2021), collectively reinforcing the broader academic pattern consistently documented within the context of Assam.

XII. Educational Implications

- Teachers should implement gender-responsive pedagogical strategies, ensuring improved engagement of male learners.
- Schools may introduce study skills enhancement and academic mentoring programs targeting boys.
- Parents may be sensitized to provide structured academic support for male children.
- Policy planners should consider achievement-based guidance and counselling intervention models at the Higher Secondary level.

XIII. Conclusion

The study concludes that female Higher Secondary first-year students in Government schools of Kamrup (Metro) outperform male students in academic achievement, as measured through HSLC examination scores. The gender-based difference is statistically significant and highlights the need for targeted academic support strategies to enhance the scholastic performance of male students while sustaining the progress of female learners.

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Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar and nationalist school of historiography

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I. Abstract

II. Historiography constitutes the critical study of how history is conceptualized, constructed, and communicated across eras, with changing interpretations which reflects the perspectives and objectives of successive historians. It entails not merely chronicling facts, but interrogating how historical events and processes are understood within different intellectual and cultural frameworks. Among the diverse schools that have shaped Indian historical writing, the Nationalist School occupies a prominent space, emerging in response to and in dialogue with colonial and imperialist accounts. Within this paradigm, R.G. Bhandarkar stands as a foundational figure, distinguished for pioneering a historiographical method that prioritizes evidence-based enquiry and systematic source criticism. His elaborative writings and scholarly interventions instilled a sense of historical consciousness, actively contributing to the shaping of India's early national identity. By integrating critical methodology with a profound understanding of classical texts and material evidence, Bhandarkar's work not only challenged dominant colonial narratives, but also re-centered Indian agency in the study of ancient history. His legacy endures in the continued relevance and evolution of Nationalist historiography.

III. Keywords

Nationalist Historiography, R.G. Bhandarkar, Indian historical methodology, Critical source analysis, Indigenous scholarship, Historical reconstruction in India.

IV. Introduction

Nationalist Historians or Nationalist Historiography are the terms, which are used in comparative sense with the Imperialist attitude particularly the British writers. Rising class of Indian scholars sought to assert their national culture against the interpretations presented by European writers. Although there were occasional lapses in principles of history writing, while writing 'Nationalist History'. However, this happened with those writers whose sole aim was to glorify India's past.

After the starting phase of copying western Life in dress, manners and custom there was an urge which started developing in the educated Indian class which wanted to make India more Indian and less English¹. This educated class did not want the Western Civilization to replace their own as there was once in thinking of Macaulay and other Missionaries. They only wanted West to revitalize, re-energize the Indian culture and Society like Raja Ram Mohan Roy had desired. That educated class was in quest to reform their Millennium old religion, society and rejuvenate their ancient culture. At other level, English education was seen as an instrument of colonial dominance. Chiplunkar opines that English poetry has crushed India's freedom and he further criticized English historians too.

All of these mentioned factors created a sense of renaissance which eventually turned into a sense of self-respect, self-confidence. India started gaining National Self-Consciousness which was soon to get converted into desire for freedom from British control. This new consciousness had to be sustained and promoted by the knowledge of people's past. Nationalist writers at times differed from each other but all of them believed that India existed as a political degree and Indians were capable of self-governance.

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee asserted that for creating a sense of national Pride, unity and desire for freedom, study and writing of history was very much necessary. India was a colony because Indian history had not been written and interpreted by Indian historian. In his Bibidh Prabandha, he says-

"There is no Hindu history. who else will praise our good qualities if we do not praise them? ... when has the glory of any nation ever been proclaimed by another Nation? The proof of the war power of the Romans is found in Roman history. The story of Greek heroism is in Greek writing. the case for Mussulman power in battle rests only in their own records. the Hindus have no such glorious qualities simply because there is

¹ Sreedharan, E.; A textbook of historiography, Orient Blackswann, Hyderabad, 2018, pp. 426

no such written evidence.”²

This space identified by Bankim Chandra was soon to gain attraction of the historians who written in the first half of the 20th century when the Nationalist spirit provided the ideology for historical investigation and interpretation.

Many Indians influenced by nationalism, took task of examining stereotypes created by colonial/Imperialist historiography. They did so on basis of detailed research. In the beginning nationalist historiography was confined to ancient India, they tried to counter the colonial narrative of India's backwardness

Nationalist history was also used as a weapon to eliminate the foreign rule in India. It was used as a means to awaken the national feeling and induct patriotic feeling in countrymen. It is the will of the people that they want to live together- the 'vouloir vivre collectif' (the wish to live together).³ This will over time got converted into sentiment of unity which was formed on grounds of race, geographical factor, language and religion.⁴ Through nationalist historiography, historical consciousness started growing in common people. Nationalist Historiography may be described as a school which tries to contribute in increasing nationalist sentiment and to organise people on the name of caste, religion or linguistic differences.

Nationalist historians projected India's tradition of spirituality as a mark of distinction and also a means of India's greatness and superiority over the west, especially in term of 'moral values' in comparison to basically the 'materialistic' character of western civilization, At the same time they emphasized on Indians' prowess in administration, diplomacy, empire building, taxation system, military power, agrarian development etc. through their writings.

V. RG Bhandarkar's Impact

Mountstuart Elphinstone shows a genuine sympathetic understanding of Indian history and culture rather than getting judgemental. For Elphinstone, history provides an authentic, accurate and genuine account of past and this should be done on the basis of scientific study of the evidences available. The conclusion taken out from the evidences should be free from any kind of pre-made notions.

In Elphinstone's words: *"In history, there can be no finality, there always remains a scope for modification and reinterpretation. Furthermore, a real history of India could not be written without getting in direct contact with the Indian situation."*⁵

These lines of Elphinstone's reflect his historical sense, as a historian he is open towards history in general and history writing or interpretation of history in particular. This former governor provided a chronological structure without any attempt to reconstruct the ancient Indian political history. He was concerned with the cultural achievements of Hindus and provided fine details about social life, religion, commerce and trade including Hindus' concern with the external world. A point could be raised about his concern only about Hindus not other communities of ancient India. At that time writers, scholars were seeing history in terms of Hindu and Muhammadan India, so Elphinstone is not any exception because he was living in a certain age.

So, after evaluating different aspects of Hindu India. He found its social institutions in an advanced stage of development. He separated fact from mythology, as we get to see ancient literature contains myths too. The major point of his scholarly work is that he didn't study the state of Hindu society by western standards but he examined it in the context of native condition. It is appreciable that he did not try to impose the Western standards in evaluating the Hindu society because each place, country is unique in its own.

Elphinstone's genuine sympathetic attitude towards India and its culture made him popular among the educated class of Western India. Even the citizens of Bombay establish an institution in 1834 on his name. With passage of time this Institute became and epicenter of the scholarly activities and a center of a great intellectual movement. It helped Indians in

² Clark, 'The role of Bankim Chandra in the development of Nationalism', in Philips, ed., *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, pp. 436

³ Appadorai, A. ; *The Substance of politics*, Oxford University Press, Madras, 1952, pp.15

⁴ Sreedharan, pp. 151

⁵ Puri, B.N., *Ancient Indian Historiography*, Aatmaram and sons, Delhi, 1994, pp. 134

bringing them close to the European scholars and getting them associated with research and teaching activities.

Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar holds a pre-eminent position as the first indigenous historian of ancient India, initiating a critical, scientific approach to the reconstruction of India's past. His scholarship demonstrated that Indian historians could produce authoritative accounts driven by rigorous methodology, rather than relying exclusively on colonial narratives or traditional readings. Bhandarkar's focus on epigraphic, numismatic, and literary sources established new standards for historical enquiry and inspired a generation of Indian scholars.

His contributions to historical studies are in form of *Early History of Deccan*, *A peep in to the Early history of India*, and articles in the Journal of Bombay branch of Royal Asiatic society, Indian Antiquary, Epigraphica Indica and proceedings of international congress of Orientalists (all of them are included in his collected works).

Bhandarkar worked on various fields of Indology. He was patriotic but not chauvinist as there is a very thin line between patriotism and chauvinism. He did not show any anti-British intentions in his writing. Moreover, he appears to be the supporter of British efforts in field of academics. He had full faith in his Hindu tradition and culture along with that he had an equal respect for genuine scholars whether they are from Britain or Germany.

As per Bhandarkar, the task of the historian is to describe the past as it actually was. In dealing with materials of historical importance, one should proceed with those evidence like a judge. Bhandarkar advocates⁶ that while dealing with History one must be impartial with no intention to find something in materials which tends to glorify his race, country or people.

Apart from concluding dry truth, nothing should be a historian's aim. In every case credibility of source should be checked by him. Bhandarkar equally emphasizes this thing that a historian should make sure while describing a certain case, he should keep feeling of exaggeration aside.

In his presidential address to the first Oriental conference at Poona(modern day Pune) in 1917, Bhandarkar notices that Indian Scholars tend to reject even a bit of foreign influence on their Civilization and claim early antiquity for some of the events in their own history.

Bhandarkar stands out as a pioneering pillar of the Nationalist School of historiography, marking a significant departure from the methods employed by many European historians of Ancient India. Many of the European scholars frequently relied on textual sources at face value, sometimes interpreting the Puranic texts without sufficient critical engagement. Bhandarkar approached these sources with a rigorous, skeptical eye. His critical handling of the Puranic material, particularly in relation to the chronology of the Satavahana kings, showcases both his methodological innovation and commitment to historical accuracy.

Bhandarkar's work exemplifies a methodologically pluralistic approach, rather than depending solely on textual traditions, he systematically cross-checked Puranic references with epigraphic evidence and archaeological data. This triangulation lent his analyses a robustness rarely seen in the work of his contemporaries. Notably, his reconstruction of Satavahana chronology moved beyond mere speculation, offering a timeline that has since become the scholarly consensus, as noted by A.L. Basham. The longevity and acceptance of Bhandarkar's chronology of the Satavahanas speak to the permanent value of his methods: his judicious use of sources and his unwillingness to settle for unsubstantiated claims set a gold standard for subsequent historians.

Central to Bhandarkar's contribution was not merely the outcome, but also the critical, comparative, and historical method itself, as articulated in his seminal paper: *'The Critical, Comparative and Historical Method of Enquiry as Applied to Sanskrit Scholarship and Philology and Indian Archaeology.'* In this work, Bhandarkar argued compellingly for a scientific approach to Indology, one grounded in skepticism, corroboration, and continuous questioning. He underscored the necessity of treating Sanskrit texts not as sacrosanct repositories of truth but as historical documents subject to the same critical analysis as any other source. Furthermore, his embrace of philology and archaeology was a decisive step forward, advocating for the careful parsing of language, context, and material remains, and placing Indian historiography on firmer, more empirical foundations.

⁶ Bhandarkar, R.G.; Collected works, Poona, 1927-33, pp. 4

What truly distinguishes Bhandarkar's scholarship within the Nationalist School is his insistence on objectivity and methodological rigor. In championing the scientific method, he transcended narrow ideological boundaries and set in motion a tradition that sought to retrieve India's past in all its complexity. His legacy, thus, lies not only in the specific chronologies he established, but also in the robust framework of historical enquiry that continues to guide Indian historians, marking a transformative moment in the study of Ancient India.

According to him, before admitting any writings in any historical work one should ask themselves that object of the author was to please the Reader or to simply record the events as they occurred.⁷ In the wake of this criteria, he found the list of the kings contained in Purana as confused and corrupt.⁸ Bhandarkar's methodology of historical research could be found in his writings covering four volumes expanded over 2000 pages. This voluminous work includes all aspects of Indology like socio-religious aspects, political history, Sanskrit literature and its problems, epigraphy etc. He emphasized on the thorough evaluation and critical examination of the historical sources. After analyzing the sources, he wrote down his views with full authority.

In his historical writings he did not merely write about political history but he covered other aspects like social history, religious history and economic conditions along with other aspects. In his contribution on 'Social history of India',⁹ he did a serious study of social institutions such as caste system, age of marriage, position of women etc. In his opinion, caste seems to have developed in the later Vedic period because of difference in profession. Gradual operation of many causes led to formation of new castes. The causes as per Bhandarkar's opinion were difference of locality, formation of guilds (Srenis) and religious sects.

Like a true gentleman historian, he sometimes discarded his old views when those appeared to be wrong. Like he modified his views about the Vallabhi era which he first assumed as 78 CE but later he found substantial reasons to modify his earlier expressed opinions and identified the Vallabhi era same as Gupta era i.e. 319 CE.¹⁰

VI. Conclusion

In conclusion, it could be said that primarily Nationalist historiography was used as a tool for instilling patriotic feeling in fellow countrymen. However, with passage of time historical consciousness started growing through these writings. Historians belonging to the nationalist school of historiography took task of examining the stereotypes created by colonial historians. R.G. Bhandarkar was a pillar of the nationalist school of historiography who worked on various aspects of ancient Indian history with unbiased approach and scientific temper. He was from an educated class which is well reflected in his writings. Apart from the political history, other fields like social, economic, religious were also given equal importance in his writings.

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⁷ Bhandarkar, R.G.; *Collected works*, pp. 365

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⁹ Bhandarkar, R.G.; *Collected works*, 3, pp.423

¹⁰ *Indian Antiquary (I.A.)*, 3, pp. 154 ; *Collected works*, 3, pp. 259-60

Bridging the gap: scaffolding techniques for developing communicative competence in EFL contexts

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I. Abstract

This study investigates the impact of scaffolding strategies on the English-speaking skills of rural undergraduate learners. Conducted with male B.Sc. Zoology students in Tamil Nadu, India, the experiment divided participants into control and experimental groups. The experimental group received structured support including thematic flow charts, sentence starters, fillers, and comprehension questions, while the control group was provided only visual aids and a glossary. Oral performance was assessed based on fluency, idea expansion, and grammar. Results revealed that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group, demonstrating greater fluency, coherence, and grammatical accuracy. The familiar theme of 'School Life' enhanced engagement and contextual relevance. The findings affirm the pedagogical value of scaffolding and task-based instruction in promoting communicative competence among under-resourced learners. The study advocates for inclusive, meaning-driven approaches in English language teaching, especially in rural and multilingual settings.

II. Keywords

Scaffolding, Speaking Skills, Task-Based Language Teaching, Rural Learners, Scaffolding Strategies, etc..

III. Introduction

Speaking is a productive language skill that involves the articulation of thoughts, emotions, and ideas through verbal communication, often requiring spontaneous and contextually appropriate responses. In today's globalized world, English has emerged as a lingua franca, serving as a vital tool for academic success, professional advancement, and cross-cultural interaction. For learners in non-native contexts, especially in rural areas, acquiring spoken proficiency in English is both a challenge and a necessity. Task-based language teaching (TBLT) offers a promising approach to address this need by emphasizing real-world communication through meaningful tasks. According to Ellis (2003),¹ tasks are activities where language is used for a communicative purpose to achieve an outcome, while Nunan (2004),² defines tasks as classroom activities that require learners to comprehend, manipulate, and produce the target language. Several studies have highlighted the efficacy of task-based and scaffolded instruction in improving speaking skills. For instance, Willis (1996),³ advocates for task cycles that promote fluency and learner autonomy. Vygotsky's (1978),⁴ theory of the Zone of Proximal Development supports the use of scaffolding to extend learners' capabilities; and Hymes (1972),⁵ emphasizes communicative competence, where meaning takes precedence over form. More recently, Richards (2006),⁶ and Skehan (1998),⁷ have reinforced the value of fluency-focused, learner-centered approaches in second language acquisition. Together, these perspectives underscore the pedagogical importance of structured, theme-based speaking tasks in fostering oral proficiency among English language learners.

IV. Affective Factors Influence among the L2 Learners

Affective factors play a crucial role in second language (L2) learning because they directly influence learners' motivation, confidence, and willingness to communicate. Among these, **fear, anxiety, and shyness** are particularly significant barriers to oral performance. **Fear** often arises from the anticipation of making mistakes or being negatively judged, which discourages

¹ Ellis (2003)

² Nunan (2004)

³ Willis (1996)

⁴ Vygotsky's (1978)

⁵ Hymes (1972)

⁶ Richards (2006)

⁷ Skehan (1998)

learners from participating in classroom discussions. **Anxiety**, as defined by Horwitz et al. (1986),⁸ in their Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), manifests as nervousness, tension, and apprehension when speaking in the target language. It can lead to mental blocks, increased hesitation, and reduced fluency. **Shyness**, on the other hand, is a personality trait that makes learners reluctant to initiate conversations or interact with peers, thereby limiting their practice opportunities. Together, these affective factors can cause learners to avoid communication, restrict idea expansion, and rely on minimal responses, ultimately slowing down their progress.

Pedagogically, addressing these issues requires creating a **low-anxiety classroom environment** where errors are treated as part of learning, scaffolding is used to build confidence, and peer/group activities encourage participation. Strategies such as **positive self-talk, relaxation techniques, and cooperative learning** can help learners overcome fear and shyness. By reducing anxiety and fostering a supportive environment, teachers can enhance learners' fluency, confidence, and communicative competence.

V. L2 Learners Overcome Affective Factors by Using Strategies

Learning strategies play a vital role in helping L2 learners cope with affective barriers such as fear, anxiety, and shyness. Affective strategies, as classified by Oxford (1990),⁹ are designed specifically to regulate emotions, motivation, and attitudes, thereby creating a positive mental environment for learning. For instance, learners can use anxiety-reducing strategies such as deep breathing, relaxation, or listening to calming music before speaking tasks to lower nervousness. Self-encouragement strategies, including positive self-talk ("I can express myself in English"), reduce fear of failure and boost confidence. Similarly, rewarding strategies (treating oneself after successful performance) sustain motivation and gradually lessen anxiety.

Other categories of strategies also indirectly reduce affective barriers. Social strategies (asking questions, practicing with peers, cooperative learning) create a supportive environment that encourages shy learners to speak in low-pressure contexts. Metacognitive strategies (planning and monitoring performance) reduce uncertainty, helping learners feel more in control and less fearful during tasks. Compensation strategies (using synonyms, gestures, or paraphrasing when a word is forgotten) reduce the anxiety of communication breakdowns, allowing learners to maintain fluency even with limited vocabulary.

Together, these strategies help learners to gradually replace fear with confidence, anxiety with relaxation, and shyness with active participation. By equipping students with practical tools to regulate emotions and manage communication challenges, strategies not only improve language performance but also foster resilience and autonomy in the language learning process.

VI. Literature Review

Several linguistic theories suggest that communicative effectiveness depends more on fluency and idea development than on strict grammatical correctness. These are the earlier investigations also confirm the importance of this approach

The theoretical foundation of this study is grounded in **Vygotsky's (1978),¹⁰ Zone of Proximal Development**, which highlights the importance of scaffolding in extending learners' abilities. Building on this, **Bruner (1985),¹¹** emphasized scaffolding as temporary support that enables learners to progress gradually toward independence, while **Gibbons (2002),¹²** demonstrated its classroom applications through visuals, guided practice, and joint construction of texts. In line with **Hymes' (1972),¹³ theory of communicative competence**, effective communication is achieved when meaning and contextual appropriateness are prioritized over mere grammatical accuracy, a principle that resonates with the present study.

Task-based perspectives further strengthen the rationale for scaffolding in spoken English development. **Ellis (2003),¹⁴** defined tasks as meaning-focused activities that promote real

⁸ Horwitz et al. (1986)

⁹ Oxford (1990)

¹⁰ Vygotsky's (1978)

¹¹ Bruner (1985)

¹² Gibbons (2002)

¹³ Hymes' (1972)

¹⁴ Ellis (2003)

communication, while **Nunan (2004)**,¹⁵ elaborated on classroom task design that moves from controlled to freer expression. Similarly, **Willis (1996)**,¹⁶ introduced the task cycle, which includes pre-task support and post-task reflection, aligning with the scaffolding approach adopted here. **Skehan (1998)**,¹⁷ explained that fluency, accuracy, and complexity often compete for learners' attention, but structured input can help balance these aspects. **Richards (2006)**,¹⁸ reinforced this by underscoring the learner-centered, communicative nature of classroom tasks.

In sum, the reviewed literature consistently affirms that scaffolding and task-based instruction significantly enhance learners' fluency, idea expansion, and grammatical control. Together, these studies provide a strong theoretical and practical justification for implementing structured support tools in English language classrooms, particularly for rural learners with limited exposure to communicative environments.

VII. Scope

- The following points highlight the scope of this Experimental work.
- To analyze the role of scaffolding in enhancing English-speaking skills among rural undergraduates.
- To compare oral performance between students who received scaffolding and those who did not.
- To investigate the impact of thematic tasks (e.g., School Life) on learners' fluency.
- To assess how scaffolding helps in expanding ideas during spoken tasks.
- To evaluate the grammatical accuracy achieved through scaffolded instruction.
- To examine the effectiveness of flow charts, sentence starters, and fillers in oral communication.
- To study the motivation and engagement levels of learners when using familiar themes.
- To explore the challenges faced by rural learners in English language learning.
- To validate the application of communicative competence theory in rural ELT contexts.
- To suggest pedagogical implications for task-based and scaffolded instruction in under-resourced classrooms.

VIII. Objective

For the purpose of clarity, the objectives of this study is listed below

- To provide structured support to undergraduate learners for developing spoken English.
- To identify differences in performance between experimental and control groups.
- To measure the improvement in fluency through scaffolded speaking activities.
- To examine the role of scaffolding in enhancing idea expansion during oral tasks.
- To evaluate the effect of scaffolding on grammatical usage.
- To test the applicability of task-based learning in rural Tamil Nadu contexts.
- To encourage spontaneous communication among learners using structured tools.
- To minimize hesitation and pauses in student speech.
- To foster confidence in learners while speaking English.
- To recommend inclusive teaching strategies for rural and multilingual classrooms.

IX. Research Questions

- Based on the objectives, the study is guided by the following research questions
- How does scaffolding influence the fluency, idea expansion, and grammar of rural undergraduate learners in spoken English tasks?
- What are the differences in oral performance between students taught with scaffolding strategies and those taught without them?
- To what extent does using a familiar theme like "School Life" enhance learners' confidence and communicative competence?

¹⁵ Nunan (2004)

¹⁶ Willis (1996)

¹⁷ Skehan (1998)

¹⁸ Richards (2006)

X. Methodology

The experiment was conducted with eleven male B.Sc. Zoology students aged 17 to 18, studying at Rajah Serfoji Government College, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, India. All instructions regarding the nature, purpose, and advantages of the experiment were clearly explained to the participants. Each student received a profile card, and details about timing and contact hours were communicated in advance.

Before the intervention, a baseline test was conducted to assess the students' English speaking levels. Topics for the test were chosen by the students themselves to ensure comfort and relevance. Based on their performance, the students were divided into two groups namely control group and an experimental group.

The experimental group received a comprehensive scaffolding package, including a thematic flow chart on *School Life*, a glossary, comprehension questions, sentence starters, fillers, and a scaffolding skeleton. The researcher introduced the theme and provided structured input to guide their speaking. Students were allowed to read the materials two to three times as needed. The primary objective was to encourage spontaneous speech using the scaffolding framework and color posters, following Dell Hymes' principle that meaning is more important than form.

The control group received only color posters, keywords, and a glossary, without any scaffolding framework. Both groups were asked to speak on the topic of *School Life* for a specific period. Their oral responses were recorded using a Transcend MP3 device and evaluated based on three criteria: Fluency (10 marks), Idea Expansion (10 marks), and Grammar (5 marks). One student discontinued participation due to practical reasons. A key limitation of the study was that only male students were selected.

XI. Tools

- There are the following tools used for this study
- Tasks (Scaffolding Frame Work)
- Descriptive Statistics
- Transcent Voice Recorder –MP3
- (Not used cell phone for voice record purpose, because students are facing some anxiety issues while using cell phone)

XII. Evaluation Criteria

In second language learning, greater importance is given to fluency and idea expansion rather than grammar because communication is primarily meaning-oriented. According to Hymes' (1972) theory of communicative competence, effective language use depends on conveying ideas appropriately in context, not merely on producing error-free sentences. Fluency reflects the learner's ability to process and produce language in real time, showing automaticity in communication (Skehan, 1998). Similarly, idea expansion encourages learners to connect thoughts with language, engaging in higher-order thinking and meaningful expression, as supported by Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory. Overemphasis on grammar often leads to hesitation, anxiety, and reduced willingness to speak, whereas focusing on fluency and idea development builds confidence and communicative competence. Grammar remains important, but it is best developed gradually through meaningful use and feedback, rather than being the primary focus of oral tasks.

Table-1

S.No	Categories	Marks
1	Fluency	10
2	Idea Expansion	10
3	Grammar	05
Total	25	

Experimental Group Students Roll Numbers and their Base Line Test Scores

The following table shows the roll numbers and baseline performance of students in the experimental group

Table-2

S.No	Roll No	Test Topics	Baseline test Scores-10 Marks
1	25MT0929	Cell Phone	8
2	25MT0930	Friends	7
3	25MT0932	School Life	8
4	25MT0933	Cricket	6
5	25MT0937	Computer	7

XIII. Control Group Students Roll Numbers and their Base Line Test Scores

The following table shows the roll numbers and baseline performance of students in the control group

Table-3

S.No	Roll No	Test Topics	Baseline test Scores
1	25MT0927	Internet	4
2	25MT0912	Dhoni	3
3	25MT0915	First Day College	2
4	25MT0931	Cricket	4
5	25MT0940	My School Teacher	4

Results

The experiment revealed a clear distinction in speaking performance between the experimental and control groups. The experimental group, which received comprehensive scaffolding support including thematic flow charts, sentence starters, fillers, comprehension questions, and a glossary demonstrated significantly higher levels of fluency, idea expansion, and grammatical accuracy. Most students in this group spoke with minimal hesitation, effectively using the scaffolding tools to maintain continuity and express detailed thoughts. Their average fluency scores ranged from 7 to 9 out of 10, while idea expansion scores fell between 6 and 9, reflecting their ability to elaborate on school-related experiences with descriptive language and structured narration. Grammar scores ranged from 3 to 5 out of 5, indicating moderate control over sentence structure and verb usage. Students in the experimental group also showed greater confidence and engagement, often exceeding the expected speaking time and attempting complex sentence constructions using vocabulary from the glossary.

In contrast, the control group, which received only color posters, keywords, and a glossary without any scaffolding framework, struggled to perform at a comparable level. Their speech was marked by frequent pauses, limited vocabulary use, and minimal elaboration. Fluency scores ranged from 4 to 6, and idea expansion was notably weaker, with scores between 3 and 5. Grammar scores were lower, ranging from 2 to 3, due to recurring errors in verb forms and sentence structure. Many students in this group relied heavily on the glossary but failed to integrate the words meaningfully into their speech. Their responses were often brief and lacked depth, with some reverting to their mother tongue mid-sentence due to vocabulary gaps. One student from the control group discontinued participation due to practical reasons, reducing the total sample size to eleven. Overall, the results strongly suggest that the scaffolding framework played a pivotal role in enhancing the speaking performance of rural undergraduate learners, validating the pedagogical value of structured support in communicative language teaching.

XIV. Individual Performance of the Experimental Group Students

Roll No: 25MT0929 (Score: 8/10). This student displayed strong fluency with minimal hesitation. He effectively used the scaffolding materials such as fillers and sentence starters. Ideas were logically expanded, and sentences were well connected. Grammar accuracy was consistent, with very few errors in tense usage. Overall, he showed excellent confidence and exceeded expectations in spoken tasks.

Roll No: 25MT0930 (Score: 7/10). The student maintained good flow during speech but occasionally paused. He used some filler (i.e. 'like', 'see', 'mm') Sentence starters and the thematic flow chart helped in organizing ideas. He could expand thoughts with some descriptive detail. Grammar was somewhat good, though subject-verb agreement slipped at times. He showed steady improvement and used vocabulary from the glossary effectively.

Roll No: 25MT0932 (Score: 8/10). This learner spoke confidently with a smooth flow of ideas.

He maintained the tone with confidence. He relied less on pauses and more on fillers to sustain

speech. Idea expansion was strong, drawing from personal school experiences (i.e. Govt. Boys Hr. School Orathanadu). Grammar was largely correct, with minor lapses in past tense forms. He demonstrated high engagement and responded well to the scaffolding framework.

Roll No: 25MT0933 (Score: 6/10). The student struggled initially but gained fluency with scaffolding aids. He used the flow chart and glossary to frame sentences. Idea expansion was limited but improved with prompts. He used the strategy was 'Take Notes'. Grammar errors were more frequent, especially with verb forms. Despite challenges, he showed clear progress compared to the baseline test.

Roll No: 25MT0937 (Score: 7/10). This student spoke with reasonable fluency, though some hesitation remained. Sentence starters (i.e. Firstly, I would like to..., Before I start...) encouraged him to continue speaking longer. He gave some example about the topic. He expanded ideas moderately well, adding personal touches. Grammar was satisfactory but not fully accurate, especially articles. Overall, he performed better than control group peers and showed confidence.

XV. Individual Performance of the Control Group Students

Roll No: 25MT0927 (Score: 4/10). This learner spoke with frequent pauses and lacked fluency. Ideas were fragmented, with little expansion beyond keywords. Reliance on the glossary was high, but integration was weak. Grammar errors were noticeable, particularly intense usage. Overall, the performance reflected limited confidence without scaffolding support.

Roll No: 25MT0912 (Score: 3/10). The student struggled to maintain continuous speech. Fluency was low, with long silences and hesitation. Ideas were expressed in short, incomplete sentences. Grammar mistakes were frequent and basic in nature. His performance showed minimal benefit from only visual aids.

Roll No: 25MT0915 (Score: 2/10). This learner faced major difficulty in constructing sentences.

Speech was limited to single words or short phrases. Ideas were almost absent, showing lack of elaboration. Grammar usage was very weak, with repeated errors. He appeared anxious and could not sustain communication.

Roll No: 25MT0931 (Score: 4/10). The student managed basic fluency but often paused mid-sentence. Idea expansion was shallow, mostly repeating simple thoughts. Vocabulary from the glossary was used, but not contextually. Grammar showed consistent errors in sentence structure.

His overall speech was hesitant and lacked depth.

Roll No: 25MT0940 (Score: 4/10). This learner attempted to speak continuously but with frequent breaks. Ideas were underdeveloped and lacked logical flow. Glossary words were used but without proper sentence framing. Grammar accuracy was weak, with verb mistakes being common. Confidence was low compared to the experimental group.

XVI. Overall performance of the experimental and control group students

The overall performance of the experimental group was noticeably better than that of the control group. The experimental group achieved a **mean score of 7.2**, which indicated that most of the students spoke with greater fluency, expanded their ideas in a more detailed manner, and showed better control of grammar. They made use of the scaffolding tools such as flow charts, sentence starters, fillers, and glossary words to sustain their speech with confidence. Their responses were more organized, and they connected their ideas with fewer pauses. The familiar theme of *School Life* also helped them to relate personal experiences and maintain continuity in communication.

On the other hand, the control group obtained a **mean score of 3.4**, which revealed that their performance was comparatively weaker. Their speech contained frequent pauses, hesitation, and incomplete sentences. Most of them relied only on keywords from the glossary without developing their ideas fully. Their grammatical errors were more common, and their confidence level was low during the speaking activity. Since they received only posters and a glossary without scaffolding support, their communication was less fluent and less coherent.

Strategy Identified Table-4

S.No	Roll.No	Strategy Identified	Major Strategy Type
1	25MT0929	Reviewing	Memory strategy
2	25MT0930	Create mental linkages	Memory strategy
3	25MT0932	Getting help	Compensation strategy
4	25MT0933	Taking Notes	Cognitive strategy
5	25MT0937	Using a checklist	Affective strategy

Strategies and Implications

Learning strategies are the techniques or actions that learners use consciously and unconsciously to make language learning more effective, easier, and enjoyable. They are broadly classified into **direct strategies** and **indirect strategies** (Oxford, 1990). Direct strategies involve active use of the language and include **memory strategies** (such as grouping and associating words to recall vocabulary), **cognitive strategies** (like practicing, summarizing, and analyzing patterns), and **compensation strategies** (using synonyms, gestures, or guessing meaning from context when knowledge is lacking). Indirect strategies, on the other hand, support language learning without directly using the language. These include **meta-cognitive strategies** (planning, monitoring, and evaluating one's learning process), **affective strategies** (managing motivation, attitudes, and emotions through relaxation or positive self-talk), and **social strategies** (learning through interaction, cooperation, and seeking clarification from others). Together, these strategies empower learners to take control of their own learning, improve communication, and overcome difficulties in the second language acquisition process.

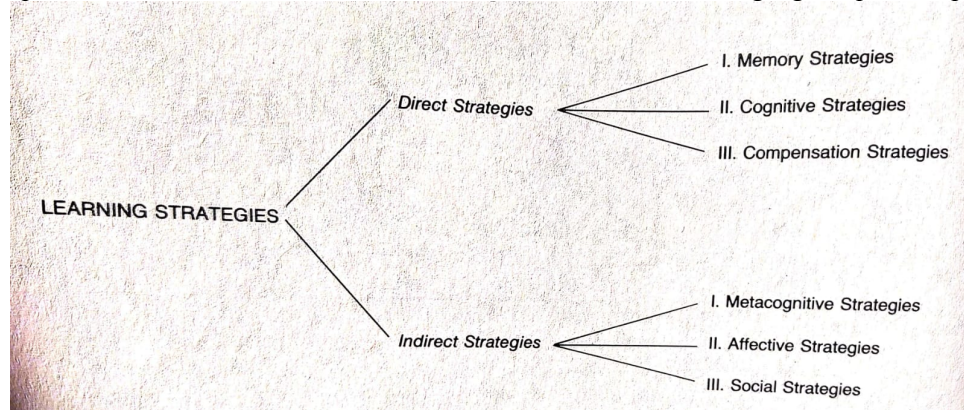


Fig-1

Rebecca describes the inter relationship between major strategies. She classifies two major types of strategies, namely Direct and Indirect strategy. She further shows the inter relationship between strategies and their sub categories i.e. Memory Strategies, Cognitive Strategies, Compensation Strategies, Meta-cognitive Strategies, Affective Strategies and Social Strategies. The following diagram shows the inter relationship

XVII. Discussion

The results of this study underscore the transformative impact of scaffolding strategies on the oral communication skills of rural undergraduate learners. The experimental group's superior performance in fluency, idea expansion, and grammar clearly demonstrates that structured support can bridge the gap between passive knowledge and active language use. By integrating multimodal scaffolding tools such as flow charts, sentence starters, fillers, and comprehension questions the study provided learners with a cognitive and linguistic framework that enabled them to speak more confidently and coherently. This aligns with **Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)**, which posits that learners can perform beyond their current capabilities when guided by appropriate support. The scaffolding served as a temporary aid, gradually empowering students to internalize patterns of speech and engage in spontaneous communication.

The choice of *School Life* as the thematic frame played a crucial role in activating prior knowledge and emotional resonance. Familiarity with the topic allowed students to connect personal experiences with linguistic input, thereby enhancing motivation and reducing

anxiety. This thematic relevance is consistent with **Dell Hymes' theory of communicative competence**, which emphasizes that effective communication depends not only on grammatical accuracy but also on contextual appropriateness and meaningful interaction. The experimental group's ability to expand ideas and use vocabulary contextually reflects a shift from form-focused instruction to meaning-driven expression a core principle in Hymes' framework.

In contrast, the control group's limited performance highlights the inadequacy of unstructured input in promoting spoken fluency. Despite having access to visual aids and vocabulary lists, these students struggled to organize their thoughts and maintain coherence. Their reliance on isolated words and lack of sentence-level scaffolding resulted in fragmented speech and reduced engagement. This suggests that while visual stimuli can support comprehension, they are insufficient on their own to foster productive language use without accompanying linguistic scaffolds.

The study also reveals important insights into the challenges faced by rural learners, particularly in contexts where English is taught as a foreign language with limited exposure to authentic communication. The success of the experimental group demonstrates that even short-term interventions, when thoughtfully designed, can yield measurable improvements in speaking skills. However, the study's limitation namely, the inclusion of only male participants points to the need for broader demographic representation in future research. Additionally, the discontinuation of one participant due to practical reasons highlights the importance of flexible and inclusive research designs that accommodate the realities of rural learners.

In sum, this study affirms the pedagogical value of scaffolding in enhancing oral proficiency among under-resourced learners. It advocates for a shift toward **task-based, meaning-oriented instruction** that empowers students to speak with confidence and clarity. By grounding language learning in familiar themes and providing structured linguistic support, educators can create more inclusive and effective ELT environments especially in rural and multilingual settings.

XVIII. Limitations

Several constraints should be acknowledged while interpreting the findings of this research

- The study included **only male students**, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to female learners or mixed groups.
- The **sample size was very small** (only 11 participants), reducing statistical reliability and wider applicability.
- The experiment was conducted in **one rural college only**, so results may not represent learners from other institutions or regions.
- The study focused on a **single theme ("School Life")**, which may limit the scope of learners' vocabulary and idea expansion.
- The duration of the intervention was **short-term**, making it difficult to evaluate the long-term impact of scaffolding on fluency and grammar.

XIX. Merits

The study offers several pedagogical merits that highlight the effectiveness of scaffolding in spoken English.

- The study demonstrated that **scaffolding significantly improves fluency, idea expansion, and grammar**, compared to traditional input.
- Using a **familiar theme ("School Life")** increased learner engagement, motivation, and confidence.
- The approach provided **structured tools** (flow charts, sentence starters, fillers, comprehension questions), which helped students speak continuously with less hesitation.
- The experiment highlighted the **value of task-based and meaning-focused learning**, aligning with theories of communicative competence.
- The study offered **practical pedagogical implications** for under-resourced rural classrooms, showing that low-cost scaffolding tools can make a big difference.

XX. Demerits

Alongside its merits, certain demerits were also identified in the implementation of scaffolding strategies

- Over-reliance on scaffolding may make learners **dependent on external support**, reducing their ability to speak freely without aids.
- The heavy emphasis on fluency and idea expansion may have led to **less attention to grammar accuracy** in the long run.
- The study design did not include **longitudinal tracking**, so sustained improvement beyond the intervention remains unknown.
- Some learners in the control group **showed demotivation** due to lack of scaffolding, raising concerns about equity in experimental design.
- The methodology relied mainly on **oral performance scores**, without triangulating results with interviews, self-reflection, or written tasks for deeper insights.

XXI. Conclusion

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate the effectiveness of scaffolding strategies in enhancing the English-speaking skills of rural undergraduate learners. The experimental group, supported by structured tools such as thematic flow charts, sentence starters, and comprehension questions, showed marked improvement in fluency, idea expansion, and grammatical accuracy compared to the control group. This underscores the importance of guided input in bridging the gap between passive language knowledge and active communication. The use of a familiar theme School Life further contributed to learner engagement and contextual relevance, validating the role of meaning-driven instruction in communicative competence. While the study was limited by its small and gender-specific sample, the results advocate for the integration of scaffolding frameworks in English language teaching, particularly in under-resourced educational settings. Future research should aim to include diverse learner profiles and explore long-term impacts of such interventions to build more inclusive and effective pedagogical models.

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A historical study of the Kailasanathar temple at Ilaiyaththangudi

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I. Abstract

The Nagaraththar community, also known as the NattukottaiChettiars, is one of the most influential mercantile groups in Tamil Nadu. They are renowned for their entrepreneurial pursuits in trade, banking, and philanthropy. They have played a vital role in shaping the economic and cultural history of the region. Their religious and social life revolves around a network of nine temples, which together define the sacred geography of Chettinad. Among these, the Kailasanathar Temple at Ilaiyaththangudi stands out as the oldest and most revered shrine, regarded as the moolasthanam or original seat of worship.

This paper offers a historical and cultural review of the Ilaiyaththangudi Kailasanathar Temple, examining its origins, architectural characteristics, and inscriptions within the wider context of Nagaraththar heritage. Using literary sources, epigraphic evidence, and traditional accounts, the paper explores how the temple served not only as a religious centre but also as a hub of social organisation, philanthropy, and community identity. The findings demonstrate that the Kailasanathar Temple represents the synthesis of faith, economy, and aesthetics that define the ethos of the Nagaraththar community. Through its ongoing rituals, artistic traditions, and enduring patronage, the temple remains a monument that bridges the spiritual devotion of the past with the cultural continuity of the present.

II. Keywords

Ilaiyaththangudi, Kailasanathar Temple, Nagaraththar, Chettinad, Epigraphy, Cultural Heritage.

III. Introduction

The Nagaraththar, also known as the NattukottaiChettiars, form one of South India's most prominent mercantile communities.¹ They represent a distinguished mercantile group whose history, traditions, and social organisation are an integral part of Tamil Nadu's cultural heritage. The term Nagaraththar literally means "town-dwellers,"² reflecting their urban outlook and long-standing association with trade and finance. Over time, this community evolved from a collection of related sub-castes into a unified group under the collective name Nagaraththar. Among their subsects, the NattukottaiNagaraththars, popularly known as NattukottaiChettiars, became a wealthy and influential segment recognised for their enterprise in commerce, banking, and moneylending. They were also significant landowners, with their economic activities extending beyond the local to international levels, linking the Tamil region with wider networks across Southeast Asia.

The title Chettiar used by the Nagaraththars derives from the ancient Tamil word 'etti,' a term of distinction bestowed upon merchants by Tamil monarchs. The compound name Nattukottai—meaning "country-fort"—refers to the impressive architecture of their homes, which resemble fortified palaces and stand today as evidence of their wealth. The Chettinad region, spread across parts of Sivagangai, Ramnad, and Pudukkottai districts, became the traditional homeland of the community. Its unique triangular shape, dotted with elaborate mansions, temples, and choultries, forms the lasting landscape of Nagaraththar history and identity.

The origins of the NattukottaiNagaraththars are wrapped in legend and migration narratives. Tradition locates their earliest home in the ancient land of Naganadu, a region said to have been destroyed either by natural disaster or inundation. From there, the community is believed to have moved first to Kanchipuram, the seat of early Tamil civilisation, and later to

¹ Saju, M. T. "Nattukottaichettiars traced to more than 65,000 years ago". The Times of India.

² Contributions to Indian Sociology. Vol. 36. Contributions to Indian Sociology: Occasional Studies: Mouton. 2002. p. 344.

Kaveripoompattinam, the flourishing port of the Cholas.³ These migrations, spanning over millennia, mark their steady progress from inland settlements to coastal centres of trade. Finally, around the eighth century, they established themselves in the Pandya kingdom with Karaikudi as their nucleus. Each phase of migration left its imprint on their social and religious life, enriching their collective memory with a sense of endurance and adaptation.

In their early days, the Nagaraththars, then known as DhanaVaishyas, were divided into three main groups — the Six, the Seven, and the Four Vazhiyars — all dedicated to the worship of MaragathaVinayagar. After settling in the Pandya territory, these groups took on new forms and names: the Ariyurar, the Ilaiyathangudiyar, and the Sundarapattanathar. Among these, the Ilaiyathangudiyar later became known as the Nattukottai Nagaraththars, a group that continued to thrive in the Chettinad region.⁴ According to communal legend, during their voyage from Kaveripoompattinam, the ancestors of the Nagaraththars were lost at sea and prayed intensely to Lord Vinayagar for twenty-one days before reaching land safely. In remembrance of this rescue, they celebrate the festival of PillaiyarNonbu, a ritual symbolising gratitude and faith in divine protection.

The internal organisation of the Nagaraththar community is notable for its precision and order. Their social structure revolves around a system of nine sacred temples, collectively known as the Kovilgal of the Nattukottai Nagaraththars. These temples—located at Ilaiyathangudi, Iluppaikkudi, Iraniyur, Mathur, Nemam, Pillayarpatti, Soorakudi, and Vairavanpatti, and Velangudi—serve as both religious and administrative hubs. Each temple corresponds to a distinct division or KovilPulli, within which families trace their lineage to a common ancestor.⁵ This temple-based division governs marriage, inheritance, and ritual observances. Marriage within the same temple group is strictly forbidden, upholding the principle of exogamy that maintains social harmony. Some temples such as Ilaiyathangudi and Mathur have further subdivisions or pirivugal, allowing intermarriage between certain divisions, while others, like Iraniyur and Pillayarpatti, remain closely linked and therefore retain restrictions.

The Ilaiyathangudi Kailasanathar Temple holds a position of utmost significance within this sacred network. Revered as the moolasthan—the original and primary shrine—it is regarded as the ancestral and spiritual centre of the entire Nagaraththar system. Historical tradition links the temple to the earliest phase of their settlement in the Chettinad region. Its architectural splendour, ritual practices, and genealogical records serve as tangible connections between the past and present of the community. Every major religious and social ceremony within the Nagaraththar community derives its validation from this temple, which functions as both the seat of authority and a symbol of unity.⁶

The prosperity of the Nagaraththars was not limited to their homeland. By the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, they had built an extensive banking network that extended from Ceylon and Burma to Singapore, Malaysia, and Vietnam. Their pursuits in maritime trade and finance gained them recognition as pioneers of indigenous capitalism in South and Southeast Asia. At home, their wealth translated into significant contributions to religion, education, and philanthropy. They endowed temples, built choultries, established schools and colleges, and funded social welfare institutions across Tamil Nadu. The combination of faith, enterprise, and public service encapsulates the core of their cultural ethos.

In the social hierarchy of South India, the NattukottaiNagaraththars came to be regarded as high-class Vaishyas because of their involvement in commerce and banking.⁷ Their prestige, however, extended beyond economic boundaries. In many regions, their wealth and influence

³ Chandramoorthy, M. NagaratharMarapumPanpadum (Tamil). ManivasakarPathippakam, 2011. P. 12

⁴ Chandrasekar, S. The Nagaraththars of South India. The Macmillan Company of India Ltd, 1980. P.62

⁵ RadhakrishnaAyyar, S. A General History of Pudukkottai State. Sri Brahadambal State Press, 1916. P.36

⁶ RadhakrishnaAyyar, S. A General History of Pudukkottai State. Sri Brahadambal State Press, 1916. P.78

⁷ SathavathanamSubramaniya Iyar. DanavaisyarakiyaNattukkottaiNagaraththarSarithiram (Tamil). 2nd ed., 1904. P. 65

placed them on par with, or even above, the traditional priestly class. Their rise was a model of upward mobility achieved through enterprise rather than heredity—a testament to the dynamic nature of Tamil society. Some among them even attained positions of rulership or state authority, highlighting how economic power could transcend Varna distinctions.

The grandeur of their temples and mansions still reflects a civilisation that blended discipline with devotion and commerce with culture. Over centuries of migration, enterprise, and worship, the Nagaraththars have maintained a living tradition that links economy to ethics and prosperity to piety. Their legacy endures not only in the carved stones of Chettinad but also in the enduring institutions of charity, education, and faith that continue to shape Tamil society today.

The present study investigates the historical importance of the Kailasanathar Temple at Ilaiyaththangudi in relation to the social and cultural life of the Nagaraththars. Using epigraphic records, literary sources, and traditional accounts, it aims to reconstruct the temple's development as both a spiritual sanctuary and a social institution. Through this examination, the paper seeks to show how the temple continues to embody the ideals of devotion, unity, and continuity that define the lasting legacy of the Nagaraththar community.

IV. List of Nine Temples

S.No	Place Name	Temple Name
1	Ilaiyaththangudi	Kailasanathar temple
2	Mathur	Aynurrisvarar temple
3	Vairavanpatti	Valarolinathar temple
4	Nemam	JeyankondaCholisvarar temple
5	Iluppaikkudi	Thanthonrisvarar temple
6	Surakkudi	Desikanathar temple
7	Velankudi	Kanteesvarar temple
8	Pillaiyarpatti	Thiruvisar alias Marutisar
9	Iraniyur	Atkondanathar temple

All nine of these temples are situated approximately 30 km from Karaikudi town. The first three temples are larger, while the remaining six are smaller. The three larger temples are divided into groups of 7, 7, and 3, totalling 17 subdivisions. The other six temples have no subdivisions. In total, there are 23 known subdivisions. The dates of the temples' origins or their dedication by the particular group of Chettis are recorded in their temple registers. According to these records, the following years are known.⁸

S.No	Temples	Date	Pullis (1999-2000)
1	Ilaiyaththangudi	707 CE	6839
2	Mathur	712 CE	6810
3	Vairavanpatti	712 CE	5467
4	Nemam	714 CE	2742
5	Iluppaikkudi	714 CE	1390
6	Surakkudi	718 CE	1757
7	Velankudi	718 CE	46
8	Pillaiyarpatti	714 CE	3504
9	Iraniyur	714 CE	3057

The Nagaraththar established their first temple in 707 CE at Ilaiyaththangudi. Later, due to disputes among them, the seven major divisions of Nagaraththar expanded to nine. The people of the other eight divisions (except those from Ilaiyaththangudi) approached the Pandya king to build separate temples for each of their groups. As a result, the Pandya king permitted them to have individual temples. The structure and significance of these temples, along with the Nagaraththar society linked to them, are examined in detail in the following pages.

V. Ilaiyaththangudi Kailasanathar Temple

The Ilaiyaththangudi Kailasanathar Temple is a Hindu shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva, located in Ilaiyaththangudi, a town in the Ramanathapuram district of Tamil Nadu, India. The main deity of the temple is Lord Kailasanathar, another name for Lord Shiva. It is celebrated for its historical

⁸ SathavathanamSubramaniya Iyar. DanavaisyarakiyaNattukkottaiNagaraththarSarithiram (Tamil). 2nd ed., 1904. P. 120

importance, architectural splendour, and spiritual significance in the region. This Shiva temple is located in Ilaiyathankudi village, approximately 25 km from Karaikudi, along the route to Kunrakudi, Nemam, Kilachivalpatti, and near Avinippatti. The principal deity is Kailasanathar, with his consort being NiththiyaKalyani Amman. It is believed that the temple originated in Kali Yuga 3808, which corresponds to 707 CE. Among the Ilaiyathankudi Nagaraththars, there are seven subdivisions, namely:

- Okkurudaiyar at Ilaiyaththnkudi alias Kulasekarapuram in Kalvasalnadu
- Arumparkilaiyar alias Pattanasarniyar of the same village and same nadu
- Perumaruthuradaiyar of the same village and same nadu
- KalanivasalKudiyar of the same village and same nadu
- Kinkinikurudaiyar of the same village and same nadu
- Perasenthuradaiyar of the same village and same nadu
- Siruseththurudaiyar of the same village and same nadu⁹

VI. Reason for the name

One native literature IlasaiPuranam mentions various names of this village such as Sivapuram, Pukailayam, Kamapirapurapuram, Siththapuram, Purathanavanam, NithiyaKalyaniPuram, Siramapanathanapuram, etc. The names Athan and Puthan are among the earliest names. The Kunrakudi Tamil Brahmi inscription, dated to 1-2 CE, reads as 'KapiyurAthanSaththan'. Ilaiyaththangudi might have been named after Athan and later changed to Athankudi. Over time, Athankudi has evolved into Aththankudi and Ilaiyaththangudi. This name is Sanskritized as 'Vichranthipuram', and a mythological association is also linked to it. Some people write this village's name as 'Ilaiyarrankudi' in their registers (Isaipidimanam). This term is wrongly translated as Vichranthipuram in Sanskrit. 'IlaiyaththangudiManmiyam', written by Visvanatha Iyar, mentions the uniqueness of this village and states that anyone who performs *Siva Pūjā* at this temple would surely attain *Mokṣa* (heaven). KanchipuramSankarachariyar mutt shares a close connection with this place. The sixty-fifth head of this mutt, 'Sri Maha Devandhra Sarasvathi Swamy', passed away here, and his *samādhi* was constructed as a stone temple by the local Nagaraththars. The sixty-eighth head of this mutt, Sri Chandra Sekarenthira Sarasvathi, resided here from 1961 to 1963, a total of two and a half years.¹⁰

VII. Inscription of Ilaiyaththangudi

In this village, 31 stone inscriptions are observed, belonging to later Pandya rulers. Among these, three records are found at Kailasanathar temple, and one is associated with Pattanaswamy Urani (Water body). Two records are engraved on the walls of Ayyanar temple. The remaining 20 inscriptions are associated with an ancient Vishnu temple. The following five records are visible on the walls of Athikesavapperumal temple.

The Siva temple inscriptions record the name of the temple as Kalvayil AndaNayanar Temple. The presiding deity is known as Sri Kailasamudaiya Nayanar, and his consort is called Thirukamakkottamudaiya Nachchiyar. Kamakkottamudaiya Nachchiyar is a common name elsewhere for Siva's consort, such as in the Meenakshi Temple. Madurai is also referred to as Thirukamakkottamudaiya Nachchiyar during the 12th to 13th centuries CE. The dilapidated Vishnu temple is referred to in the inscriptions as the 'Vinnagar Emperuman Temple'.¹¹

Between the 15th and 16th centuries CE, this area was under the control of the Vijayanagar rulers. Madurai Nayaks took over rule during the 17th century CE. The Sivagangai rulers governed this region around the 18th century CE. They, along with the Zamindars of Ilaiyaththangudi, Kalalpattai, and Sivagangai rulers, donated some villages for this temple.

VIII. Pandya inscriptions at Kailasanathar temple

Three records of later Pandya rulers are known from this temple. They were copied by the epigraphist of the Archaeological Survey of India and published as short notes in 1926 (ARE 1926). The first record is engraved on the outer wall of the Vinayakar shrine situated in the Prakara (Circumambulatory passage). It is inscribed in Tamil language and script. It pertains to MaravarmanSundara Pandya I (who was pleased to give Chola Nadu). It reveals that during his

⁹ Bavani, R. Pudukkottai Society Gleaned from Inscriptions. PhD thesis, Tamil University, 2017. P.19

¹⁰ Ramaswami, N. S. (1988). Parrys 200: A Saga of Resilience. Affiliated East-West Press. p. 193.

¹¹ Ibid. p. 198

eighth regnal year (1224 CE), the Chieftain of Kalvayil Nadu, KandanAludaiyan, donated and sold one village to the Goddess ThirukkomakkottaMudaiyaNachchiyar. It also mentions that a merchant constructed this shrine, Kamakkottamudaiya Nachchiyar, who lived at Kalaiyar Kalapperuntheru, Ponthudaiyan Ponnai Thiruvai, also known as IrunithiSamaya Chakravarthi. The record also specifies the four boundaries of the donated village and states that all taxes were exempted for this donation.¹²

It is clear that only during the 12th-13th Century CE did the entire Tamil Nadu witness the construction of separate shrines for goddesses within Shiva temples, elevating them to the status of deities. Before this, shrines for goddesses were built as subordinate to Parivara deities. Due to the rising status of the village agricultural community and their demand for equal recognition of female village deities, temples were constructed with equal status during the 13th century CE. This inscription also confirms the same developments at Ilayaththangudi.

The second inscription is also related to the previous one. In this record, the village name, previously donated by the donor KalvayilNadalvar in the last record, is known as SinkalanthakanaNallur. In this record, the villagers of Nelvayil accepted the donated village, exempted all taxes for that village, and recorded it in stone and metal. This second record also belongs to the eighth regnal year of MaravarmanSundara Pandya I (1224 CE).⁸

The third record is engraved on a stone slab in front of PattanaswamyUruni. It indicates that a water channel was called Anchatha Perumal, and that this name, Anchatha Perumal, might belong to the donor of this channel. This record could be dated to the 15th or 16th century CE. The name Pattanasamy was widely used during the Vijayanagar rule. Pattanasamy means the head of a pattanam where merchants lived. He would preside over meetings of Nagaraththars and collect Pattanapukuthi or makanmai (levy), which was used for temple construction and other social welfare activities. In this village, Pattanaswamy created an Uruni (water body) to be dug out and named it after himself.

Ilayaththankudi Village remained a religiously tolerant place because all religions, such as Saivism, Vaishnavism, Jainism, and Buddhism, flourished there. One spot known as 'Samanankadu' is located on the southern side of Ilayaththankudi. Two stone sculptures of the Buddha were once visible in this village, but they have now been relocated to museums.

Seven divisions of Chettiyars from Ilayaththankudi have constructed seven Vinayaka temples and dug out seven Urunis (water bodies) for their individual worship. Athmanatha Swami Sivatemple was also built by the PattanaswamyNagaraththar division of Ilayaththankudi. It is situated on the western bund of PattanaswamyUruni. The temple was renovated and sanctified again on 5.11.2003.¹³ Numerous sculptures of the Saiva sect and paintings of significant panels from the ThiruvilaiyadalPuranam are in these temples. Their art has a distinct identity, known as 'Art of Nagaraththar,' even though it has continuity with Vijayanagara and Nayak art.

IX. Athmanatha Swami temple at Ilayaththankudi

This temple belongs to the Pattanaswamy group of Chettis of Ilayaththankudi. It is built on the western bund of PattanaswamyUruni (water body). The temple was constructed with white granite, and renovation work was carried out by the PattanaswamyNagaraththars, with the sanctification ceremony completed on 5.11.2003. The consort of Athmanatha is known as SoundaraNayaki Amman.

X. Athikesavapperumal temple

The Nagaraththars of Ilayaththangudi are devoted followers of Saivism, but they have also served the Vaishnavite sect. They built an AthikesavaPerumal temple in this village. The KalanivassKudiNagaraththar branch of Ilayaththangudi has taken control of this Vishnu temple. The consort of this Perumal is called ParimalavalliThayar. Vaikanasa Agama is observed in the worship of this temple, which was constructed between 1942 and 1948.¹⁰

XI. Conclusion

The historical development of the Nagaraththar community cannot be fully understood without recognising the importance of its temple institutions, among which the Ilayaththangudi Kailasanathar Temple is the earliest and most revered. Founded in 707 CE, this temple signifies

¹²Ramaswami, N. S. (1988). Parrys 200: A Saga of Resilience. Affiliated East-West Press. p. 197.

¹³Haellquist (21 August 2013). Asian Trade Routes. Routledge. p. 150.

the beginning of the Nagaraththar's sacred landscape, around which the community's spiritual, social, and economic lives gradually formed. Its establishment represents more than just the building of a religious site; it marks the institutionalisation of a collective identity based on faith, kinship, and discipline. The temple's inscriptions, rituals, and legends reveal a continuous tradition of patronage, spanning from the Pandya and Vijayanagar periods to the present, highlighting the interaction between religion and economy in shaping Chettinad culture.

The Kailasanathar Temple also represents the social ideals of the Nagaraththars. It depicts a vision of religion as both a spiritual and civic duty, where worship was inseparable from moral order, charity, and communal responsibility. Through its festivals, endowments, and administrative roles, the temple promoted cohesion among the Pullis and maintained the ethical framework of the community. The artistic features—carvings, sculptures, and murals inspired by the *ThiruvilaiyadalPuranam*—further express a refined aesthetic sense that unites devotion and art. The Nagaraththars' tradition of renovating and sanctifying the temple across generations highlights a continuous renewal of faith, turning the site into a living repository of memory and identity.

In a broader historical context, the Ilaiyaththangudi temple represents the amalgamation of material prosperity and spiritual ambition that characterises the Nagaraththar ethos. Their wealth, accumulated through commerce and banking, was intentionally reinvested in religion, education, and community welfare. Therefore, the temple is not just a stone structure but a symbol of social philosophy—a philosophy that merges economy with ethics and prosperity with piety. Even now, the Kailasanathar Temple remains a pilgrimage destination, a place of ancestral remembrance, and a testament to the lasting legacy of a community that combined devotion with enterprise. By preserving and celebrating this heritage, the Nagaraththars have ensured that Ilaiyaththangudi continues to be the spiritual centre of Chettinad and a monument of Tamil civilisation itself.

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Gender as A prison in Kavita Kane's *Menaka's Choice*

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I. Abstract

By reimagining the conventional portrayal of the celestial *Apsarā Menakā*, Kavita Kane in *Menaka's Choice* (2016) exposes how the female body is persistently objectified—as both a vessel of desire and a symbol of aesthetic idealization. The study examines how authority, in the shape of a “system,” imposes docility on women's bodies. Kane's narrative brings to light the suppressed inner worlds of women, unearthing experiences historically silenced or ignored. The essay ultimately seeks to examine the protagonist's resistance to this disciplinary framework and interrogates the act of seduction through the lens of gendered power dynamics.

II. Keywords

Docile bodies; Individuality; *Apsarās*

III. Introduction

Kavita Kane (b. 1966) is a visionary writer who centres the silenced voices of women, particularly those relegated to the margins of mythology. Her works cultivate gender sensitivity by shedding light on the most overlooked female mythological figures, reconfiguring entrenched patriarchal structures in the process. *Menaka's Choice* (2016) can be read as a feminist reclamation, portraying how women are stifled by rigid norms and constant surveillance. Menaka, the enchanting apsara, is initially portrayed as both the object of male desire and an instrument wielded by patriarchal power to disrupt the asceticism of the sage Vishwamitra. Her body, commodified and manipulated, becomes a site of discomfort and repression—alienated from her own sense of identity and autonomy.

The concept of the *Apsarā* has undergone a significant transformation from the early to the later Vedic periods. As noted by D.D. Kosambi, *Apsarā* were once venerated during the early Vedic era, often regarded as mother goddesses—figures such as Menaka, Ghritachi, and Alambusa held revered positions within sacred lore. However, this perception deteriorated over time, and by the later Vedic period, *Apsarā* were increasingly depicted as celestial courtesans, their divinity replaced with sensuality. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* recounts that *Apsarā* emerged from the churning of the ocean (*Samudra Manthan*), and various Purāṇic texts offer conflicting portrayals of them—some describing *Apsarā* as embodiments of pleasure and consorts of gods, while others cast them as instruments of seduction deployed by Indra to disturb the penance of sages. This duality in their characterization reflects a deeper patriarchal anxiety around female agency and desire.

In Hindu mythology, *Apsarā* are portrayed as celestial beings—epitomes of beauty whose physical allure is often weaponized to fulfill divine agendas. Their charm is depicted as powerful enough to disrupt the penance of great ascetics, thereby serving the interests of the gods. The *Vayu Purāṇa* enumerates fourteen *Apsarā*, while the *Hari Vamśa* lists only seven. These ethereal figures are categorized into two types: *daivika* (divine) and *laukika* (worldly), based on their roles and functions. Frequently, Indra commands these *Apsarā* to seduce sages, aiming to thwart their spiritual ascension and maintain divine supremacy. Failure to complete such tasks often leads to severe punishment from sages or kings, highlighting the transactional nature of their existence.

Among these tales, the story of Menaka and the sage Vishwamitra is one of the most renowned. Menaka is sent to seduce Vishwamitra, ultimately breaking his penance. In *Menaka's Choice*, Kavita Kane reclaims and reimagines this narrative by placing Menaka, not Vishwamitra, at its core. Kane's Menaka is not merely a pawn of divine schemes, but a fully realized individual who questions her role and seeks emotional depth in her love for Vishwamitra. Distinct from the traditionally submissive women of Hindu epics, Kane's Menaka resists domesticity, asserting her independence and inner conflict. However, this very resistance

invites scrutiny, revealing how female agency is often undermined in mythological and cultural contexts.

Although Apsarā are perceived as heavenly and free-spirited beings, their celestial status masks a deeper entrapment within patriarchal structures. They are portrayed as powerful yet paradoxically powerless—figures who carry symbolic authority but are denied actual agency. Despite being imagined as liberated from worldly duties and societal expectations, Apsarā are consistently held accountable and punished for transgressions, often for actions they are coerced into. Their role within the cosmic order reflects a deeper contradiction: they serve as tools of a disciplinary system that governs female behavior through surveillance and control. Over time, this system normalizes constant observation and subjugation, compelling the individual to internalize it as the natural and inevitable order.

The narrative of *Menaka's Choice* begins with the birth of Menaka, the celestial apsara, from the churning seas—a symbolic origin that sets the tone for her role as both divine and dispossessed. As an inhabitant of “Heaven,” or “Indralok,” Menaka exists within what, from a Foucauldian lens, can be interpreted as a disciplinary institution—an environment meticulously regulated to sustain an existing power structure. Within this cosmic order, every being is assigned a purpose, and social separation reinforces control. Kane repeatedly emphasizes this framework by portraying Menaka not as a complex individual but as a body—a spectacle often subjected to others’ desires and commands. Her identity is largely confined to her physical form, as captured in the description: “She was slim but delectably voluptuous, her long, slender neck over slight shoulders, her creamy, shadowed cleavage heaving slightly, her slim waist curving deliciously into flaring hips, the dimpled navel, provocative and alluring above a pair of long, slim legs, the thighs moving sinuously at the smallest movement she made.” (Kane, 15). This vivid imagery embodies the archetypal Apsara figure, whose worth is defined by appearance. The emphasis on bodily form and gesture aligns with the Foucauldian notion that such movements “constitute a genetic form of individuality by subjecting the body to the demand for perpetual progress toward an optimal end” (Hoffman 30). In this context, Menaka emerges as a seductive agent—constructed and utilized by the system she seemingly belongs to.

In *Menaka's Choice*, she is framed primarily as a seductive beauty—a mere instrument in the hands of the powerful Indra, created to use her physical allure to distract and subdue the great sage Viswamitra. When one's sexual identity and physical attributes are elevated above one's reason and agency, it becomes a site of oppression. This condition aligns with what Michel Foucault terms “anatomo-politics,” where control over the body is exerted through fragmentation, docility, and obedience.

Within this disciplinary framework, Apsarā are molded into docile bodies—expected to remain passive and compliant. They internalize external surveillance to the extent that they begin to regulate their own thoughts and behaviors, effectively transforming themselves into objects of control. Menaka, deeply aware of her identity as an apsara, becomes a muse for poets, sculptors, and artists—celebrated for her beauty but not for her individuality. Although the agency associated with her body is governed by an external force, she paradoxically embodies it. Kane presents Menaka as a figure who resists complete submission; her demeanor suggests a non-conforming spirit, unwilling to be entirely bound by the roles imposed upon her. While she is expected to perform the role of the “seductress” or “temptress of pleasure,” it is ultimately Indra who imposes this role on her, asserting male control over female agency.

Apsarā is trained to practice dancing and to make themselves wonderfully beautiful in order to entice ‘men,’ who are particularly frightening to the power structure, because they are put in a multiplex power relation. They see themselves less as unique people with goals and preferences and more as celestial creatures. They “were taught to be selfish and pitiless,” (Kane 38), they should be ruthless, offer fleeting but unstable pleasure, and not love; rather, they should be adored. It is anticipated that they will be a machine of youth and beauty. As the god of love Kama informs us: “Be sexual—master that sexual escalation! No words, it's a physical

¹ Hoffman, M. “Disciplinary Power” in Dianna Taylor (Ed.) Michel Foucault: Key Concepts. Durham: Acumen. 2011: 20-35

game—raw and fluid! Be sinuous, sensual, sensuous, shameless!” (Kane, 36). Once more, he calls out their responsibility as Apsara: “You are artists, you are courtesans skilled to make certain, special men happy, to bewitch the strongest, to weaken the toughest” (Kane, 27). This is how they train as part of their regular routine. Like Menaka, who keeps herself occupied by practicing dance, Menaka is also trained with the idea of courtesans and women’s sexuality. Not only does the disciplinary system control the physical appearance of Apsarā, but it also shapes their attitudes and beliefs: “they were taught to be selfish and pitiless: they cared for themselves” (Kane, 38). Menaka is also meant to be both free and restricted, but she is prohibited from getting married and starting a family. This demonstrates the irony of their disobedience.

Menaka follows the power system when it comes to training and operation. But any violation of this power structure could result in her expulsion from heaven. As they are forbidden from being married or having relationships with other people, Indra is incensed with Menaka for her deed of falling in love with Vasu and marrying him against the laws of heaven. Indra demands angrily, “how dare you break the rules?” (Kane, 25). Beautiful, eternal, and youthful, their bodies in heaven exist to serve the greater good rather than for their own sake. Later in the book, Indra is shocked to learn that Menaka is pregnant because, as a “dancing Nymph,” she is not permitted to become pregnant. She cannot have a personal existence, as Indra asserts, as she was made to satisfy and placate.

Menaka now challenges her identification as a subject of the power structure rather as an individual, exposing the core truth as she explains, “You gave me all the weapons of love, sex and desire but disarmed me of my capability of conscious choice and decision. Why? I can be a woman, but never a wife or a mother. Just a sexual slave. A whore” (Kane, 53). She discovers the hidden reality of her submissiveness here. It draws a clear line between Menaka as a person and Menaka as a tool—a subject Indra wants her to be and as an individual, she desires for herself. It’s noteworthy to observe that in patriarchal societies ²“the sexual anatomy of Apsarā was challenging the notion of male authority, so that its subversive potentiality was sought to be appropriated by transforming their sexual autonomy into their sexual availability” (Shah 147). She eventually becomes just a random component that Indra’s power system can utilize and discard. She bemoans the fact that people who “...have no choice, no voice, yet we (apsara) are to sing paens for him (Indra)” (Kane, 66) are the same as her. Unlike the “wives” of devas who are permitted to be married and have children, they are forced to behave and appear a certain way.

As a result, Indra punishes her by offering her two options: surrender Vasu and paradise or give up her child. “His offer was a sham but she knew she had a choice to refuse,” (Kane, 55) as Kane says. Due to her obligation to fulfill her role as an Apsara, she gives up her child, Pramadvarya. She decides to leave her child behind as Indra’s “Instructive conversation” serves as the foundation for heaven’s discipline code. Menaka offers here every option available to her as an apsara. As such, she becomes aware of her situation and learns what an apsara needs.

Power operates through systems of knowledge and normalization, rather than being imposed solely through overt force. Power, in this sense, is neither purely structural nor purely a matter of individual agency. Within this framework, Indra reinterprets Menaka’s act of seduction not as a transgression, but as a righteous and necessary act—one aligned with divine purpose. He reframes the act as moral rather than coercive, asserting that it reflects an accepted and legitimized form of truth. To Indra, seduction becomes a tool of cosmic balance: beneficial, essential, and socially productive. This reframing masks manipulation with moral justification, transforming subjugation into salvation under the guise of divine order.

Vasu is also found guilty of adultery and defying Indra since Menaka and Vasu’s relationship is frightening to Indra’s power structure. Indra turns him into a public alcoholic and a lowly man, and he enlists Rambha’s help to carry out his scheme. Rambha is an individual body that occupies the position of chief of Apsarā as such, she is the “other hierarchy” that ensures the everlasting nature of this system because “this network holds.” When Indra tosses his Vajra at

² Shah, S. *The Making of Womanhood: Gender Relations in the Mahabharata*. New Delhi: Manohar, 1995.

Vasu, threatening him, the result is not death but Vasu's expulsion from Heaven in the form of a monster. But Menaka knows that Vasu's removal isn't related to adultery; rather, it's because of Indra's jealousy. To create a hierarchy of good and evil subjects, Indra punishes Vasu according to the modes of punishment.

Menaka gets apathetic and withdraws from everything at this stage. She chooses to keep her everyday activities quiet. Her hostility to Indra's prevailing mentality is consequently shown in her aloofness and disinterest. Despite her tendency toward detachment, she chooses to become nothing more than an Apsara, devoid of joy or purpose, and ruthless. Monitoring Panopticon is a declaration of self-assertion and self-defense against the prying eyes of strangers. according to Sally Bayley. Nonetheless, from a Foucauldian standpoint, it is difficult to oppose power since doing so makes one an active participant in the power structure and assumes the counterhegemonic role inside the social formation.

Menaka's remoteness suggests her freedom in this way. Menaka is an active character who uses her aloofness to make Indra realize his deed and to exact revenge on her expelled beloved, Vasu. She rages and warns, saying, "n I announce right now, right here, that I refuse to dance in this court till Vasu returns" (Kane 82). Put another way, Menaka's aloofness is not a withdrawal from activity. Since the victim enjoys the agony of the dominant, her humiliation of Indra is "the element of liberty." Menaka gains authority the instant she places her demands before Indra. Here, her strength is understood in two ways: while she is strong and yet yields to authority, she is unable to leave heaven and still depends on Indra, and he is unable to use his power to get what he wants from her.

Menaka doesn't keep her position a secret for very long. In addition, her realization prompts her to flee heaven in an effort to circumvent the rules by aiding Indra in his scheme to harm Viswamitra. Thus, she becomes entangled in Indra's storyline and perceives Vishvamitra as her one and only "legitimate opportunity of escape" (Kane 108). She realizes through her docility that she needs to entice someone outside of paradise because she cannot rely only on her status as an "apsara."

Menaka fulfills the demands of the power structure and portrays herself as nothing more than a submissive body that is led by Indra. She obeys Indra's orders to seduce, entice, and conquer men with her sensuous movements, and she consents to use her feminine charm to seduce Vishvamitra, the wise man. Was Menaka up to her shenanigans again, Kane asks in an interrogation. However, it's her modification for her need. She only returns to her former persona in order to carry out her escape strategy from the Indralok. Menaka is driven to interact with the world of sexual baits by a fear of rejection and estrangement. In this sense, she finds herself back at the beginning. This implies, therefore, that she has disassociated herself from all authority and taken on the role of the principal of her servitude. Menaka takes ownership of the limitations imposed by authority.

The disciplinary system uses self-discipline, internalization, and the surveillance gaze as subversive strategies. Because Menaka is an apsara, her act has demonstrated a way that embodies both divinity and injustice. The story portrays ³"the manner in which societies depict the victories and attraction between the sexes" (Shah 149) in addition to a new kind of self-discipline that eliminates any opposition. Menaka is merely a pervasive and metaphorical concept that is unable to break free from the network of power and resistance.

The battleground where Kane has placed her heroine represents the ongoing conflict of her awareness between her individuality and docility. The final outcome of "creating desire, attaching individuals and their behavior and bodies are judged and against which they police themselves" (Sawicki 68) is Menaka's body's docility, which displays a cunning artifice. Menaka can therefore be both submissive and resistant to Indra's laws, but she is also bound by her status as an apsara who, in the end, is unable to overthrow the established order. Kane has succeeded in creating a mythology that addresses its origins, takes into account the oppression and subjugation of women, and reveals their hidden aspirations and experiences.

IV. Conclusion

³ Shah, S. The Making of Womanhood: Gender Relations in the Mahabharata. New Delhi: Manohar, 1995.

Kavita Kane's *Menaka's Choice* (2016) as a feminist reclamation of mythology, foregrounding the silenced voice of the apsara Menaka. Traditionally depicted as an instrument of male desire and divine strategy, Menaka embodies the paradox of beauty and bondage—an ethereal figure celebrated yet denied autonomy. The study situates Apsarā within their Vedic and Puranic transformations, tracing their shift from revered goddesses to celestial courtesans, reflecting patriarchal anxieties about female agency. Drawing on Foucauldian notions of surveillance, docility, and anatomo-politics, the analysis demonstrates how Menaka's body is commodified, disciplined, and regulated within Indra's power structure, reducing her identity to that of a seductress. Kane, however, reimagines Menaka as a resistant figure who questions her objectification, negotiates her role, and asserts moments of defiance against Indra's control. Yet, her struggle reveals the contradictions of female agency within myth: she resists and complies simultaneously, embodying both subversion and submission. Ultimately, *Menaka's Choice* highlights how patriarchal structures manipulate desire and discipline to maintain control, while also revealing the suppressed aspirations and inner conflicts of mythological women, thereby offering a gender-sensitive reinterpretation of cultural narratives.

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Animals, myths and ecologies of relation: rewriting human–nonhuman narratives in *gun Island*

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I. Abstract

Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island* offers a compelling narrative that traverses myth, migration, and ecological crisis, weaving a tapestry of interconnected lives human and nonhuman across temporal and spatial boundaries. As a work of contemporary climate fiction, the novel interrogates the dominant anthropocentric worldview and advocates for an ecological consciousness that recognises the agency and sentience of nonhuman beings. This article explores *Gun Island* through the lens of human–nonhuman affiliation, environmental degradation, and animal concern, arguing that Ghosh challenges the bifurcation between the human and the nonhuman by presenting a world in which boundaries are porous, and survival is shared. Central to the narrative is the reimagining of the Bengali legend of Bonduki Sadagar and *Manasā Devī*, which serves not only as a mythic underpinning but also as a symbolic framework that links past ecological disruptions with present environmental catastrophes. The novel's mythic structure allows for a deep interrogation of how traditional stories embed ecological memory and foster a multispecies sensibility. Ghosh suggests that myth is not a relic of the past but a narrative form capable of articulating complex, entangled relationships between humans, animals, and the environment in the age of the Anthropocene.

II. Keywords

Human–Nonhuman Affiliation, Climate Fiction, Ecocriticism, Animal Studies, Anthropocene

III. Introduction

The twenty-first century is marked by a profound crisis that transcends national borders, species boundaries, and disciplinary frameworks: the climate crisis. As the consequences of ecological degradation become increasingly visible in the form of rising sea levels, erratic weather patterns, species extinction, and mass migration, literature has taken on a renewed urgency in exploring the complexities of human relationships with the environment and nonhuman life. Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island* (2019) emerges as a significant contribution to this growing body of literature often referred to as climate fiction, or “cli-fi.” Unlike traditional ecological narratives that isolate the natural world as a separate or passive backdrop, *Gun Island* places the human and the nonhuman in a complex web of interdependence, disrupting anthropocentric frameworks and inviting readers to reimagine the boundaries of agency, belonging, and ethical responsibility. *Gun Island* connects climate change with forced migration, drawing attention to the shared vulnerability of human and nonhuman entities in the face of environmental collapse. The novel's transnational setting from the mangroves of the Sundarbans to the urban landscapes of Los Angeles and Venice demonstrates the global scale of ecological crisis and its uneven impact on marginalized communities and endangered species alike. In these interwoven stories of displacement, Ghosh illustrates that climate change is not only a scientific or political issue but also an ethical and narrative one, requiring a rethinking of relationality and responsibility.

This article draws on theoretical insights from ecocriticism, posthumanism, and animal studies to analyse how *Gun Island* cultivates an ethos of care and interdependence. Thinkers such as Donna Haraway, Bruno Latour, and Cary Wolfe provide a critical lens through which to examine the novel's challenge to species hierarchy and human exceptionalism. Ultimately, *Gun Island* urges readers to imagine a world where the boundaries between human and nonhuman are not lines of division but sites of connection and cohabitation.

Set against the backdrop of global ecological instability and mythic resonance, *Gun Island* intricately weaves together elements of folklore, migration, climate disaster, and multispecies entanglement. The novel follows Deen, a rare book dealer from Kolkata, whose life is radically altered when he encounters the legend of Bonduki Sadagar—a merchant said to have angered

the snake goddess Manasa Devi. What begins as an intellectual curiosity soon turns into a transformative journey that leads him across continents, from the Sundarbans and Los Angeles to Venice, all the while encountering animals, environments, and stories that defy rationalist understanding. Through this narrative structure, Ghosh compels us to consider myth not as a relic of premodern irrationality but as a narrative technology deeply attuned to ecological relationships and interspecies knowledge systems.

This article approaches *Gun Island* through the theoretical lenses of ecocriticism, posthumanism, and animal studies to argue that Ghosh challenges the human-centred ontology that has long dominated literature and culture. The Anthropocene—a term increasingly used to describe the current geological epoch shaped by human activity—serves as a backdrop for the novel’s exploration of environmental catastrophe and its uneven consequences. However, *Gun Island* does not simply document ecological degradation; it interrogates the very foundations of the human–nonhuman divide and proposes a reimagining of life in relational and ethical terms. The novel’s commitment to multispecies storytelling foregrounds the entangled fates of humans, animals, and ecosystems, thereby advancing a politics and poetics of interdependence.

One of the most striking features of *Gun Island* is its portrayal of animals not merely as symbols or allegorical figures but as sentient agents with the power to influence human lives and narrative trajectories. The appearance of a venomous snake in the Sundarbans, the venomous spider in Los Angeles, and the dolphins that guide and protect asylum seekers in the Mediterranean all exemplify Ghosh’s effort to destabilize anthropocentric hierarchies. These animals are not incidental to the plot; they are co-narrators in the novel’s unfolding *drama*, revealing the insufficiency of human-centred epistemologies to comprehend the full scope of planetary life. In this sense, the novel resonates with the work of theorists like Donna Haraway, who advocates for “staying with the trouble” in our relations with other species, and Cary Wolfe, who calls for an ethics that includes the lives of nonhuman others beyond the utilitarian or sentimental.

The character of Cinta, an elderly historian and thinker based in Venice, serves as a mouthpiece for many of the novel’s philosophical meditations on ecology, myth, and memory. Her reflections challenge the anthropocentric arrogance that separates humans from other species and frame climate change as not merely a technical problem but a profound ethical and imaginative failure. Through her conversations with Deen, Ghosh critiques the dominant modes of historiography and scientific thinking that exclude nonhuman agency, and calls instead for a renewed narrative imagination that can encompass the multiplicity of life forms and experiences on Earth.

This article will thus explore three interrelated strands in *Gun Island*: human–nonhuman affiliation, environmental concern, and animal agency. First, it will examine how Ghosh constructs multispecies relationships that destabilise human exceptionalism and foreground interdependence. Second, it will analyse how the novel frames climate change and displacement as intertwined phenomena affecting both human and nonhuman lives. Finally, it will highlight how animals in the text function as active participants in the narrative, thereby inviting a reconsideration of ethics, storytelling, and the boundaries of the political.

IV. Myth and Ecology : Reimagining the Past through the Legend of Bonduki Sadagar

Amitav Ghosh’s *Gun Island* begins by invoking the centuries-old Bengali legend of Bonduki Sadagar, “the Gun Merchant,” who flouted the worship of the snake goddess Manasa Devi and was cursed for his impiety.¹ At first glance, this folkloric frame appears simply atmospheric—a nod to regional colour and traditional storytelling. Yet Ghosh deliberately situates the legend as more than ornament: it becomes the structural and ethical backbone for his ecological imagination. By foregrounding myth as a repository of ecological knowledge and interspecies ethics, *Gun Island* critiques the secular-rationalist traditions of the Enlightenment, which have long relegated nonhuman agencies and oral histories to the margins of “serious” discourse. Instead, Ghosh reclaims myth as a living archive that can articulate the complex entanglements of humans, animals, and environments in the Anthropocene.

In *The Great Derangement*, Ghosh diagnoses modern literature’s failure to reckon with climate change as symptomatic of a broader epistemic “derangement”: a conviction that

¹ Amitav Ghosh, *Gun Island*, New Delhi: Penguin Random House, 2019, 3–5.

humanity stands apart from nature, that the nonhuman world is merely a backdrop for human drama.² *Gun Island* stages a corrective to this separation by embedding ecological warnings within the very fabric of myth. The story of Bonduki Sadagar—his shipwrecked voyage, his fateful encounter with the snake deity, and the cyclical curse that afflicts his lineage—speaks not only of divine retribution but of the consequences that befall human communities when they transgress the boundaries of respect owed to other-than-human beings.

Ghosh's re-imagining of the Bonduki Sadagar myth involves a series of textual interventions that underscore its ecological dimensions. First, he relocates the legend from the realm of pure fable to the historical record of Deen's family archives, including marginalia in rare books and annotated maps of mangrove creeks. These embedded documents remind readers that myth and history are porous categories: what we register as "legend" often originates in real events—saltwater floods, cyclonic storms, patterns of animal migration—that impressed themselves upon collective memory. By weaving scholarly references and archival fragments into the narrative, Ghosh demonstrates how oral traditions can encode empirical observations of environmental change, transmitted across generations long before meteorology or satellite imagery existed.

Second, the novel literalizes the myth's ecological stakes through Deen's encounters with living snakes in the Sundarbans. When Deen first hears the story of Manasa Devi, it is through the voice of Tipu, a local boatman whose family has bound itself to the goddess's worship for generations. Tipu's telling is not merely anecdotal; it unfolds on the very bank of the river where Deen later witnesses countless pythons slither through creek water. These snakes are not metaphors but active agents in the unfolding drama of ecological transformation: they abandon their usual habitats in response to rising salinity and erratic flooding, entering human settlements in search of refuge. Each snake sighting thus resonates with the ancestral curse: humanity's disregard for nonhuman domains returns to unsettle the supposed mastery of nature.

Third, Ghosh reconfigures the myth through spatial expansion. While the core legend is rooted in Bengal, the novel's narrative trajectory carries Deen across continents to Los Angeles and Venice, where analogous stories of snake-gods and displaced creatures emerge. In Venice, Cinta recounts Venetian folktales of a "water woman" and mysterious floods tied to past betrayals of the lagoon's fauna. These parallel myths articulate a key argument: ecological ignorance is not a problem confined to one culture or region but a global phenomenon grounded in a shared failure to acknowledge interspecies bonds. By mapping the Bonduki Sadagar narrative onto varied geographies, Ghosh demonstrates the universality of ecological "curses" born of human arrogance and hubris.

The novel's treatment of myth also enacts a methodological shift from the linear temporality of Western historiography to a cyclical, multi-layered conception of time. The curse afflicting Sadagar's descendants does not unfold as a singular event in the past; it recurs unpredictably, echoing through storms, droughts, and migrations. This temporal layering mirrors ecological rhythms—tides, monsoon cycles, animal breeding seasons—that classical realist narratives often elide. Myth becomes a form of "slow knowledge," preserving patterns of environmental change that elude the snapshot perspective of scientific reports. In presenting mythic memory alongside contemporary climate data—such as news of unprecedented cyclones and coral-bleaching events—*Gun Island* invites readers to perceive ecological history as continuous and recursive.

In sum, by reimagining the past through the legend of Bonduki Sadagar, *Gun Island* restores myth to its rightful place as a dynamic, ecological archive. Ghosh challenges secular-rationalist presumptions that regard myth as mere superstition, demonstrating instead that traditional narratives can articulate complex entanglements of humans, animals, and environments. Through spatial and temporal expansion, archival embedding, and embodied animal encounters, the novel reveals myth's capacity to preserve ecological memory, foster interspecies ethics, and catalyse a renewed imagination of planetary interdependence. In the Anthropocene, when established categories of knowledge falter under the weight of climate disruption, *Gun Island*

² Amitav Ghosh, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 9–12.

shows how the stories of our ancestors can guide us toward an ethics of respect and care for all forms of life.

V. Human–Nonhuman Affiliation: Interspecies Encounters and Ethical Relationality

Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island* dismantles the presumed boundary between humanity and the more-than-human world through a series of encounters that compel its human protagonists to recognise nonhuman agency and forge ethical relations across species lines. In foregrounding snakes, dolphins, spiders and migratory birds as co-agents in the unfolding narrative, Ghosh dramatizes what Donna Haraway terms “response-ability”—the capacity to respond to, and be transformed by, the presence of other beings. The novel's most arresting moments arise when human characters confront animal others not as spectacles or symbols but as fellow inhabitants of an entangled biosphere, demanding new modes of attention, care and mutual recognition.

Central to this theme is Deen's journey into the Sundarbans, where the myth of Bonduki Sadagar first intersects with real-world ecology. The cobra that slithers across the mangrove floor is at once an embodiment of the snake-goddess Manasa Devi and a displaced creature forced from increasingly saline waterways. In this liminal landscape—a tidal labyrinth of mudflats, creeks and aerial roots—humans and animals share precarious spaces. Local boatmen like Tipu do not treat snakes simply as threats; they tell stories, perform rituals and build shrines in Manasa's honour, acknowledging the snake's right to exist. For Deen, a scholar schooled in rationalist modes of knowledge, the cobra's sudden emergence shatters his intellectual detachment. He experiences visceral fear, yes, but also profound awe; the snake's presence becomes a catalyst for what he later terms an “ecological awakening.”

Ghosh's portrayal of snakes illustrates how interspecies affiliations often begin in fear yet can blossom into respect. The earliest encounters in the Sundarbans are fraught with danger: Deen narrowly escapes a venomous bite, and local fishers recount losing limbs or lives to tiger and crocodile attacks. Yet these stories coexist with accounts of reciprocity—of tigers avoiding certain villages, of farmers planting fish-attracting crops in exchange for bounteous harvests, of boatmen offering milk to snakes. This cohabitation is not idyllic but conditioned by ongoing negotiation: rituals and taboos function as protocols for respectful co-presence. Ghosh thereby suggests that ethics in the Anthropocene may derive less from abstract principles than from situated practices of reciprocity that respect nonhuman difference.

The dolphins of the Venetian lagoon offer a very different model of human–nonhuman affiliation. Drawing on real reports of dolphins guiding refugee boats to safety, Ghosh imbues these marine mammals with deliberate affinity for human voyagers in peril. The dolphins are not anthropomorphised in a sentimental fashion; rather, their acts are depicted as intelligent, affective responses to fellow creatures in distress. They breach the surface, circle the boats and disrupt the authorities' attempts at interception. In doing so, they enact a form of cross-species solidarity that transcends human political borders and species hierarchies. For characters such as Cinta—an environmental historian living in Venice—the dolphins become exemplars of multispecies ethics: they show what it means to act in concert with others, to share vulnerability and to resist structures of exclusion.

Each of these interspecies encounters underscores two interlinked insights. The first is that nonhuman beings possess agency—not in the limited sense of biological instinct but in a broader, more relational sense that includes ethical significance. The cobra's refusal to vanish, the spider's unwelcome return, the dolphins' protective circling: all speak to purposeful action. Ghosh's narrative thus aligns with Cary Wolfe's insistence that animals are not mere objects of human concern but subjects whose lives interrogate human self-understandings. The second insight is that ethical relationality is grounded in affective experience as much as in rational deliberation. Deen's fear of the snake, his pain from the spider bite, and the wonder inspired by the dolphins all register as visceral knowledges that catalyse moral transformation. These affective encounters resist the cold objectivity of Enlightenment reason, suggesting that ethics must be re-grounded in embodied, and situated experiences of the more-than-human world.

Moreover, the novel emphasises that interspecies affiliations have political as well as personal dimensions. Climate-driven displacement affects human communities and nonhuman populations alike: rising temperatures, cyclones and sea-level rise push both fishers and fish into new territories. When Deen travels to L.A. to investigate the spider incident, he learns that

local authorities have ramped up pest control measures, endangering not only spiders but other arthropods vital for ecosystem health. In Venice, the refugee crisis and lagoon pollution converge to threaten both human migrants and endemic species. Ghosh thus highlights how ecological crises are intersectional, requiring coalitions of human and nonhuman actors to resist harmful policies and practices. The dolphins' intervention in refugee rescues is political precisely because it challenges the state's monopoly on border control and asserts the moral worth of all sentient lives.

Ultimately, *Gun Island* posits that the survival of both human and nonhuman beings in the Anthropocene depends on cultivating modes of affiliation that honour interdependence, non-hierarchy and care. Through its richly textured interspecies encounters, the novel models an ethics of relationality that begins with attentiveness to animal bodies and worlds and extends into political solidarity across species lines. By recasting snakes, spiders and dolphins as co-authors of the story, Ghosh invites readers to inhabit a world where ethical responsibility is shared, boundaries are porous, and the fates of all creatures are entwined. In doing so, *Gun Island* offers not only a literary meditation on climate crisis but a manifesto for living with, rather than against, our more-than-human kin.

VI. Animals as Narrative Agents: Disrupting Anthropocentric Storytelling

Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island* challenges deeply entrenched anthropocentric narrative traditions by positioning animals as active agents in the story rather than passive symbols or mere background elements. This shift from human-centred storytelling to a more distributed agency aligns with broader posthumanist and critical animal studies discourses that call for decentring the human and acknowledging the vitality and complexity of nonhuman life.³

VII. Decentring Human Agency

In traditional Western storytelling, animals are often relegated to the status of allegory or metaphor tools used to reflect human virtues, fears, or desires. They are typically silent, passive, or symbolic, serving the human narrative but lacking independent agency. Ghosh's *Gun Island* radically departs from this mode by rendering animals as subjects with their own trajectories and capacities to affect the human world. The snake goddess Manasa Devi's legend, the behaviour of wild snakes in the Sundarbans, the dolphins' intervention in refugee rescue, and the spider's disruptive appearance in Los Angeles are not mere plot devices but narrative agents whose actions and presences actively shape the story's course.

For example, the cobra in the Sundarbans does not simply embody mythic symbolism; it is an ecological force that influences human behaviour and spiritual life. It is both feared and venerated, inspiring rituals and stories that inform the lives and ethics of the local people. This complex relationship exemplifies how animals in *Gun Island* refuse to be reduced to passive backdrops. Instead, they insist on being recognised as integral parts of human histories and futures. The cobra's crossing into Deen's path marks a turning point in his intellectual and emotional journey, disrupting his rationalist skepticism and opening him to alternative ways of knowing and relating.⁴

VIII. Animals as Storytellers and Myth-Makers

Ghosh's narrative approach also expands the notion of storytelling itself by weaving together scientific ecology, folklore, and interspecies interactions. The novel reclaims myth not as outdated superstition but as a living mode of multispecies storytelling that encodes ethical lessons and ecological wisdom. The legend of Bonduki Sadagar and the worship of Manasa Devi are more than cultural artefacts; they are modes through which human and nonhuman histories intersect and co-produce meaning.

By integrating myth with empirical ecological realities, *Gun Island* positions animals as co-authors of stories that transcend human timeframes and epistemologies. For instance, the migratory birds that track environmental changes act as living archives of climate shifts, while dolphins' actions in the Mediterranean rescue mission rewrite narratives of migration and

3 Cary Wolfe, *Animal Rites: American Culture, the Discourse of Species, and Posthumanist Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 1–5.

4 Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, trans. David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 25–30.

refuge beyond human political borders. These stories challenge human exceptionalism by illustrating how animals participate in shaping histories and futures, sometimes in ways humans do not fully comprehend or control.⁵

IX. Conclusion

Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island* offers a powerful literary response to the pressing challenges of the Anthropocene by reimagining the relationship between humans and the nonhuman world. Through a narrative that interweaves myth, migration, environmental degradation, and multispecies encounters, Ghosh dismantles entrenched anthropocentric paradigms and advocates for a more inclusive, ethical, and ecologically conscious worldview. The novel illustrates how animals—snakes, dolphins, spiders, birds—are not peripheral or ornamental but central to both the plot and the ethical framework of the narrative. They are agents of disruption, transformation, and insight, compelling the human characters and readers to confront their own complicity in ecological harm and to reconsider their place within a web of interdependent life.

What makes *Gun Island* particularly significant in the context of environmental and animal studies is its insistence on narrative as a space of ethical negotiation. By breaking away from human-centric storytelling traditions, Ghosh not only makes room for nonhuman voices but also elevates the importance of interspecies relationality. The novel challenges readers to embrace a form of narrative ethics that is rooted in attentiveness, reciprocity, and humility—values that are urgently needed in an age marked by climate crisis, mass extinction, and environmental displacement.

In centring animals as narrative agents and symbolic interlocutors, Ghosh critiques the human and animal. The reappearance of myth—particularly the legend of Bonduki Sadagar and Manasa Devi—serves not as a nostalgic return to superstition, but as a vital mode of ecological knowledge that resists the mechanistic view of the world. Myth, in *Gun Island*, becomes a vehicle through which ecological memory and multispecies relationships are preserved, reinterpreted, and made relevant in the contemporary moment.

Moreover, the novel foregrounds the political dimensions of human–nonhuman entanglement. Climate migration, ecological injustice, and biodiversity loss are not abstract concepts but lived realities for both human and nonhuman communities. The dolphins that guide refugees to safety, the spider that signals environmental intrusion, and the snakes that embody sacred and ecological knowledge—all these beings complicate and enrich our understanding of agency, kinship, and resistance in a world that is increasingly fragmented and volatile.

Ultimately, *Gun Island* urges a reimagining of ethics—not as a solely human affair, but as a shared, collective responsibility that spans species boundaries. In depicting a world where animals are not voiceless victims but active participants in shaping ecological and social futures, Ghosh paves the way for a form of environmental imagination that is deeply relational and radically inclusive. His narrative insists that we must listen—not only to each other, but to the more-than-human voices that inhabit our world and are, quite literally, speaking back to us. It is in this listening, in this shared vulnerability and co-existence, that the possibility of a more just and sustainable future might be found.

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The ecological study of horse in the select retold Indian mythological stories of Anita Nair

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I. Abstract

Anita Nair is an Indian writer in English. She is famous for her novel *Ladies Coupe*. But she is a good academic trainer of writing short stories. She is conducting a training academy for writing short stories. She has been contributed several books for children. They are published by *Penguin Books* as puffin books. They are *World Myths and Legends* and *Magical Indian Myths*. The present study is taken several short stories which are retold mythological stories of Anita Nair's *Magical Indian Myths*. They are all talking about the myth in the past for children in now-a-days to know. Horse is a domestic animal which is very friendly with human beings for so many years. It is portrayed to be a separate force in warfield of ancient days and in history. In the collection of several stories of Anita Nair, horses are also played vital roles in those stories. This research paper is dealt with the ecological study of horses in the select stories of Anita Nair from the book *Magical Indian Myths*.

II. Key words

Horse, Stallion, Mare, and Ecocriticism.

III. Introduction

Anita Nair is a prominent writer in English from India. She has been contributed several works in Indian writing in English in order to enrich the literature of English. She is a fine supporter of creative writing. She has noted in her book that she has been had an interest to show the wealth of Indian myths and its culture to children in and out of India. By noting such stories she has a belief of giving hope for the preservance of the ideology what India has been preserved. Through these books she has been become a story teller of children. From her book, *Magical Indian Myths*, there are several stories that have horses as their characters. They are "How the Sun Became Less Fierce," "The Churning of the Cosmic Ocean," "How Dadhyanch Saved the Earth," and "Why Ocean Came to be Called Sagara." Nair has been written several books related to the myths in the world. Her writings are being allowed the creativity of the readers to live in the words she has used in her works. That much of effect, she has been invested in her books for collecting the minds of young readers. This *Magical Indian Myths* is a collection of fifty stories from Indian mythology especially Indian Hindu mythology.

Ecocriticism is portrayed to be the study of literature and the environment of the story in an interdisciplinary prediction. Cheryll Glotfelty says "Ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment."¹ In these retold mythological stories, Nair has been used the appropriate ready-made languages to express the actual story in the myth. Her attempt on preserving the nature is being appreciated. This research paper is dealt with the role of horse in these stories. Especially it focuses on how the breed horse is being portrayed in the stories of the past generation.

The article entitled "Green Ideologies in Indian English Literature" highlights the rise of green ideology in Indian Writing in English. They inform the role of nature in the stories as a character especially in the field of common platform. Those stories are interconnecting the human beings with such nature world, they alternate environmentalism as follows:

¹ Glotfelty, Cheryll and Harold Fromm.- are the writer of the book *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* and they are prominent persons in the field Ecocriticism

In Indian English literature, mythology and folklore are frequently rewritten in order to explore modern themes, speak to socio-cultural concerns, and consider how our connection with nature is changing. Authors who retell old myths and folktales give them fresh interpretations, symbolism, and application, giving readers new perspectives on their own cultural history and its applicability in the contemporary day. (Madhukar², 556)

As per the reference of the *Online Etymology Dictionary*, the following meanings of words are being identified. The word *horse* is derived from the protogermanic term *harss* of unknown origin. This word is being played the role of verb as “to provide with a horse or horses.” It is scientifically named as *Equus caballus*³. It is studied as a single species with several breeds. The men horses which are all kept for breeding called as stallions. This word stallion comes from old French *estalon* which means uncastrated male horse. The term Mare comes from the Proto Germanic word *marhjio* which means female horse.

In the story, “How the Sun Became Less Fierce,” Surya is possessed a chariot that has seven horses. Nair has been described those horses as “Surya’s chariot was drawn by seven horses, each with gleaming coats like brownish-red silk and adorned with tassels of gold” (Nair 1). Though they are seven in number they have been got whip flick as usual. His chariot is driven by his mother, Aruna. It is a decision of Aruna to arrange marriage between Surya and Sanjana, the daughter of Vishwakarma, the architect of the gods. But after the marriage, the radiation what Surya has naturally is being hatred by his wife Sanjana for not able to have a close relationship with her husband. So she is in the position to inform her father and she has been decided to go away from the palace of Surya, by disguising herself as a mare to the forest. It is started to get worried for Surya without his wife. So, he has been also begun to roam all the forest in order to search his wife and found her at a forest in the shape of mare. Then, the physical appearance of Surya is changed by himself as a stallion and gone near to his wife. In the mean time, due to the absence of Surya, the entire world gets darkness and this matter has become a big issue for Vishwakarma. For that, Vishwakarma has been reached the place where these couples live and cut the one-eighth of Surya’s rays when he is in disguise. Those fiery trimmings have been fallen to the earth and two of them become the disc of Lord Vishnu and the trident of Lord Shiva.

In this story Surya and Sanjana have been changed into horses and started to live their lovable life as horses. Even the words and terms are used correctly as stallion and mare. Especially the nature of the disguise is also to share their love with each other. The attractive life is derived in the form of horses to them. Nair has been noted the colour of those seven horses in the chariot of Surya as brownish-red silk. The editors of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* quotes the wording of French zoologist Georges-Louis Leclerc, comte de Buffon as “the horse is the proudest conquest of Man.” Likewise they are being informed “A stallion used for breeding is known as stud. A castrated stallion is commonly called a gelding. Formerly, stallions were employed as riding horses, while mares were kept for breeding purposes only.” The seven horses of Surya’s chariot are Gaythri, Brhato, Usnik, Jagati, Tristup, Anustup and Pankti⁴. The study of astronomy⁵ is referring to the seven horses as VIBGYOR whereas White Violet, Indigo, Blue, Green, Yellow, Orange and Red. Nair has been noted them as brownish red silk in colour. But most of the photos and paints of Surya in India are being projected as they are white horses or a mixture of brownish red and white horses. Horse is being used for travel or journey, war fields and even for their meat after the death/ by killing. Orwell’s *Animal Farm*⁶ is a literary example for the projection of horse meat in the end of the novel. Horses are majorly famous for their speed running and travelling assistantship. In this story, Surya’s chariot is lead by seven horses. They are light horses which are used for riding purpose. The study about the horses is limited to general features. Everything is named as horse especially Marwari breed of Indian origin when

² Yogesh Kumari Madhukar is a writer of the essay “Green Ideologies in Indian English Literature.”

³ Online Etymology Dictionary that is edited by Douglas Harper-for knowing the origin of the word horse.

⁴ Greek term- Scientific name of horse

⁵ Encyclopaedia of Britannica is one of the encyclopaedias that is used for meaning of the word station.

⁶ Seven Vedic great meter of Vedic poetry

one has browsed the Vedic horses in India.

In the story “The Churning of the Cosmic Ocean,” Nair has been described the entry of horse in a situation. This story is about the avatar of Lord Vishnu. At the same time it has a part of Lord Shiva’s consumption of poison side of nectar. The Lords in the heaven along with the headship of Lord Indra and Asuras the demons have been assembled together to churn the cosmic ocean to get the nectar the Amrutha from it. When they start to churn the ocean, “first emerged Kamadhenu, the cow of plenty. It was given to Vashista, the officiating priest. Then came Airavata, the stately white elephant, and Uchchaiah-sravas, a wonderful horse, which were both claimed by Indra” (Nair, 15). Finally they get that nectar and Lord Shiva is consumed the poison in it and he is rescued according to the story.

The white horse which comes out of cosmic ocean is named as Uchchaiah-sravas. It is believed to be the animal form of Lord Vishnu. *Bhagavat Gita*⁷ is being acknowledged this Uchchaiah-sravas is a form of Lord Vishnu. “Amongst horses know me to be Uccaiashrava, begotten from the churning of nectar. I am Airavata amongst all lordly elephants, and the king amongst humans” (Gita 10:27). *Vishnupurana*⁸ tells that this horse is handed over to Indra⁹ later it is in the hands of King Bali for sometimes. It is portrayed to be a horse of seven heads.

In the story, “How Dadhyanch Saved the Earth,” is a story about the life of Dadhyanch, son of Atharvan, the son of Brahma. He is performed a great penance towards Indra and get the boon of Indra by learning the knowledge of Indra on Sciences he has known, At the same time, he is warned by Indra not to share the knowledge he has got from Lord Indra to anyone. So he has been become a good healer. Aswin twins are the characters who have been interrupted Dadhyanch and asked the science he has been learnt from Indra. At first, he is denied, later he has been started to spell all the learnings to them. This news of sharing knowledge is come to Indra by his power, he is cut off the head of Dadhyanch. But at the same time, Aswin twins, who have learnt the sciences, fix the head again to the body of Dadhyanch. After few years, when Dadhyanch is in the earth, there are many controversies due to the entry of demons. So Lord Indra is decided to conduct a battle but he has acknowledged the dealing with Dadhyanch by asking him to be left something. Then the Ashwin twins have been reminded him of “the horse’ head, which had been Dadhyanch’s for a while. It lies at the bottom of a lake near Kurukshetra¹⁰” (Nair, 37). Then Indra has been dredged the horse’s head out. He is being made weapons by using the bones of horse and foiled nine times ninety stratagems of the demons. From this story one can be understood, the body of the horse especially head is used to create weapons. Skull, Mandible and cervical vertebrae of the horse head are used by Indra to create weapons to destroy the demons. Even the role of Hayagreeva is different from this story. The bones are used for killing beings.

In the story, “Why the Ocean Came to be Called Sagara,” Sumati, the wife of Sagara, has begotten sixty thousand sons. When they are started to grow up, their naughtiness are also increased. In order to overcome such difficulties to preserve his reign, he is planned to conduct an Ashwamedha sacrifice to establish his ruling power. So he is conveyed his sons by calling them “It is most important that nothing happens to the sacrificial horse. I would like you to guard the horse” (Nair, 87). As per the wish of their father they start to watch over the horse. But at one night it is disappeared. All the sons of Sagara are haunted the horse that is given by their father. They are started to dig deep in the earth and they start to enter the netherworld in search of the horse. There the Sage Kapila is seated in a place and done meditation. On the same spot, they have been noticed the roaming of the missed horse. So, they think that Sage Kapila is a cheater who has kidnapped their horse from earth. So, they have decided to club him to death. But knowing this through his meditational power, suddenly Sage has opened his eyes from deep meditation and started to show his eyes wide in anger for their attempt of trying to attack. His sudden sight is attempted to sparkle fire of his wrath and they are started to burn all the sons of Sagara into ashes.

⁷ Astronomy is the study of all things beyond universe (stars, sun, Moon and others)

⁸ Animal Farm is a novella which talks about the revolution of animals against their master

⁹ Bhagavat Gita is a song of God and it is a part of Indian Epic Mahabharata

¹⁰ Vishnupurana is narrated by Sage Parashara to Maitreya

India has a long history for the sacrifice of Ashwamedha from its Vedic period. The word *Ashwamedha* means *horse sacrifice*. In the holy epics of India, *The Ramayana*¹¹ and *The Mahabharata*¹² have the evidences of the occurrences of Ashwamedha. This sacrifice is conducted for strengthening the prosperity and fertility of the King and his clan during his kingdom. The editors of *Encyclopaedia of Britannica*¹³ is told that “Not all performances of the Ashwamedha involved the actual killing of an animal, as indicated in the *Shanti Parva*, the 12th book of the ancient Sanskrit epic poem *Mahabharata*.”

But in this story of Nair, the arrangement for Ashwamedha becomes vain. Even the horse which is preserved for the sacrifice has gone out of the place and the act of missing is decided the fate of all the sixty thousand sons of Sagara, to become ashes by the curse of Sage Kapila.

The scientific study¹⁴ entitled “Horse-meat for human consumption — Current research and future opportunities”, the meat of the horse is used for the food in several countries in the world. They are being focussed the meat of horse as a commodity. There are several countries appreciated to eat horse meat in America, Europe and Asia. In India, horse is sacrificed by the believers for their belief and to get some power from nature in the name of God. The meat of horse is fat free in maximum. But the pagan beliefs in Europe are being motivated for not eating in maximum European countries.

Horse, *Equus caballus*, is used for travelling by Lord Surya, even he has been changed his physical appearance as stallion to have a private meet with his wife Sanjana who is in the form of a mare. This breed of horse is always used as a vehicle for Indra, Bali, and all kings of the entire world. The usage of stallion and mare is only for breeding. It is also focussed in the select story. They have been used this animal horse as a vehicle to move from one place to another place. They are even used as a troop in war. All over the world, the immigrants or invaders have been used the particular animal horse for their movement. Even in the game of chess it is also a living evidence for using horses in the warfield. The move of horse in the game of chess is similar as it has the habit of jumping over the things the place where it is. The bones of dead animals are converted into weapons for attacking or defending the attack of enemies. It is proved in the story of Ashwin twins and the sage Dadhyanch. Likewise sacrificing horse is occurred from the period of Vedic India. Now-a-days people of several countries have the habit of eating the meat of the horse. So, horse is domesticated for having good relationship with human beings in order to use them for sharing the works of human and even as a food in some occasion. Even the stories and habituals of the ancestors are being informed the usages of horses. From the pride journey of the King to his last journey to burial ground, horse chariot is inevitable transport for those days’ people, Even now-a-days horses are used for the wedding journeys and for the religious purposes. These stories are being proved the good relationship maintained between mankind- the characters in the stories of Nair and the horses that are the characters in the stories. The appearance of rural deities in the South India especially in Madras state now-a-days Tamil Nadu is also example for the close relationship of the people with the animal horse. All the temples of clan deities in the region maximum possess the statues of horses in front of their main deities. The horse chariot is being used for the arrival of Kallazhagar in Madurai for the function of wedding ceremony of Lord Sokkanatha and Goddess Meenakshi. All of them is being referred the life of the past generation with this particular animal -horse. Horses have been cattled by the human beings for their personal purposes and this breed is also being proved its attachment with human beings.

IV. Conclusion

In “How the Sun Became Less Fierce” horse appears to be the safe being and in the appearance Surya and Sanjana live their life. It signifies the life with passion. In “The Churning of the Cosmic Ocean” horse is considered to be the holy gift with special power. In “How Dadhyanch Saved the Earth” it has the quality of healing and started to heal and in “Why the Ocean Came to be Called Sagara,” because of it so many persons get curse from Sage Kapila. They have missed it and lost their life. One can identify the attachment and interlinked life lived by the

¹¹ Indra is ruler of heaven in Hindu myth

¹² Kurukshetra is located in the state Haryana in India, considered to be one of the holy lands

¹³ The Ramayana is one of the epics of India that talks about the ninth incarnation of Lord Vishnu

¹⁴ The Mahabharata is one of the epics of India that talks about the eight incarnation of Lord Vishnu

past people with horse. So, horse is considered to be one of the gifts of the nature or the almighty to the human beings. By knowing the truth, all the human beings have to protect animals to live their life as human beings.

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***Satya* (truth) and *Nyaya* (justice) in corporate governance: whistleblowing through the lens of Indian knowledge systems**

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I. Abstract

Corporate governance refers to the mechanisms, by which corporations are controlled and directed, which encompass the balance between economic and social goals, and between individual and communal goals. *Satya* (Truth) and *Nyāya* (Justice) are the principles that work as the foundation of Indian Corporate ethics and they are in line with the broader goals of corporate governance in India. Evidently, in general, one of the key pillars for robust governance of institutions is whistleblowing as a major tool for identifying malpractice, fraud, and unethical behavior within entities. When whistleblowers can report misconduct without the risk of backlash from either management or law enforcement, they help to hold corporate stakeholders responsible for their ethical promises to their companies and customers. The paper also critically examines the relevant provisions of the Indian legal framework including the Whistleblower Protection Act, 2014 and those under the Companies Act, 2013 in addition to the relevant recommendations of the Narayana Murthy Committee, Jamshed J. Irani Committee and SEBI's Uday Kotak Committee on Corporate Governance. The research paper concludes some policy suggestions aimed at broadening whistleblower protections to incorporate all sectors, thereby reinforcing corporate governance structures that resonate with the ethos of *Satya* and *Nyāya*.

II. Keywords

Corporate governance, economic and social goals, *Satya* (Truth), *Nyāya* (Justice), Indian corporate ethics, whistleblowing, malpractice and fraud, Whistleblower Protection Act 2014, Companies Act 2013, Narayana Murthy Committee, Jamshed J. Irani Committee, SEBI Uday Kotak Committee

III. Introduction

Corporate governance is the collar of ethical, sustainable business practices and ensures the company works transparently, fairly, and stays accountable. Indian ethos as represented by ancient Sanskrit words *Satya* (Truth) and *Nyāya* (Justice) provides deep resonance with core values and principles of corporate governance that shape the conduct of business towards creating equitable outcomes for all stakeholders. With this comes the responsibility to maintain ethical practices, which, is a necessity in this ever-growing complex, globalized world that we live in today. Corporate governance is not just a legal requirement, it embodies the principles that should underpin an organization's decisions and its relationships with its shareholders, employees, and the wider community.

A key element of good corporate governance is the development of an adequate mechanism for reporting wrongdoings that will enable employees (internal stakeholders) and other stakeholders (external stakeholders) to highlight unethical practices without fear of reprisal. It serves as a protection against some degree of corruption, fraud, and other nefarious activities that could threaten not only the integrity of the company but the interests of its stakeholders and the general economy. Reporting irregularities technically known as Whistleblowing, acts as a reminder of the ethical foundations of governance, promoting *Satya* and *Nyāya* by advocating for transparency and accountability in organizational practices.

IV. Whistleblowing as Ethical Duty: Indian Philosophical Insights

Whistleblowing can be seen as an essential aspect of any program for corporate governance, as it meets at the intersection of moral accountability and organizational integrity. It is a process in which employees or insiders within an organization expose unethical, illegal, or corrupt practices or misconduct. The disclosure can be made internally to senior management, compliance officers, or audit committees, or externally to regulatory bodies, law enforcement,

media, or to the public. Internal whistleblowing addresses issues within the organization and ensures that the company's reputation is protected and violations are appropriately addressed. External whistleblowing, however, becomes necessary when internal processes seem ineffective in addressing concerns or when the whistleblower feels that they are at risk of retaliation.

The heart of whistleblowing resonates profoundly with the Indian philosophical principles of *Satya* and *Nyāya*, the two foundational tenets of ethical conduct in governance. The value of truth and righteousness were said to form the bedrock of *dharma* in ancient India's texts, upon which the fabric of society was established as *dharma* was necessary for individual interpretation to ensure justice in society.¹ Likewise, the Bhagavad Gita stresses the importance of pursuing *dharma* regardless of personal consequences. This part of the Gita resonates with the courage required by whistleblowers. This moral and historical foundation further enhances the view that whistleblowing is not an act of dissent but rather a duty to act in the interest of the greater good ethical.² Whistleblowers are seen as the "conscience keepers" of organizations, who speak truth to power and champion integrity and transparency by providing disclosures about wrongdoing. Within the corporate framework, whistleblowers are the embodiment of the ideal. They take responsibility for protecting the interests of stakeholders and ensuring ethical governance. Whistleblowers shining light on malpractice and corruption not only help reduce financial and reputational risk but also reinforce the organizational culture of compliance and ethical behavior. Guiding principles such as *Satya* and *Nyāya* worshipped by the great Mahatma Gandhi and the same principle is at the heart of the impact of whistleblowing in our current governance structures.³

Informed by the Arthashastra, with Kautilya emphasizing strong oversight and accountability in governance systems, modern frameworks should expand protections across all economic sectors to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive governance ethos. Even where the legal framework exists, the effectiveness of whistleblowing mechanisms is usually hampered by fear of reprisal, cultural resistance, and lack of awareness.⁴ As the Rigveda and Upanishads point at the pursuit of knowledge and the duty to speak against falsehood, they highlight the need to create a corporate culture in which whistleblowers are hailed rather than exiled.⁵ By educating and creating awareness around the importance of being ethical, the culture of silence which is widely prevalent among us can be broken down and principles of *Nyāya* can be ushered in helping us develop a place where truth prevails and no one has an impunity to commit a crime against the innocent.⁶

Thus, whistleblowing is not just a regulatory enterprise; it is also the celebration of time-tested Indian ethos in contemporary corporate ethos. Incorporating *Satya* and *Nyāya* into the design of policies centred around whistleblowers within the workplace, Indian corporations can build fortresses of governance systems that prevent malfeasance from even surfacing in the first place as these policies take firm roots and develop an innate measure of trust and confidence for stakeholders. Such integration of traditional insights and modern institutional practices provides a directional call for building a corporate ecosystem founded on integrity that has a

¹ Jasvant S. Majirana, "An Analytical Study of The Mahabharata As An Epic," JETIR p. 1 (2019), available at <https://www.jetir.org/papers/JETIR2003003.pdf> (last accessed 7 January 2025).

² S. R. S. Varma, "Understanding the Moral and Ethical Dimensions of the Bhagavad Gita," Theologia Viatorum (2017), available at <https://theologiaviatorum.org/index.php/tv/article/view/223> (last accessed 7 January 2025).

³ Acharya and Chakraborty, "Relevance of Gandhian Principles in the Digital Era," Organization and Management Quarterly p. 1 (2019), available at <https://oamquarterly.polsl.pl/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Acharya.pdf> (last accessed 7 January 2025).

⁴ R. Shamasastri, "Kautilya and the Concept of Good Governance," The Indian Journal of Political Science p. 1 (2013), available at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41856223> (last accessed 7 January 2025).

⁵ Yamaguchi, "Three Essays on Culture and Whistleblowing," PhD dissertation, University of Hawaii, (2017), available at <https://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/0553b412-5437-46e3-b374-dbc6cac54b29/content> (last accessed 7 January 2025).

⁶ Institute of Company Secretaries of India, "Gyan Ganga: A Brief Insight into Corporate Governance," (2020), available at https://www.icsi.edu/media/filer_public/63/b0/63b0b6a1-bbb1-4beb-89f7-977e5f8ca047/gyan_ganga_4_02072020.pdf (last accessed Dec. 30, 2024).

role in transforming economic development into sustainable growth and ethical business practices.⁷

V. Whistleblowing as a Tool for Maintaining Ethical Standards in Business

Whistleblowers are essential in promoting ethical business practices as they help identifying, uncovering, and rectifying corporate malfeasance. Ensuring a culture of compliance helps mitigate the risk of fraud, misconduct, and other unethical behavior, playing a crucial role in maintaining robust corporate governance and stakeholder trust. Whistleblowing is a necessity for both transparency, stakeholder protection, and long-term corporate health, especially in an economy on the cusp of becoming globalized and a high-growth market like India. Based on *Satya* and *Nyāya*, this empowers an employee to report any wrongdoing/antics that go against the core values of the company without any fear of retaliation, promoting a culture of accountability. Favoring board independence, supporting audit processes, and encouraging ethical leadership, a structured whistleblowing mechanism strengthens corporate governance. It allows for early corrective corporate governance action by boards and audit committees and contributes to further, robust compliance and transparency. Whistleblowing also helps shareholder activism, exposing internal mismanagement, and driving corporate action closer to investor preferences. Such fast-track redressal forums also strengthen the governance structure of the company by addressing the whistleblower complaints in a timely manner, avoiding massive failures in the future, and saving the corporate image. Whistleblowing, therefore, not only ensures good governance but also acts as a deterrent against unethical behavior at all levels in the organization and facilitates a transparent and accountable culture. It safeguards stakeholder interests and increases investor trust by demonstrating a company's commitment to authentic business practices.

VI. The Journey of Whistleblowing in India: Historical and Legal Framework

In India, whistle-blowing mechanisms have evolved significantly over the years, driven by the country's growing emphasis on improving corporate governance, promoting ethical practices, and enhancing corporate accountability. The need for strong governance frameworks emerged as India's economic environment transformed with globalization and fast-paced corporate growth. The ethos of *Satya* and *Nyāya* is deep-rooted in Indian ethos, forming the bedrock approach of corporate ethics and governance. Whistleblowing, in this light, became a powerful tool for exposing malfeasance, preventing financial misconduct, and protecting stakeholder interests. Aware of the negative impacts of corporate fraud and mismanagement, governments and potential regulatory organizations started introducing measures and frameworks to embed whistleblowing as a form of governance reform.

VII. A Role of Committees

The first moves in this direction were made with specialized committee formation to address corporate governance issues. In this regard, the Narayana Murthy Committee, set up by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) in 2003, was one of the first major contributions. The Committee focused primarily on improving standards of corporate governance in listed companies and also on measures to protect whistleblowers from retaliatory actions. The Committee also urged companies to formalize relevant whistleblower policies at their workplaces, giving employees a safe avenue for reporting unethical behavior. Among the key recommendations were the establishment of direct reporting lines to audit committees, as well as annual affirmations by companies that whistle-blower complaints were addressed in a fair and transparent manner. This was a turning point in embedding whistleblowing into corporate governance frameworks.⁸ Then came the Dr. Jamshed J. Irani Committee Report in 2005 which sought to overhaul India's corporate legal framework by revising the Companies Act. The Committee emphasized among others the need to ensure that whistleblowers were protected and called for strong protections not just in the public sector but also in the private

⁷ Institute of Company Secretaries of India, Professional Programme Study Material (ICSI), Governance, Business Ethics, and Sustainability (ICSI, New Delhi, 2014)

⁸ S. Agarwal, "Role of Whistleblower Policies in Corporate Governance," 8 International Journal of Scientific Development and Research 132 (2023), available at <https://ijsdr.org/papers/IJSDR2309132.pdf> (last accessed Jan. 1, 2025).

sector. The Committee noted the need to expand whistleblower protections to general employees, an action that would help promote an environment of integrity and vigilance throughout the organization. These guidelines set the stage for a more inclusive and protective framework for corporate whistleblowers in India, as the Irani Committee recommended safeguards against harassment and victimization.⁹ Expanding on the work done in those initial years, SEBI's Uday Kotak Committee on Corporate Governance (2017) added momentum to the issue of whistleblowing in India. The Committee proposed various measures, such as leniency arrangements for whistleblowers who voluntarily disclose information about financial misconduct or governance failures. The Kotak Committee also recommended the provision of incentives for whistleblowers as well as enhanced legal protections for them, to encourage reporting that might help reduce fraud and curb risks, further reinforcing corporate accountability. These initiatives signify a growing awareness of whistleblowing as an important mechanism to impart ethical governance into the growing corporate landscape.

VIII. B Legislative Milestones and Corporate Governance Reforms

India has also experienced a slow inclusion of legislative safeguards for whistle-blower protection and enhancement of corporate governance structures.¹⁰ One of the key legislative milestones with regard to the former is the Whistleblower Protection Act of 2014. The Act's passage was significant as it provided statutory protection to whistleblowers, meant to protect those revealing corruption and wrongdoing in public sector enterprises, and also to establish a legal framework to protect whistleblowers. Nevertheless, the Act has limited scope, covered primarily public sector employees, and left a significant gap in protection for whistleblowers working in private corporations. The Act, however, despite many of its shortcomings, was crucial in providing certain protections like anonymity for whistleblowers and authority against victimization, thus forming part of the larger narrative towards ethical accountability within Indian governance.¹¹ Another important milestone in the evolution of whistleblower protection in India occurred through the Companies Act, of 2013, which, although not using the term whistleblowing, introduced significant provisions in respect of the vigilance mechanism. Section 177(9) of the Act requires all listed companies, companies that accept deposits from the public, and companies that have borrowings of more than 50 million or such other sum as may be prescribed, to establish a mechanism called vigilance mechanism whereby employees and directors can report any concerns about unethical behavior and violation of the code of conduct. Section 211 also enables the appointment of a Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) to investigate corporate fraud cases and handle whistle-blower complaints. This highlights the role that vigilance mechanisms can play in encouraging good governance and aiding in the prevention of corporate wrongdoing.¹² In addition to this, the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations 2015 further strengthened the whistleblower framework by requiring that all listed companies should incorporate whistleblower policies as part of the governance structures. These vigil mechanisms encourage workers and directors to report concerns about unethical behavior or violations of company policy, such as financial fraud. The rules also provide for direct access to audit committees by whistleblowers, another measure that not only strengthens the principle of independent oversight but shields such whistleblowers from internal retaliation. Requiring Companies to disclose Whistleblower Policies in Annual Reports promotes transparency and signals a commitment to fostering ethical business practices.

While the Companies Act, 2013, and certain SEBI regulations require listed companies to have vigil mechanisms, enforcement is weak. Lengthy legal battles and workplace ostracism also deter would be whistle-blowers. This is a particular challenge as whistleblowers are

⁹ A. Sharma, "Whistleblower Protection in Indian Corporate Governance: An Analytical Study," 18 *Supremo Amicus* 76 (2020), available at <https://supremoamicus.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/A1v18-76v18.pdf> (last accessed Jan. 1, 2025).

¹⁰ S. Agarwal, "Role of Whistleblower Policies in Corporate Governance," 8 *International Journal of Scientific Development and Research* 132 (2023), available at <https://ijsdr.org/papers/IJSDR2309132.pdf> (last accessed Dec. 29, 2024).

¹¹ Rao, *Whistleblower Protection in India: A Critical Analysis* p. 50 (LexisNexis, New Delhi, 2015).

¹² Companies Act, 2013, s. 177(9) and s. 211.

frequently viewed as traitors and the easily fresh risks in an international context combine when ethical values conflict and cultural obstacles arise. Aptly, unlisted and small and medium size enterprises, which form a very essential part of Indian economy, do not have formal reporting systems mainly because of lower regulatory scrutiny. Strengthening governance also requires broadening the coverage of whistle-blower protections beyond the public sector to private sectors, SMEs, and unlisted firms. Legal forms, anti-retaliation measures, and incentives such as tax benefits will help spread the word about whistleblowing frameworks. Filling such gaps would enhance corporate integrity, mitigate risks, and reinforce the tenets of *Satya* and *Nyaya* in corporate governance.

IX. C Self Regulations by various corporate entities

Numerous top Indian enterprises have proactively implemented strong whistleblower policies to strengthen governance structures and protect insiders from reports. Infosys, for example, launched its first "Ombuds Policy" in 2003, enabling employees, clients, and vendors to safely report misconduct while safeguarding them against retaliation. Likewise, Wipro has set up internal vigilance frameworks to safeguard whistle-blowers and foster ethical compliance across all tiers of an organization.¹³ As a manifestation of its commitment to transparency and accountability, Tata Motors has established anonymous reporting channels and engages external auditors for complex cases.

X. Challenges and the Path Forward for Whistleblower Protection

There is a continuous challenge in providing robust whistleblower protection throughout India's corporate sector. Because employees in private sector jobs are excluded from the Whistleblower Protection Act, the current legal framework has a serious gap. The second exception is theoretically focused on the institutions of corporate governance but in practice limits the ability of employees of private corporations to report wrongdoing without fear of retaliation, counteracting a major goal of corporate governance reform. Legislative reform to cover the gap and apply whistleblower protections to all sectors is an essential stipulation for addressing the uppermost need to strengthen *Satya* and *Nyāya* at the heart of India's evolving corporate governance framework. While there has been substantial movement through committee recommendations, legislative provisions, and voluntary corporate initiatives, more needs to be done to ensure that whistleblower protections are safe and sound across the board. Through the institutionalization of whistle-blowing and functioning as a major pillar of corporate governance, India can cement the idea of ethics into the psyche of the entrepreneurs to create a more ethically driven, accountable, and resilient corporate ethos consistent with the nation's deepest values which are truth and justice.

XI. Strengthening whistleblowing in India: Suggestions

- Private sector employees and employees of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and third-party stakeholders should be covered under the scope of the Whistleblower Protection Act, 2014 and the Statutory Protection for Whistleblowers Between the Public and Private Sectors should be equal or there should be separate legislation applicable to public and private sectors.
- Legal protections should be broadened against workplace discrimination, dismissal, and harassment concerning whistleblowing activities.
- Awareness campaigns to bring employees up to speed on whistleblower rights and reporting principles should be frequently conducted.
- *Satya* and *Nyaya* should be made apart of the company ethics training and the company should highlight the importance of whistleblowing in upholding corporate integrity.
- Senior leaders and those on boards should actively promote whistleblowing as an important aspect of corporate governance.

¹³ Infosys Limited, "Whistleblower Policy," p. 1 (April 9, 2003), available at <https://www.infosys.com/investors/corporate-governance/documents/whistleblower-policy.pdf> (last accessed Jan. 1, 2025).

- Whistleblowers should be recognised and rewarded publicly, making it clear that the realisation of ethical governance is a joint enterprise where whistle-blowers should be commended and can be encouraged.
- Whistleblower complaints should be investigated promptly, transparently, and with timely resolution.
- Penalties for companies found retaliating against whistleblowers should be high to uphold the ideal ethical practices.
- Secure, accessible, and anonymous reporting platforms should be provided to protect the identity of whistleblowers against retaliation risks which forms the way for a safe space for ethical disclosures.
- Through these holistic reforms, India can foster a whistleblower-friendly culture, better corporate governance, safeguard the interests of stakeholders, and support ethical business practices.

XII. Conclusion

Whistleblowing is the bedrock that strengthens *Satya* and *Nyāya* in the ambit of corporate governance in India. It sends a strong, informal but powerful, signal that gives people the right to call out wrongdoing, protect stakeholder interests, and hold organizations to a higher standard of accountability. Whistleblowers positively impact standards of business practice by exposing unethical conduct and holding corporations to greater ethical accountability than would otherwise exist. Such practice not only reduces risks of financial malfeasance but also improves the confidence of investors, enhances public trust, and avoids degradation of corporate reputation in the long term.

The ideas of *Satya* and *Nyāya* have deep roots in Indian history and culture, with philosophical origins in ancient texts yet with the barrage of globalization, marketplace competition, and an ever-changing corporate ecosystem, these principles have been diluted over time and as a result of which corporate scandals, financial fraud, and mismanagement increased. Such malpractices do not only remain within the boardroom but also affect public confidence, and stakeholders at large. Since public interest and public money are often at stake, directly or indirectly, businesses must abide by the highest standard of ethical good governance. Whistleblower protection and reward is not just about protecting individuals, it is about creating a culture of ethical responsibility that benefits the entire economy. Integrating whistleblowing within the core of corporate governance materially reinforces acceptable conduct within the workplace, ultimately contributing to ongoing business health and viability.

The corporate governance path for India, which is currently transforming its governance landscape, should be steered and should be modeled after the twin philosophies of *Satya* and *Nyāya*. Thus their utility for use for business is not only in accord with India's age-old cultural system but also goes towards the global trend of ethical business practice. Whistleblowing should not be seen as an act of dissent, but rather a civic and moral obligation that upholds the public interest. It is a vital piece of the country's effort to achieve justice, fairness and economic resilience. Revitalise and re-implement *Satya* and *Nyāya* in the corporate sector will serve the society at large with inclusive growth, minimizing corruption and establishing a culture of vigilance and trust. By aligning legal frameworks with ancient Indian values, India can build an ecosystem of progressive governance, deeply rooted in its timeless ethical traditions, creating a future where businesses blossom for the benefit of all stakeholders as well as the nation's overall economy at large.

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Exploring the relationship between academic resilience and academic achievement among secondary school students

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I. Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between academic resilience and academic achievement among secondary school students, with a focus on variations by gender, locality, and educational board. The primary aim is to determine whether students who demonstrate higher levels of resilience also achieve greater academic success, and to explore which demographic and contextual factors influence resilience levels.

A descriptive survey method was employed, targeting secondary school students from Varanasi district. Stratified random sampling was used to select a balanced sample from both U.P. Board and CBSE Board schools, ensuring adequate representation across gender and locality. The Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30), developed by Simon Cassidy (2016), was administered to measure students' resilience, while academic performance was assessed through school records. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics to summarize resilience and achievement levels, and inferential statistics—such as Pearson's correlation, t-tests, ANOVA, and regression analysis to examine relationships and group differences. Statistical significance was set at the 0.05 level.

Findings revealed a very strong and statistically significant positive correlation ($r = 0.936$) between academic resilience and academic achievement, indicating that students with higher resilience are more likely to achieve better academic outcomes. CBSE students demonstrated higher resilience than their U.P. Board counterparts, with urban students in both boards outperforming rural peers. Gender-based analysis showed that while resilience scores varied, academic achievement remained consistent across groups. These results underscore the predictive role of resilience in academic success and highlight the importance of targeted educational interventions to foster resilience, particularly among rural and underrepresented student populations.

II. Keywords

Academic resilience, academic achievement, secondary school students, gender differences, urban and rural schools, CBSE Board, U.P. Board

III. Background of the Study

Academic resilience is acknowledged as a key determinant of students' ability to succeed academically despite encountering challenges, adversity, or stress within the school environment (Booth & Neill, 2017). As secondary education becomes more demanding, understanding and enhancing resilience is crucial for educators and policy-makers who aim to promote both academic achievement and emotional well-being (Luthans, Luthans & Luthans, 2020). Academic resilience comprises the personal strengths and adaptive behaviors—such as perseverance, motivation, self-belief, and emotional regulation—that enable learners to recover, adapt, and thrive even when faced with socioeconomic difficulties, family disruptions, or rigorous academic challenges (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2018).

The transition into secondary school brings increased academic, social, and emotional pressures. Students with higher academic resilience are more likely to remain engaged and perform well, while those with lower resilience may struggle to cope with new expectations or peer influence (Mallick & Kaur, 2016). Importantly, academic resilience is not a fixed trait but develops through interactions between internal qualities (e.g., motivation, self-regulation) and external resources (e.g., family support, positive school environment, helpful peer relationships) (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2018). Research has also found demographic variations: for example, girls tend to exhibit greater emotional regulation, and urban students often have more opportunities and resources for resilience-building (Rasheed & Sultan, 2023; Mallick & Kaur, 2016).

IV. Review of Literature

Multiple studies indicate a strong positive relationship between academic resilience and achievement. Booth and Neill (2017) showed that students with robust coping strategies and adaptability achieved better academic outcomes. Fletcher and Sarkar (2018) emphasized that resilience is multidimensional, shaped by both intrapersonal and environmental factors. Luthans

et al. (2020) identified psychological capital—including resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy—as significant predictors of student success.

Research has also explored demographic influences. Rasheed and Sultan (2023) found girls often demonstrate higher resilience due to superior emotional processing and help-seeking behaviors. Mallick and Kaur (2016) reported that students in urban environments generally outperform their rural counterparts in both resilience and academic achievement, likely due to better infrastructure and support services.

V. Knowledge Gap

While existing research establishes a strong link between resilience and academic performance, there remains limited investigation into how this relationship varies across different demographic factors, such as gender, urban–rural locality, and type of school board. Most studies focus on either resilience as a general construct or academic achievement in isolation, without delving into how these intersect under different sociocultural and institutional settings. Moreover, there is a lack of comprehensive exploration of which specific resilience traits (e.g., motivation, goal-setting, regulatory skills) are most influential for secondary students, and how school-based interventions can best support these attributes across diverse contexts (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2018; Mallick & Kaur, 2016).

VI. Rationale and Need for the Study

Given the increasing challenges faced by secondary school students—including academic pressure, social competition, and changing family structures—examining academic resilience is both timely and necessary. Understanding the interplay between resilience and academic achievement, and how this is moderated by demographic factors (e.g., gender, locality, school board), can inform targeted interventions to foster resilience equitably across student groups (Booth & Neill, 2017; Rasheed & Sultan, 2023). Such evidence-based strategies are vital for reducing achievement gaps and promoting both cognitive growth and emotional health.

In summary, this study seeks to deepen our understanding of academic resilience, its relationship with academic achievement, and the contextual factors that shape both traits among secondary school students. Insights from this research will help educators and policy-makers design holistic educational programs that build students’ resilience, ensuring their readiness to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving academic landscape (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2018; Luthans et al., 2020).

VII. Research Questions

- What is the correlation between academic resilience and academic achievement among secondary school students?
- What is the level of academic resilience among secondary school students?
- Do resilient students perform better academically under stress compared to their non-resilient counterparts?

VIII. Objectives

- To examine the relationship between resilience and academic achievement among secondary school students.
- To measure the level of academic resilience among secondary school students.
- To identify key factors contributing to higher academic resilience and their effect on academic achievement.
- To compare academic resilience based on gender, locality, and school board type.

IX. Null Hypotheses

- H01: There is no significant relationship between academic resilience and academic achievement among secondary school students.
- H02: There are no significant differences in academic resilience and achievement based on gender, school locality, or type of school board.
- H03: Self-regulation and motivation do not significantly influence academic resilience and academic achievement.

X. Methodology

- **Research Design**

The present study adopts a descriptive survey method to achieve its objectives. This design is appropriate for systematically describing the characteristics of a population without exploring causal relationships. It enables the researcher to assess the levels and variations of academic resilience among secondary school students.

- **Population and Sample**

The population of the study consists of all secondary school students in the Varanasi district. A stratified random sampling technique will be used to ensure adequate representation from different educational boards. Two strata will be formed: students from the U.P. Board and the CBSE Board. From these strata, a total of 160 students will be randomly selected, with 80 students from the U.P. Board and 80 students from the CBSE Board.

- **Tool for Data Collection**

To assess academic resilience, the Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30) developed and standardized by Simon Cassidy (2016) will be used. The scale comprises 30 items designed to measure key aspects of resilience, including perseverance, motivation, adaptability, help-seeking behavior, and emotional regulation.

- **Analysis and interpretation**

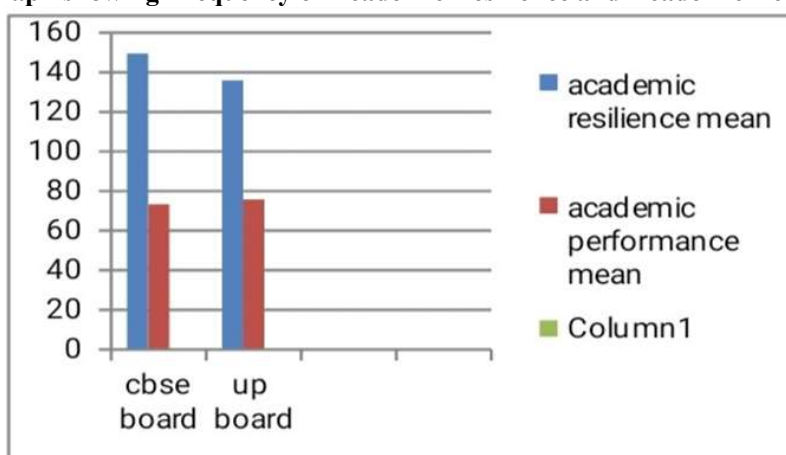
Correlation between Academic Resilience and Academic Achievement

The study revealed a **very strong and statistically significant positive correlation (Pearson's $r = 0.936$)** between academic resilience and academic achievement. This demonstrates that students with greater academic resilience achieve better outcomes, supporting the idea that resilience is not just associated with, but also predictive of, academic success. Resilient students are able to manage setbacks and adapt to academic challenges, which translates into measurable academic improvements (Booth & Neill, 2017; Luthans et al., 2020).

Table 1-Correlation between Academic Resilience and Academic Achievement

Metrics	ARS TOT AL	AP TOTAL	ARS Mean	AP MEAN	SD OF AR S	SD OF AP
CBSE BOAR D	11960	5950.66	142.71	74.59	9.25	4.99
U.P. BOARD	10873	5983.28				
Total	22833	11933.94				

Fig 1:Graph showing Frequency of Academic Resilience and Academic Achievement



Gender Differences in Academic Resilience

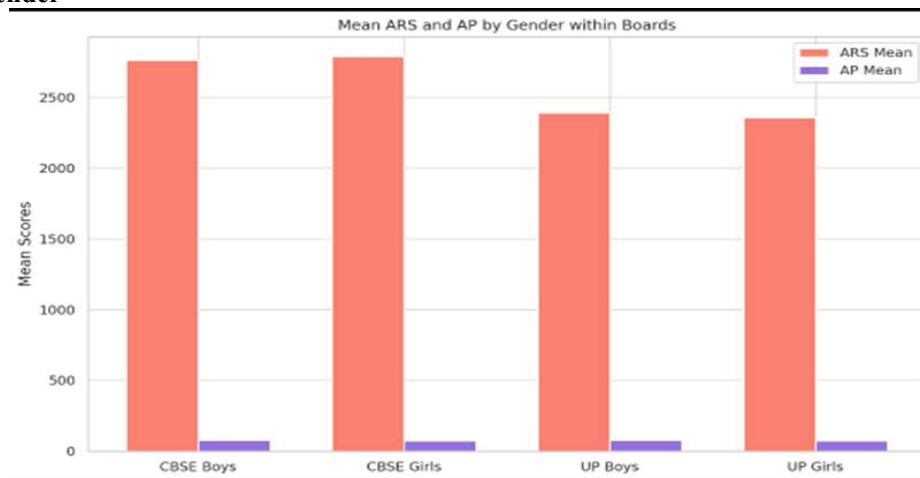
The results indicate that CBSE students show higher academic resilience than U.P. Board students, with CBSE boys scoring the highest (152.3). Girls in the U.P. Board show slightly higher resilience (139.2) than boys (132.7), reversing the trend seen in CBSE. However, academic performance across all groups is nearly identical, with mean scores ranging from

74.18 to 74.59. This suggests that while resilience varies by board and gender, it does not significantly impact academic achievement in this sample. However, male students achieved marginally higher academic performance, highlighting a possible mismatch between internal resilience and observable outcomes (Rasheed & Sultan, 2023). These differences were not statistically significant, emphasizing the need for **gender-sensitive approaches** in resilience training.

Table 2: Gender Differences in Academic Resilience

Metrics	N	GENDER	ARS TOT AL	ARS ME AN	AP TOTAL	AP MEAN
CBSE BOARD	40	BOYS	6092	152.3	2983.66	74.59
	40	GIRLS	5828	145.7	2967	74.18
U.P. BOARD	40	BOYS	5307	132.7	2979.95	74.5
	40	GIRLS	5566	139.2	2969.94	74.25

Fig 2 : Graph Comparing Academic Resilience and Academic Performance among Gender



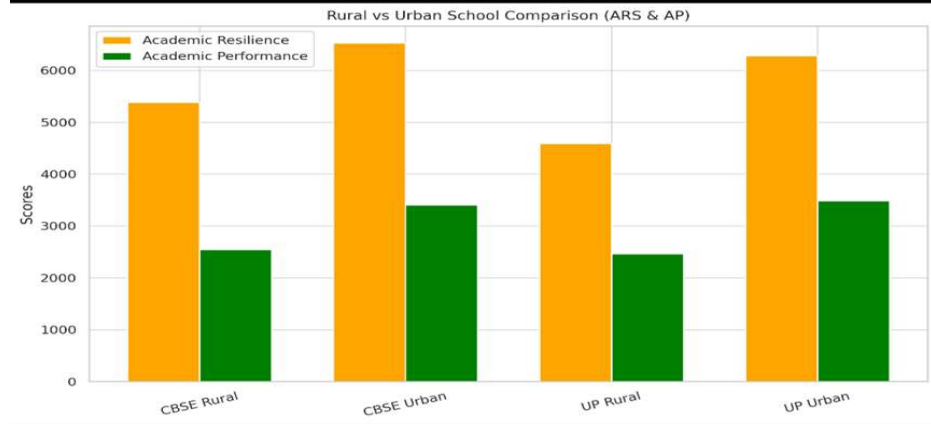
Locality-Based Differences in Resilience

The data shows that urban students outperform rural students in both academic resilience and academic performance across both CBSE and U.P. Boards. CBSE urban students have the highest academic resilience (ARS mean = 163.25) and estimated academic performance (AP mean = 76.00), while U.P. rural students have the lowest (ARS mean = 114.78, AP mean = 74.37). Overall, CBSE students show higher resilience than U.P. Board students. The findings suggest that urban environments and CBSE curriculum may offer better support systems, contributing to stronger resilience and slightly higher academic outcomes. This finding supports previous studies underscoring the role of school environment in shaping resilience (Mallick & Kaur, 2016).

Table 3: Locality-Based Differences in Resilience

Metrics	BOARD	LOCALITY	N	ARS TO TA L	ARS ME AN	AP TO TA L	AP ME AN
SCHOOL1	CBSE	Rural	40	5380	2545.86	148.9	74.38
SCHOOL 2		Urban	40	6530	3404.80	152.0	75.87
SCHOOL1	U.P	Rural	40	4591	2463	136.0	74.37
SCHOO 2		Urban	40	6282	3486.89	150.0	75.86

Fig 3: Graph Comparing Academic Resilience and Academic Performance among Locality



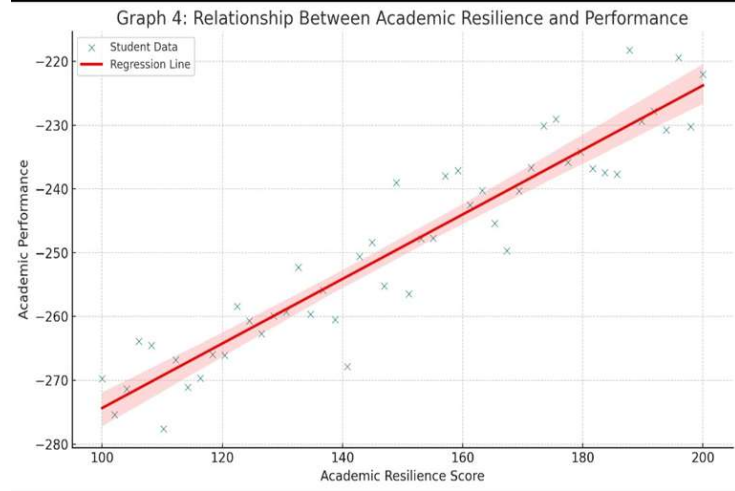
Correlation between Academic Resilience and Academic Performance

The Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.93 indicates a very strong positive relationship between academic resilience and academic performance. This suggests that students with higher resilience levels tend to achieve significantly better academically. The result aligns with previous studies; for instance, Booth and Neill (2017) found that resilient students perform better under pressure, while Luthans et al. (2020) highlighted resilience as a key predictor of academic success. Similarly, Fletcher and Sarkar (2018) emphasized that resilience enhances students’ ability to adapt and thrive in challenging academic environments. Overall, the findings confirm that academic resilience plays a crucial role in shaping student achievement.

Table 4: Correlation between Academic Resilience and Academic Performance

Variables	Pearson Correlation coefficient (r)	Result
Academic Resilience	0.93	Very High Correlation
Academic Performance		

Fig 4: Graph showing correlation between Academic Resilience and Academic Performance



XI. Findings and Discussion

The study revealed a very strong positive correlation between academic resilience and academic achievement (Pearson’s $r = 0.936$), indicating that students with higher resilience levels tend to perform better academically. This supports previous research which highlights resilience as a key non-cognitive factor influencing academic success (Booth & Neill, 2017; Luthans et al., 2020). CBSE students demonstrated higher academic resilience compared to U.P. Board students, with CBSE boys scoring the highest. Interestingly, U.P. Board girls showed slightly higher resilience than boys, reversing the gender trend observed in CBSE. However, academic

performance remained relatively consistent across all genders and boards, with mean scores ranging narrowly from 74.18 to 74.59, suggesting that resilience variations may not directly reflect in academic scores. Locality-based analysis showed urban students outperformed rural students in both resilience and estimated academic performance. CBSE urban students had the highest resilience levels (mean ARS = 163.25) and an estimated AP mean of 76.00, while U.P. rural students showed the lowest scores. These findings align with earlier studies emphasizing the role of the school environment in shaping resilience and performance (Mallick & Kaur, 2016). Overall, the results confirm that while academic performance remains similar, resilience varies significantly across gender, board, and locality, and plays a fundamental role in supporting students' academic growth.

XII. Educational Implications

The findings of this study highlight the central role of academic resilience in shaping students' academic outcomes, suggesting several important educational implications. Schools should prioritize fostering resilience as a core objective within their curricula, integrating socio-emotional learning and life skills programs that promote perseverance, motivation, and adaptive coping strategies in students. Teachers and school leaders can support this by creating nurturing classroom environments, encouraging positive student–teacher relationships, and offering structured opportunities for help-seeking and reflection. Additionally, targeted interventions are necessary for students in rural settings or underrepresented groups, as the data indicate disparities in resilience and academic achievement based on locality and educational board. Capacity-building workshops, mentoring initiatives, and access to counseling services can help close these gaps. Importantly, recognizing that resilience is a dynamic and developable trait empowers educational stakeholders to implement ongoing support systems such as peer mentorship, academic counseling, and resilience-based activities that enable all students to adapt, recover, and thrive academically, regardless of their background (Booth & Neill, 2017; Luthans et al., 2020; Mallick & Kaur, 2016). This comprehensive approach ensures that students are not only academically prepared but also possess the psychological strength to handle future educational and life challenges.

XIII. Conclusion

Academic resilience significantly predicts and enhances academic achievement in secondary school students. The study underscores the necessity for educational policy and practice to prioritize resilience as a core competency, integrated within curricula and supported by institutional resources. Interventions should particularly target rural schools and promote equitable access to resilience-building opportunities, ensuring that all students are equipped to thrive academically and emotionally in a changing educational landscape (Booth & Neill, 2017; Luthans et al., 2020; Fletcher & Sarkar, 2018; Mallick & Kaur, 2016; Rasheed & Sultan, 2023).

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Engaged religion of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar

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I. Abstract

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar interpreted the basic tenets of world religions like Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism, from the viewpoint of the prevailing social situation in India. He saw religion not as a means to spiritual salvation of Individual souls, but as a 'social doctrine' for establishing the righteous relations between man to man. Ambedkar's philosophy of religion does not mean either theology or religion. Theology studies the nature, attributes and function of God, whereas religion deals with things divine¹. For Ambedkar, religion is a social force, and is essential for man and society. He agreed with 'Edmund Burke' who said, "True religion is the foundation of society, the basis on which all true civil Government rests, and both their sanction". But at the same time, Ambedkar condemned a religion of rules and preferred a religion of principles. "Rules are practical, they are habitual ways of doing things according to prescription. But principles are intellectual, they are useful methods of judging things. As Ambedkar recognized, that religion, as a social force, cannot be ignored. What is Ambedkar's test of justice and utility for religion? It consists in the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity, a trinity of great principles².

II. Key Words

Religion, Social, Equality, Morality, Humanity, Reinterpretation, Buddhism, Hinduism, Caste, Dhamma, Justice.

III. Objective of the Paper

This Research paper explores that how Ambedkar used religion as a tool for social transformation. How he defends religion against socialists as a spiritual need, and as a public practice against the liberal private faith by emphasizing the precedence of the social over the political. His conversion to Buddhism and critique of Hinduism were deeply political and ethical acts rooted in justice. The paper shows Ambedkar's social and moral interpretation of Buddhism aims at bringing about a change in social relations at the grassroots level.

IV. Literature Review

The concept of "engaged religion" in the thought of B.R. Ambedkar represents religious practice as a means for social transformation and interpretation of Buddhism. The main literature review for this research paper is "Ambedkar on Religion" edited by Nagendra Kr. Singh, published by J.L. Kumar for Anmol Publications (New Delhi). I also used another books for completing my research paper are -

"The Philosophy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar" edited by Pradeep Gokhale, Sugava Prakashan (Pune).

"Dr. B.R. Ambedkar: The maker of Modern India", edited by Dr. Desh Raj Sirswal, published by Milestone education society (Kurukshetra).

"Classical Buddhism, Neo-Buddhism and the question of Caste", edited by Pradeep Gokhale, published by Routledge India.

¹ Singh, Kr. Nagendra, 2000, 'Ambedkar on Religion', Anmol Publications, New Delhi, Page no. 1.

² Singh, Kr. Nagendra, 2000 'Ambedkar on Religion', Anmol Publications, New Delhi, Page no. 7.

V. Introduction

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was not only the father of Indian constitution but was a great freedom fighter, political leader, philosopher, thinker, writer, economist, editor, and a revivalist for Buddhism in India. Ambedkar was responsible for the revival of Buddhism in its new form which he called 'Navayana' or 'Neo-Buddhism'. One of the important areas in which Dr. Ambedkar put his intellectual and philosophical energies was religion. His philosophical contributions in this area pertained to religion in general and Hinduism and Buddhism in particular. He had a broad conception of social reform in which the reforms in various fields such as politics, economy, culture and religion had their interactive roles to play. He treated religion as a social institution, not as a trans-societal or divine institution. It is with this understanding that he critically examined Hinduism, abandoned the Hindu fold, embraced Buddhism and presented a reconstruction of Buddhism³.

Even though the teachings of the Buddha are ever true and everlasting, but still they need reinterpretation in each age, in accordance with the growing spiritual and social consciousness of humanity. Ambedkar fulfilled this assignment successfully through his monumental work "The Buddha And His Dhamma". This perfect and well-written work is really revolutionary in certain aspects as in it the modern Bodhisattva has re-interpreted the dhamma in the light of the experience and knowledge gained by humanity during the last 2500 years. This book has thrown very valuable light on certain problems of Buddhism which had confused Buddhist and non-Buddhists alike for many centuries⁴.

The features of Buddhism, which seem to have attracted Ambedkar and which are reflected in his monumental work "The Buddha and His dhamma" are as follows :

- Buddhism emphasized the role of reason as against faith or superstition. This is seen in some important Suttas from Tripitaka such as Kalamasutta.
- Ambedkar found that as a result of its rational attitude, Buddhism rejected many objects of dogmatic belief such as God and soul which were accepted by most other religions.
- Buddhism was strongly apposed to the caste system as is seen in many suttas such as Assalayanasutta and Vasetthasutta.
- Buddhism emphasized morality, which included 'Sheel' and Brahmaviharas such as 'Maitri' and 'Karuna', as the essence of good life. This morality was essentially human centric and had no reference to soul or to God.

Thus it was the rational, secular, moral and egalitarian aspect of Buddhism, which attracted Ambedkar, and must have been influential in Ambedkar's preference for Buddhism over other religions⁵.

VI. "Neo-Buddhism" or "Navayana" :

A new era of contemporary Buddhism begins with Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. "Classical Buddhism of course still exists in most countries with large Buddhist populations. But in India, where Buddhism had almost completely disappeared, it was revived but in a new form with Ambedkar's 'Navayana' Buddhism. *Navayana* gave a new meaning to Buddhism. In his introduction to "The Buddha and His *Dhamma*", Ambedkar makes it clear that he denied four crucial elements of classical Buddhism⁶.

- One is the idea of *Sabbam duhkham*, "all is sorrow". If this is true there is no way out". In fact, Buddhism does not really say that "all is sorrow", only that there is *duhkha*, and it can be overcome.
- Second, he eliminates the notion of *Karma* and transmigration or rebirth, he prefers to reinterpret *Karma* to have the meaning of social causation and also perhaps genetical inheritance.

³ Gokhale, Pradeep, 2008 'The Philosophy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar', Sugava Prakashan, Pune, Page no. 109.

⁴ Singh, Kr. Nagendra, 2000 'Ambedkar on Religion', Anmol Publications, New Delhi, Page no. 478.

⁵ Gokhale, Pradeep, 2008 'The Philosophy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar', Sugava Prakashan, Pune, Page no. 114.

⁶ Gokhale, Pradeep, 2020 'Classical Buddhism, Neo-Buddhism and the question of caste, Routledge India, Page no. 35.

- Third, he denied the idea that Buddha renounced the world after seeing an old man, a sick man, and a dead man, instead arguing that he was trying to avoid a conflict over water between the Koliya and Sakya clans.
- Finally, he eliminates the concept of the sangha as a society of world renouncer; he would prefer to have it as a kind of social service league⁷.

In his book "The Buddha and His dhamma", Ambedkar have been also explained a correct interpretation of the word 'Dhamma', which have been divided into three groups that is 'Dhamma', (b) Adhamma, and (c) Saddhamma - and the role of a Bhikkhu.

a. Dhamma : "To maintain purity of life is 'Dhamma'.

- To reach perfection in life is Dhamma.
- To live in Nibbana is Dhamma.
- To believe that Karma is the instrument of Moral Order is Dhamma.
- To give up carving is Dhamma.
- To believe that all compounded things are impermanent is Dhamma".

b. Adhamma : "Belief in the supernatural is Not-Dhamma (Adhamma).

- Belief in God is not essentially a part of Dhamma.
- Dhamma based on union with Brahma is not dhamma.
- Belief in soul is not-Dhamma.
- Belief in sacrifices is Not-Dhamma.
- Belief based on speculation is Not-Dhamma".

c. Saddhamma : "Dhamma is Saddhamma when it makes learning open to all. Dhamma is Saddhamma when it teaches that mere learning is not enough. It may lead to pedantry. Dhamma is Saddhamma when it teaches that what is needed is Prajna (Pradnya). Dhammas is Saddhamma only when it teaches that mere Prajna is not enough. It must be accompanied by Sheela. Dhamma is saddhamma only when it teaches, that more than Karuna what is necessary is Maitri. Dhamma to be Saddhamma must break down barriers between man and man. Dhamma to be saddhamma must teach that 'worth' and not 'birth' is the measure of man. Dhamma to be saddhamma must promote equality between man and man⁸.

VII. The role of a Bhikkhu

Ambedkar raises in the introduction to "The Buddha and His Dhamma", is concerned with the role of a Bhikkhu. Traditionally the main role of a Bhikkhu was to discipline his own behaviour, speech and mind by following the rules of Sheela, by practicing meditation and in this way trying to realize Nibbana. A bhikkhu also had a social role, that of spreading the understanding of Dhamma among common people, and enlightening them on matters of morality and religion. According to Ambedkar a Bhikkhu should certainly try to attain perfection in self-culture. But however perfect he may be in self-culture, he is not a Bhikkhu if he is indifferent to the woes of mankind. A Bhikkhu should be a warrior who wages war for a noble endeavour and does not avoid fighting when virtue is in danger.⁹ This leads to the development of a rationalistic, even "materialistic", form of Buddhism. Ambedkar's Navyana Buddhism, is resolutely anti-caste. His theme is the annihilation of caste, he does not want simply to analyse it but to destroy it.

VIII. Annihilation of Caste

Ambedkar was fed up with the upper caste Hindus regarding the lawlessness against the untouchables and the unbearable pain, which the Dalits had to face. He pondered how to rescue the Dalit Community from the clutches of the mighty Hindus. He realized that unless and until the hierarchy based caste system is abolished; it is only a day-dream for the Dalit to have dignity and self-respect. Therefore, he envisaged that annihilation of caste is the one and only one way to liberate the Dalits from the dominant upper caste Hindus. Ambedkar held that "It is not possible to break caste without annihilating the the religious notions on which it, the caste

⁷ Gokhale, Pradeep, 2020 'Classical Buddhism, Neo-Buddhism and the question of caste, Routledge India, Page no. 36

⁸ Singh, Kr. Nagendra, 2000 'Ambedkar on Religion' 'Anmol Publications, New Delhi, Page no. 356.

⁹ Gokhale, Pradeep, 2008 'The Philosophy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar', Sugava Prakashan, Pune, Page no. 132.

system is founded." Caste system creates inequality and repulsion towards each other. There is lack of unity among the Hindus because of the caste system. Therefore, for the betterment of the Hindus, caste system should be annihilated.¹⁰

IX. Religious Conversion

Ambedkar failed to realize the dream of annihilating the caste on account of the strong oppose of the mighty Hindus. In order to give up the Hindu religion, he neither embraced Christianity nor Islam. He maintains that Buddhism is the viable and feasible solution to rescue the Dalit Community and humanity. Buddhism has its roots in the Indian soil. Hence, he embraced Buddhism on 14th October, 1956 at Nagpur, Maharashtra before he died on 6th December, 1956. On the same day, around 8, 00,000 lakhs of supporters embraced Buddhism. This was the largest conversion in a single day in the world. Dr. Ambedkar's revolution was a counter revolution, an effort to establish an alternative society to that of Hindu society which was based on inequality and on caste system. Buddhism has no place for the caste system and chaturvarnya.¹¹ Ambedkar's last speech, delivered in 1956 at Sarnath, again emphasised the inequality of Hinduism and contrasted it with the humanist teachings of Buddhism. He concluded this lecture saying, 'our primary duty now is to embrace Buddhism and attain equality and fraternity.

X. Impact of Ambedkar's conversion to Buddhism :

Ambedkar made their people conscious of their miserable condition and inspired them to struggle for their own betterment. This task he accomplished through his effective, inspiring and purposeful speeches and writings. He dinned into their ears the slogans of self-help, self-respect and self-knowledge. He often used to tell his people, 'you must abolish your slavery yourself'¹². Ambedkar explain the reasons as to why he had decided to change his religion in Bombay Conference on May 30 and 31, 1936. He said, "The Hindu religion does not appeal to my conscience and does not appeal to my self-respect". According to Ambedkar, **"Religion is for Man and not man for Religion"**. To get human treatment, convert yourselves;

- Convert' for getting organised
- Convert' for becoming strong
- Convert' for securing equality
- Convert' for getting liberty.
- Convert' so that your domestic life may be happy.

I consider him a leader who without fear or favour tells the people what is good and what is bad for them. It is my duty to tell you, what is good for you, even if you do not like it. I must do my duty and now I have done it. It is now for you to decide and discharge your responsibility".¹³

XI. Conclusion

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar held that every citizen of India must be treated equally and should not be deprived of any opportunity and equality based on gender, work and caste differences. Religion must be existing as a medium of social justice and welfare, not as a discriminatory factor. He wanted to establish a society in which an individual is the centre of all social purpose, a society which is based on equality, equity of opportunities, liberty and fraternity. Religion is primarily a valuing attitude, universalizing the will and the emotions, rather than the ideas of man. It encourages hope, and gives confidence in the battle of life. It is thus that religion taps new levels of energy, for meeting the crisis of life, while at the same time it brings about a deeper harmony between the inner and the outer. Therefore, the purpose of engaging with religion is to harmonizing and bringing to a maximum of vital efficiency life on its inner side.

¹⁰ Sirswal, Dr. Desh Raj, 2016 'Dr. B.R. Ambedkar: The Maker of Modern India', Milestone education society, Pehowa (Kurukshetra), Page no. 15.

¹¹ Sirswal, Dr. Desh Raj, 2016 'Dr. B.R. Ambedkar: The Maker of Modern India', Milestone education society, Pehowa (Kurukshetra), Page no. 16, 17.

¹² Singh, Kr. Nagendra, 2000 'Ambedkar on Religion', Anmol Publications, New Delhi, Page no. 438.

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Nature's embrace: exploring nature's empathy in Anita Desai's literary landscape

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I. Abstract

Anita Desai's *Village by the Sea* exposes the harsh realities confronting impoverished children in India—abandoned, marginalized, and facing neglect, domestic violence, and societal apathy. Amidst this adversity, Desai portrays nature as a compassionate mother, offering solace and nurturing hope. This research aims to explore how nature becomes a transformative force, countering the effects of parental neglect and societal indifference on abandoned children. Desai's affinity with nature extends to *The Peacock Garden*, where she unravels the post-partition bond between humanity and nature. Through the eyes of Zuni, a little girl who is a survivor of the 1947 partition, Desai explores the profound connection between humanity and the natural world. The analysis focuses on Desai's vivid imagery, delving into specific passages to unravel the nuanced and symbiotic relationship between man and nature as crafted by Anita Desai.

II. Keywords

Nature's empathy, companionship, refuge, rage and healing qualities

III. Introduction

Anita Desai explores the intimate, intelligent, intricate, relationship between man, his community and his natural environment which is of much importance in her novels. An analytical study of Desai's novels shows that the most striking and pervading theme in her novels is doubtlessly the theme of nature empathizing with the human and nonhuman world and vice versa. In short it is the internal landscape or mindscape reflected on the external landscape. Anita Desai, the dynamic, multi-faceted, writer brings out the very reality of the poor people of India in her every undiminishing lively style. The realism that accompanies this fictional work is outstanding. The fact that this novel, *The Village by the Sea* won her Guardian Children's Fiction Prize is no surprise to the readers. This novel surrounds the lives of four children Lila, Hari, Kamal and Bela who are left to take care of themselves by their invalid parents. Desai in her novel, *The Peacock Garden* brings out eloquently the ways in which man and nature bond with each other in an amazing way. The story of *The Peacock Garden* is set in India; it unfolds in the eyes of a little girl Zuni, whose family are the lucky survivors of the partition of 1947.

IV. Discussion 2.1 *The Village by the Sea*

The novel *The Village by the Sea* opens with Lila's visit to the beach in the early morning. Lila, the thirteen-year-old girl, the eldest of the four is seen offering fresh flowers from her kitchen garden to a sacred rock in the shallow waters of the sea which is a kind of temple for people in the sea village of Thul. "Just then the sun lifted up over the coconut palms in a line along the beach and sent long slanting rays over the silvery sand to touch her on the back of her head" (Desai 2). The sun is personified as embracing and touching Lila who enjoys the balminess of the warm and friendly sun. Nature, lights up the dull and pleasure devoid life of little Lila. "Sometimes she felt it was the best time of day for her, the only perfectly happy and peaceful one" (Desai 3).

Lila begins her day in the loving arms of nature which fills her mind with peace. She makes it a point to begin her day at the sea. None but the poor could alone enjoy such a strong bond with nature. The ugliness that encompasses their lives makes them see the beauty in nature. The

happy nature and its web of life, the sparkling happy waves dancing in the sun all “seemed to tell Lila to be calm and happy and all would be well and all would be just as it was before” (Desai 5). Hari, the only boy of the family though not the eldest is burdened with the responsibility of taking care of his sisters. He goes on thinking and burdening himself about his family’s future. “And the pigeons cooed and cooed in the great banyan trees sounding as if they were trying to console” (Desai 18). Nature provides solace to the burdened heart of Hari. The shady grove of casuarina trees, like a mother embraces Hari, who takes rest, cools off his mind and heals his mind off the pressures of life that engulfs him.

The crab imagery that Desai brings out is very symbolic of Hari’s struggle in life. “Hari amused himself by turning the crabs’ right side up so they could scuttle away down into the sea and safety. But the crow kept turning them over on to their backs again with its beak” (Desai 26). The large black crow here can stand for the mundane reality of life which pecks him each day and he, struggling like the crab with optimism to safety in vain.

Hari lies awake in bed listening to the “louder breathing of the sea outside” (Desai 45). For Hari and his poor sister, the sea is like a living being providing all the life. The lashing waves feel like the breath of the sea. Hari feels hopeless, as the little life in his village Thul doesn’t offer him much scope to earn money and uplift his life and of his family members. Hari watches a pair of huge kites majestically floating on currents of air, “Hari wished he too could soar up into the sky and disappear instead of being tied to the earth here” (Desai 59).

The poor people of Thul are marginalised and exploited by the corrupt government officials who plan to sell the fertile land of the poor peasants and set up factories that vomit poisonous wastes in the land, air and sea. They discourage fishermen that the paltry fish they catch is not worth their time and energy and they have to look out for new occupations selling their land to the government. But the people are not discouraged, they say, “And if there is not enough fish for us, there is plenty of food anyway - paddy and vegetables and coconuts” (Desai 91). The people of Thul understand the bounty of nature. They have a close relationship with nature and are very confident that Nature would sustain them even in the toughest times.

Desai vividly brings out the contrast between the dusty city of Bombay and the peaceful sea village of Thul. Even the people who live there are as gloomy and grumpy as the environment around them. Even in the city, Nature provides solace to Hari. Hari, who is caught up in the fiery furnace of the kitchen house spends sleepless nights and become extremely tired. Seeing poor helpless Hari sick with sleeplessness, an old watch mender beside the cooking house he works suggests a park surrounded by trees in which he could spend the night. “... the park changed his life and made it easier to endure... it had a bench to lie on, trees to look at, some pigeons and crows to watch, ...” (Desai 167,168).

Mr. Panwallah, the helpful watch mender teaches Hari valuable lesson for life from Nature. He says to Hari, “Learn, learn, learn – so that you can grow and change. Things change all the time, boy-nothing remains the same. When our earth was covered with water, all creatures lived in it and swam. When the water subsided and land appeared, the sea creatures crawled out and learnt to breathe and walk on land” (Desai 210). Thus, Nature teaches Hari to grow and change and make himself fit into what the world expects from him so that he could become successful. Desai also makes an important reference to learning from birds. Seeing Sayyid Ali, the Birdwatcher Hari feels he had missed a great deal without paying attention to the birds that swarmed in Thul. Hari feels, “. . . how birds and men were united in this great wheel and how the birds, if we understood them, could show us and teach us many important things” (Desai 258).

Anita Desai not only brings out the loving solace Nature provides to Human Beings, but also pinpoints the cruel reward that man gives back to nature. The following lines from the novel lay bare the heartless thankless ways in which the /humans give back to Nature. On his way back to his sea village Hari observes the environment around him which gives him a scary idea of the future of his village which would soon become a factory site. “... the factory belt of Thana, pouring out evil-smoke and chemicals into the discoloured sky, all the land around blighted and bare, not a blade of grass to be seen and the few remaining trees coated with suffocating dust. Hari wondered if this could possibly be the way that the green coastline from Rewas to Alibagh would look like one day” (Desai 220). As the famous Ecopsychologist Larry Robinson opines, “We human beings have a fundamental need for nature. Instead of trying to tame or eliminate or

ignore it, it is time we learned to grow with nature. We need to take an active role, celebrating it and caring for it, nurturing our own needs in the process. Only by taking responsibility for the Earth can we truly reconnect with it – and with ourselves”. (29)

V. The Peacock Garden

The very beginning para of the novel, *The Peacock Garden* strikes the key note of the whole novel. “That summer, in 1947, the rains were late. Each day seemed hotter than the last in the little village in Punjal. The earth was scorched and every weed on it had withered” (Desai 5). Nature becomes a reflection of the arid lives of the people. C.G. Shyamala affirms that “Desai has the power to express sensibilities in her canvas using images from nature.... She is an artist who has the ability to carve such deep emotions within dexterous use of imagery that they announce the introduction of the explorations of the selves within the ecological framework” (7). Anita Desai portrays the ground reality of the very time when India was divided in the name of religion and Pakistan became a separate nation. “The sky was yellow, the sun hidden by dust” (Desai 5). Desai very intensely depicts how the sun in the lives of the Indians had been covered with the dust of hatred and evil by some anti-social weed planters in the society.

In the month of May, as the sun was scorching the people living in the little village of Punjal had to take their beds upstairs to catch some breeze from the mango groves. “In May, they carried them up to the flat roof of their white house, to catch the few faint breezes that rose somewhere in the mango grove by the canals and murmured over the housetops.” (Desai 5). This is very figurative of the suffocating environment and lives the people were living. Nature as a gentle breeze provides solace to the hearts of the people who are choking in the polluted air of the social evils of the society. In July there were showers of rain which would disturb the family in the middle of the night. “Zuni hated these nights, for it was stifling in the room with the small windows, and she wished she were allowed to stay out on the roof and feel the cool raindrops patter down on her hot, dry, dusty body” (Desai 5). This is very symbolic of the heat of the time, wherein people were filled with bitterness against each other and were yearning for the cool drops of harmony to quench their peace thirsty soul.

One hot night Zuni is awakened by her parents and she finds to horror the entire colony around her burning. Zuni and her parents rush to the nearby Mosque in the middle of the night seeking refuge. Nature stands as a reflection of the condition of the lives of the people in the novel. “It was as if the whole village was on fire. Zuni could see that it was too big a fire to put out – there was so little water in the well these days, and none at all in the canals. That must be the reason why they were running away...” (Desai 11). The little water in the wells stands for the scarcity of the feeling of brotherhood and compassion towards their fellow citizens. The milk of human kindness seems to have drained in the hearts of the people as they burned down the houses of their own countrymen and chased them out of the land.

Desai sees Nature empathising with man. Nature shares the joys and sorrows of man. “Zuni heard the stray dogs of the village howling out in the fields, wailing as if they were in tears. Somewhere down by the canal bed a jackal answered, and its voice was even more sad and frightening. Now all they could see of the fire was the glow in the sky, angry and red” (Desai 11). Zuni feels that even the dogs are in tears to see the pathetic plight and flight of the people as they are forced to move into a strange unknown country overnight. Even the jackals share the sadness of Zuni. The sky was also angry and red, witnessing the madness of the people who were departing from each other in the name of religion.

Zuni’s father does not leave India like his fellow mates. He clearly states, “There will be no running away for me. My land is here, my mango grove and my cattle” (Desai 20). Zuni’s father is so much attached to Nature he doesn’t want to leave the land, the mango grove and his cattle. His attachment is so close to his land that he doesn’t mind whether it is life or death. Zuni also shares the same unshakable bond with Nature. “The thought of the mango grove where she and Razia went to help pluck mangoes in summer and ate so many, sitting in the back of the canal with their feet swinging in the green water as they sucked the sweet, orange flesh from the flat white seeds...and then she knew Abba had decided right and they should stay” (Desai 23). Zuni even though a little girl seems to display a very clear mind set. Though all her best friends leave to Pakistan. She feels a firm call to stay back with her mango grove. She feels Nature to be a closer companion than her friends.

While the elders of the family are ruminating on the reality of the situation. Zuni is so excited about the thought of living in the peacock garden, the very arms of Nature. She enthusiastically asks, "Is this our house, Abba? Oh, look, how pretty it is! What a tiny window. And there's a pigeon on the roof- perhaps it has its nest there..." (Desai 31). Zuni finds every possible opportunity to appreciate the involvement of nature in their lives.

Nature provides a perfect refuge for these refugees. "Oh, the garden is full of things to eat," Zuni said happily, "and full of things to see" (Desai 32). Nature provides physical and mental food and strength to the people who trust in her. The Peacocks living in the garden have become a part of their lives and help them move on. When Zuni admirably remarks, "The garden is full of Peacocks." Her mother faintly replies that they have often seen so many peacocks in the fields. But Zuni rightly replies, "Yes, but these live here, in the garden with us, Zuni explained" (Desai 36). Anita Desai is an amazing writer who has a close walk with Nature. She closely feels the empathising quality of Nature.

Zuni loved to lie on the cool clay floor, gazing up at them and listening to the breeze whisper in the dry straw. Somehow it made her feel cool and rested on the hottest afternoon. At night they slept outdoors, under real stars, and often heard the peacockscall, quite close to them. There was a sadness in their shrieks, but now they did not disturb Zuni – she knew them so well. (Desai 43). Not only at the day time but also at night Nature proved to be Zuni's close friend sharing her melancholy.

The family harvests oranges in the winter and has an outdoor lunch in the garden. The children eat so well enjoying the natural breeze, enclosed in the loving arms of nature. Zuni's mother happily remarks, "If I had known eating outdoors would make you eat so well," said Amma, "I would have given you your meals outside everyday" (Desai 48). At last after many days of hiding, they receive a message that it was safe to come outside. Excited Zuni also joins her father and pays a visit to their village. On their way, Zuni is a little frightened. She feels so safe and secured to walk amidst the sugarcane fields. "The tall canes, rustling in the breeze, were like green walls and protected her" (Desai 52).

The peacock garden, in which the whole family takes refuge, is a very symbol of Nature which encloses embraces and protects them from all the dangers around them. "Zuni's collection of peacock feathers grew fast and the ceiling of the thatched hut was spangled with their brilliant colours so that it really looked as though a rich cloth with a pattern of stars hung there" (Desai 43). Zuni decorates the small hut's ceiling with peacock feathers. The peacocks become a portion of her life and she shares a great relationship with them.

One day Zuni finds to her great delight, a peahen with her five chicks. She feels extremely excited and shares her joy with her friends at school, who pay her a visit to admire the new chicks. Nature almost becomes a companion for Zuni. The little girls in all their innocence are easily able to tune themselves to Nature. The children are mesmerized and enraptured at the sight of the majestic peacocks. They cry in excitement that it was an enchanting, "Peacock Party...and said they had never seen a prettier sight. "It was just like a party," Teta said. "Or a fair," cried Bina..." (Desai 69). The novel ends in a happy tone announcing the wedding of Zuni's sister, Razia. "Amma went on talking. "Yes, Zuni shall be a little peacock and dance at the wedding" (Desai 71). Zuni is seen as the charming little peacock of her family adding so much beauty and warmth to her family.

VI. Conclusion

In *The Village by the Sea* Anita Desai passionately advocates against the thoughtless depletion of nature's grandeur and bounties through selfish, aggressive, and short-sighted human actions. She contends that any ecosystem is shaped by constitutive elements, and an eco-friendlier approach contributes to a greener Earth. Karl Kroeber's assertion, encapsulated in the phrase, "One appreciates the joyfulness and healing qualities offered by nature if we bestow our finest human feelings" (Kroeber 73), reinforces the idea that a deeper, emotional connection with nature guides to beneficial rewards. *The Peacock Garden* vividly illustrates a profound transformation in the lives of its characters triggered by the traumatic partition. In times of calamity, nature emerges as a resilient fortress of refuge. The Peacock Garden, emblematic of this natural sanctuary, becomes the source of essential elements for survival, sustaining the family amidst upheaval. Contemplating Florence Williams' perspective, "We don't experience

natural environments enough to realize how restored they can make us feel, nor are we aware that studies also show they make us healthier, more creative, more empathetic and more apt to engage with the world and with each other. Nature, it turns out, is good for civilization" (4), the novel suggests that nature plays a pivotal role in restoring, nourishing, and positively influencing individuals and societies.

In conclusion, Anita Desai's narrative not only serves as a poignant commentary on the detrimental impact of human actions on nature but also underscores the transformative and nurturing power of the natural world, especially in times of adversity. The dual perspectives presented in both the novels accentuate the importance of cultivating a profound and reciprocal relationship with nature for the well-being of both individuals and civilizations. Attuning oneself to the subtle and life-enhancing aspects of nature can lead to rewarding returns.

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Silence as resistance: post-truth myth making in Joy Kogawa's *OBASAN*

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I. Abstract

Literature has long faced censorship, distortion, and marginalisation. This has been demonstrated in numerous literary works across the authors of the world and also by multicultural authors that document the injustices, harassments, wartime atrocities and historical-erasure. In this study, the researcher has chosen Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*. *Obasan* highlights silence as a central theme of subtlety with reference to one of the central characters throughout the novel. This aspect of silence is personified by Naomi's Aunt Obasan Aya, the title character, who keeps her suffering and trauma hidden in an attempt to safeguard the collective trauma. This research article aims to reveal the hidden facets of Obasan Aya's beliefs during the Japanese Canadian incarceration through post-truth analysis. The analysis also focuses on the concepts of falsehood used for political purposes to justify the forced relocations and confiscated properties during the war. The purpose of this paper is to clear up the hazy perception of the world on the effects of World War II and the destitution of immigrants. This vision spreads the arguments in society about the discrepancies between the real world and the so-called truths.

II. Keywords

Canadian, falsehood, immigration, incarceration, multicultural, mythology, trauma

III. Introduction

Literature's multiple facets glance through time, age and era to carry the history among generations. Most ideas carried the legitimacy of the concepts but some ideas bear falsifications or misinterpretations and subjective reinterpretations, which makes history an unreliable source with multiple facets. The interpretations, you encounter, focus on the visible side of the coin, the other side remain unturned. This kindles the concept of aftermath analysis of events which unveiled the truths and its other interpretations through the stakeholders' spectacle. This article focuses on the aftermaths that clarify the interests through post-truth analysis. Post-truth is a concept of studying the after effects or alternate effects of an event through objective perspectives which lacks emotional or personal appeal to the event. The post-truth period analyse *Obasan*, which resurrects the vague ideologies on Silence with elements from literary works in the society that detrimentally views silence as a weak, passive gesture or response to injustice and trauma.

The researcher's choice of novel *Obasan* by Joy Kogawa is about Naomi Nakane, thirty six year old Japanese - Canadian school teacher, who confronts her agonizing childhood memories following the death of her uncle. The novel is set primarily in 1970s Canada, the story moves between the present and Naomi's recollections of her family's sufferings during the internment and harassment during and after World War II. After the death of her uncle, she was helping her aunt, Obasan, and Naomi uncovers family secrets through letters and diaries, learning the tragic fate of her mother, who was severely injured by the atomic bombing of Nagasaki. Through Naomi's journey of learned experiences, the novel explores themes of memory, silence, identity, loss, and the everlasting trauma of historical injustice against Japanese Canadians. Though the novel focuses on Naomi Nakane and her lived experiences the author had intent to name the novel *Obasan*, this idea of nomenclature signifies the dominance of Obasan Aya's silent presence in the novel. In the light of these events in the novel the researcher focused on Aya (Obasan), the titular protagonist of Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*. She has learned to regard silence as a conscience that becomes an

expression of her feelings and lived experiences. Even though she plays as a silent elderly woman, the horrific past experiences that subdued her still linger beneath her disguised Japanese-Canadian identity. This silence was portrayed to be both benevolent and perilous for the immigrant population's identity. In order to counterattack its portrayal as merely an unobtrusive life, the researcher has chosen Joy Kogawa's novel *Obasan* and its title character, Aya. By allowing the character's silence to be defiant against the unsaid Japanese consequences during World War II and in the internment camps, the researcher reimagines an alternate conscience for the character. Japanese Canadians were traumatized by the wartime forced migrations and internment camps, yet Obasan Aya, a member of the Nisei, a second-generation Japanese Canadian, and said nothing about it. The prolonged silence of the whole family of Aya led to the accumulation of trauma in the next generations. This collective trauma is being neglected by generations as a result of this silence. A collective total is impacted when an individual chooses not to sow the words because they will not enjoy the benefits of truth. Joy Kogawa in his prologue has given a glimpse of the characterisation of Obasan Aya and her manifestation silence, which says:

There is a Silence that cannot speak.

There is a silence that will not speak.

Beneath the grass the speaking dreams and beneath the dreams is a
sensitive sea. The speech that comes forth from the amniotic deep. To attend its
voice, I can hear it say, is to embrace its absence. But I fail the task. The word is
stone. (Kogawa Prologue)¹

Throughout the ages, literature has undergone significant transformations, and its perspectives on society have also changed significantly. Sometimes, the mirroring developments in literature are reversals; for example, the decade's literary approach has compared the literary elements of the present with the aspects of mythology and legendary mythical figures. This has contributed positive elements to current literary tendencies. In light of the ideology, the researcher has selected the theme of enabling silence, combining the post-truth era with the mythical Vajrayudha, Lord Indra's weapon that grants an unbreakable state of enlightenment in the Hindu epic Mahabharata. This weapon is tool of passive-aggression which awakens the spirit of people (enlightenment) and also creates obliteration (destruction) in the face of anger. The researcher made a comparative study by aligning the ideas of Vajrayudha as a motto to awaken Aya's silence embodied mind. This is the apt idea to embark on a journey of awareness viz the path of enlightenment against silence, a detrimental approach; and to destruct the mindset of the older Japanese-Canadian generations in assuming that silence will safeguard the future generations.

IV. Statement of the Problem

The problem analysis states that Obasan Aya, the title character, has fostered silence as a veil to the collective trauma during the World War II internment camps in order to cope with the hardships of the Japanese-Canadian life, taking into consideration the long peaceful subdued future. By empowering silence to boldly express the trauma caused by the Canadian internment camps and the forced displacement of individuals during the post-war era, the study aims to resist the author's idea of silencing the major aura, Aya. This resistance, thereby, enhance the future generations' attitude in perceiving the world.

V. Objectives of the Study

The study's primary goal is to examine how post-truth perspectives are analysed through Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* in contemporary comparative literature. It also aims to evaluate the themes of silence through intergenerational trauma and silence through the character of Obasan Aya and consider them in light of mythological concept of Vajrayudha. Lastly, counterattacking the

¹ Kogawa, Joy. *Obasan*. United States, Anchor Books, 1994.

manifestation of Aya as an emotional submissive as a choice to stop trauma from being passed down through generations.

VI. Methodology of the Study

On an attempt in establishing a connection between the issues in the chosen work and contemplating it with the themes of mythology in relation to the post-truth period and its subtleties, the entire article is categorized as qualitative research and is elaborated utilizing narrative analysis. In order to revitalize the title character and its representation of silence as a defence strategy during the world war and its aftermath, the text is most significantly analyzed utilizing the concepts of post-truth and mythological symbolism.

VII. Research Queries

The researcher puts forth the following hypothetical research queries to validate the analysis and answered it through his paper. The queries were scrupulously created to align with the research study and its ideas of comparative analysis. The questions are:

- Does the embodiment of silence, fruitful to Obasan Aya?
- Do the mythological aspects empower silence as a power?
- Does post-truth provide vivid insights on the historical events?

The responses validate the key concepts of the analysis and also provided comprehensive insights. The response to these questions might brew a stronger spell on the chosen topic giving clarity upon the queries.

VIII. Discussion

Literature's origin as a genre, imagery, and comparative study has been strengthened by history, mythology and its facets. The researcher used Vajrayudha, an extremely potent force of enlightenment, and stillness as a weapon of destruction in this research article. Obasan Aya and her silence were shaped by the bombing in Japan (i.e., the pit of flames) and the miseries endured in the internment camps; Indira's weapon, Vajrayudha, was made from the bones of a sage who perished in a pit of flames enduring the sufferings in silence. Silence, and Vajrayudha are considerate in overcoming internal or external barriers and demonstrating the strength of spiritual and psychological belief through resilience and resistance. In order to survive with the cultural trauma and to be strong in the face of hardship, Obasan Aya decides to remain silent.² It demonstrates a route of perseverance throughout and after a conflict. It is possible to view the concealment and repression of collective trauma as a form of resistance to society's demands for individual liberty and dignity. Obasan Aya is a lifeless body that denies the oppressor's story, a voice, rejecting the past and the collective suffering that may define her or perhaps mould her into a completely different person is the essence of silence. Because it will allow the characters to fully confront their losses and sufferings, a potentially painful process that gives them a new aspect, identity, and cultural personification and the modern cultural identity may be confused and bring catharsis to the character and its surroundings. In order to bridge the narrative gap, the silence that fills the broken memories and histories must be filled. As Naomi says about Obasan Aya's embodiment of silence as "The language of her grief is silence. She has learned it well, its idioms, and its nuances. Over the years, silence within her small body has grown large and powerful. What will she do now? I wonder." (Kogawa 17) As a response to the first research query on whether the embodiment of silence as a shield to protect her family from the collective trauma was fruitful or not; the embodiment of silence is fruitful to Obasan Aya and her conscience but it is harmful to her younger generations. The Japanese-Canadian cultural amalgamation created a space where the third generation, Naomi, suffers without a stronger root to hold. Naomi's root grew strong after her realisation of the past events in her family and with the assistance of her Aunt Emily's words she embarks a journey of realisation, to create a base that adhere her real identity, than a vague social identity which barely made her survive.

² Robinson, Greg. "Internment of Japanese Canadians". The Canadian Encyclopedia, 17 September 2020, Historica Canada.

According to Nietzsche's Perspectivism, the thoughts and insights of an individual are shaped by their perspective, and truth is never absolute but rather perspectival.³ Through history books, the world's perspective on the World War and the Canadian internment camps is put apart with the perspective of Obasan, who lived through it but was for a very long time forbidden from telling the world about it. The memories of traumatized people, both living and dead, steadily deteriorate with time; it does not provide the desired result; instead, the people endured in silence in the hope that things would improve in the future, but nothing changed.⁴ The narrator describes in *Obasan* about the embodiment as "The memories were drowned in a whirlpool of protective silence. Everywhere I could hear the adults whispering, "Kodomo no tame. For the sake of the children . . ." Calmness was maintained." (Kogawa 26) It is clear from expressing the aforementioned quote and analyzing it in light of the research study that silence is never productive since the trauma and oppression that go unspoken never produce a revolution or an impact. This ideology completely aggravates the researcher's work on counterattacking the idea of silence as a weapon, according to Naomi Nakane, who claims that silence is always a form of expressing trauma and that those who adopt a victim attitude have never been the true victims but rather the silent ones. Nakane says "People who talk a lot about their victimization make me uncomfortable. . . . the children who say nothing who are in trouble more than the ones who complain." (Kogawa 41) It is an appealing approach to examine the literary genre that combines mythological imagery with modern literary situations. From comparing Sita and Kannagi to demonstrate the virginity of women, to using the Harichandra to ridicule or extol a man's virtue, to using the Kumbakarna to accuse gluttony, and so on, the general public has demonstrated for decades that mythology has always been a part of human existence. Its timeless appeal and practicality for use across time are further demonstrated by the novel's attempt to compare the theme of silence with Lord Indira's Vajrayudha, a legendary weapon, the weapon of enlightenment, demonstrating its superiority over other mythological weapons in that silence is regarded as a force that can cause just as much destruction as the former. It spreads the notion that stillness and the Vajrayudha are comparable in how they are created. They are both manifestations of suffering and agony. As a response to the second research query on the validity of the mythological aspects empowering silence as a power factor to the characters of the novel especially Obasan Aya and Naomi Nakane. The mythical power factor, Vajrayudha, empowers the idea of silence against its customary beliefs of the society; this literary idea of comparatively analysing the protagonists with the characteristics of mythical ideology develops an alternate identity to the characters' behaviour.⁵ The last query on post-truth providing vivid insights on the historical events is a vague but sincere approach. This approach analyses the effects and after effects of World War II and the Canadian internment camps through lived experiences of the characters and the letters by the victims. This approach of post-truth analysis is only possible when a form of documentation is present on the event, or else the approach is more of vague fictional interpretation. The characters in the novel are paradoxical in their characteristics and approaches but the protagonist Aya's silence, once spoken, reveals a sound creed which resonates both abiding and resisting nature embarked within it.

IX. Conclusion

A summary of the downward progression of a being's generational painful demise is provided by the title character's silent stance. In the post-truth era, the study has attempted to empower the veil as the legendary weapon, revealing its true self. Since the truth is always subjective, there were a lot of different perspectives on the old truth during the post-truth age. Obasan Aya experienced enough traumas from the wartime silence to change who she was for the rest of her life. The elderly find calm and peace within themselves, a state that poses a threat not only to themselves but also to future generations, potentially resulting in the generational trauma of racism and bullying, while

³ Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm, et al. *A Genealogy of Morals*. United Kingdom, Macmillan, 1897.

⁴ Bigot, Corinne Florence. "'None of Us Escaped the Naming': Reclaiming Identities and Space in Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*." *Commonwealth Essays and Studies* 36, no. 1 (September 1, 2013): 81–91.

⁵ Davidson, Arnold E. *Writing against the Silence : Joy Kogawa's Obasan*. ECW Press, 1993.

other characters in the book are energetic and revolutionary in their struggle against injustice.⁶ According to the study's findings, perceptual truth can always end up preventing a person from expressing who they really are, whereas post-truth can offer fresh truth patterns that help people deal with traumatic experiences. Throughout his discussions, the researcher has provided explicit answers to each research question. The other characters' ideology in dealing with the traumatic past, particularly Aunt Emily, provides resistance meanwhile the protagonist's approach provides silence. This paper enlightens the literary aspects of silence as a resisting dynamics with reference to the post-truth myth making.

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Body shaming and mental health: A sociological study of stigma and self-Perception

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I. Abstract

This study examines the sociological dimensions of body shaming and its impact on mental health, focusing on how societal norms and stigma shape self-perception. Drawing from Erving Goffman's theory of stigma and symbolic interactionism, the research explores the lived experiences of individuals subjected to body shaming across various social contexts, including media, education, and family. Through qualitative interviews and content analysis, the study identifies patterns of internalized shame, social exclusion, and coping mechanisms. The findings reveal that body shaming is not only a personal issue but a systemic form of social control that reinforces normative ideals of appearance. This paper argues for a shift toward more inclusive body discourses and mental health interventions that consider the sociocultural roots of body-based discrimination.

II. Key words

Body shaming, stigma, identity, mental Health, self perception.

III. Introduction

We live in a world where beauty and body types are deeply idealized and influenced by models and influencers on social media. The pressure to achieve this physical "perfection" or a physical type creates psychological repercussions in the individual, bringing consequences on mental health as well as on self-esteem. Body shaming refers to the act of criticizing, mocking, or devaluing an individual based on their physical appearance. It often targets aspects such as weight, body shape, skin tone, height, facial features, or any deviation from perceived beauty norms⁷ Although commonly associated with overweight individuals, body shaming can affect people across the body spectrum—underweight, tall, short, muscular, or disabled—indicating its deep-rooted connection to societal expectations rather than objective health standards. It manifests both overtly, through verbal insults and bullying, and covertly, through social exclusion, microaggressions, or unrealistic body ideals perpetuated by media and cultural discourses.⁸

From a sociological perspective, body shaming is not simply a matter of personal bias or individual cruelty; it is a social practice embedded in cultural norms and power structures. It serves as a mechanism of social control, reinforcing dominant standards of beauty, femininity, masculinity, and desirability. These standards are largely shaped by historical, racialized, and gendered narratives that privilege thinness, youth, whiteness, and able-bodiedness. As such, individuals who do not conform to these ideals are subject to stigmatization, marginalization, and identity degradation.⁹

In contemporary society, body shaming has reached alarming levels of normalization and prevalence, fueled in part by the rise of digital media. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook contribute to the visibility of curated and often edited body images, setting unrealistic benchmarks for attractiveness. Filters and photo-editing tools have further distorted body expectations, making natural human variation appear flawed. This creates a cycle of comparison, dissatisfaction, and shame among users, particularly adolescents and young adults. Studies have consistently shown that exposure to idealized body images on social media is correlated with body dissatisfaction, low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression. The problem extends beyond individual behavior and penetrates institutional and cultural frameworks. For example, in healthcare settings, fatphobia can result in discrimination against overweight patients, where medical concerns are dismissed as weight-related regardless of context. In workplaces, hiring and promotion may be influenced by appearance, reflecting beauty bias. In schools, students who do not conform to

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dominant beauty ideals often face bullying or social exclusion.¹⁰ Even pop culture and advertising frequently reinforce the message that thin, fit, and fair-skinned bodies are the norm, while others are either ignored or tokenized. Moreover, body shaming disproportionately affects marginalized groups. Women are particularly vulnerable due to gendered beauty standards that link physical appearance to social value. People of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, and those with disabilities also face compounded forms of body shaming due to intersectional stigmatization. For instance, fatphobia often overlaps with racism, classism, and transphobia, amplifying the psychological burden on affected individuals. One of the many mental health issues connected to body shaming is a low standard of life, mental uneasiness, and an increased risk of suicide or self-harm. Depression, body dysmorphic disorder, and anxiety are some other problems.¹¹ The effects of body shaming on mental health and self-esteem are significant. It may result in low self-esteem, an unhealthy body image, and even despair and anxiety. If someone is constantly told they are not physically appealing or that their bodies are not good enough, they may begin to internalize messages that there is something seriously wrong with them. Body shaming is a pervasive social issue deeply embedded in the fabric of contemporary life. It not only causes emotional and psychological harm but also perpetuates structural inequalities. Understanding its widespread nature and systemic roots is essential for addressing the mental health crises and social exclusion it generates. A sociological lens allows us to move beyond personal blame and toward a collective responsibility for dismantling harmful body norms.¹²

IV. Body shaming and mental Health

A growing body of interdisciplinary research has examined the relationship between body shaming and mental health, highlighting its detrimental psychological and social consequences. This literature review synthesizes existing findings from sociology, psychology, gender studies, and media studies to situate the current study within broader scholarly discourse. Research consistently shows that body shaming is associated with adverse mental health outcomes, including low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, disordered eating, and suicidal ideation. A meta-analysis by Jackson et al. (2014) found a strong correlation between weight-based teasing and the development of body dissatisfaction and eating disorders, particularly among adolescents and young adults. These psychological effects are often long-term, persisting well into adulthood. While much of the early literature focused on women and girls, recent studies indicate that men, transgender individuals, and non-binary people are also vulnerable to body-related stigma, albeit in gender-specific ways.¹³

Sociological studies emphasize that body shaming is not simply a result of individual cruelty but a reflection of broader social norms and cultural expectations. Chrisler and Johnston (2012) argue that modern Western societies equate thinness with self-discipline, health, and moral worth, while fatness is often associated with laziness, lack of control, and unattractiveness. These norms are culturally and historically constructed and are reinforced through institutions such as media, education, and healthcare. As such, body shaming becomes a tool of social regulation, used to enforce conformity to idealized standards.

Media plays a significant role in perpetuating unrealistic and narrow beauty standards. Numerous studies have demonstrated how advertising, television, and particularly social media platforms contribute to the internalization of these ideals. For instance, Tiggemann and Slater (2014) found that Instagram usage is strongly linked to body surveillance and self-objectification in teenage girls. The curated, filtered nature of digital content promotes constant comparison and the normalization

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of unattainable body images. At the same time, content that challenges mainstream beauty ideals—such as the body positivity movement—often faces backlash, further highlighting the resilience of dominant aesthetic norms.¹⁴

Emerging literature also underscores the importance of intersectionality in understanding body shaming. Crenshaw's (1991) concept of intersectionality has been applied to analyze how race, gender, sexuality, and class intersect to shape body norms and experiences of stigma. For example, Black women face both racialized and gendered beauty expectations, often being criticized for traits like curviness or natural hair that deviate from Eurocentric standards. Likewise, fatphobia in queer communities can be compounded by homophobia and transphobia, making body shaming a multifaceted form of social exclusion. In terms of coping mechanisms, some studies explore resistance strategies, including participation in body positive communities, self-acceptance narratives, and activism. However, these responses are not always accessible or effective, particularly for those facing multiple axes of oppression. As a result, body shaming remains a persistent challenge to individual well-being and social inclusion. Despite the growing awareness, gaps remain in understanding the lived experiences of those affected by body shaming, particularly from a sociological and qualitative perspective. This study seeks to fill that gap by exploring how individuals internalize, resist, or navigate body-based stigma in various social contexts.¹⁵

V. Causes of Body Shaming

Body shaming is a complex social phenomenon rooted in various cultural, psychological, and structural causes. Understanding these causes requires examining the social norms, power relations, and institutional factors that shape perceptions of the body.¹⁶

One of the primary causes of body shaming is the existence of rigid cultural standards of beauty. These ideals—often emphasizing thinness, youth, and specific body shapes—are socially constructed and vary across time and place but have become dominant globally due to media influence and globalization. Societies establish these norms as markers of desirability, health, and social worth, making bodies that deviate from them targets for criticism and ridicule.

Media, advertising, and popular culture play a significant role in perpetuating these narrow ideals by continuously showcasing idealized and often digitally altered images of beauty. This constant exposure normalizes unrealistic expectations, fostering an environment where those who do not fit these standards are stigmatized.

Body shaming is often learned through socialization processes in families, schools, and peer groups. From a young age, individuals receive explicit and implicit messages about the “right” way to look. Parents, teachers, and peers may unintentionally or deliberately criticize bodies, reinforcing ideas about body norms.

Peer groups, especially during adolescence, can be particularly influential in body shaming. The desire for acceptance can lead to conforming to appearance ideals or shaming those who differ. Bullying and teasing based on body size or appearance are common forms of social control within these groups.

Body shaming can function as a tool for maintaining social hierarchies and exercising power. By enforcing normative body standards, dominant groups—often defined by race, gender, and class—maintain control over marginalized populations. Feminist theories argue that body shaming of

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women serves to police female bodies and maintain patriarchal power by diverting attention from structural inequalities to individual appearance.

Similarly, fat shaming can reflect societal disdain for bodies that symbolize a failure to conform to neoliberal ideals of self-discipline, productivity, and health. This stigmatization serves to discipline bodies and behaviors, promoting conformity through shame and exclusion.

While body shaming is primarily a social issue, individual psychological factors contribute to its perpetuation. Insecurity, low self-esteem, and internalized societal standards can lead individuals to project their anxieties onto others through body shaming. This can manifest as criticism, gossip, or bullying, often as a way to boost one's own social standing. Additionally, some individuals may engage in body shaming as a defense mechanism to cope with their own feelings of inadequacy or to align with dominant social norms. The rise of social media has intensified body shaming by creating constant visibility and comparison. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook often highlight idealized body images and encourage users to present curated versions of themselves. This environment fosters judgment and critique, as people are frequently evaluated based on appearance. Moreover, online anonymity can embolden individuals to engage in harsher body shaming than they might face in face-to-face interactions. The viral nature of social media also amplifies negative messages, increasing the reach and impact of body shaming.

VI. Body shaming and stigma

Stigma is a powerful social process through which certain individuals or groups are devalued, discredited, and marked as “different” or “lesser” based on specific characteristics. The concept of stigma was extensively developed by sociologist Erving Goffman (1963), who described it as an attribute that deeply tarnishes an individual's social identity, resulting in prejudice and discrimination. Erving Goffman's (1963) seminal work on stigma serves as a foundational framework for analyzing body shaming as a form of social exclusion. Goffman defines stigma as a discrediting attribute that reduces an individual “from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one.” In the context of body shaming, bodies that deviate from socially accepted norms—whether due to size, disability, skin tone, or gender presentation—are marked as “spoiled identities.” These stigmatized bodies are subjected to judgment, discrimination, and often public ridicule, leading to shame, withdrawal, and a fractured self-concept. Goffman's notion of “felt” versus “enacted” stigma is particularly relevant: individuals not only experience external discrimination but also internalize societal judgments, resulting in psychological harm such as anxiety, self-hatred, and depression.¹⁷ Stigma arises when bodies that deviate from socially constructed beauty ideals—such as those related to size, shape, skin color, or ability—are labeled as unacceptable or inferior. This labeling transforms the body into a visible marker of difference that attracts negative social judgment and marginalization. Rather than simply being personal criticisms, body-related stigmas are embedded in broader cultural values and social power structures that prioritize certain appearances over others. The internalization of body-related stigma is a crucial process in understanding its psychological effects. When individuals are repeatedly exposed to negative messages about their bodies, they may come to believe these messages and develop a “spoiled identity,” where their sense of self-worth is diminished. This internalized stigma can lead to serious mental health challenges, including low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and eating disorders. Symbolic interactionism helps explain how these negative social interactions influence the construction of self-identity, highlighting the role of social feedback in shaping how individuals see themselves. Moreover, body shaming is deeply gendered and racialized. Women, especially women of color, face heightened scrutiny of their bodies due to intersecting systems of patriarchy and racism. Feminist theories argue that controlling women's bodies through beauty standards is a way to maintain patriarchal power. Simultaneously, racialized beauty norms privilege whiteness,

11. Goffman, E. (1963). *Stigma: Notes on the management of spoiled identity*. Prentice-Hall.

marginalizing bodies that do not fit Eurocentric ideals. This intersectional stigma complicates experiences of body shaming and creates diverse challenges across different social groups.¹⁸

In contemporary society, the rise of social media has amplified both body shaming and stigma. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok expose users to idealized and often digitally altered images, reinforcing narrow definitions of beauty. The constant comparison to these images fosters body dissatisfaction and intensifies feelings of stigma. While online spaces can also host supportive body positivity movements, the overall digital environment tends to perpetuate exclusionary beauty norms. Body shaming and stigma are social processes deeply embedded in cultural values and power relations. They shape how individuals experience their bodies, interact with others, and navigate social spaces. Addressing these issues requires a critical examination of societal norms, increased awareness of the psychological harm caused, and efforts to promote inclusivity and respect for body diversity.¹⁹

VII. Body shaming effect self perception

Self-perception refers to the way individuals view and understand themselves, including their beliefs, attitudes, and evaluations about their own identity and physical appearance. It is a critical component of self-concept and plays a fundamental role in shaping one's mental health and social interactions.

In the context of body shaming, self-perception becomes particularly vulnerable. When individuals are repeatedly exposed to negative judgments or stigma about their bodies, their internal sense of self can be distorted. According to symbolic interactionist theory, self-perception is socially constructed through interactions with others and through the process of reflected appraisal—how we imagine others see us. Body shaming acts as a form of social feedback that can alter these appraisals, leading individuals to adopt negative views about their own bodies.

This negative self-perception often manifests as body dissatisfaction, where individuals feel unhappy or ashamed of their physical appearance. Over time, these feelings can erode self-esteem and contribute to mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and eating disorders. The internalization of stigmatizing messages means that individuals do not only fear external judgment but may also harshly judge themselves, creating a harmful feedback loop.²⁰

Self-perception is also influenced by broader societal and cultural standards of beauty, which often promote unrealistic and narrow ideals. Media representations, peer comparisons, and cultural narratives collectively shape what individuals consider “acceptable” or “ideal” bodies. When personal appearance diverges from these ideals, self-perception may be negatively affected, reinforcing feelings of inadequacy and exclusion. However, self-perception is not fixed; it can be reshaped through positive social interactions, supportive environments, and individual acts of resistance. Body positivity movements, inclusive representation, and affirming relationships can help individuals develop healthier and more accepting perceptions of themselves, challenging the stigma imposed by body shaming. Self-perception is a dynamic and socially mediated process profoundly impacted by body shaming and stigma. Understanding this relationship is essential for addressing the psychological and social consequences of appearance-based discrimination.²¹

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VIII. Policy Recommendations and Interventions

Addressing body shaming requires a multi-level approach that targets the cultural, institutional, and individual factors perpetuating stigma and negative self-perception. Below are key strategies that can contribute to reducing body shaming and fostering a more inclusive society:²²

Schools and community organizations should implement comprehensive educational programs that promote body diversity, media literacy, and critical thinking about beauty standards. These programs can help young people understand the social construction of beauty ideals, recognize harmful body shaming behaviors, and build resilience against internalizing stigma. Encouraging empathy and respect for diverse bodies can foster positive peer environments and reduce bullying.²³

Media platforms and advertisers play a critical role in shaping societal beauty norms. Policies encouraging diverse and realistic representations of bodies in advertising, television, film, and social media can challenge narrow ideals and normalize body diversity. Regulatory bodies can develop guidelines to discourage harmful content, such as digitally altered images or advertisements promoting unrealistic body standards. Supporting campaigns that celebrate all body types can help shift public perceptions.²⁴

Institutions should adopt anti-discrimination policies that protect individuals from body-based prejudice in workplaces and healthcare settings. Training healthcare providers to recognize and counteract weight bias and other forms of body stigma can improve patient care and mental health outcomes. Workplaces can promote inclusive wellness programs that focus on holistic health rather than appearance. Given the psychological impact of body shaming, expanding access to mental health services is essential. Counseling and support groups that address body image issues and stigma can help individuals develop healthier self-perceptions and coping mechanisms. Public health campaigns can raise awareness about the connection between body shaming, stigma, and mental health.²⁵

Grassroots movements advocating for body positivity and body neutrality have shown promise in challenging stigma and empowering individuals. Supporting these initiatives through funding, partnerships, and public endorsements can amplify their reach and impact. Social media campaigns that encourage authentic representation and self-acceptance can counteract harmful online environments.

IX. Conclusion

Body shaming is not merely an individual or superficial issue; it is a deeply embedded social phenomenon shaped by cultural norms, power relations, and institutional practices. Through the lens of stigma, body shaming marks certain bodies as deviant and undesirable, leading to exclusion, discrimination, and profound psychological harm. This social devaluation significantly affects self-perception, often causing individuals to internalize negative messages and develop harmful self-identities. The persistence of rigid beauty standards, reinforced by media, socialization processes, and digital culture, perpetuates body shaming and its detrimental effects. Moreover, body shaming intersects with other social inequalities, disproportionately affecting marginalized groups and complicating their experiences of stigma. Addressing body shaming requires more than individual

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resilience—it calls for systemic cultural change that challenges narrow beauty ideals, promotes body diversity, and fosters inclusive social environments. By understanding body shaming as a sociological issue linked to stigma and self-perception, we can better appreciate its wide-ranging impacts and work toward healthier, more accepting societies where all bodies are valued and respected.²⁶

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A semantic analysis of Lord Alfred Tennyson's "*The Lady of Shalott*" in mythological perspective

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I. Abstract

This research paper attempts a stylistic analysis of Lord Alfred Tennyson's renowned poem "The Lady of Shalott" through a mythological perspective. On the account of Arthurian legend and classical mythology, the analysis explores the poem's intricate symbolism, narrative structure, and thematic depth. Through the values of mythological criticism, the study opens up the presence of mythical archetypes and allegorical motifs within the poem by shedding light on its cultural and psychological point of view. The key themes, such as fate, destiny, and the quest for self-realisation, are examined through Tennyson's use of language, imagery, and intertextual references. The research article also investigates the poem's reception and its significance in the realm of mythological literature. The unravelling of mythical elements employed in the themes in "The Lady of Shalott" is of good nature. Hence, this study offers new vistas in Tennyson's poetic vision and its profound impact on readers across future generations.

II. Keywords:

Stylistics, Semantic Analysis, *The Lady of Shalott*, Mythological.

III. Introduction

Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott," is a narrative poem published in the year 1832 and was later revised in the year 1842. It stands as a timeless masterpiece of Victorian literature, captivating readers with its enchanting narrative and profound themes. It is set against the backdrop of Arthurian legend and the poem tells the tragic tale of a mysterious woman confined to a tower on the island of Shalott, cursed to weave images of the outside world without ever experiencing it directly. Through its evocative language, rich symbolism, and mythological underpinnings, "The Lady of Shalott" invites readers into a world of romance, magic, and tragedy. In this research article, we undertake a stylistic analysis of Tennyson's poem from a mythological perspective. Deeply examining the language, symbolism, and narrative structure employed by Tennyson, our study aims to unveil the mythological themes and archetypes that permeate the poem, offering insights into its enduring cultural and literary significance. It draws upon the insights of scholars and critics and seeks to explore how Tennyson's poem engages with classical myths and legends, while also examining its unique contribution to the Victorian literary landscape. Through this analysis, we hope to shed light on the intricate craftsmanship of Tennyson's poetry, as well as the profound insights it offers into the human condition. In the study of "The Lady of Shalott" within the theme of mythology and literature, the researcher aims to deepen our understanding of its thematic complexity and enduring appeal. Ultimately, this research seeks to highlight the enduring relevance of Tennyson's poem and its rich mythological imagery in the realm of literature and beyond.

IV. Review of Literature

Abrams (1973) argues that "natural supernaturalism" is central to the understanding of the Romantic period and its influence on modern literature. It will help the understanding of the themes in both eras that involve natural supernaturalism.

Brown (2017) examines the parallels between the Lady's journey in Tennyson's poem and the archetypal hero's journey found in classical mythology. Tennyson's narrative with mythic motifs allows the article to find the poem's mythological resonance and thematic complexity.

Clark (2014) examines Tennyson's poem as an example of Victorian mythopoeia, exploring how the poet creates a mythic world infused with symbolic meaning and allegorical significance. The study considers the poem's contribution to the Victorian revival of mythic storytelling and its resonance with contemporary cultural concerns.

Eagleton (2004) says that Mythology is deeply intertwined with cultural identity, social norms and cultural values. He explores how myths shape and reflect these aspects within a culture. He points out that the nature of mythology involves layers of meaning and evolving interpretations over time and across different cultures. Eagleton portrays various mythologies that have been understood and reinterpreted throughout history.

Garcia, M (2016) explores the portrayal of feminine archetypes in Tennyson's poem, focusing on the Lady's role as a tragic heroine. Garcia examines how the Lady embodies archetypal qualities of isolation, longing, and sacrifice, drawing parallels to mythological figures such as Persephone and Psyche.

González, L., & Patel, S. (2021) explore the intersection of semantics and pragmatics in natural language processing, discussing current trends and challenges in developing computational models that can accurately capture and process meaning in context.

Johnson (2012) examines the narrative structure of Tennyson's poem through the lens of mythic patterns, tracing the Lady's journey from isolation to tragic fulfilment. The article explores how Tennyson employs mythic motifs to imbue the poem with a sense of inevitability and archetypal resonance.

Jones (2018) analyses Tennyson's engagement with classical mythology in "The Lady of Shalott," analysing how the poem draws upon ancient myths and legends to create a mythological framework. The article investigates the role of mythological themes in shaping the poem's narrative structure and thematic depth.

Joseph Campbell (2008), in his "The Hero with a Thousand Faces", speaks about comparative mythology and explores the "monomyth" or the universal pattern found in heroic stories across many world cultures. The book delves into the concept of their mythological origin, time of creation, or specific cultural details, myths and rituals worldwide that share a fundamental structure that reflects the journey of the archetypal hero.

Northrop Frye (1957) aims to establish a systematic and comprehensive structure for understanding literature. It attempts to formulate an overall view of literary criticism's scope, theory, principles, and techniques, derived exclusively from literature itself. His work focuses on archetypes as universal and they are recurring elements in literature that contribute to shared cultural elements.

Smith, J (2019) explores the symbolic significance of Tennyson's poem, particularly focusing on the Lady's tapestry, mirror, and the curse that binds her. It examines how these elements serve as archetypal motifs, drawing connections to classical mythology and the broader tradition of mythic storytelling.

Wang, Y., & Johnson, M. (2022) provide a comprehensive overview of advancements in distributional semantics, focusing on computational approaches and the use of large-scale language corpora to model the meaning of words and their relationships.

White (2015) analyses Tennyson's employment of mythological imagery, such as the references to Camelot and Sir Lancelot, in shaping the poem's mythic atmosphere. The article investigates how Tennyson draws upon Arthurian legend and classical mythology to enrich the symbolic landscape of the poem.

V. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for the stylistic analysis of Lord Alfred Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott" from a mythological perspective draws upon several key theoretical concepts and approaches, providing a lens through which to interpret the poem's mythic dimensions. Mythological criticism explores the presence and significance of mythic elements within literary texts, emphasising the universal archetypes, symbols, and themes that recur across cultures and periods. Drawing upon the works of scholars such as Joseph Campbell and Northrop Frye, this

approach seeks to uncover the underlying mythic structures and motifs embedded within Tennyson's poem, illuminating its broader cultural and psychological resonances. Archetypal analysis, as pioneered by Carl Jung, examines the collective unconscious and the archetypal symbols and motifs that manifest in literature and art. The role of identifying archetypal figures such as the hero, the journey, and the quest for self-discovery, this approach reveals the deeper layers of meaning and symbolism present in Tennyson's depiction of the Lady of Shalott and her mythic journey towards destiny and transformation is of great advantage. Structuralist theory, as developed by scholars like Claude Lévi-Strauss, focuses on the underlying structures and binary oppositions that shape narrative and meaning. Applying structuralist principles to "The Lady of Shalott," this framework explores the dualities of confinement and liberation, illusion and reality, and fate and free will that permeate the poem, revealing how these structural elements contribute to its mythological resonance. Intertextual analysis explores how literary texts reference and engage with other works of literature, mythology, and cultural discourse. Tracing the intertextual connections between "The Lady of Shalott" and sources such as Arthurian legend, Greek mythology, and Pre-Raphaelite art, this framework elucidates Tennyson's dialogue with mythic traditions and his reinterpretation of mythological themes in a Victorian context.

VI. Semantic analysis in the poem "The Lady of Shalott"

Semantics analysis is a linguistic study concerned with the meaning and interpretation of words, phrases, and sentences within a language. It explores how meaning is conveyed through the relationships between words, the context in which they are used, and the underlying structures of language. The semantic analyses examine various aspects of meaning, including Lexical Semantics, Sentence semantics, Discourse semantics or pragmatics, Figurative Language, Thematic Elements, and Critical Appreciation. Semantic analysis involves examining the meaning and interpretation of words, phrases, and the overall content within a text. In the case of "The Lady of Shalott" by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, a semantic analysis delves into the deeper layers of meaning, myth, Arthurian legend, and symbolic elements of the poem.

Mythological Archetypes in "The Lady of Shalott"

"The Lady of Shalott" draws heavily upon mythological archetypes, creating a narrative that resonates with timeless themes. The Lady herself embodies the archetype of the tragic heroine, confined to her tower and cursed to weave images of the outside world without ever experiencing it directly. This imprisonment mirrors the fate of numerous mythological figures, such as Rapunzel or Psyche, who are similarly confined or isolated. In Tennyson's poem "The Lady of Shalott," various mythological archetypes contribute to the rich tapestry of themes and symbols woven throughout the narrative. These archetypes, drawn from diverse mythic traditions, add depth and resonance to the poem, inviting readers to explore universal themes of fate, destiny, and the quest for self-discovery.

The Heroine's Journey

The Lady of Shalott embarks on a journey of self-discovery and transformation, akin to the archetypal heroine's journey found in mythic narratives. She begins in a state of isolation and confinement, undergoes a series of trials and challenges, and ultimately achieves a deeper understanding of herself and the world around her.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume.²⁷

Thus, the heroine's journey takes place in the poem.

The Quest for Knowledge

Like many mythological heroes and heroines, the Lady's journey is driven by a quest for knowledge and enlightenment.

I am half sick of shadows,' said

²⁷ (The Lady of Shalott, Line-109-112)

The Lady of Shalott.²⁸

Her decision to defy the curse and look directly upon Camelot reflects a desire to transcend her limitations and gain a deeper understanding of the world beyond her tower. Thus, the quest for knowledge is portrayed in the poem.

The Eternal Cycle

The poem explores themes of cyclical time and the eternal recurrence found in many mythic traditions.

To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
And music went to Camelot.²⁹

However, the Lady's repetitive actions of weaving and observing reflect the cyclical nature of existence, while the imagery of the river flowing endlessly to Camelot symbolises the eternal passage of time.

The Damsel in Distress

The Lady of Shalott embodies the archetype of the damsel in distress, a recurring figure in myth and legend. Confined to her tower and cursed by fate,

She hath no loyal knight and true
The Lady of Shalott.³⁰

She requires rescue or redemption, awaiting a knight or saviour to liberate her from her plight.

The Enchanted Tower

The Lady's Tower serves as a symbolic representation of the enchanted castle or tower found in many mythic narratives.

Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
The Lady of Shalott.³¹

Indeed, it is a place of seclusion and confinement, where the Lady is cut off from the outside world and bound by the constraints of fate.

The Mirror and the Reflection

The mirror plays a central role in the poem, serving as a symbol of illusion, reflection, and self-awareness.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river.³²

It echoes the mythic motif of mirrors and reflections found in various cultural traditions, highlighting themes of perception and reality.

The Journey to Camelot

Camelot, the legendary court of King Arthur, represents the ultimate destination and goal of the Lady's journey. It is a symbol of power, prestige, and worldly achievement, embodying the ideals of chivalry and romance.

Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror crack'd from side to side;
'The curse is come upon me,' cried
The Lady of Shalott.³³

²⁸ (The Lady of Shalott, Line-71-72)

²⁹ (The Lady of Shalott, Line-64-68)

³⁰ (The Lady of Shalott, Line-62-63)

³¹ (The Lady of³¹ Shalott, Line-15-18)

³² (The Lady of Shalott, Line-10-14)

³³ (The Lady of Shalott, Line-114-117)

Through these kinds of mythological archetypes within “The Lady of Shalott,” readers gain a deeper appreciation for Tennyson’s poetic vision and the enduring resonance of his mythic narrative. Through the interplay of these archetypes, Tennyson explores timeless themes of human experience and invites readers to embark on a journey of mythic discovery.

VII. Arthurian Legend and Symbolism in “The Lady of Shalott”

Tennyson’s poem is deeply rooted in Arthurian legend, with references to Camelot and the figure of Sir Lancelot. Camelot, the legendary court of King Arthur, represents an idealised realm of chivalry and romance. The Lady’s longing for the world beyond her tower reflects the human desire for connection and experience, echoing themes found in the quest for the Holy Grail. Sir Lancelot serves as a symbol of temptation and desire, drawing the Lady out of her isolated existence and ultimately leading to her downfall. His appearance in the poem ignites a chain of events that culminate in tragedy, highlighting the destructive power of forbidden love. “The Lady of Shalott” is steeped in Arthurian legend and rich symbolism, drawing upon the mythical world of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table to weave a narrative of enchantment, tragedy, and quest. Through a mythological perspective, the poem delves into the mythical world of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, drawing upon timeless themes and imagery that resonate with readers across generations. Here, we explore the presence of Arthurian legend and symbolism in Tennyson’s poem, accompanied by poetic lines that capture the essence of its mythic depth. The influence of Arthurian legend pervades “The Lady of Shalott,” infusing the poem with the timeless allure of Camelot and its legendary inhabitants. King Arthur, the fabled ruler of Camelot, and his court of knights serve as central figures in the poem’s mythic landscape. The Lady of Shalott, confined to her tower on the island of Shalott, gazes upon Camelot from afar, yearning to be part of its world of chivalry, romance, and adventure.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro’ the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river³⁴

The realm of Camelot, steeped in the lore of King Arthur and his noble knights, serves as the backdrop for the Lady of Shalott’s solitary vigil. Camelot symbolises an idyllic kingdom of honour, chivalry, and courtly love, captivating the Lady’s imagination and fueling her yearning for connection.

VIII. Symbolism

Symbolism plays a crucial role in conveying the themes and motifs of “The Lady of Shalott,” drawing upon the imagery and iconography of Arthurian legend to enrich its narrative tapestry. The Lady’s mirror reflects the images of Camelot, offering her only a distorted view of the world outside her tower. Meanwhile, her tapestry becomes a vessel for her creative expression, depicting scenes of Camelot’s splendour. The river that flows past the Lady’s tower symbolises the passage of time and the inevitability of fate. When the Lady ventures into the river in her boat, she embarks on a journey towards her tragic destiny. Camelot symbolises the idealised realm of King Arthur’s court, representing themes of nobility, honour, and the pursuit of excellence. For the Lady of Shalott, Camelot serves as both a source of fascination and a distant dream, embodying the unattainable ideals of the Arthurian world. The curse that binds the Lady of Shalott to her tower symbolises the constraints imposed by fate and destiny. It represents the forces that govern her life and ultimately lead to her downfall when she defies its injunction and looks directly upon Camelot. Through the interplay of Arthurian legend and symbolism, Tennyson’s “The Lady of Shalott” transcends its narrative boundaries, offering readers a timeless exploration of human longing, destiny, and the quest for transcendence. As the Lady’s journey unfolds against the backdrop of Camelot’s splendour, readers are invited to delve into the mythological depths of the poem, where the echoes of legend and symbolism resonate with the universal truths of the human.

IX. Findings & Discussions

³⁴ (The Lady of Shalott, Line-10-13)

The analysis reveals that Tennyson employs a wealth of symbolism and vivid imagery to evoke the mythic atmosphere of Arthurian legend and classical mythology. The Lady's mirror and tapestry emerge as potent symbols of her isolation and indirect perception of reality, while nature imagery and visual imagery transport readers to the enchanted realm of Camelot. The discussions explore the symbolic significance of these elements, considering how they contribute to the poem's mythological resonance and thematic development. Analysis of Tennyson's use of language and imagery reveals thematic layers related to fate, destiny, and the quest for autonomy. The Lady's journey becomes a metaphor for the human condition, exploring themes of agency, constraint, and the search for meaning amidst forces beyond one's control. Discussions delve into the philosophical implications of these themes, considering their relevance to Victorian society and their enduring resonance in contemporary culture. The intertextual connections between "The Lady of Shalott" and sources such as Arthurian legend and Pre-Raphaelite art uncover Tennyson's engagement with mythic traditions and artistic movements of his time. Discussions explore how Tennyson reinterprets and reimagines these sources, infusing them with his poetic vision and sensibility. Consideration of reader response and interpretation reveals the diverse ways in which Tennyson's poem has been received and understood over time. Discussions explore the evolving interpretations of "The Lady of Shalott" and its impact on subsequent literary and artistic works, highlighting the enduring fascination with its mythological themes and lyrical beauty.

X. Conclusion

The Mytho-Semantic analysis of Lord Alfred Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott" reveals rich evidence of symbolism, narrative intricacy, and thematic depth based on legendary figures. The findings of the analysis highlight Tennyson's masterful use of symbolism and imagery to evoke the enchanting atmosphere of Arthurian legend and classical mythology. Through potent symbols such as the Lady's mirror and tapestry, Tennyson explores themes of fate, destiny, and the quest for autonomy, weaving a narrative that resonates with universal truths and human experiences. Tennyson's exploration of mythic archetypes and themes adds depth and complexity to the narrative, inviting readers to contemplate the deeper layers of meaning embedded within the poem. The stylistic analysis of "The Lady of Shalott" from a mythological perspective enriches our understanding of Tennyson's poetic vision and its place within the realm of mythological literature.

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Implication of Sanskrit in our practical life

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I. Abstract

Humans are social beings. All members of society are inextricably related to one another. The real great man leads the society towards progress. Saṁskara refreshes man in the same way as water purifies a vessel. A great human being behaves like a friendly manner. The relevance of Sanskrit has been increasing steadily since ancient era. Saṁskara impacts on our lifestyle, religious thinking, and character formation. Sanskrit continues to promote that philosophy even in the present era. This means that if a human being has the right education and reform, it is considered by society as Mahiruha, just as a tree that is watered and cared for afterwards flowers and develops.

II. Keywords

Saṁskāra, right education and reform, ascetic, affection, anxiety, Āśrama.

III. Introduction

Affectionate love is an eternal character of the minds of humans. In the drama of Abhijñānaśākuntalam, Maharshi Kanva is the first name that appears in our mind as a loving father. In spite of being an ascetic, we see him mainly as the loving father of the household in this drama. We learn at the start of the drama that he traveled to *Somatirtha* in order to reduce his adoptive daughter Shakuntala's trouble from the unfortunate events. In our real lives, parents also follow many religious practices to ensure that no mishap is done to the child. Again, at the beginning of the third act of Abhijñānaśākuntalam, we get to know that Shakuntala is the cherished soul of Maharshi.-

सा खलु भगवतः कण्वस्य कुलपतेरुच्छ्वसितम्।¹

IV. Affection

Moreover, due to affection for the child, he accepted both the marriage and the impregnation of Shakuntala. . In Shakuntala's farewell scene, there is no distinction between eremite and householders. He has started to cry after her farewell ceremony to avoid her daughter's demonization. She said—

शममेष्यति मम शोकः कथं नु वत्से त्वया रचितपूर्वम्।

उटजद्भारविरुढं नीवारवलिं विलोकयतः।।²

Even though Kanva is her foster father, his heart is full of anxiety, and he was almost speechless when he thought that his daughter would go to her husband's house. If the foster father is in this situation, then what is the condition of the real father? He said—

यास्यत्यद्य शकुन्तलेति हृदयं संस्पृष्टमुत्कण्ठया

कण्ठःस्तम्भितवाष्पवृत्तिकलुषश्चिन्ताजडं दर्शनम्।

वैक्लव्यं मम तावदीदृशमिदं स्नेहादरणौकसः

पीडन्ते गृहिणः कथं नु तनयाविश्लेषदुःखैर्नवैः।।³

This manifestation of the father's affection continues to this day and will be in the future. Kanvamuni's paternal affection is an instance of society. We have to learn from Kanvamuni how to behave with an adopted daughter. This does not only indicate the affection among people but also the affection between animal and human. In the fourth act, it was seen that the wild animals were also feeling miserable in a time of parting hearts, similarly as Shakuntala went to the in-law's

¹ अभिज्ञानशकुन्तलम्, तृतीय अङ्कः

² . अभिज्ञानशकुन्तलम्, 4/21

³ अभिज्ञानशकुन्तलम्, 4/6

house. Wild deer likewise trust Shakuntala's affection, much as a child treats its mother's lap as the world's most eternal sanctuary of serenity. So, Deer does not want to allow her to leave the āśrama's in time for her journey to her spouse's home. If āśrama's deer cubs were injured in the mouth, she would carefully use ingudi oil with motherly adore. Here the affection of mother and son is expressed. He Said-

यस्य त्वया ब्रणविरोपणमिह्नुदीनां तैलं न्यषिच्यत मुखे कुशसूचिविद्धे ।
श्यामाकमुष्टिपरिवर्धितको जहति सोऽयं न पुत्रकृतकः पदवीं मृगस्ते ॥^४

Unnecessary fearfulness is the nature of a mother's affection. She has much anxiety for the pregnant deer. So before going to her spouse's house, she requested Karna to know about the news of Harin's uneventful delivery.

V. Compassion

Every stage of Shakuntala drama reflects the sense of compassion. Shakuntala hasn't been paying attention when Durbasa curses her in the fourth act since she was contemplative with her spouse. They were feeling very nervous and suppressed the news of Durbasa's curses because they were worried over Sakuntala's destiny. Priyanvada said—

को नाम उष्णोदकेन नवमालिकां सिञ्चति ?^५

The news of Shakuntala's journey to her husband's home is also not being accepted by nature. Not only she herself but also nature along with wild animals feel unhappy with the living scene of Shakuntala. He said –

उद्गलितदर्भकवला मृग्यः परितक्तनर्तना मयूराः ।
अपसृतपाण्डुपत्रा मुञ्चन्तशूणीव लताः ॥^६

Grass is falling down the ground from the mouths of shocking deer. Dance is the natural characteristic of peacocks however miserable peacocks aren't dancing at this moment. The disrupted trees are shedding their dry leaves. Feeling this natural scenario, Kalidas imagines that nature is also shedding tears.

VI. Self Possession

Nowadays, people's requirements to maintain their lifestyles are increasing linearly with time; for this reason, they sometimes lose their honesty. Unless self-control over himself or herself it is not possible to grow up. For smoothly leading their life, they need to have control over themselves. In the Gita, Lord Krishna has established a complement to those who are controlled over themselves. He said-

तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीद् मत्परः ।
वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥^७

If they have self-control, the people would know a lot about soul. It is impossible human beings to abandon their desire if they lack self-control. As a consequence, Lord Krishna instructs them to reduce their desire by controlling their 'Panchaindriya'. Nowadays a large number of characterless people are present in our society; as a result, our society is becoming corrupted, increasing pain in life, and affecting family life. So it has been said—

तस्मात् त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।
पापमानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥^८

Gita also explained about the way to control our mind. By nature our mind is fluctuating, so it needs to be controlled, and Lord Krishna said-

असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम् ।
अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥^९

⁴ अभिज्ञानशकुन्तलम्, 4/14

⁵ अभिज्ञानशकुन्तलम्, रातुर्थः

⁶ अभिज्ञानशकुन्तलम्, 4/12

⁷ द्रौपदीयुगवञ्चिता, 2/61

⁸ द्रौपदीयुगवञ्चिता, 3/41

The human beings will be able to control their minds by practice and quietism. One's mind gets inflexible to concentration as they focus on the Bhagavad Gita. When someone begins to meditate, he stops thinking about his family and focuses on meditation. This is a way for preventing mental fluctuations. Having control of our sense organs is essential to living an enjoyable life. For prohibiting him or her from engaging in immoral work, he or she must focus on the current situation. Nowadays people are very much focused greediness. Therefore, in modern society, the evil tendencies of antisocial people, such as mass rapists, can be observed. Manusmriti describes the way cultured people control their senses.—

इन्द्रियाणां विचरतां विषयेष्वपहारिषु।

संयमे यत्नमातिष्ठेद्विद्वान् यन्त्येव वाजिनाम्॥^{९०}

Everyone is committed to fulfill the goal of 'Purusartha'. The four pillars that together make up "Purusartha" are "Dharma," "Artha," "Kama," and "Moksha." Manu says what kind of actions can be done to achieve 'Purusartha'.—

इन्द्रियाणां प्रसङ्गेन दोषमुच्छत्यसंशयम्।

संनियम्य तु तान्येव ततःसिद्धिं नियच्छति॥^{९१}

VII. Duties towards Elders

Our path in life becomes beautiful and smooth only when it is filled with the blessings of our elders. Elders should never be disrespected because the 'Acharya' is the embodiment of the god, the father is like image of Hiranya, the mother is like the earth, and the elder brother is like his simulacrum. Manu said

आचार्यो ब्रह्मणो मूर्तिः पिता मूर्तिः प्रजापतेः।

पिता पृथिव्या मूर्तिस्त भ्राता स्वो मूर्तिरात्मनः॥^{९२}

We do not have the ability to pay off our parent's kindness. There are many families today where the elderly are not accepted and respected by their sons and daughters-in-law. But we forget that our lives are running on the basis of the previous 'karma' of our parents. Manu said---

यं मातापितरौ क्लेशं सहेते सम्भवे नृणाम्।

न तस्य निष्कृतिः शक्या कर्तुं वर्षशतैरपि॥^{९३}

A mother giving birth to a child by carrying it in her womb, endures the pain of childbirth, and protects the child after birth. The father endures all the hardship of raising and educating his child after birth. It is impossible to repay the debt of their parents' suffering even after a hundred years. Sanskrit literature, both ancient and modern, explains human behavior. In the present era, people are suffering from various types of depression. One of Hariram Acharya's "Sankalpa Geeti" in "Gitikabya" described how to develop positive thoughts from all those negative thoughts. Said—

यूयं दीपं प्रज्वालयत तिमिरं स्वयं गमिष्यति रे।

अमृतचिन्तनं निमिषं कुरुत गरलं स्वयं गमिष्यतिरे॥^{९४}

Just as a lamp is lit to dispel darkness, the poet says that the process of lighting the lamp of strong will to dispel the darkness of the mind. So, we should always think positive.

VIII. Meditation

The normal and eternal nature of the mind is restlessness. Fickle-minded people sink into darkness every time. Meditation is the best and most effective way to abandon this restlessness and attain stability. Meditation can help to eliminate mental fickleness. So 'Patanjali' says in the 'Jogsutra' —

तत्र प्रत्ययैकतानता ध्यानम्॥^{९५}

^९ श्रीमद्भगवत्सगवगीता, 6/35

^{१०} मनुसंहिता, 2/88

^{११} मनुसंहिता, 2/93

^{१२} मनुसंहिता, 2/225

^{१३} मनुसंहिता, 2/227

^{१४} संवत्सपगीति

Meditation is a yoga practice that involves focusing the mind on a single object to achieve a state of quiet and being fully attentive. Among all the yogis, the dhayan-yogi is superior. A popular way to focus the mind is through meditation. Meditation helps to create a positive perspective and develops the habit of focusing on particular matter. Meditation can help to reduce stress, depression, and anxiety. The benefits of meditation include enhanced attention, improved brain function, and raised self-awareness. In today's society, anxiety and depression are increasing day by day in people's lives. Nowadays a day's people are lacking satisfaction due to various environmental pressures and restlessness of mind. There is a lack of happiness in life in spite of having lots of wealth and properties in human life. In its sixth chapter, the Gita provides advice on how to live a happy life. Said-

प्रशान्तमनसं ह्येनं योगिनं सुखमुत्तमम्।
उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम्॥^{१६}

Those whose sins are removed and whose minds are entirely calm, such a Brahma-like yogi, certainly attain the greatest happiness and peace. Therefore, meditation is essential for the peace of mind of human beings.

IX. Truthfulness

The truth always succeeds. How we should behave in our lives is described in detail in Sanskrit at various stages. There are very few people who speak the truth nowadays. Sometimes people are used to choosing to tell lies to avoid risk, which is completely inappropriate. The twenty chapter of the Taittiriya Upanishad, Shikhavalli is said to be-

सत्यं वद। धर्मं चर। मिथ्या मा वद॥^{१७}

So, speak the truth, be religious, and never tell lies; these three clues should be the basic 'mantra' of life. Not only in the Upanishads but also the Smritishastras, the topic of truth telling has been discussed in

detail. Since outstanding behavior allows people to succeed to the greatest extent, honesty and moral behavior have been stated as top priorities. Manusamhita Said-

सत्यं ब्रूयात् प्रियं ब्रूयात् ब्रूयात् सत्यमप्रियम्।
प्रियञ्च नानृतं ब्रूयादेष धर्मः सनातनः॥^{१८}

Speak the truth, speak softly, but avoid telling unacceptable truths about human life. Do not tell false words that are mellifluous. According to the Vedas, this is the ancient faith.

X. Environmental Awareness

Presently we are planting trees to protect the environment from excessive pollution. Through tree planting, we will regain an evergreen environment, which will make life healthier and brighter as we have a spiritual connection with nature. In this manner the close relationship between nature and human beings is explained in detail in Kalidas's Sanskrit literature. In the play "Abhigan Shakuntalam," the close relationship between the forest creeper and the leading actress Shakuntala is described. About the tree planting and nursing have been described in the first act of "Abhigan Shakuntalam". Shakuntala says-

तात, लताभगिनी, वनज्योत्स्नां तावत् अमन्त्रयिष्ये॥^{१९}

Not only in Kalidas's poetry, but also in Bhavabhuti's poetry, the close relationship between humans and nature is seen. Ramchandra says in the drama of 'Uttaramcharit'.—

(पुष्पकं प्रवर्तयन्) भगवति पञ्चवटि। गुरुजनादेशोपरोधात्क्षणं क्षम्यतामतिक्रमो रामस्य॥^{२०}

¹⁵ योगसूत्र, 3/2

¹⁶ द्वीपमण्डवञ्चिता, 6/27

¹⁷ शैत्रिरीयउपनिषद, एकादशअनुवाद।

¹⁸ मनुस्मृति, 4/138

¹⁹ अभिज्ञानशकुंतलम्, प्रथम अंक।

²⁰ उत्तररामचरितम् द्वितीय अंक।

Kalidas probably wants to say that in the drama of Shakuntala, two main motivations are "One Tree, One Life" and "Trees are our friends". Shakuntala enjoyed adorning herself with all types of trees and leaves, but she usually refused to use real trees and leaves. So, Kalidas said-

पातुं न प्रथमं व्यवसति जलं युष्मास्वपीतेषु
या नादत्ते प्रयमण्डनापि भवतां स्नेहेन या पल्लवम्।
आद्ये वः कुसुमप्रसूतिसमये यस्या भवत्युत्सवः
सेयं याति शकुन्तला पतिगृहं सर्वैरनुज्ञायताम्।^{२१}

XI. Liberality

Kindness is one of the best characteristics of humanity among all others. Since we are social beings societal responsibility is always with us. The liberal mentality is characterized by its willingness to support people and help in difficult situations. At present, there has been a discrimination between people. Chanaka said—

अयं निजः परो वेति गणना लघु चेतसाम्।
उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्।^{२२}

Those whose hearts are violent, they make the deference. But liberal people consider all people into world as relatives. In the present society, such liberal people are needed. Those people who have free minds strive to differentiate between different people. It is very effective at present to follow the mentality of such broad-minded people for upgrading the society.

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²¹ अभिज्ञानशकुन्तलम्, 4/9

²² रूपावली

Discrimination against Women in Kavita Kane's *The fisher queen's dynasty*

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I. Abstract

Women are often denied the freedom to express themselves in a world dominated by men. In *The Fisher Queen's Dynasty*, Indian novelist Kavita Kane elevates Satyavati, a supporting character, to a prominent position. The classic stories of the Mahabharata are rewritten in the book, offering a fresh perspective. Retelling or rewriting has long been a powerful tool for challenging prevailing beliefs and expressing opposing viewpoints. This paper aims to examine Satyavati's transformation from a poor fisher girl to the queen of Hastinapur. It highlights how Satyavati challenges conventional assumptions by stepping outside the traditional cultural framework and reversing gender roles. Her voice becomes a feminine declaration of self-determination and freedom, focusing on how women are oppressed, marginalized, and subjugated. This study explores the crucial role that Satyavati, the novel's protagonist, plays in shaping the plot and its subsequent twists and turns.

II. Keywords

Subversion, Patriarchy, Gender discrimination, Identity

III. Introduction

The stories of the Mahabharata have been passed down through generations, transmitting moral, cultural, and ethical values as well as some philosophical truths. Modern female writers often aim to give a voice to the voiceless, representing the oppressed individuals who are routinely overlooked in the epic stories of Indian mythology. In a world where gender discrimination is pervasive and women are often viewed as the "other" or the inferior sex, there is an urgent need for strong, self-reliant female role models. The Mahabharata, an ancient Hindu epic, offers us powerful female characters who, despite facing social injustices perpetuated by patriarchy, displayed the bravery and determination to rise above their circumstances.

IV. Hindu Epics

Indian novelist Kavita Kane excels in retelling the stories found in the Hindu epics, such as the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. Her first novel, *Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen*, was highly successful and paved the way for her other works, including *Sita's Sister*, *The Fisher Queen's Dynasty*, *Menaka's Choice*, *Ahalya's Awakening*, and *Lanka's Princess*. Kane often narrates the stories from the perspective of marginalized individuals, giving them a new dimension. The male-centric Mahabharata traditionally focuses on the heroics and prowess of legendary fighters such as Bhishma, Guru Dronacharya, King Drupad, the Pandavas (sons of King Pandu), and the Kauravas (sons of King Dhritarashtra). Despite having a significant presence in the Mahabharata, Satyavati is not typically praised as the ideal woman. She is often portrayed with a stigmatized social background, and she is said to be a cunning, ambitious woman who would go to any lengths, even committing heinous acts of cruelty, to satisfy her hunger for power. Some even believe that Satyavati was the primary cause of the Kuru dynasty's demise, despite her efforts to uphold the family tradition. Through her revisionist novel *The Fisher Queen's Dynasty*, Kavita Kane challenges patriarchal notions about women and provides neglected, underappreciated characters with the opportunity to express their repressed emotions and aspirations.

Satyavati's dark skin earned her the nickname Kali. She was the unacknowledged daughter of Uparichara Vasu, the king of Chedi, and a fisherwoman. A cursed apsara named Adrika, in the form of a fish, consumed the king's semen when he spilled it in a fit of ecstasy. The fish later gave

birth to a boy and a girl, and the girl was given to Dasharaj, a poor chieftain of a fisher village, while the son was taken by the king. Parental abandonment of daughters was not a recent phenomenon. A.S. Altekar (2014) notes, ¹“the birth of a girl was generally an unwelcome event in ancient times in all patriarchal societies” (3). Sons were valued more than daughters, as they were considered the family’s financial asset. Kane’s narrative suggests that Satyavati became driven to become a queen after her father abandoned her, which planted the seed of a desire for a life she had not had since childhood. She had to work hard to support herself, ferrying people across the Yamuna River, while her brother lived a life of royal luxury.

Kane characterizes Satyavati’s resentment: ²“She detested the way the nobles and royalty lived their lives, while she was cursed to a life of hard work and stench, with no hope of ever bridging the gap” (10). Kane reveals that Satyavati’s mother was actually Dasharaj’s sister, a fisherwoman, rather than an apsara. King Vasu fabricated the tale about Satyavati’s birth to preserve his reputation. The myth involving Uparichara’s ³“joyful spurt of semen” in the forest, leading to the fish’s consumption of it, may be an elaborate story to cover up the king’s indiscretion with a fisherwoman (Pattanaik, 2010, 59). In Kane’s revisionist narrative, Satyavati’s mother is portrayed as a fisherwoman who was abandoned by King Vasu. This version highlights the predicament of lower-class women, who are often treated as mere objects of sex and face double disadvantage. As Simone de Beauvoir (2011) writes in *The Second Sex*, ⁴“She is nothing other than what man decides; she is thus called the sex, meaning that the male sees her essentially as a sexed being; for him, she is sex [...] He is the subject; he is the Absolute” (25).

V. Women Imotion and Disires

However, patriarchal oppressors who see women as mere objects of sex could never harm Satyavati. Kane delves deeply into Satyavati’s mind, articulating her repressed emotions and desires that are not included in the original Mahabharata. Kane’s retelling of the Mahabharata gives Satyavati’s existence a new dimension, particularly through the catalyst action of Rishi Parashar. In the original epic, Satyavati is depicted as the victim of Rishi Parashar’s sexual advances, and the benefits she receives from him are portrayed as acts of his kindness. In Kane’s version, however, Satyavati is a grounded, self-assured woman. Although Parashar attempts to seduce her, Satyavati’s sharp intelligence prevents her from yielding to his sensual demands without establishing three conditions: uncompromised virginity, perpetual youth, and a fragrant body. Satyavati gives birth to Vyas, Parashar’s child, but she does not want the responsibility of raising him. She entrusts her son’s father with custody and moves on, unwilling to carry the shame of being an unmarried mother.

Satyavati, on the other hand, desired an honorable existence through the holy union of matrimony. She declined to live as an ascetic at an ashram and marry a rishi. She was aware that she had inherited the traits of a queen and that she was a princess by birth. She was driven to reclaim her rightful birthright at all times. Satyavati disobeyed moral laws that were intended solely to control women. She desired to use her lust and beauty to seduce men in order to fulfill her ambition. She was aware that her bold attitude would be perceived by society as unethical. She would much rather be regarded by society as a cunning person than as a simple victim of an exaggerated moral code. She firmly said, "If men can use women, why can't women get something from men?" (32) without seeing anything wrong. Lust and beauty were merely means to an end. She was skilled at using circumstances to her advantage and achieving her goals by hinting at her plans. With Parashar’s blessing, she developed a captivating beauty that could draw in anyone she desired. Because of her luck, Satyavati attracted the attention of Shantanu, the king of Hastinapur,

¹ Altekar, A.S. *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization*. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, Delhi, 2014.

² Kane, Kavita. *The Fisher Queen’s Dynasty*. Westland Publications Ltd, 2017

³ Pattanaik, Devdutt. *Jaya: An Illustrated Retelling of the Mahabharata*. Penguin India, 2010.

⁴ Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. London: Vintage Books, a Division of Random House, Inc., New York. p. 25, 2011.

who wanted to marry her. However, she opposed joining Shantanu's harem. She desired to wed Shantanu in order to become the queen of Hastinapur. Her father, Dasharaj, took things a step further, as he desired Satyawati's child to succeed his mother as the heir to the Hastinapur monarchy, in addition to securing his daughter's future.

Shantanu found these circumstances difficult, as he had already proclaimed Devavrat, his first son by Ganga, his first wife, to be the future monarch. Devavrat found a solution when he vowed to remain single for the rest of his life and to never marry in order to ensure his father's happiness. That's why Satyawati asserts that Devavrat adopted the name Bhishma after taking the horrible vow. The entire story was altered by this one oath. It is presumed that if Bhishma had not made that commitment, the tale might have turned out differently.

According to feminist critic V. Geeta (2009), 'patriarchy' is a system of authority in which men in general, and father figures in particular, have control over the home and society. Not only are women subjugated, but men and other lesser members of society are also subject to dominance. It seems to be a crucial idea in literature to recognize a society in which women are denied the same rights and liberties that men are granted as a natural state of birth. In India, women are glorified when they follow the patriarchal society's code of behavior, which includes being obedient daughters, loving wives, and nurturing mothers.

According to Manu (2012), the human race's ancestor, women should be maintained under the control of the male members of their family as stipulated in the Manusmriti, the collection of human rules. A woman is cared for by her father before marriage, takes charge of her spouse afterward, and eventually must rely on her sons for support. A woman is never suitable for self-reliance. However, Satyawati's independence and free will subvert the patriarchal society's stereotypes. She made her living before getting married by transporting passengers across the Yamuna River. Her own goals were more expansive because they affected the well-being of her fishing community. She wasn't just concerned about her family; she also helped the fishing community find solutions to a number of issues. Since fishermen were the weaker and more marginalized segment of society, she was always concerned with improving and elevating their community. She reminded the King of the injustice done to her people, raising her voice in the process.

The transformation of Satyawati into a stunning madonna with an alluring body scent and the queen of Hastinapur is remarkable. She began her life as a simple fisher girl who was scorned and disregarded due to her dark skin and foul body odor. Even though the kingdom's populace ignored Satyawati, over time, her skill at diplomacy and administration won over the people's hearts. Following the passing of her spouse and eldest child, she began to worry much about the heir apparent. She grew fervent in her desire to marry her son Vichitravirya as soon as possible. For political reasons, Satyawati coerced Bhishma into kidnapping three Kashi princesses: "By marrying all three of them into Hastinapur, Kashi will be solely ours. If the three princesses marry three different suitors, we will be in conflict with them all our lives" (213). Satyawati reminded Bhishma that royals had eight different kinds of weddings when he justified not kidnapping the three princesses against their will. One is the "practice of veershulkaa," in which the suitor, having vanquished the other suitors, demonstrates his courage and strength by taking the bride. Given that Vichitravirya lacked the physical strength to do this assignment, Satyawati instructed Bhishma to act on his brother's behalf. This had fatal results for Bhishma. Bhishma forcibly brought Ambalika, Ambika, and Amba, the three sisters, to be his brother's wives. Amba confessed to being in love with King Shalva before the marriage ceremony, which prevented her from marrying Vichitravirya. She was brought back to Shalva by Bhishma, but he would not accept her since he considered his honor as a Kshatriya to be more important than his love. That was the way with women. Amba was unable to return to her father. She requested Bhishma to marry her, holding him accountable for her terrible situation, but he declined due to his unbreakable celibacy vow. One of the most formidable female characters in the Mahabharata, Amba fell prey to the system of patriarchy in society. She is a living example of what a woman filled with wrath is capable of. Her face was ablaze with the desire for vengeance. Amba was prepared to die and committed suicide by plunging into a self-

made pyre after Lord Shiva granted her wish for retribution in her next life. Amba killed Bhishma in her next birth as Shikhandini, fulfilling her wish to do so.

There was once a notion that man played a significant role in the genesis myth. This long-held notion was disproved by Satyawati, who demonstrated that women are important and men are unimportant in the creation myth. Her last son passed away without leaving a successor to the Hastinapur throne. Though she was disappointed with herself, she refrained from letting her mental and emotional suffering break Hastinapur into pieces. She acted in a royal manner. She declared, "I will not be defeated," (270) demonstrating her resolute intention to maintain her position of power no matter what. "I need to figure something out." She would do whatever it took to carry on the tradition. She begged Bhishma to forsake his vow of celibacy and wed the daughters of his brother. She made every effort to sway Bhishma, but in vain. She never hesitated to call upon her abandoned son, Vyas, when she could find no other option. She persuaded him to use niyog to father her daughters-in-law's children. A husband's strategy of generating children, known as Niyog, involves asking his wife to conceive a child through another man. Satyawati was not allowed to force her daughters-in-law to follow the rule, but she broke it because she was adamant about carrying on the family tradition. "They will have to obey me for the sake of the crown" (282). Evidently, this demonstrates Satyawati's brutality and lack of morality, but by doing this, she was empowering her daughters-in-law to challenge the patriarchal notion that men have a crucial role in fathering the next generation. "[...] it is the women who give birth and create new life, a new hope, by perpetuating their family line, their dynasty, their clan, their race. Though men claim it to be theirs, in the name of patriarchy" (284). Beyond her wildest dreams, Satyawati envisioned her dynasty's heirs. Though none of her three heirs were ideal candidates for the throne, as the blind sons of a maidservant, Dhritarashtra, Pandu, and Vidur were all born lowborn and incapable of becoming kings, notwithstanding Vidur's perfection. On the grounds of caste and class, Satyawati questioned this marginalization: "Why can we not make new laws, new rules that break shackles, instead of changing us? If I, a fisher girl, could be queen, I shall see to it that a maid's son gets his rights!" (314).

The biggest issue for a woman is to secure her place in society. Women are society's first indicators of change. In today's world, meeting this basic requirement remains the biggest challenge. There cannot be a revolution without the advancement of women. Women have clearly suffered for various reasons throughout history. Their identity problem, stemming from their lack of a safe place to call home, is the primary barrier to their advancement in life. To preserve their uniqueness, they are swaying like a pendulum. They have always been subordinated due to a lack of accessibility. Since ancient times, there has been a serious debate about women's status. This debate covers a wide range of topics, including female education, economic empowerment, political engagement, rape, female foeticide, domestic abuse, and the dowry system. Various social norms imposed by patriarchal dominance deprive women of their fundamental rights across the globe. The advancement of civilization is hindered by this gender imbalance. In Indian culture, women are referred to as "Ardhangini," or the better half, and it would be impossible to complete any important task without them. Therefore, they occupy positions of equality with men. But does this become tangible in reality? Contemporary Indian English fiction writers have made an effort to portray women's identities and roles in both the home and society.

VI. Conclusion

During the Mahabharata era, women's freedom of expression was limited. In that period, Satyawati, Kunti, and Draupadi were all extremely powerful personalities. One of the most misinterpreted figures in the Mahabharata is Satyawati. The other version of the Mahabharata by Kavita Kane, *The Fisher Queen's Dynasty*, expertly captures the progression and maturation of Satyawati's life. She is portrayed as a strong, self-reliant woman who can stand up for herself and make her own judgments. Her life is a tale of metamorphosis: from a fisher girl to a queen, from Kali to Satyawati, and from Matsyagandha to Yojanagandha. She took control of her own destiny and achieved her goals. Satyawati was able to participate in conversations and debates, be pragmatic, and formulate reasonable questions. Her obsession with having her own child become

the king of Hastinapur and the strategies she used to achieve this goal served as her means of rebellion against the patriarchal system that upholds the lineage of the fathers. Her transition from a private to a public space, designed for men rather than women, is symbolized by her transformation from a fisher girl to a queen. Her conception of women as creators deviates drastically from conventional patriarchal viewpoints. Throughout the Mahabharata, Satyawati is portrayed as the most powerful and esteemed advisor to the Kauravas and Pandavas, serving as a significant figure in the life of the venerable Bhishma and as the mother of the great sage Vyasa.

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Stri-Dharma *versus* feminist resistance: An indological reading of thrity umrigar's *The space between us*

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I. Abstract

Thrity Umrigar's *The Space Between Us* illuminates the tangled web of caste, class, and patriarchal stigma embodied in the lives of Bhima, Maya, and Serabai. This article engages feminist theory—particularly intersectional and Dalit feminist interventions, and Indological constructs such as *aśuddhi* (ritual impurity), *strī-dharma* (gendered duty), *mokṣa* (liberation), and *saṃsāra* (cyclical suffering). These frameworks reveal how the novel stages women's experiences not merely as gendered subjugation but as layered struggles shaped by caste hierarchies, economic deprivation, and inherited cultural codes. Bhima's condemnation of Maya's pregnancy exemplifies how patriarchal notions of chastity and honour are unwittingly 'passed down like a family heirloom.' In addition to it, the spatial reality of the slum—marked by open drains and the indignity of a shared lavatory—operates as a metaphor for *aśuddhi*. It underscores how systemic lack of basic amenities intersects with ritual notions of impurity to reinforce exclusion. Meanwhile, Maya's yearning to become an avian and escape from shame symbolizes her aspiration to transcend the suffocating cycle of *saṃsāra* and claim a horizon of freedom.

Serabai, by contrast, embodies a feminist paradox. Once a victim of domestic tyranny, she later enforces codes of propriety upon others. This reflects how structures of suffering can reproduce themselves across social relations. Her bond with Bhima entrench both solidarity and division among women. This inter-generational dynamic finds its counterpart in the novel's portrayal of men: Viraf's objectification of women is starkly juxtaposed with Freddy's *sāttvic* masculinity, exposing patriarchy's double standards. Similarly, the contrast between Dinaz's celebrated pregnancy and Maya's vilified one foregrounds how reproductive labour becomes differently valued depending on caste, class, and social standing. Dalit feminist critiques articulated by Sharmila Rege, Jyotirao Phule, and B. R. Ambedkar further sharpen this analysis by exposing how Brahmanical patriarchy weaponized notions of purity to sustain hierarchical social order. Within this matrix, survival itself emerges as a form of *śakti*—a power not of overt revolt but of endurance and quiet persistence. Umrigar inscribes this ethic of resilience in Bhima's final act of releasing balloons at the seashore. Her gesture acknowledges the weight of *karma* and the possibility of forward motion.

II. Keywords

Indology, Dalit feminism, *strī-dharma*, *aśuddhi*, *mokṣa*, *saṃsāra*, *survivalist śakti*, caste, class, patriarchy, ritual impurity, subaltern, autonomy, motherhood.

Feminist discourse in India has undergone a paradigmatic shift from gender-exclusive lens to a nuanced recognition of the layered intersections of caste, class, religion, and regional specificities. Kumkum Sangari and Kumkum Roy have foregrounded the notion that women's subjectivities are embedded within a constellation of "multiple identities" (4)¹ produced by the interplay of social hierarchies and ideological formations. This idea exposes that the oppression of women can be understood in other forms of marginalization. Dalit feminist interventions have further destabilized the hegemonic narratives of mainstream feminism. In this context, Sharmila Rege's Dalit standpoint exposes the hermeneutical silencing of Dalit women whose histories and lived realities are rendered peripheral to dominant feminist frameworks.

Her critique foregrounds the epistemic violence inherent in such exclusions while simultaneously recuperating subaltern women's experiences as legitimate sites of knowledge-production. This layered feminist discourse provides a critical scaffolding for reading Thrity Umrigar's novel *The Space Between Us*. The characters in the novel are not merely victims of patriarchal subjugation, but they are also refracted through their caste, class, and religious position. Here, domination and subordination are lived realities that shape, constrain, and occasionally enable

¹ Roy, Kumkum, editor. *The Power of Gender and the Gender of Power: Explorations in Early Indian History*. Oxford University Press, 2010.

their modes of self-fashioning. Indology, in its contemporary scholarly orientation, complements this feminist framework by functioning as both a repository of India's civilization memory and as a critical apparatus for examining the *longue durée* of cultural and textual traditions.

Rather than treating myths, scriptures, and ritual practices as static inheritances, Indological inquiry interrogates the processes through which these discourses are appropriated and contested in modern consciousness. Wendy Doniger and Sheldon Pollock have shown that Indian textual traditions are deeply ambivalent: they simultaneously reinforce hierarchies of caste, gender, and power. When brought into dialogue with feminist hermeneutics, Indology extends its analytical reach to uncover how gendered subjectivities are produced and regulated within socio-religious matrices. In this light, Umrigar's novel functions as a cultural palimpsest, where sediment norms of patriarchy and caste oppression are re-inscribed and resisted, foregrounding the dialectic of domination and survival that structures her characters' lived realities.

It is within this intersectional and Indological frame that *The Space Between Us* foregrounds two central female figures—Bhima, the domestic worker, and Serabai, the middle-class widow. Their lives are bound together by intimacy yet divided by class and caste. Feminist criticism identifies this relational paradox as a hallmark of patriarchal societies: women share emotional labour, but they remain entrenched in structures of inequality. As bell hooks reminds us, “sisterhood is still possible. But it will not happen if women deny the differences between us” (43)². Sera empathize with Bhima's suffering, but her complicity in class privilege ensures that an invisible boundary persists between them.

This fraught dynamic finds its most intense expression in Bhima's existential crisis when confronted with Maya's illicit pregnancy. Her denunciation of Maya as a destroyer of moral values reveals her internal patriarchal codes that have historically burdened women with the responsibility of safeguarding family honour. As Judith Butler notes, “gender norms are not merely internalized, but they work as a regulatory ideal that produces the very subjects it governs” (23)³. Bhima's response reflects personal outrage and disciplining force of patriarchy that scripts women into custodians of chastity and morality. Her turmoil is compounded by the oppressive spatiality of the slum: its open drains, stench, and communal toilets stand as corporeal metaphors for social chaos, echoing Indological notions of *asuddhi* (impurity). Meantime, Maya, the embodiment of the younger generation, struggles for self-hood. Her imprisonment inside the house symbolizes punishment for transgressing inherited moral boundaries. Bhima's misinterpretation of Maya's agoraphobia and withdrawal as laziness exposes the generational rift.

Amidst this strain, Dinaz emerges as a source of comfort for Bhima. She shields Bhima from Sera's rebuke for tardiness. Yet, this fragile moment of solidarity is disrupted by the insidious undercurrents of patriarchal chauvinism embodied in Viraf's corrosive remark. He trivializes Dinaz's professional achievement as an extension of her physical allure. Simone de Beauvoir captures this reduction succinctly: “Humanity is male, and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him” (26)⁴. Viraf's insinuation, cloaked in feigned innocence, exemplifies the deeply ingrained male prerogative to sexualize women's labour. This phenomenon is widely criticized by feminists as the objectification of female agency. Martha Nussbaum identifies this dynamic as the process whereby women are treated as “instruments of the purposes of others” (257)⁵, thereby stripping their autonomy. Sera's failure to discern the latent misogyny in Viraf's suspicion underscores her entrapment within patriarchal frameworks—the same frameworks that once dictated her life through her husband Feroz and her mother-in-law, Banu.

Banu's matriarchal tyranny and Feroz's conjugal dominance rendered Sera a prisoner of domesticity. This reflects the cyclicity of *stri-dharma*—the culturally inscribed duty of women to uphold familial honour through submission. As Sharmila Rege observes, “the ideal woman is

² Hooks, bell. *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. South End Press, 1984.

³ Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge, 1990.

⁴ Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Translated by H. M. Parshley, Vintage, 2011.

⁵ Nussbaum, Martha C. *Sex and Social Justice*. Oxford University Press, 1999.

always produced in relation to caste, community and class structures” (72)⁶, highlighting how Sera’s identity as the dutiful wife was shaped less by choice and more by patriarchal dictates. She ‘turn deaf ears’ to Aban’s admonition that economic independence is the fulcrum of female dignity within the in-laws’ household. Her tragic attempt to embody the ideal wife leads her to face Banu’s regressive dictum. Her marriage confines her within gilded chains of domesticity. Serabai’s life epitomizes the tragic paradox of a woman caught between patriarchal authority and matriarchal tyranny.

Her intelligence and practical reasoning are constantly thwarted by the irrationality of tradition and the violence of her husband, Feroz. The physical abuse from Feroz silences Sera’s reasoning capacity. Banu’s shrill accusations during Sera’s menstruation, branding her a pollutant within the sacred household space, exemplify Indological notions of *asuddhi* (ritual impurity) weaponized as domination. Such ritual policing exposes what Ambedkar denounced as “The religion ceases to be a moral guide and becomes an engine of oppression” (43)⁷.

Prayer here, rather than liberating, calcifies Banu’s cunningness. As Kierkegaard insightfully remarked, “Prayer does not change God, but it changes the one who prays” (34)⁸. In Banu’s case, it did not elevate her spirit but hardened her resolve to perpetuate tyranny. In contrast, Freddy, her father-in-law, emerges as a figure of *sattva*. He offers Sera an emotional reprieve, embodying an alternative masculinity that values compassion over control. Yet, Sera’s endurance of humiliation, ranging from Feroz’s baseless accusations of flirtation to his shame-inducing strokes through candle-holder reflects his sadism. Sera clings to marriage despite its corrosive hypocrisies because the societal strictures equate female worth with marital endurance. Feroz’s death fills her with relaxation than sorrow. His absence liberates her from servility, rage, and pretense. Indologically, her trajectory resonates with the cycle of karma, where suffering through the shackles of *stri-dharma* eventually paves the way for emancipation. Yet, the irony deepens in Sera’s petty cruelty toward her paralyzed oppressor. Pinching Banu’s withered cheeks affords her momentary catharsis. As Bell hooks describes it as “the tragic cycle wherein the oppressed internalize domination and seek to reclaim power through acts of replication” (31)⁹.

Even though Sera undergoes oppression, she replicates it by contrasting Maya’s illicit pregnancy and Dinaz’s legitimate one. She embraces patriarchal double standards that circumscribes female sexuality, motherhood, and honour. Dinaz’s pregnancy is celebrated as a harbinger of joy, while Maya’s condition is cast as a curse that contaminates familial happiness. This double standard exposes the cultural dichotomy wherein the foetus, sanctified within wedlock, becomes a vessel of continuity, but out of wedlock is stigmatized as a site of shame and pollution. This stigma is evident when Sera prevents Bhima from discussing Maya’s pregnancy in the presence of Dinaz. Her gratitude towards Sera stems from the latter’s role as patron in Maya’s education. Rege insists this as “education for the oppressed remains mediated by the charity of the privileged” (81)¹⁰. Bhima’s ingrained sense of gratitude compels her to seek the latter’s counsel regarding Maya’s uncertain future. Ironically, Sera, herself a victim of systemic oppression, suggests Bhima to identify the perpetrator and assess whether he is worthy to marry Maya. Instead of evaluating the ethical and psychological implications of such advice, Bhima adopts Sera’s prescription.

She pressurizes Maya with relentless interrogation to disclose the name of her molester. Unable to endure her grandmother’s coercion, Maya capitulates her classmate Ashok as a molester. Bhima’s approach to Ashok leads her to clutches of class and gender inequality. This is evident through clerk’s assassination of Bhima’s character. His offensive words expose the violence of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. Bhima tolerates his uncivilized behaviour for the sake of

⁶ Rege, Sharmila. *Writing Caste, Writing Gender: Narrating Dalit Women’s Testimonios*. Zubaan, 2006.

⁷ Ambedkar, B. R. *Annihilation of Caste*. 1936. Critical edition edited by S. Anand, Navayana, 2014.

⁸ Kierkegaard, Søren. *Purity of Heart Is to Will One Thing*. Translated by Douglas V. Steere, Harper Torchbooks, 1956.

⁹ Hooks, bell. *Ain’t I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism*. South End Press, 1981.

¹⁰ Rege, Sharmila. *Writing Caste, Writing Gender: Narrating Dalit Women’s Testimonios*. Zubaan, 2006

safeguarding Maya's future. Her sacrifice resonates with Ambedkar's claim that "caste is not just a division of labour, it is a division of labourers" (47)¹¹. Her meeting with Ashok Malhotra to trigger his responsibility as father ends in paranoia. He justifies himself as an innocent and follower of traditional beliefs. He further insults Bhima by questioning her intention of spoiling his reputation in the college. The insults inflicted upon Bhima crystallizes into rage, culminating in her physical assault on Maya. Maya, instead of feeling guilty, turns the accusation back on Bhima. She criticizes her for damaging her reputation in the college. This painful confrontation dramatizes Rege's assertion that "Dalit women are doubly marginalized—by patriarchy within and Brahmanism without" (13)¹².

Maya's irresponsible behaviour leads Sera to consider her as an inadvertent destroyer of Bhima's spirit. Sera advises Bhima to convince Maya to have an abortion, seeing it as the only way to protect Maya's future and maintain the family's honour. Bhima accepts Sera's advice without question and pressures Maya to follow it. Although she notices Maya's descent into despair and nothingness caused by her self-imposed isolation, Bhima does not offer comfort. Instead she takes on the role of enforcing Sera's decision. Sharmila Rege identifies this as "the tragic complicity of the oppressed in reproducing dominant ideologies" (83)¹³. Bhima's inability to understand Maya's pain deepens her depression, eventually pushing her to express a desperate wish for escape. Maya reveals her longing to become a bird and fly away to a place where her shame and suffering remains unknown. This echoes the Indological motif of *moksha*, liberation from worldly dishonour and entanglements. Bhima consoles Maya by insisting abortion as the only way to escape social shame. This shows her form of survivalist feminism, which is driven less by empowerment and more by the fear of stigma. Ambedkar cautions against this mindset when he writes that "the emancipation of the mind and soul is the necessary preliminary for the political expansion of the people" (64)¹⁴.

Bhima, however, cannot reach this kind of emancipation because her thinking is limited by the pressures of honour and survival. When Maya finally agrees to the abortion, she insists on Sera's accompaniment of her to the hospital. Although Maya's preference for Sera deeply wounds Bhima, she rationalizes it by attributing Sera's access to private hospitals that ensure superior medical care that Bhima fails to provide. Bhima's dependence on Sera highlights the structural inequalities of class and caste that prevent working-class women from accessing equal healthcare. As Simon de Beauvoir points out, "poverty exacerbates the dependence of women, for it keeps them at the mercy of others for survival" (628)¹⁵.

The abortion unmasks how the womb becomes a contested battleground where stri-dharma and honour wrestle with Maya's autonomy and desire. Her post-abortion desolation exemplifies what Sharmila Rege calls the "colonization of women's bodies by caste and community honour" (72)¹⁶. The idea of surf therapy emerges in Bhima's mind as a potential means to restore Maya's fractured psyche. She observes the sudden brightness in Maya's eyes upon hearing their proposed outing to the beach. In that moment, Bhima chastises herself for having succumbed to a mechanical existence. This resonates with T. S. Eliot's idea in *The Waste Land* as "each man fixed his eyes before his feet. Flowed up the hill and down King William Street, to where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours. With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine" (60-63)¹⁷. As Eliot laments that human life is dulled by routinization, Bhima realizes that dawn and dusk have reminded her of wage work rather than inner suffering of her granddaughter. This highlights the economic compulsions of the working class, where subsistence needs often eclipse affective care.

¹¹ Ambedkar, B. R. *Annihilation of Caste*. 1936. Critical edition edited by S. Anand, Navayana, 2014.

¹² Rege, Sharmila. *Writing Caste, Writing Gender: Narrating Dalit Women's Testimonios*. Zubaan, 2006.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ambedkar, B. R. *Annihilation of Caste*. 1936. Critical edition edited by S. Anand, Navayana, 2014.

¹⁵ Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Translated by H. M. Parshley, Vintage, 2011.

¹⁶ Rege, Sharmila. *Writing Caste, Writing Gender: Narrating Dalit Women's Testimonios*. Zubaan, 2006.

¹⁷ Eliot, T. S. *The Waste Land*. 1922. Edited by Michael North, W. W. Norton, 2001.

However, surf therapy introduces a space of renewal. Clinical studies affirm its efficacy in building confidence, regulating emotions, reducing alienation, and activating the parasympathetic nervous system to restore psychological balance. For Maya, the susurrations of the waves erase her painful memories and lead her back to her earlier state of happiness. This encounter with the water resonates with traditional Indian cosmology, where the ocean (*samudra*) symbolizes renewal. Maya's therapeutic engagement with the sea reflects duality: her trauma is the poison she endures, while her resilience is the nectar that emerges from the same source. In this way, the ocean functions as a natural element for existential transformation. She eagerly inquires about her grandfather, father and mother.

Nostalgia pervades Bhima as she recalls Gopal and the adolescent desires that shaped their youthful bond. Gopal's unconventional courtship by cycling beside Bhima's bus while singing with unabashed vigor evokes both embarrassment and delight. Though Bhima outwardly curses him, she inwardly harbors deep concern and affection. His sudden absence intensifies her emotional conflict. This aligns with the Indological conception of *śṛṅgāra rasa*, where longing and affection are heightened by separation and vulnerability. His earnest promise of lifelong care, wins the approval of Bhima's father, leading to their marriage. Yet, the transition into conjugal life overwhelms both with the weight of responsibility. Together they raise two children, Pooja and Amit, but a critical ideological rift emerges regarding education.

Gopal, insists the necessity of education for safeguarding Pooja's future, but Bhima dismisses it by insisting her role as wife. Their life remains harmonious until Gopal's accident at work, which exposes the harsh intersection of poverty, illiteracy, and exploitation. Her inability to comprehend the legal agreement leads to affix her thumb impression. From an Indological perspective, this aligns with the *karma-phala* doctrine, where past neglect of education generates her present suffering. In the hospital, Bhima experiences both humiliation and hope. The caste prejudice of Feroz reaffirms her marginalization within a rigidly stratified society. The state-run hospital itself becomes a microcosm of systemic inefficiency and disregard for working-class lives. This mirrors the Indological critique of *adharma* where institutions fail to uphold justice for the vulnerable.

Gopal's physical impairment diminishes his capacity for labour and initiates his dismissal from employment. His termination is a reflection of systemic exploitation, where the vulnerable are discarded once they are deemed unproductive. The decisive moment comes through Bhima's thumb impression, coerced into acknowledging his voluntary resignation. This act, borne of her illiteracy, silences Gopal's resistance. It serves as an instance for the aristocrats use of ignorance as a weapon to exploit the proletariat. In the Indological framework, the thumb—an ancient signifier of identity and agency becomes here a site of disenfranchisement. This results as Gopal's descent into extreme alcoholism reorders his priorities, placing alcohol above the well-being of his ailing son. Bhima's desperate act of confronting him in a bar and beating him with a broom signifies her refusal to endure his neglect.

Subsequently, Gopal's deserts her by leaving a letter in which he addresses Bhima as the 'queen of my dreams'. He apologizes to her for making her life tragic. He insists his yearning for his ancestral homeland reflects a distorted echo of *vānaprastha*—the stage of withdrawal into nature in pursuit of detachment and inner peace. This symbolizes the rupture of marital vows and the dissolution of *grhastha dharma*. Bhima overcomes the pain of Gopal's desertion by considering Pooja as a source of survival. That too gets collapsed when receives the call from Delhi that her daughter and Son-in-law is in serious condition due to AIDS. The decayed state of government hospital and the physician's phlegmatic contempt further induces trauma in her. Her psychological pain deepens upon learning of Pooja and Raju's confirmed mortality; the existential sense of *śūnyatā* (nothingness) overwhelms her, as she is forced by fate to witness the death of the very daughter she considered her lifeline. Yet, in a paradox of grief, Bhima shoulders the responsibility of cremating both her daughter and son-in-law, transforming trauma into duty.

Even after the death of Pooja and Raju, Bhima cope with sufferings by considering Maya as the essence for her existence. The interaction about family gets diverted when Bhima and Maya encounter Serabai, Dinaz, and Viraf. It becomes the moment of rupture in trust and kinship. Bhima

initially receives them with surprise and courtesy, but the interaction quickly deteriorates when Viraf exhibits visible discomfort in facing Maya. Bhima's doubts Viraf's role in Maya's pregnancy. She brands her granddaughter a traitor that results in Maya's outburst. She reveals Viraf as a seducer. She also insists his demand to erase all evidence of their relationship underscores his patriarchal impunity. Viraf's arrogance manifests in his attempt to shift the blame onto Maya, accusing her of enticing him into sexual advances. Maya's revelation forces Bhima to confront her misplaced loyalty. Her ignorance and blind trust are exploited by upper-class privilege. Kierkegaard explains this paradox: "There are two ways to be fooled. One is to believe what isn't true; the other is to refuse to believe what is true" (227).¹⁸

Bhima discerns the venom concealed within Viraf's feigned innocence. The following morning, her silence during the car ride heightens his suspicion. To safeguard his social façade, he accuses her of theft, weaponizing her economic precarity to expel her from the household. Bhima's protest against his betrayal proves futile. Sera casts her out from the employment. This moment signifies Bhima's transition from the role of *sevaka* (faithful servant) to the marginalized figure. Seeking solace, she turns to the sea. On the beach, she purchases balloons and releases them skyward. This symbolic gesture becomes an act of catharsis of her burdens. Though deprived of livelihood, Bhima experiences an unexpected inner lightness.

III. Conclusion

In *The Space Between Us*, Umrigar projects a poignant negotiation between stri-dharma and feminist resistance. She exposes how women's lives oscillate between prescribed duties and the search for inner freedom. Bhima's endurance, rooted in her love for Maya, and Serabai's quiet reclamation of dignity through Dinaz, reveal how essence sustains women against relentless *duḥkha*. Their resilience signifies a subtle but radical refusal to remain bound by oppressive structures. Umrigar illuminates the indomitable spirit of subaltern women and reframes their survival as a form of feminist resistance, where the burden of suffering transforms into the strength of becoming. Thus, the novel inscribes women's endurance within an Indological continuum while simultaneously carving space for agency beyond patriarchal dictates.

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¹⁸ Kierkegaard, Søren. *Works of Love*. Translated by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Harper Perennial, 2009.

Education and corruption: A critical examination of Chetan Bhagat's *Revolution 2020*

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I. Abstract

Chetan Bhagat's *Revolution 2020* examines the corruption and moral fracture that dominate India's education system. The novel presents education as a structure where ambition, greed, and social inequality converge. In this system, the pursuit of learning becomes a pursuit of power and wealth. Gopal, Raghav, and Aarti stand as representative figures: Gopal embodies the collapse of integrity, Raghav embodies the endurance of idealism, and Aarti reflects the pressure of convention. The setting of Varanasi, a city associated with spiritual inheritance, intensifies the contrast between moral decay and inherited ideals. Through its portrayal of private colleges, coaching institutes, and political influence, the novel exposes the alliance between education and commerce. Bhagat interprets education as a mirror of the nation's social condition, where progress depends on compromise. The corruption within this system arises from structural inequality rather than individual failure. The paper interprets *Revolution 2020* as a moral and social allegory that traces the conversion of education into a commercial enterprise. Bhagat's vision affirms the need for ethical reform, intellectual integrity, and renewed faith in education as a means of collective advancement.

II. Key Words

Education System, Corruption, Ambition and Inequality, Moral Decline, Social Commentary

III. Introduction

The story is set in Varanasi, where Gopal, Aarti, and Raghav have been close friends since school. Gopal falls in love with Aarti, but she makes it clear that she values their friendship and is not ready for a relationship. Both boys dream of getting into top engineering colleges. Raghav achieves an excellent rank, while Gopal performs poorly. Hoping to improve, Gopal moves to Kota for coaching. During his absence, Aarti and Raghav grow close and fall in love. When Aarti tells Gopal about their relationship, he feels betrayed and stops speaking to her. His studies suffer as a result. Later, Gopal reconnects with Aarti and begins studying seriously again, but he fails to secure a good rank the second time as well. Soon after, his father dies, leaving him deeply distressed. Meanwhile, Raghav and Aarti's relationship grows stronger. Raghav discovers his calling in journalism and starts writing against corruption. Gopal's life takes a new turn when he meets MLA Shukla, a powerful politician who offers to build a private engineering college on Gopal's family land. Gopal accepts the offer and becomes the college's director. Though the venture brings him wealth and status, it is built on bribery and political manipulation. Gopal becomes increasingly uncomfortable with the dishonesty that fuels his success. When Raghav exposes the corruption behind the college in a newspaper article, MLA Shukla and Gopal retaliate by getting him dismissed. Undeterred, Raghav launches his own newspaper, *Revolution 2020*, to fight for truth and justice. The government soon shuts it down, leaving him jobless and disheartened. Raghav's growing obsession with activism strains his relationship with Aarti. During this period, she reconnects with Gopal, and their renewed friendship gradually turns into an affair. Aarti confesses her love for him, and Gopal plans to tell Raghav the truth. However, a visit to Raghav's office changes his mind when he meets a poor farmer seeking help. The moment forces Gopal to reflect on his own life of greed and moral failure. He realises that Raghav's honesty and purpose give him

a dignity that money cannot buy, and that Aarti's heart truly belongs to Raghav. To end their affair, Gopal deliberately stages a scene with two prostitutes so that Aarti will see him as unfaithful. Heartbroken, she leaves him and returns to Raghav. Gopal quietly helps Raghav get his job back and encourages him to enter politics. Raghav and Aarti eventually marry. Gopal becomes a successful businessman but remains lonely and emotionally wounded. Though he sacrificed his love to protect Aarti's happiness, he continues to doubt his own goodness. The author, after listening to his story, assures him that he is indeed a good man. ChetanBhagat's *Revolution 2020* explores the intersection of education, ambition, and corruption in modern India.¹ Set against the moral and spiritual backdrop of Varanasi, the novel contrasts faith and integrity with greed and moral decline. Education, once viewed as a path to progress, becomes a tool for exploitation. The system that promises equality instead rewards manipulation and power.²

Through Gopal Mishra, RaghavKashyap, and Aarti Pradhan, Bhagat portrays a generation caught between dreams of success and ethical compromise. Gopal's rise from poverty through corrupt means exposes the moral price of ambition. Raghav's pursuit of reform through journalism embodies courage and resistance. Aarti's struggle for independence reflects the limits placed on women within a conservative society. Bhagat presents education as a mirror of the nation's condition—coaching centres and private colleges turn learning into a commodity, while merit gives way to money and influence. *Revolution 2020* thus becomes a story of moral inquiry, revealing how the pursuit of success in a corrupt system tests the conscience of both individuals and the nation itself.³

IV. The Education System: A Platform for Ambition

Revolution 2020 presents the Indian education system as a field of ambition and exploitation. The system appears to offer equality, yet its structure favours privilege and profit. Bhagat's portrayal exposes the contradictions that define modern education in India: an institution meant to liberate the mind becomes a mechanism that confines it. The system manufactures dreams, sells them as commodities, and leaves the dreamers in debt. Gopal Mishra's early experience in Kota serves as the first illustration of this condition. Kota functions as a symbol of industrialized learning. The coaching institutes resemble production units where students are treated as raw material, and results are measured in ranks and percentages. Bhagat's depiction of Kota as a "factory for IIT aspirants"⁴ conveys the mechanical nature of this system. The institutes offer equality in uniform and discipline but retain a hidden hierarchy based on success and financial capacity. Bhagat observes that "equality in clothes did not mean Bansal believed all students were equal."⁵ The statement reveals the illusion of fairness that governs the world of competitive education. The façade of democracy conceals the logic of exclusion. Within this structure, ambition assumes the form of anxiety. Middle-class families invest savings, security, and self-esteem in their children's education. For many, education stands as the only possible escape from economic limitation. Gopal recalls, "My father borrowed money from everyone he knew to send me to Kota. They said it was my ticket out of poverty, but all it did was make us poorer."⁶ The remark defines the tragic economy of aspiration. The father's faith in education becomes a source of loss rather than liberation. Bhagat thereby establishes a social truth: the market for education thrives on the desperation of those who cannot afford failure. The coaching industry transforms learning into labour. The classroom becomes a site of relentless competition where instruction serves performance rather than understanding. Students are trained to reproduce solutions, not to question ideas. Teachers function as supervisors of efficiency. The relation between teacher and learner becomes contractual,

¹ Gupta, Suman. *Globalization and Literature*. Polity Press, 2009. P. 150

² Mishra, Pankaj. *Temptations of the West: How to Be Modern in India, Pakistan, Tibet, and Beyond*. Picador, 2006. P. 15

³ Kumar, Ashok. *Postcolonial Indian Fiction in English and Masculinity*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017. P.19

⁴ Bhagat, Chetan. *Revolution 2020 : Love, Corruption, Ambition*. Rupa Publications, 2011. P. 15

⁵ Ibid., p. 15

⁶ Ibid., p. 15

governed by fees and results. Education loses its ethical and intellectual centre. Private colleges represent the second phase of this commercialization. Bhagat's description of GangaTech College illustrates the operation of higher education as a business enterprise. The campus, the buildings, and the advertisements project an image of progress, but behind the façade lies a machinery of manipulation. Placements, admissions, and inspections depend on payment. Gopal states, "Every hire, every inspection, every placement required something under the table. It was like an unspoken rule."⁷ The phrase "unspoken rule" defines the normalisation of corruption. Within such institutions, learning serves the market, and knowledge functions as a negotiable good. Bhagat presents Gopal's transformation from student to director as an allegory of systemic corruption. The boy who once failed the entrance examination now owns a college that reproduces the same conditions of inequality that once defeated him. His rise represents the circular nature of the system: the exploited becomes the exploiter, and the structure renews itself through personal ambition. The college that promises opportunity becomes a theatre of moral failure. Gopal's confession—"I didn't care how dirty the money was or where it came from. All I knew was I wanted to make it big"⁸—summarises the ideology of success that drives the education industry. The education system in *Revolution 2020* therefore stands as a microcosm of national life. The obsession with results, the worship of wealth, and the erosion of values merge within it. Bhagat interprets education as a social mirror that reflects the moral climate of the nation. The system rewards imitation and punishes integrity. Knowledge becomes secondary to reputation; learning becomes subordinate to status. Through this portrayal, Bhagat constructs a critique of a society that measures human worth through market logic. Education, in his vision, is no longer an act of enlightenment but an exercise in survival.

V. **Corruption: The Engine of the System**

Corruption occupies the structural centre of *Revolution 2020*. It defines the operation of the education system, determines the course of ambition, and shapes the destiny of every character in the novel. Bhagat treats corruption not as a temporary disorder but as a permanent condition that governs institutions and individuals alike. The system functions through a network of transactions, where money replaces merit and influence substitutes for integrity. The novel exposes how this moral disintegration transforms education from a path of enlightenment into an enterprise of profit. The establishment of GangaTech College illustrates the organized nature of corruption in higher education. Bhagat constructs the process as a sequence of negotiations rather than procedures. Every stage—land acquisition, inspection, affiliation, and placement—requires the circulation of money and favour. The statement, "The system runs on bribes. Without it, you can't even get an inspection done. Today, I paid five lakhs just for a clean report,"⁹ expresses the logic that sustains the structure. The bribe ceases to appear as an exception; it becomes a rule, a silent agreement that defines participation in public life. Bhagat's vision reveals how corruption ceases to be a crime and becomes a form of governance. The alliance between Gopal Mishra and MLA Shukla forms the political dimension of this corruption. Shukla's decision to convert land into a college represents the intersection of political power and economic ambition. His remark, "This land is too prime to leave idle. Let's turn it into something lucrative—a college,"¹⁰ captures the utilitarian morality of public life. Education becomes a means of financial expansion, not social reform. The cooperation between Gopal and Shukla symbolizes the partnership between youth and authority, ambition and power, in sustaining a corrupt order. Bhagat interprets politics as a force that legitimizes moral compromise in the name of progress. Within this system, moral resistance appears futile. Gopal's initial reluctance to participate in bribery fades under pressure from necessity and persuasion. His transformation from a victim of corruption to its beneficiary reveals the psychological cost of adaptation. The struggle for survival demands accommodation to power.

⁷ Bhagat, Chetan. *Revolution 2020: Love, Corruption, Ambition*. Rupa Publications, 2011. P. 16

⁸ Ibid., p. 150

⁹ Ibid., p. 17

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 19

The act of bribery becomes an act of existence. Bhagat presents this process without sentiment; he observes how the system converts conscience into compliance. Gopal's admission—"I didn't care how dirty the money was or where it came from"¹¹—marks the completion of his moral defeat. The bureaucratic structure in *Revolution 2020* functions through fear, greed, and imitation. Officials protect their interests through secrecy and complicity. The college management imitates the methods of the state. Every approval depends on payment; every appointment depends on loyalty. Bhagat's depiction of these mechanisms reveals the continuity between personal corruption and institutional decay. The same moral logic governs both the individual and the system. Integrity ceases to yield reward, and honesty becomes an obstacle. The failure of virtue thus emerges as the most tragic dimension of Bhagat's narrative. Raghav Kashyap provides the moral counterpoint to this decline. His commitment to journalism affirms the possibility of ethical action within a corrupt society. Raghav's decision to investigate and publish exposes his belief in the transformative power of truth. His declaration, "We need a revolution, one that exposes the rot in the system and gives power back to the people,"¹² expresses Bhagat's ideal of moral resistance. Yet Raghav's struggle remains incomplete, for the system he confronts absorbs reform and neutralizes dissent. Bhagat's portrayal of Raghav's idealism demonstrates both the necessity and the fragility of moral courage. Corruption in *Revolution 2020* therefore extends beyond bribery; it represents a philosophy of life. It governs thought, behaviour, and ambition. The corrupt act is only the visible symptom of a deeper ethical decay. Bhagat's insight lies in his recognition that corruption survives through acceptance. The system persists because individuals adjust to it. Gopal's success and Raghav's failure both emerge from the same social structure. One adapts and prospers; the other resists and suffers. The novel thereby transforms corruption from an administrative problem into a moral condition. Bhagat's critique reveals the continuity between private ambition and public disorder. The college, the newspaper, and the political office operate through identical principles: each pursues power, each rewards compromise, and each reproduces inequality. The education system, in this sense, mirrors the nation's political and economic structure. Bhagat's narrative of Gopal and Raghav serves as a symbolic opposition between conformity and conscience. Through them, the novel declares that reform cannot begin with law or policy; it must begin with the recovery of individual integrity.

VI. Social Commentary: Ambition and Inequality

Revolution 2020 extends its critique beyond the education system to the larger social and cultural structure that defines aspiration in contemporary India. Bhagat portrays a society where ambition becomes both a necessity and a burden. The desire for success governs every decision, and education becomes the central symbol of that desire. Yet, beneath this apparent democracy of opportunity lies a hierarchy sustained by wealth, privilege, and access. The novel uncovers the hidden structure of inequality that shapes the destinies of India's youth. The middle-class family occupies the core of Bhagat's social vision. It represents the hopes and anxieties of a nation that equates education with advancement. Parents consider education the sole path to respectability and financial security. Their faith in its redemptive power remains unshaken even when it leads to ruin. Bhagat uses Gopal's father as the embodiment of this belief. His sacrifices arise from conviction rather than knowledge. The statement, "My father borrowed money from everyone he knew to send me to Kota. They said it was my ticket out of poverty, but all it did was make us poorer,"¹³ defines the paradox of social aspiration. The system that promises liberation instead deepens dependence. Through this episode, Bhagat uncovers the tragic dimension of ambition shaped by unequal opportunity. Economic privilege dictates access to education at every level. The wealthy secure seats through donation and recommendation; the poor rely on chance and endurance. The illusion of merit conceals the economy of privilege. The façade of equality collapses under the weight of transaction. Bhagat's representation of coaching centres and private colleges exposes this hidden

¹¹ Bhagat, Chetan. *Revolution 2020: Love, Corruption, Ambition*. Rupa Publications, 2011. P. 17

¹² Bhagat, Chetan. *Revolution 2020: Love, Corruption, Ambition*. Rupa Publications, 2011. P. 22

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 15

arithmetic of success. He reveals how the rhetoric of competition legitimizes exclusion. The result is a hierarchy disguised as fairness, where opportunity depends on wealth, and wealth decides worth. Raghav Kashyap represents the intellectual conscience of this world. His choice of journalism, against the security of engineering, affirms the possibility of moral conviction within a conformist culture. His father's advice—"MIT Lucknow offers security. Journalism is risky. Stick to engineering; it is safer"¹⁴—expresses the psychology of a generation governed by fear of failure. Raghav's defiance of this logic signifies courage rather than rebellion. Through him, Bhagat contrasts ethical inquiry with social conformity. The struggle between conviction and compromise forms the essence of his social commentary. Aarti Pradhan introduces another dimension of constraint—the position of women within a patriarchal social order. Her aspiration to become an air hostess expresses a desire for autonomy and self-expression. Yet, her father's refusal, justified by notions of propriety, reveals the moral code that confines women to roles deemed respectable. "Dad insists I finish college before even considering becoming an air hostess. He thinks it's not a proper career for a DM's daughter."¹⁵ This remark illustrates how family honour replaces personal ambition as the measure of virtue. Through Aarti, Bhagat interprets gender as a site of negotiation between freedom and restraint. The education that liberates men often reinforces control over women. The intersection of class, gender, and education defines Bhagat's social realism. Each character functions within the boundaries imposed by social expectation. Gopal's poverty, Raghav's idealism, and Aarti's constraint belong to a single system governed by hierarchy and moral anxiety. Bhagat observes that corruption is not confined to institutions; it inhabits relationships, values, and habits. The corruption of education reflects the corruption of desire. The longing for advancement, untempered by ethics, converts ambition into greed. Through this vision, *Revolution 2020* emerges as a commentary on a civilization in transition. It depicts a generation torn between inherited morality and modern ambition. The narrative records the exhaustion of old ideals and the uncertainty of new ones. Bhagat interprets progress as a double-edged condition that creates mobility but erodes integrity. The promise of success conceals the loss of purpose. Each triumph carries the trace of compromise. The social world of *Revolution 2020* thus reveals a moral economy where opportunity, success, and virtue no longer coincide. Bhagat constructs a vision of India that aspires to advancement yet suffers from spiritual fatigue. His critique extends from classrooms to boardrooms, from private ambition to public life. Through his characters, he articulates a collective dilemma: how to achieve prosperity without surrendering conscience. His answer lies in ethical renewal. Only through moral clarity can education recover its original function as a means of justice and collective dignity.

VII. Conclusion

Revolution 2020 establishes education as the moral centre of Bhagat's social vision. The novel presents a nation in transition, where the desire for advancement confronts the loss of ethical direction. Gopal's wealth, Raghav's idealism, and Aarti's restraint form three responses to a corrupt system. Each figure reflects a different moral stance within a society that equates success with power. Through these lives, Bhagat exposes the exhaustion of values in an age of ambition. Education in the novel functions as both a symptom and a symbol. It reveals the structure of inequality that governs opportunity and achievement. The institutions of learning reproduce social divisions, while the rhetoric of reform conceals exploitation.¹⁶ Bhagat's portrayal of the nexus between politics, money, and education defines corruption as an organized principle rather than an individual act. Yet *Revolution 2020* affirms the possibility of renewal. Raghav's commitment to truth, however fragile, signifies the endurance of moral conscience. Bhagat transforms the idea of revolution into an ethical imperative rather than a political event. The true revolution begins with

¹⁴ Bhagat, Chetan. *Revolution 2020 : Love, Corruption, Ambition*. Rupa Publications, 2011. P. 19

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 20

¹⁶ Nayar, Pramod K. *Contemporary Indian Fiction in English: Critical Essays*. Pearson Longman, 2010. P.18

the recovery of integrity, with an education that restores purpose, fairness, and dignity to public life. Through this vision, Bhagat reclaims education as the foundation of a just and humane society.

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Shining light on pre-independence India: A study of societal changes in *Sunlight on a Broken Column*

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I. Abstract

AttiaHosain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column* offers a profound exploration of the socio-political and cultural transformations in pre-independence India. The novel captures the intersection of colonial domination, nationalist awakening, and the redefinition of social and gender roles during a period of transition. Through the experiences of Laila and other characters, Hosain presents the tensions between tradition and modernity, faith and identity, and the individual's quest for freedom within a changing society. The narrative reveals how education, urbanisation, and cultural fusion reshape personal and collective consciousness. This paper analyses these dimensions to highlight Hosain's vision of a nation negotiating between its colonial past and the emergence of a new social order.

II. Keywords

colonialism, nationalism, religious identity, cultural identity, gender role

III. Introduction

Societal changes refer to the transformations and shifts within a society over time, impacting its structure, values, norms, and way of life. These changes can manifest in various aspects, including culture, economics, politics, technology, and demographics. Societal changes are often driven by internal factors, such as social movements, generational shifts, and evolving ideologies, as well as external forces, like globalisation, technological advancements, and environmental challenges. These transformations can be gradual and sudden, and their effects can be profound. They may lead to shifts in power dynamics, alterations in social roles and expectations, changes in cultural practices, and adjustments in the distribution of resources and opportunities. Understanding and adapting to societal changes is crucial for individuals, communities, and governments to navigate the complexities of the modern world and address emerging challenges while preserving core values and principles. India experienced social, cultural, and political upheaval during the pre-independence era. Significant societal changes were happening as the nation marched toward self-determination and liberation from British colonial rule. AttiaHosain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column* captures these changes through its brilliant characters and their interconnected narratives. The novel explores the societal changes happening in India during the pre-independence period. It offers a vivid portrayal of the complex and evolving dynamics of Indian society during this transformative period.¹

IV. Colonialism and Nationalism

Colonialism and nationalism are two powerful and interconnected forces that have greatly influenced modern history. Colonialism refers to the period when European powers expanded their empires by conquering distant lands and cultures, often exploiting resources and imposing foreign rule. In contrast, nationalism is the passionate belief in and loyalty to one's nation, culture, and identity, frequently as a response to colonial domination. Nationalist movements arose in opposition to colonialism, fighting for self-determination, independence, and the revival of cultural and political autonomy. The conflict between colonialism and nationalism has been a crucial factor in the fight for sovereignty and freedom in many regions, leaving a profound impact on the political landscape and the collective identities of nations.

¹ Nabar, Vrinda. "Fragmenting Nations and Lives: Sunlight on a Broken Column." P.145

AttiaHosain skillfully weaves together themes of colonialism and nationalism within its narrative, shedding light on the many dimensions of India's fight for independence. The novel vividly depicts the oppression under British colonial rule, illustrating the economic and social exploitation of the Indian people. It introduces a variety of characters deeply involved in the rising nationalist movement. Through their stories, we witness the emergence of national consciousness, the passionate desire for self-determination, and the significant sacrifices made in the cause. AttiaHosain's storytelling expertly explores both the personal and political aspects of this struggle, emphasising how the characters' lives are closely connected to the political landscape. With subtle character development and rich storytelling, the novel captures the hope, resilience, and unwavering dedication that defined India's pursuit of freedom in the pre-independence era. The novel clearly portrays the oppressive nature of British colonial governance, highlighting the economic, social, and political exploitation of Indians by the British. The British presence is depicted as a controlling force that suppresses the aspirations and autonomy of the Indian populace.

Sunlight on a Broken Column is set against the backdrop of a rapidly growing nationalist movement. The characters in the novel actively participate in India's fight for independence, engaging in political debates, joining protests, and advocating for self-determination. The novel encapsulates the growing awareness and determination of Indians to liberate themselves from colonial domination.

Laila, the protagonist of *Sunlight*, embodies the nationalist spirit. She is not satisfied with a passive role in the struggle for independence. She believes that "Destiny's purpose is merely to shock us at moments into a state of awareness; those moments are milestones in between which we have to find our own way." Laila's involvement in nationalist politics demonstrates her strong commitment to the cause and her desire to be an active agent of change. Her journey reflects the broader societal shift towards a nationalist consciousness. The novel weaves personal stories with the political landscape, showing how politics deeply influence the characters' lives. Their beliefs and actions affect marriages, relationships, and family dynamics. This interaction underscores the all-encompassing nature of the nationalist movement during that period. Nationalism comes at a price, and the novel does not shy away from depicting the sacrifices made by individuals and families in the pursuit of freedom. The characters are prepared to endure personal hardships, including imprisonment and separation, to achieve independence. This underscores the collective sacrifice and dedication of the nationalist movement. The novel also examines the intellectual debates surrounding nationalism. Characters discuss the philosophy and ideology behind the struggle for independence. These discussions offer insights into the variety of thoughts within the nationalist movement and the complex web of ideas that motivated it.

V. Religious and Cultural Identity

"We're Indians. We're not British. We're not Muslims. We're not Hindus. We're Indians."² Religious and cultural identities are vital to a person's sense of self and their feeling of belonging in the community. Religious identity relates to an individual's connection to a specific faith, including their beliefs, rituals, and values. It often offers a moral and ethical foundation that guides actions and perspectives. Conversely, cultural identity is broader, covering a person's links to their cultural heritage, such as language, traditions, customs, and shared history. These identities can overlap with cultural practices often shaped by religious beliefs. Both spiritual and cultural identities are essential in shaping lives, affecting relationships, social interactions, and a sense of belonging within a diverse and interconnected society.

Discussions and debates about religious and cultural identity characterised India's pre-independence era. The novel reflects these debates through its Muslim characters, who wrestle with questions of identity in a Hindu-majority society. Laila, the protagonist, faces conflicts related to her religious and cultural identity as she navigates a transforming world. Religious and cultural identity are central themes in *Sunlight*. The novel offers a rich exploration of how characters navigate identity within the complex fabric of Indian society during this period. It examines the

² Hosain, Attia. *Sunlight on a Broken Column*. P. 40

intricacies of religious identity, especially through the perspective of Muslim characters. Laila and her family belong to a Muslim community in, and their experiences highlight the challenges and tensions of being a religious minority in a predominantly Hindu society. The novel also depicts the blending of cultural elements and the emergence of hybrid identities. The characters come from varied cultural backgrounds, and their interactions underscore the multicultural essence of Indian society. This cultural融合 reflects the dynamic and inclusive nature of identity in a diverse nation like India. The novel does not shy away from illustrating religious tensions and communal conflicts that were prevalent during the pre-independence period. These tensions are woven into the narrative, illustrating the difficulties faced by individuals and communities in maintaining their religious identities amid a politically charged environment. Laila, the protagonist, declares, “I would surely achieve my nirvana and become so English that my aunts and cousins would be strangers to me.”³ Throughout the novel, various traditions, rituals, and customs are showcased, providing insights into the rich tapestry of Indian culture. These traditions serve as symbols and vital components of the characters' lives, representing their link to their heritage and the continuity of cultural practices. As India underwent a process of modernisation during this period, the characters in the novel confront questions about how to reconcile their religious and cultural identities with the evolving world. The tension between tradition and modernity is palpable as characters navigate these changes. Laila, the central character, embarks on a journey of self-discovery involving questioning and redefining her religious and cultural identity. Her struggles mirror the wider quest for self-identity faced by many individuals striving to reconcile their heritage with the shifting socio-political landscape.

VI. Modernisation and Education

Modernisation and education share a reciprocal relationship in the process of societal development. Modernisation, often characterised by technological advancements, urbanisation, and economic growth, is significantly influenced by education. Education equips individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in and contribute to modernised societies. It fosters critical thinking, innovation, and adaptability, all of which are crucial in navigating the complexities of modern life. Conversely, modernisation can facilitate access to education by providing resources and infrastructure, thereby improving educational opportunities for communities. This interplay between modernisation and education underscores the pivotal role education plays in shaping the trajectory of societies on their path toward progress and development.

The novel highlights the changing attitudes towards education and modernisation. “We need to modernise our country,” Laila said. “We need to build new factories, schools, and hospitals. We need to improve our infrastructure.”⁴ Laila’s pursuit of education, especially as a woman, challenges traditional norms and highlights the growing importance of education as a means of empowerment. The novel emphasises the role of education in shaping new ideas and aspirations. Modernisation in the novel is represented by the shifting societal norms, values, and technological advancements of the time. “Education is the key to progress,” Nadeem said. “It will help us to build a better future for ourselves and for our children.”⁵ As India transitioned from a colonial state to a society on the brink of independence, characters in the story grapple with the implications of these changes on their lives and identities. The tension between tradition and modernity is palpable, reflecting the broader sociocultural landscape of the era. Education emerges as a potent catalyst for modernisation and personal empowerment. Laila, the novel’s protagonist, symbolises the transformative power of education, especially for women. Her relentless pursuit of knowledge challenges the traditional gender norms of her society, highlighting the changing role of women in a rapidly modernising India. Education becomes a means of acquiring knowledge and a tool for personal growth, empowerment, and self-expression. The novel highlights how access to education can transform individuals and challenge the status quo. Laila’s journey from a traditional upbringing to a life of

³ Hosain, Attia. *Sunlight on a Broken Column*. P. 51

⁴ Hosain, Attia. *Sunlight on a Broken Column*. P. 49

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 53

intellectual curiosity mirrors the societal shifts in attitudes toward learning and knowledge acquisition. It emphasises the democratizing potential of education, as it allows individuals to question, explore, and engage with the changing world around them.

Further, *Sunlight on a Broken Column* also presents the impact of education on individual identity. As characters gain access to education and encounter new ideas, they undergo personal transformations. Education becomes a vehicle for self-discovery, leading characters to question their traditional roles and beliefs. This introspection contributes to the broader societal shift in values and aspirations during the pre-independence period.

VII. Gender Roles

Gender roles refer to societal expectations, norms, and behaviours assigned to individuals based on their perceived or assigned gender. These roles have historically shaped how people are expected to behave, what roles they should occupy in society, and the responsibilities they should assume. While gender roles have evolved, they persist in various forms across cultures. Traditionally, gender roles have often been dichotomous, with men typically expected to be assertive, competitive, and the primary breadwinners. In contrast, women were expected to be nurturing, caregiving, and focused on domestic responsibilities. However, modern societies have experienced significant changes in gender roles, with more opportunities for individuals to challenge and transcend these traditional expectations.

The changing role of women in society is a significant aspect of the societal changes depicted in the novel. As Laila and other female characters in the story seek independence and intellectual fulfilment, they challenge traditional gender roles. This mirrors broader discussions about women's rights and gender equality during the pre-independence period.

The novel depicts traditional gender roles and expectations prevalent in Indian society during the mid-20th century. Women are expected to conform to conservative norms, often defined by their roles as wives and mothers. "A woman should not be seen in public without a veil," says Laila's grandmother, Begum Sahib⁶. The protagonist, Laila, grapples with these expectations as she seeks to find her identity and independence in a society that limits women's aspirations. Laila's journey throughout the novel reflects the changing roles of women in post-independence India. She challenges the traditional gender roles imposed upon her and aspires to pursue education and personal growth. Her desire for self-fulfilment and independence mirrors the shifting social dynamics in the country as women increasingly assert their rights and ambitions. "I am my own person," Laila said. "I am not the property of my father or my husband. I have the right to make my own decisions and to live my life the way I want to."⁷ The novel also explores family dynamics, highlighting the tensions and conflicts arising from the clash between traditional gender roles and evolving societal norms. Laila's relationships with her mother, grandmother, and other female family members illustrate the complexities of these roles within the context of a Muslim family. *Sunlight on a Broken Column* is set during a period of significant social and political change in India. The struggles of characters with gender roles are intertwined with broader social transformations and the push for women's rights and empowerment as the country moves towards independence.

VIII. Generational Conflicts:

Generational conflicts are tensions and disagreements that occur between different age groups within a society, usually between older and younger generations. These conflicts often originate from differences in values, beliefs, lifestyles, and expectations shaped by each generation's unique experiences and cultural influences. Younger generations may challenge or reject the traditions and norms upheld by their elders, seeking change and progress, while older generations may resist these changes, holding on to established practices and values. Such conflicts can appear in various areas, including politics, social issues, technology, and cultural trends. Effective communication and

⁶ Hosain, Attia. *Sunlight on a Broken Column*. P. 70

⁷ Hosain, Attia. *Sunlight on a Broken Column*. P. 74

understanding between generations are crucial for resolving these conflicts and finding common ground that honours the wisdom of the past whilst embracing future opportunities.

The novel portrays generational conflicts within families, with younger generations often embracing new ideas and questioning the traditions upheld by their elders. This reflects the generational divide in society regarding attitudes toward modernisation, education, and political change. One of the central conflicts in the novel is the clash between traditional values and modernity. The older generation, represented by Laila's grandmother and other elderly family members, holds on to conservative values and customs deeply rooted in tradition. They resist change and are critical of the younger generation's desire for education and independence. "The young generation doesn't respect our traditions," Saeeda said. "They think they know everything, but they don't know anything. They've forgotten their roots."⁸

In contrast, Laila and her siblings represent the modern generation, eager to embrace new ideas and lifestyles. "The old generation doesn't understand us," Laila said. "They think we're too modern, too Westernised. But we're just trying to live our lives the way we want to."⁹ Laila's pursuit of education and personal independence becomes a focal point of generational conflict. Her grandmother and other elders believe that a woman's primary role is to be a wife and mother, and they view her educational aspirations as a threat to these traditional roles. Laila's determination to break free from these expectations and pursue her dreams creates tension within the family. Differing views on the role of women in society exacerbate the generational conflict. Laila's grandmother adheres to traditional gender roles, while Laila and her generation challenge these roles by seeking education and careers. This clash highlights changing attitudes toward women's rights and their evolving roles in post-independence India. The novel also explores conflicts related to cultural and religious traditions. The older generation is deeply attached to these traditions and is often resistant to questioning or modifying them. The younger generation, influenced by exposure to new ideas and influences, questions and sometimes rejects certain traditional practices. "We are who we are because of the past," Laila said. "But we're also who we are because of the present. And we're who we're going to be because of the future."¹⁰

A lack of effective communication between the generations exacerbates the generational conflict. They often struggle to understand each other's perspectives, which can lead to misunderstandings and tensions within the family.

IX. Urbanisation and Social Change:

Urbanisation, the process of increasing urban population and the growth of cities, is a powerful catalyst for social change. As more people migrate from rural to urban areas in search of economic opportunities and improved living standards, urbanisation reshapes societies in profound ways. It accelerates cultural exchanges, diversifies communities, and alters traditional lifestyles. Urban areas often become hubs of innovation, education, and social activism, fostering new ideas and challenging established norms. However, urbanisation can also bring challenges like inequality, overcrowding, and environmental issues. Managing the effects of urbanisation requires thoughtful urban planning and policies to ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities, making it a critical driver of both positive and complex social transformations.

The novel is set in Lucknow, a city that underwent significant urbanisation and modernisation during the pre-independence era. The changing urban landscape and the influx of new ideas and lifestyles are reflected in the story as characters confront the challenges and opportunities that urban life presents. The story primarily takes place in Lucknow, a city that undergoes urbanisation and modernisation during the post-independence period. As the city grows and evolves, it symbolises the broader urbanisation across India. The novel portrays the increasing access to education in urban areas, a significant aspect of social change. The protagonist Laila is determined to pursue her education despite traditional gender roles and expectations. This desire for education reflects the

⁸ Ibid, p. 68

⁹ Ibid, p. 68

¹⁰ Hosain, Attia. *Sunlight on a Broken Column*. P. 72

changing social dynamics and aspirations of women in urban settings. “We can’t stop urbanisation,” Laila said. “It’s inevitable. But we can try to preserve our culture and our identity in the process.”¹¹

The generational conflict in the novel is intertwined with the impact of urbanisation. Laila’s grandmother represents traditional values and customs, while Laila and her siblings represent the more modern, urbanised generation. The clash between these generations is emblematic of the shifting cultural and social norms in urban India. The urban environment in the novel is a melting pot of cultures and ideas. The characters in the city interact with diverse people and experiences, leading to cultural exchange and transformation. This is reflected in their changing attitudes, values, and lifestyles. Urbanisation often brings about more significant political and social awareness among the urban population. The characters in the novel become more attuned to the political changes and challenges facing the newly independent India, reflecting the broader shift in consciousness brought about by urbanisation. “We need to find a balance between tradition and modernity,” Nadeem said. “We need to embrace the new without forgetting the old.”¹² Urbanisation can create economic opportunities, and characters in the novel, such as Laila’s brother Rafi, seek employment and career prospects in the city. The pursuit of economic stability and growth is a common theme in urban settings and contributes to social change.

X. **Cultural Fusion:**

Cultural fusion, cultural blending or hybridisation, is a dynamic process that occurs when different cultures come into contact and interact, leading to the mixing and integration of cultural elements. This phenomenon can encompass various aspects of culture, including language, cuisine, art, music, fashion, and traditions. Cultural fusion often occurs in diverse, cosmopolitan urban areas or through globalisation, travel, and the exchange of ideas in our interconnected world. Cultural fusion can create new and unique cultural expressions, where elements from different cultures merge and evolve into something distinct and original. This process can enrich societies by fostering creativity, tolerance, and a broader perspective. However, it also raises questions about cultural authenticity and the potential for cultural appropriation. Striking a balance between celebrating the positive aspects of cultural fusion and respecting the origins and traditions of each culture involved is essential for promoting cultural diversity and understanding in our increasingly globalised world.

Sunlight on a Broken Column also explores the intermingling of cultures and traditions. The characters in the novel come from diverse backgrounds, and their interactions reflect the multicultural nature of Indian society. This cultural fusion is emblematic of the broader societal changes occurring as India moved toward independence. India is renowned for its rich cultural diversity, characterised by the coexistence of numerous languages, religions, and traditions. The novel reflects this diversity through its characters and settings. “We are a nation of many cultures,” Laila said. “We have been influenced by the Mughals, the British, and many other groups. This is what makes us unique.”¹³ Characters from different religious and cultural backgrounds interact, and the cultural and religious diversity of India shapes their lives. The urban environment of Lucknow, where much of the story takes place, is a melting pot of cultures and ideas. People from diverse regions and backgrounds come together in the city, fostering cultural exchange and interaction. The characters in the novel encounter and engage with individuals from different cultural and religious backgrounds, which influences their perspectives and experiences. The clash of traditional and modern values in the novel represents a form of cultural fusion. Characters grapple with the tension between old customs and new ideas, reflecting the evolving cultural landscape of India during the post-independence period. “We can preserve our own culture while also adopting new ones,” Laila said. “We can find a balance between the two.”¹⁴ Food and festivals are significant aspects of cultural fusion in the novel. Characters enjoy and celebrate various cuisines and festivals, showcasing the diversity of Indian culture. These moments of cultural exchange often serve as

¹¹ Ibid., p. 80

¹² Ibid., p. 89

¹³ Hosain, Attia. *Sunlight on a Broken Column*. P. 91

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 93

points of connection and understanding among the characters. The novel also explores the use of different languages and dialects, reflecting the linguistic diversity of India. Language is a tool for communication and connection among characters from various cultural backgrounds.¹⁵ The novel also explores the impact of Western culture, primarily through education and literature. Western ideas and values, along with Indian traditions, contribute to the cultural fusion experienced by the characters.

XI. Conclusion:

Sunlight on a Broken Column stands as a remarkable portrayal of a nation at the crossroads of history. Through nuanced characterisation and evocative storytelling, Attia Hosain examines how the struggle for independence extends beyond politics into the intimate spaces of family, culture, and conscience. The novel reflects India's passage from subjugation to self-realisation, tracing how individuals—particularly women—redefine their identities amid shifting social and moral boundaries. It thus transcends its historical setting, offering timeless insight into the resilience of human spirit and the quest for dignity in times of change. By illuminating the interplay between personal freedom and national awakening, the novel becomes not just a record of societal transformation but a lasting testament to the enduring power of self-awareness and reform.

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Śaṅkara and Dayānanda on paired philosophical terms: Vidyā–Avidyā and Sambhūti–Asambhūti

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I. Abstract

The *Īsopaniṣad*, one of the briefest yet most profound of the Principal Upaniṣads, presents in its ninth to fourteenth mantras two sets of paradoxical pairs—*vidyā–avidyā* and *sambhūti–asambhūti*—that have been the subject of centuries of philosophical exegesis. These dyads, expressed with remarkable concision, point to the relationship between empirical action and spiritual realization, creation and dissolution, and the dialectical movement of consciousness from ignorance to liberation. Śaṅkara (8th century CE), the preeminent Advaitin, interprets these pairs through the lens of *adhyāropa–apavāda* (superimposition and sublation), treating them as sequential means of ascent from ritual action (*karma*) to meditative knowledge (*upāsana*), and ultimately to the realization of non-dual Brahman (*brahma-sākṣātkāra*).

Swāmī Dayānanda Sarasvatī (19th century CE), the founder of the Ārya Samāj, reinterprets the same passages within a realist and theistic framework, asserting that both *vidyā* and *avidyā*, *sambhūti* and *asambhūti*, are real and complementary manifestations of divine law. He reads the *Īsopaniṣad* as a rational monotheistic revelation affirming the unity of scientific knowledge and spiritual insight.

This paper offers a comparative hermeneutical analysis of Śaṅkara’s Advaitic and Dayānanda’s Vaidika-theistic interpretations, situating them within the larger history of Hindu scriptural interpretation. It examines how both thinkers, though separated by more than a millennium, employ differing epistemological assumptions—Śaṅkara emphasizing transcendental realization through negation, Dayānanda emphasizing integral realization through harmony—to explicate the same *śruti* text. By tracing their philosophical presuppositions, exegetical strategies, and soteriological implications, this study illuminates the evolution of Hindu hermeneutics from classical non-dualism to modern rational theism. The analysis demonstrates that both traditions, while divergent in ontology, converge in affirming that liberation demands a balanced apprehension of the manifest and the unmanifest, the empirical and the transcendental, the world and the Word.

II. Keywords

Śaṅkara; Dayānanda Sarasvatī; *Īsopaniṣad*; *Vidyā–Avidyā*; *Sambhūti–Asambhūti*; *Advaita Vedānta*; *Ārya Samāj*; *Brahmavidyā*; *Mīmāṃsā*; *Hermeneutics*; *Soteriology*; *Epistemology*; *Vedic Monotheism*; *Upaniṣadic Exegesis*; *Indian Philosophy*; *Rational Theism*; *Non-dual Consciousness*; *Śruti Interpretation*; *Vedārthavidyā*; *Brahmasūtra Bhāṣya*.

III. Introduction

The *Upaniṣads* speak in paradox, not proposition. They employ paired terms—being and non-being, knowledge and ignorance, creation and negation—to delineate the oscillation between the empirical and the transcendental. Among these, the dyads *vidyā–avidyā* and *sambhūti–asambhūti* of the *Īsopaniṣad* stand pre-eminent for their compactness and ambiguity. Verses 9–14 compress within six lines the entire trajectory of human pursuit—from ritual knowledge to metaphysical illumination, from faith in creation to insight into the unmanifest.

The verse reads:

andhaṃ tamaḥ praviśanti ye’vidyām upāsate |
tato bhūya iva te tamo ya u vidyāyām ratāḥ || (Īśop. 9)

Śaṅkara and Dayānanda, separated by over a millennium, meet upon this compact text but diverge in orientation. Śaṅkara (8th c.) seeks to reveal the metaphysical path from ritual to realization; Dayānanda (19th c.) seeks to restore the literal Vedic monotheism and rational ethics that, in his view, Advaita had obscured. Each inherits a different *śāstric* methodology: Śaṅkara the *śruti–yukti–anubhava* triad of Vedānta, Dayānanda the *śabda-pramāṇa* literalism of *Mīmāṃsā* re-oriented toward theism.

Scholars have often contrasted their temperaments: the contemplative metaphysician and the reformist rationalist. Yet both claim the *Upaniṣads* as their foundation, both use the same *mantras*, and both read “knowledge” and “non-knowledge” as soteriologically charged categories. The

interpretive conflict thus lies not in philology alone but in ontology itself—whether reality is non-dual consciousness or the governed cosmos of an omniscient Lord.¹

IV. Hermeneutical Context

Śaṅkara's hermeneutics, rooted in the Advaita tradition, emphasize *adhyāropa-apavāda*—superimposition and sublation—as the guiding principle of scriptural interpretation. For him, every paradox in the *Upaniṣads* serves as a dialectical device to lead the aspirant from ignorance to knowledge. The seeming contradictions—*vidyā* and *avidyā*, *sambhūti* and *asambhūti*—are not conflicts but stages in pedagogical ascent. Śaṅkara views *śruti* as self-validating revelation (*svataḥ-prāmāṇya*), whose ultimate purport (*tātparya*) is the realization of non-dual Brahman.

Dayānanda Sarasvatī, however, revitalizes Mīmāṃsā hermeneutics with a rational-theistic orientation. His principle of *yathārtha-vāda*—assertion of the real—insists that the Veda teaches objective truths about God, soul, and world. He rejects the allegorical readings of Advaita as post-Vedic speculation and restores the literal, ethical, and universal meaning of the mantras. The *Upaniṣads*, for him, are not mystical riddles but luminous expressions of divine law and cosmic order. Thus, while Śaṅkara spiritualizes the Veda into interior metaphysics, Dayānanda restores it as the charter of rational religion.

V. Śaṅkara on Vidyā–Avidyā

Śaṅkara's *Bhāṣya* on *Īśopaniṣad* 9–11 articulates a subtle hierarchy between *karma*, *upāsana*, and *jñāna*. He equates *avidyā* with the Vedic ritual system and *vidyā* with meditative worship on deities:

avidyā-śabdena karmābhidhīyate, vidyā-śabdena devatopāsana.²

Those devoted solely to ritual (*avidyām upāsate*) enter darkness—the darkness of rebirth conditioned by merit. Those attached solely to deity-meditation (*vidyāyām ratāḥ*) fall into “greater darkness,” for subtle pride of attainment still binds the mind. Only one who transcends both—who “passes beyond death through *avidyā* and attains immortality through *vidyā*” (v. 11)—reaches *amṛtatva*, the serene knowledge of the Self.

Śaṅkara distinguishes two levels of *vidyā*:

1. *Aparā-vidyā*—ritual and liturgical sciences, including *karma-kāṇḍa* and subsidiary learning.
2. *Parā-vidyā*—knowledge by which the imperishable *Brahman* is known (*yā tad akṣaram adhigamyate*, Muṇḍ. 1.1.5).³

Within the *Īśopaniṣad*, *vidyā* does not yet denote the supreme *jñāna* but a higher preparation; *avidyā* signifies the lower discipline that purifies. Śaṅkara thus maps the *Īśopaniṣadic* paradox onto the pedagogical ladder of *sādhana-catuṣṭaya*: first purification by works, then concentration by meditation, culminating in knowledge that transcends both.

His own words clarify:

avidyayā mṛtyuṃ tīrtvā vidyayāmṛtam aśnute | avidyā hi karma mṛtyoḥ hetuḥ; tad-anuṣṭhānena mṛtyuṃ tīrtvā śuddhāntaḥkaraṇo vidyayā brahma vindate.⁴

In *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad Bhāṣya* 1.4.10 he identifies *avidyā* with the primal nescience that projects multiplicity (*nāmarūpa-vyākaraṇa*), yet in the *Īśopaniṣad* the term functions on the ritual plane. The two senses converge in his philosophy: ritual activity itself arises from metaphysical ignorance and yet, paradoxically, becomes the ladder out of it.⁵

Śaṅkara's interpretation follows his broader doctrine that the *Upaniṣads* reconcile the *Karma-kāṇḍa* and *Jñāna-kāṇḍa*. The former is subordinate but necessary. *Avidyā* thus becomes a *vyāvahārika-satyam* (empirical reality) opposed to, yet instrumental for, the realization of *pāramārthika-satyam*. *Vidyā* is the dawning of discriminative insight (*viveka*) but not yet final *aparokṣa-jñāna*.

The same structure recurs in the *Muṇḍaka*:

¹ Cf. S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 2 (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1929), p. 456.

² Śaṅkara-Bhāṣya on *Īśopaniṣad* 9.

³ Muṇḍakopaniṣad 1.1.4–5 with Śaṅkara-Bhāṣya.

⁴ *Īśopaniṣad*-Bhāṣya 11.

⁵ *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*-Bhāṣya 1.4.10 – discussion of *avidyā-kalpita-nāmarūpa*.

dve vidye veditavye iti ha smā yad brahmavido vadanti | parā caivāparā ca || (Muṇḍ. 1.1.4) Śaṅkara glosses *aparā* as the four Vedas and auxiliary sciences, *parā* as that by which *Brahman* is known.⁶ The *Īśopaniṣad* contrast, therefore, repeats this archetypal division. He also aligns the verses with *Gītā* 13.2–3 and *Kaṭha* 2.3.14 to show that liberation arises through *tyāga* (renunciation) after purification by action.⁷ Thus the dialectic of *vidyā*–*avidyā* resolves only in the transcendence of both; they are not antagonistic realities but sequential disciplines within the total scheme of non-duality.

Śaṅkara concludes his commentary on *Īśopaniṣad* 11 with the assertion:

*tayor ubhayor api saṃyogena eva pūrṇatā jñānasya bhavati — avidyayā hi mṛtyum tīrtvā vidyayāmṛtam aśnute.*⁸

Thus the dual pursuit culminates in a unity beyond both knowledge and ignorance—a hallmark of Advaita dialectic.

VI. Dayānanda on Vidyā–Avidyā

Dayānanda Sarasvatī's interpretation of the *Īśopaniṣad* diverges fundamentally from that of Śaṅkara in both **ontological premise** and **exegetical method**. For him, *vidyā* and *avidyā* are not preparatory disciplines on a path to *jñāna*, but **two distinct modes of knowledge**—one spiritual, one material—each real, both necessary when harmonized.

In his *Īśopaniṣad Bhāṣya*, Dayānanda renders the verse:

andhaṃ tamaḥ praviśanti ye'vidyām upāsate. tato bhūya iva te tamo ya u vidyāyām ratāḥ..

and explains:

*avidyā nāma laukika-jñānaṃ yad upāsanāyām vartate, vidyā nāma ātmika-jñānaṃ yad īśvarasya ātmanaś ca tattvajñānaṃ bhavati.*⁹

That is, *avidyā* is knowledge of worldly arts, sciences, and duties (*laukika-jñāna*), while *vidyā* is knowledge of the soul and God (*ātmika-jñāna*). Neither is condemned, but the verse warns that attachment to either exclusively leads to ignorance: materialism on one hand, fanaticism on the other. The synthesis of both alone—worldly science guided by divine wisdom—constitutes true enlightenment.

This interpretation proceeds from Dayānanda's **Vedic realism**. The Veda, he insists, cannot be self-contradictory; words such as *vidyā* and *avidyā* must retain their ordinary meanings unless clearly qualified by context.¹⁰ Therefore, Śaṅkara's rendering of *avidyā* as “ritual” (*karma*) and *vidyā* as “meditation” is rejected as a metaphysical imposition. The *Upaniṣads*, Dayānanda argues, are not esoteric allegories but divine revelations conveying ethical monotheism and rational cosmology.

In *Vedārthavidyā*, he elaborates:

*“vidyām vinā avidyā duḥkhaḥetuḥ, avidyām vinā vidyāpi na sampūrṇā; ubhayor aikyena eva paramārthaḥ.”*¹¹

Hence, the mutual necessity of *vidyā* and *avidyā* parallels his social philosophy: the Vedic sage is not a world-renouncing mystic but a rational householder practicing knowledge and work together.

Dayānanda also appeals to *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* 6.23 — *yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau* — to affirm that *vidyā* means theistic knowledge dependent on faith in the personal *Īśvara*.¹²

Thus, unlike Śaṅkara's non-dual *jñāna*, which dissolves the knower-known relation, Dayānanda's *vidyā* presupposes duality—*jīva* and *Īśvara* distinct yet harmonized.

He further links *avidyā* to materialism (*lokāyata* and *buddhi-nirākaraṇa*), declaring that such knowledge, though useful, must serve moral ends under divine law. *Avidyāyā mṛtyum tīrtvā vidyayāmṛtam aśnute* thus means: through worldly knowledge one overcomes physical evils

⁶ Muṇḍakopaniṣad-Bhāṣya 1.1.5.

⁷ Bhagavadgītā-Bhāṣya 13.2 – parallel definition of kṣetra-kṣetrajña.

⁸ Īśopaniṣad-Bhāṣya 11 closing sentence.

⁹ Dayānanda Sarasvatī, *Īśopaniṣad-Bhāṣya* (Lahore: Ārya Samāj Press, 1889), p. 23.

¹⁰ Satyārthaprakāśa, ch. 3 – principle of ekārtha-vāda (semantic consistency).

¹¹ Dayānanda Sarasvatī, *Vedārthavidyā*, ch. 4.

¹² Śvetāśvataropaniṣad 6.23.

(*mṛtyu*), and through spiritual knowledge one attains immortality (*amṛtatva*)—not by negating the world but by understanding God’s governance of it.¹³

This reading also resonates with his theistic understanding of *mokṣa*: not absorption into *Brahman* but eternal communion with the personal God. *Vidyā-avidyā* thus signify complementarity, not gradation; synthesis, not transcendence.

VII. Comparative Analysis: Vidyā–Avidyā

The contrast between Śaṅkara and Dayānanda on *vidyā-avidyā* is **not merely lexical but metaphysical**.

The difference between the two thinkers reflects the deeper polarity between Advaitic transcendence and Ārya-Samājic immanence. Śaṅkara’s path ascends from ritual to renunciation; Dayānanda’s integrates action and knowledge in moral harmony. Śaṅkara reads *vidyā-avidyā* as stages of consciousness; Dayānanda as dimensions of reality. Śaṅkara’s interpretation is hierarchical; Dayānanda’s complementary.

While Śaṅkara’s goal is *mokṣa* by transcendence of dualities, Dayānanda’s is liberation through righteous balance within duality. The hermeneutical contrast mirrors two epochs of Indian thought—classical and modern—and two temperaments of the Indian mind: the metaphysical and the pragmatic.

Both quote the same *Upaniṣadic* verses, yet their doctrinal trajectories diverge sharply:

Dimension	Śaṅkara	Dayānanda
Ontology	Non-dual <i>Brahman</i> ; world as <i>māyā</i>	Dualism of God (<i>Īśvara</i>) and soul (<i>jīva</i>)
<i>Avidyā</i>	Ritual activity and empirical knowledge; ignorance of Self	Worldly knowledge (<i>laukika-jñāna</i>); material science
<i>Vidyā</i>	Meditative or deity-centered knowledge leading to <i>ātma-jñāna</i>	Spiritual-theistic knowledge of God and soul
Relationship	Hierarchical; <i>avidyā</i> → <i>vidyā</i> → <i>jñāna</i> → <i>mokṣa</i>	Complementary; both required for harmony
Soteriology	Liberation by transcendence of both	Liberation by balance of both
Hermeneutics	Symbolic, esoteric	Literal, theistic–mīmāṃsā-based

Śaṅkara’s interpretation unfolds within the logic of *adhyāropa-apavāda* (superimposition and sublation): both *vidyā* and *avidyā* are *māyā*-bound and therefore ultimately unreal. Dayānanda’s approach rests on *yathārtha-vāda* (realistic assertion): all creation is real and divine. Hence Śaṅkara’s soteriology negates the world; Dayānanda’s redeems it.

Later Vedāntins (e.g., Madhva and Bhāskara) followed Śaṅkara’s dual reading but retained ontological realism. Dayānanda radicalized realism by grounding it in the *Veda* itself, preceding modern Hindu hermeneutic trends.¹⁴

Śaṅkara’s *avidyā* is metaphysical ignorance, while Dayānanda’s *avidyā* is epistemic limitation; the former is to be transcended, the latter integrated. Śaṅkara’s *vidyā* culminates in *jñāna-niṣṭhā*, Dayānanda’s in *īśvara-bhakti*.

The *Īsopaniṣadic* triad—*avidyayā mṛtyuṃ tīrtvā vidyayāmṛtam aśnute*—thus becomes in Śaṅkara’s system the dialectical movement of consciousness; in Dayānanda’s, the ethical program of civilization.¹⁵

¹³ Dayānanda Sarasvatī, *Vedārthavidyā*, ch. 6.

¹⁴ C.D. Sharma, *A Critical Survey of Indian Philosophy* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1960), pp. 320–25.

¹⁵ P. Deussen, *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, tr. A.S. Geden (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1906), pp. 218–20.

VIII. Śaṅkara on Sambhūti–Asambhūti

Verses 12–14 of the *Īsopaniṣad* extend the earlier paradox of *vidyā–avidyā* into the cosmic polarity of *sambhūti–asambhūti*:

andhaṃ tamaḥ praviśanti ye' sambhūtim upāsate |
tato bhūya iva te tamo ya u sambhūtyāṃ ratāḥ || (Īsop. 12)
anya-devāhur sambhūtyā anyad āhur asambhūtyā |
iti śuśrūma dhīrāṇāṃ ye na tad vicacakṣire || (13)
sambhūtiṃ ca vināśaṃ ca yas tad vedobhayaṃ saha |
vināśena mṛtyuṃ tīrtvā sambhūtyāmṛtam aśnute || (14)

Śaṅkara's *Bhāṣya* takes *sambhūti* as the manifest (*vyakta*, identified with *Hiraṇyagarbha*) and *asambhūti* as the unmanifest (*avyākṛta*).¹⁶ Both are within *māyā*; neither is *Brahman*. Worship of the unmanifest alone (*asambhūtim upāsate*) leads to obscurity, for it is without concrete understanding; worship of the manifest alone (*sambhūtyāṃ ratāḥ*) leads to deeper bondage through attachment to form. True knowledge lies in understanding both together—realizing that the same *Brahman* appears as manifestation and withdrawal.¹⁷

He glosses verse 14 thus:

vināśa-śabdaḥ avyākṛta-paryāyaḥ sambhūti-śabdaḥ hiraṇyagarbha-paryāyaḥ |
*ubhayaṃ saha yo veti sa mṛtyuṃ tīrtvā amṛtatvaṃ aśnute.*¹⁸

Śaṅkara's logic parallels the previous triad: *avidyā* and *vidyā* are like *asambhūti* and *sambhūti*—lower and higher contemplations to be transcended. In his commentary on *Brahmasūtra* 4.3.14 he reiterates that meditation on *Hiraṇyagarbha* (*sambhūti-upāsanā*) gives relative immortality (*krama-mukti*), but only direct *jñāna* of *nirguṇa Brahman* gives final liberation.¹⁹

Thus, the pair expresses the ontological rhythm of projection (*sṛṣṭi*) and reabsorption (*pralaya*) within *māyā*, both illumined and transcended by the self-luminous *Ātman*. Śaṅkara's vision is non-dual: *ubhayaṃ apī saha jñānam mokṣa-sādhanaṃ bhavati, na tu bhinnayoḥ phalam.*²⁰

IX. Dayānanda on Sambhūti–Asambhūti

Dayānanda reads the same verses through a realist-theistic lens. In his *Īsopaniṣad Bhāṣya* he explains *sambhūti* as “creation” (*sṛṣṭi*, *utpatti-śakti*) and *asambhūti* as “dissolution” (*vināśa*, *saṃhāra-śakti*).²¹ Both are attributes of the one Supreme Lord, *Parameśvara*.

He writes:

*“Sambhūtiḥ sṛṣṭi-śaktir īśvarasya; asambhūtiḥ saṃhāra-śaktir apī tasya eva na pṛthak asti.”*²²

The verse warns against deifying creation or destruction independently—those who worship *sambhūti* alone mistake the cosmos for God; those who worship *asambhūti* alone lapse into nihilism. True wisdom lies in knowing both as divine operations of *Īśvara*.²³

For Dayānanda, therefore, *sambhūti–asambhūti* articulates a theology of balance between evolution and dissolution under divine law, not a metaphysical hierarchy. He criticizes Śaṅkara's “mythic personification” of *Hiraṇyagarbha* as *adhyātmika vikalpa*—a speculative construct without Vedic warrant.²⁴

In *Vedārthavidyā* VII he adds:

*“na hi sṛṣṭiḥ svatantrā, na ca vināśaḥ ahetukaḥ; ubhayoḥ īśvarādhīnatvāt tayoḥ upāsanā ekatvena kartavyā.”*²⁵

¹⁶ Śaṅkara-Bhāṣya on *Īsopaniṣad* 12.

¹⁷ Ibid. 13.

¹⁸ Ibid. 14.

¹⁹ *Brahmasūtra-Bhāṣya* 4.3.14.

²⁰ Śārīrakamīmāṃsā-Bhāṣya, ed. Ganganātha Jha (Poona: Oriental Series, 1910), vol. 2, p. 542.

²¹ Dayānanda Sarasvatī, *Īsopaniṣad-Bhāṣya*, p. 26.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., p. 27.

²⁴ Dayānanda Sarasvatī, *Satyārthaprakāśa*, ch. 8.

²⁵ *Vedārthavidyā*, ch. 7.

Thus, while Śaṅkara internalizes the duality into meditative symbolism, Dayānanda externalizes it into divine cosmology. His monotheism reinterprets the *Upaniṣad* as a scientific-theistic statement: the knower of both creation and dissolution overcomes death because he comprehends the cyclical order of God’s universe.

Dayānanda’s realism demands that *sambhūti* and *asambhūti* denote actual processes, not states of consciousness. The term *upāsate* (“worship”) is read as “contemplate rightly,” not “perform ritual.”²⁶ Consequently, *vināśena mṛtyuṃ tīrtvā sambhūtyāmṛtam aśnute* means: “By understanding destruction, one transcends fear of death; by understanding creation, one partakes of the divine immortality of God’s law.”

This reading reinforces Dayānanda’s reformist agenda—integrating religion with empirical knowledge. Creation (*sambhūti*) corresponds to the natural sciences; destruction (*asambhūti*) to the moral law of retribution; both are real, rational, and divine. Thus, *Īsopaniṣad* 12–14, for him, validate the unity of science and spirituality within monotheism.²⁷

X. Comparative Analysis: Sambhūti–Asambhūti

Aspect	Śaṅkara	Dayānanda
Ontological level	Manifest & unmanifest within <i>māyā</i>	Creative & destructive powers of <i>Īśvara</i>
<i>Sambhūti</i>	<i>Hiraṇyagarbha</i> , cosmic mind	Creation, divine manifestation
<i>Asambhūti</i>	<i>Avyākṛta</i> , unmanifest	Dissolution, divine withdrawal
Epistemic role	Higher & lower contemplations leading to non-duality	Complementary principles of divine governance
Goal	Transcend both for <i>nirguṇa Brahman</i>	Know both as attributes of the one God
Hermeneutic	Symbolic, allegorical	Literal, theistic–rational

Śaṅkara’s *sambhūti–asambhūti* remains within the interior ascent of consciousness—*adhyātmika* interpretation. Dayānanda relocates the pair to the objective universe—*ādihidaivika* and *ādhibhautika* dimensions. For the Advaitin, reality dissolves in the one self-luminous principle; for the Ārya Samājī, reality is eternally manifold yet governed by an omniscient Lord.²⁸

Their difference thus mirrors their metaphysical commitments: the *nirguṇa Brahman* beyond predicates versus the *saguṇa Īśvara* who is cause and controller. Both, however, affirm that knowledge of both poles is necessary for liberation—a rare convergence amid opposition.²⁹

XI. Synthesis

Viewed together, Śaṅkara’s hermeneutic is **ascending**—from ritual to meditation to knowledge to silence; Dayānanda’s is **integrative**—from science to ethics to devotion to service. The *Īsopaniṣadic* pairs become mirrors reflecting the larger evolution of Hindu thought: from inward mysticism to rational theism.

Śaṅkara’s *mokṣa* is *brahma-sākṣātkāra*, the negation of duality. Dayānanda’s *mokṣa* is freedom from suffering within the everlasting reign of divine law. For Śaṅkara, the world is sublated; for Dayānanda, sanctified.³⁰

²⁶ *śopaniṣad-Bhāṣya*, gloss on “upāsate.”

²⁷ Dayānanda Sarasvatī, *Āryoddeśya Rājya-Dharma* (Bombay, 1892), p. 14.

²⁸ S.C. Chatterjee & D.M. Datta, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1954), pp. 382–85.

²⁹ R. Balasubramanian, *Advaita and Its Spiritual Significance* (Madras: University of Madras, 1981), p. 94.

³⁰ S. Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), pp. 473–76.

XII. Conclusion

The comparative study of Śaṅkara and Dayānanda on *vidyā-avidyā* and *sambhūti-asambhūti* unveils two enduring paradigms of Hindu hermeneutics. Śaṅkara, inheriting the late-Vedic quest for transcendence, turns paradox into pedagogy: the paired terms represent gradations of consciousness to be successively transcended until only *Brahman* remains. Dayānanda, shaped by nineteenth-century rational reform, restores paradox to harmony: the pairs mark complementary powers within divine reality and human civilization.

Both thinkers respond to the same *śruti*, yet their ontologies diverge—Śaṅkara's *Advaita* dissolves plurality in the one Self; Dayānanda's *Vaidika-īśvaravāda* affirms plurality as divine order. For Śaṅkara, *avidyā* and *asambhūti* are shadows within *māyā*; for Dayānanda, they are real and necessary principles. The Advaitin's liberation lies beyond creation; the Ārya Samāji's within creation rightly understood.

Still, each insists that both poles must be known together: *avidyayā mṛtyuṃ tīrtvā vidyayāmṛtam aśnute*—the seeker must traverse ignorance by knowledge and knowledge by transcendence. Whether the culmination is non-dual illumination or theistic communion, the *Īsopaniṣad* endures as the shared foundation of their divergent yet dialogic visions.

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Yoga in abhirama literature: with special reference to Kalibhāgavata

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I. Introduction

Yoga is an important medium to keep human mind, brain and body healthy. Yoga is a lifestyle by following which human intelligence can be secured. That is why Yoga has been called the shield of human intelligence.

योगः संनहनोपायध्यानसंगतियुक्तिषु।¹
(*Yogaḥ samnahanopāyadhyānasangatiyuktiṣu*)

Man attached to the *Indriyas* (senses) gets trapped in the bondage of *Sāmsāric māyā-bandhan* (worldly illusion). He remains bound by the bonds of relationships in the family and customs in the society. To rise above these bondages it is necessary to adopt the path of Yoga.

II. Keywords

Indriyas, māyā-bandhan, Yama, Niyama, āsana, Prāṇāyāma, Pratyāhāra, Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, Samādhi, Ahimsā, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacharya, Aparigraha, Śauc, Santoṣa, Tapa, Svādhyāya, Īśvarapranidhāna, Padma, Svastika, Recaka, Pūraka, kumbhaka, savikalpaka, nirvikalpaka, mana, jñāna, Śama, Dama, Uparati, Titikṣā, Samādhāna, Śraddhā, Manomayakosha, Yogitva, Moha, Chaitanya, Sārṇupya, Sālokya, Sāyujya, Sānnidhya, Brahma, Vaikunṭha, Laukika.

III. Eight Limbs of Yoga

The eight limbs of yoga mentioned by Maharishi Patanjali are - "*Yama, Niyama, āsana, Prāṇāyāma, Pratyāhāra, Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna and Samādhi*"².

1. अहिंसासत्यास्तेयब्रह्मचर्यापरिग्रहा यमाः - *Ahimsā, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacharya and Aparigraha* are called the five *Yama*-s.
2. शौचसन्तोषतपःस्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि नियमाः - *Śauc* (Defecation), *Santoṣa*(contentment), *Tapa*(penance), *Svādhyāya*(self-study) and *īśvarapranidhāna*(devotion to God) are the *Niyamāḥ*.
3. करचरणादिसंस्थानविशेषलक्षणानि पञ्चस्वस्तिकादीन्यासनानि - The postures of *Padma, Svastika* etc. made with the use of hands and feet are called *āsana*-s.
4. रेचकपूरककुम्भकलक्षणाः प्राणनिग्रहोपायाः प्राणायामाः - *Prāṇāyāma* is the way to swallow the vital air through *Recaka, Pūraka* and *kumbhaka* etc.
5. इन्द्रियाणां स्वस्वविषयेभ्यः प्रत्याहरणं प्रत्याहारः - Separating the senses from their *viṣayā*-s is *Pratyāhāra*. It means *Pratyāhāra* is to concentrate the mind by observing the self in all worldly Illusions.
6. अद्वितीयवस्तुन्यन्तरिन्द्रियधारणं धारणा - *Dhāraṇā* is the application of inner senses to a unique object.
7. तत्रा द्वितीयवस्तुनि विच्छिद्यन्तरिन्द्रियवृत्तिप्रवाहो ध्यानम् - Meditation is the intermittent flow of inner senses in a unique object.
8. समाधिस्तूतः सविकल्पक एव - Having awareness of other alternative objects along with realization of the unbroken object is *savikalpaka samādhi* and in *nirvikalpaka* there is no realization of any alternative.

¹ Amarakosha, Nānārthavarga, 3.22.3

² Yamaniyamāsanapraṇāyāmapratyāhāradhāraṇādhyāna-samādhayo'stāvamgāni. (Yogasūtra, 2/29)

There is no doubt that Abhirama Paramahansa was familiar with these eight limbs of yoga. He has discussed about these eight limbs of Yoga but mainly he has given special discussion on *mana*(mind). In this dissertation, *mana*(mind) has been specifically discussed.

Abhirama Paramahansa has asked to adopt eight flowers for *īśvarapranīdhāna*. They are – *Ahimsā*(Non-violence), *Indriyanigraha*(restraint of senses), *Dayā*(kindness), *Kṣamā*(forgiveness), *Japa*(chanting), *Dhyāna*(meditation), *jñāna*(knowledge) and *Satya*(truth)¹.

From the study of Kalibhāgavata, it is known that Abhirama Paramahansa considers 'control of the mind' as the main point of yoga practice. It is also said in *Yoga Sūtra* that -

योगः चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः³

(*Yogaḥ Cīttavṛttinirōdhaḥ*)

J. L. Gupta mentioned in *Aparokṣānubhūti* that “ The word Yoga means connection, link or union. When the word is used in a spiritual sense, it would imply the communion of the soul (*Jīvātman*) with Supreme Soul (*Paramātman*). When we talk of Yoga, it is not the Yoga that the people generally understand and the normal perception that they carry about it. Doing certain *Asanas* (postures) and some *Prāṇāyāma* (breath regulation) are only certain aspects of Yoga which are outlined under the discipline of *Haṭhayoga*. Sage Patañjali in his treatise on Yoga aphorisms defines Yoga as the suspension of the modification of the thinking principle (योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः). In this respect, breath or *Prāṇa* has the most vital role which is linked to the mind. In the *Yogavāsīṣṭha*, when initiating Lord Rama his teacher said:

शरीरशकटानां हि कर्षणे परमात्मना ।

मनःप्राणोदयौ ब्रह्मन् कृतौ कर्मकृतौ दृढौ ॥⁴

मनसः स्पन्दनं प्राणः प्राणस्य स्पन्दनं मनः।

एतौविहरतौ नित्यमन्योन्यं रथसारथी ॥⁵

It is the regulation of breath (*Prāṇa*) which helps to suspend the activity of the mind and brings all happiness, worldly and spiritual. The Yoga that puts most emphasis on the regulation of breath for the purpose of checking the modification of the thinking principle (*Manas*) is known as *Haṭhayoga*. *Rājayoga* begins, where *Haṭhayoga*, followed in a disciplined way, ends, or say that *Haṭhayoga* culminates in *Rājayoga*. A *Rājayog* in is the one who has fully conquered his mind and mastered the senses, whose heart is pure, and who has identified himself with the Self (*Ātman*). When a Yogi understands the very spirit of Yoga, the life undergoes a tremendous change. When the Yogi realizes his true Self (*Ātman*) transcending the practice of physical gratification, he recognizes his essential nature, i.e. the Divinity Itself and he gets established in the Brahman.”⁶

Sri Sri Thakura Abhirama Paramahansa has described the idealistic character of the devotees as: Truth, peace, piety, forgiveness (*Kṣyamā*), intelligence, knowledge, consciousness, free from desire and passion. These eight noble qualities are explained as *Aṣṭasakhis*, which are surrounded by Narahari, the Supreme Soul.

The human soul possessing these eight noble qualities or accepting these *Aṣṭasakhis* as the assisting aid, can experience self-realization with the help of the pure consciousness, called as *Hetu*. When one surrenders before the Supreme Soul then he will be free from the worldly passion, ignorance and the illusive *māyā* and feel that the human souls constitute the integration of different bodies, to be conceived as one indivisible power of the Absolute *Brahman*.

IV. Importance of Mana in Yogasādhana

Abhirama Paramahansa has given special discussion on *mana* (mind), the second of the eleven senses. Through '*Mana-Avadhūta Sambāda*', he has given special emphasis on controlling the *mana* (mind) by mentioning the movement of the *mana* (mind), emotions, conflicts and doubts

³ Pātañjalayogadarśanam, Samādhipāda 2

⁴ Yogavāsīṣṭha, 6 Pūrvārdham, 32.12

⁵ Yogavāsīṣṭha, 6 Pūrvārdham, 69.46

⁶ Aparokṣānubhūti, Introduction, Page-II

going on in the *mana* (mind). Because a human being has the right to six properties like 'Śama, Dama, Uparati, Titikṣā, Samādhāna and Śraddhā'. And when *mana* (mind) comes together with *jñānendriyas* (sense organs), then '*Manomayakosha*' is formed. That is why '*Manomayakosha*' is called the embodiment of willpower and while defining 'Śama' it has been said -

श्रवणादिव्यतिरिक्तविषयेभ्यो मनसः निग्रहः शमः।⁷

(*Śravaṇādivyatiṛiktaviṣayebhyo manasaḥ nigrahaḥ Śamaḥ*).

Unless a person has authority over these शमादिषट्कसम्पत्तिः (*Śamādiṣaṭkasampattiḥ*), '*Yogitva*' cannot be achieved. Abhirama Paramahansa knows this very well. Therefore, in his work '*Kalibhāgavata*' he has given special emphasis on the control of *mana* (mind).

Without control of *Indriyas* (senses), Yoga practice is not fruitful. Therefore, control over the senses is necessary for a Yogi. When a seeker gains control over his senses then he is called a Yogi. Abhirama Paramahansa was one of such yogi who had controlled his senses through spiritual practice.

Joy and sadness create disorders in the mind. That disorder can be tragic or hedonic. Yoga is achieved by maintaining *Samatā* (equanimity) in the state of happiness and sorrow. That is why it is said -

समत्वं योगमुच्यते।⁸

(*Samatvam yogamucyate*)

From the study of his works we come to know that Prabhu Shri Abhirama Paramahansa was the ultimate Yogi. In the context of *Mana-Avadhoota* dialogue in *Kalibhāgavata*, he has mentioned that

Indriyamāne tora sthira, Karichhu kaha ki hetura.

Viṣayarase nāhin āsa, teṇu ṭi sadā mun nirāsa.

*Indriyasparśa mora nāhin, eṇu mun aṭe suddha dehi.*⁹

This contemplation done by him is definitely an expression of a yogi's heart.

When the mind is fixed on an unwanted object or person, then arises *Moha*. Therefore, the *mana* (mind) should always be taken towards the good deed or right object. Abhirama Paramahansa has said -

*Mana māne sthira jeṇu, mohara guru muhin teṇu.*¹⁰

To underline the importance of *Mana*(mind), Yogi Paramahansa Deva has used *Naranātha, Nri panātha, Narapati* etc. as adjectives of *Mana*(mind).

*Śuṇa tu mana nripanātha.*¹¹

*Māga ho mana naranātha.*¹²

*Śuṇa tu mana narapati.*¹³

Paramahansa says - Knowledge can be acquired through meditation.

*Dhyāna ku jñāna ṭṭṇinelā, andhāra ujvala diṣilā.*¹⁴

Shri Paramahansa, in the dialogue '*Man-Chaitanya*', has underlined the importance of meditation and said that by meditating with a steady mind, the senses can be controlled. As soon as the senses are controlled, nature becomes favorable and man becomes free from the 'bondage of illusion'.

Dhyānaku jeṇu kalā sthira, samāra hoigalā dhīra.

⁷ Vedāntasāra 19

⁸ योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय।
सिद्धयसिद्धयोः समं भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते॥ भगवद्गीता, 2.48।

⁹ Abhirama Rachanavali, *Kalibhāgavata*, Chap 1, p.4

¹⁰ Abhirama Rachanavali, *Kalibhāgavata*, Chap 2, p.4

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Abhirama Rachanavali, *Kalibhāgavata*, Chap 2, p.4

¹³ Abhirama Rachanavali, *Kalibhāgavata*, Chap 2, p.5

¹⁴ Ibid.

*sthira hoilā prabhanjana, pavane thaya helā mana.
mana hoilā sthira jeṇu, indriya thaya hela teṇu.
indriya jeṇu hele śānti, sthakite rahile prakriti.
prakriti jeṇu hele sthira, sarilā māyā khela tāra.*¹⁵

The nature of the *Mana*(mind) is fickle. Therefore, the *Mana*(mind) has to be stabilized like a mountain, only then the desired goal will be achieved.

*Giri parāye sthira hela, nirvāte vatic jāṇilā.*¹⁶

Abhirama Paramahansa has mentioned four types of *mukti* (liberation) through the dialogue between *Mana* and *Caitanya* in *Kalibhāgavata*. Such as - *Sārūpya*, *Sālokyā*, *Sāyujya*, and *Sānnidhya*.

*Suṇa tu mana narapati, chaturtha prakāre mukati.
Sārūpya, sālokyā, sāyujya, chaturthe sānnidhyaku heja.*¹⁷

V. Sāyujya Mukti

Abhirama Paramahansa says - *Yoga-sāadhanā* is required for this *Chaturdhā* liberation. When someone remains in *samādhi* and keeps warming him in the fire of yoga to become absorbed in *Brahma*, it means, gets absorbed in *yoga-sāadhanā* and ultimately becomes a part of *Brahma*, then it is called *Sāyujya Mukti*.

When the senses are controlled through meditation by knowing that सर्वं ब्रह्मैव" Brahman is everything" and seekers want to merge into *brahma* through the meditation, then it is called *Yama*. Abhirama Says regarding *Sāyujya Mukti*. -

*dhyātmika je bhāvagrāh, janmile janma mrityu nāhin.
tāhāra amge hevi līna, punarpi na hevi janama.
etaka pañci yogāgnire , brahmare brahmalīna kara.
sāyujya mukti tāku kahi, suṇa tu mana narasāin.*¹⁸

It is said in *Aparokṣānubhūti* that -

यत्र यत्र मनो याति ब्रह्मणस्तत्र दर्शनात् ।
(*Yatra yatra mano yāti brahmaṇastatra darśanāt*)
मनसो धारणं चैव धारणा सा पुरा मता ।¹⁹
(*manaso dhāraṇam caiva dhāraṇā sā parā matā*)

Wherever the mind goes, it sees only *Brahma* and absorbing the mind in *Brahma* itself is *Dhāraṇā*. So this is called *Dhāraṇā*.

VI. Sārūpya-Mukti

Regarding *Sārūpya -Mukti*, he says - When someone, in order to attain the form of Vishnu, it means to become as bright as Vishnu and reside in *Vaikumṭha*, engages in *yoga-sāadhanā* and does penance for liberation, then it is called *Sārūpya-Mukti*.

*Ke basi tape magna hoī, bhāliki vishnu hevi muhin.
vishnunka prāye teja bahi, rahibi vaikumṭhare jāi.
ete bicāri kare tapa, tāhāku kahibi sārūpya.*²⁰

VII. SAANNIDHYA MUKTI

When someone wants to stay with the Lord day and night with the desire to see the Lord every day, wants to remain in the company of God always. With this feeling, one does penance to become free from the bondage of the *samsāra*, then it is called *Sānnidhya Mukti*.

Ke bhāle rajani dibasa, rahibi prabhunkara pāsa.

¹⁵ Kalibhagavata, mana-caitanyasamvada, page-35

¹⁶ Abhirama Rachanavali, Kalibhāgavata, Chap 2, p.5

¹⁷ Abhirama Rachanavali, Kalibhāgavata, Chap 5, p.10

¹⁸ Abhirama Rachanavali, Kalibhāgavata, Chap 5, p.10

¹⁹ Aparokṣānubhūti, 122

²⁰ Abhirama Rachanavali, Kalibhāgavata, Chap 5, p.10

*se jeun madhura murati, dekhuthibi mun niti prati.
prabhunka sange sāṅg hebi, pāsaru antara nohibi.*²¹

VIII. Sālokya Mukti

The one, who realizes in his heart that this *samsāra* is false and only Shri Hari is true, he leaves the *samsāra*, takes renunciation and gets absorbed in the devotion of God for salvation. The liberation that is achieved through this type of *sāadhanā* is called *Sālokya Mukti*.

*sālokya mukti shuṇa ebe, ke basi hridapadme bhābe.
samsāra aṭai asatya, ekā shrihari satya satya.
adhibhūtaku teji diye, sanyāsa sūtre sthira rahe.
erūpe je kare bhajana, sālokya mukti boli jāṇa.*²²

Offering all the auspicious, inauspicious, *Laukika* and Vedic deeds to God is '*śvara praṇidhāna*'. Abhirama urges people to follow the principles of *Ahimsā*, *Satya*, *Dayā*, *Kṣamā* etc. and give up untruth, anger etc. According to him God is supreme. Therefore, all actions (*Laukika* and Vedic deeds) should be dedicated to God.

*Kebala jībare ahimsā, ehi bhāvaku kara āśā.
bikāra aṭai anartha, khela tu nirvikāra patha.*²³
*nirlobhī niṣkāmi akrotha, ahimsā satya mati śuddha.
nirbhaya nirmoha miśāi, ehāṅku boli satyāgrahī.*²⁴
*ahimsā satya dayā kṣamā, ātmakuśala e jāṇimā.
himsā asatya krodha ādi, emāne ātmā pakṣye bādī.
jeteka karma phala tora, ātmaku samarpaṇa kara.
Ātamāku ātmāre majjāi, puja tu sarva bhoga dei.
ātmāre kara ātmajñāna, caitanya kara anumāna.*²⁵

Abhirama Paramahansa considers satisfaction as the ultimate happiness and says -

*hetuti aṭai viśvāsa, hetuṭi aṭai santoṣa.
hetuṭi sarva aṭe satya, hetuṭi nuhein abhibhūta.*²⁶

Sri Paramahansa has mentioned that to attain the proximity of God, one should follow the path of devotion. This is the easy path. Liberation is possible through devotional practice -

*muktiru bhakati sahaja, sahaja sūtraṭi tu bhaja.
bhakati ate sārātara, jaṇanti sinā chakradhara.
sahaja ātmā dhyāna kari, pāilā sinā chakradhār.*²⁷

IX. Prāṇāyāma

Prāṇāyāma is an important part of yoga practice. Abhirama Paramahansa knows this very well. While explaining the importance of breathing and exhalation, he depicted Shri Hari, as a supreme yogi.

*se parama jāye jīva, jāye parama āse jīva.
praśvāsa khoji śvāsare, bāraru thāye daśa ghare.
śvāsaṭi praśvāsa hoile, diśu āsi bāra dale.
yoga bhoga ange epari, khelu achhnti śiri hari.*²⁸

It is clear from these discussions that Abhirama Paramahansa was non-violent and truthful. They consider desire, impurity, dissatisfaction etc. towards the object as the biggest obstacles in attaining Brahma. According to him, *sana* helps in contemplation of Brahma and it makes the body's

²¹ Abhirama Rachanavali, Kalibhāgavata, Chap 5, p.10

²² Ibid.

²³ Abhirama Rachanavali, Kalibhāgavata, Chap 10, p.20

²⁴ Abhirama Rachanavali, Kalibhāgavata, Chap 27, p.53

²⁵ Abhirama Rachanavali, Kalibhāgavata, Chap 20, p.36,37

²⁶ Abhirama Rachanavali, Kalibhāgavata, Chap 6, p.13

²⁷ Abhirama Rachanavali, Kalibhāgavata, Chap 5, p.10

²⁸ Ibid.

position stable. Through *Tapah*(penance), *Svādhyāya*, *īśvarapraṇidhāna* (devotion to God), *dhyāna* and *dhāraṇā*, one can become absorbed in *Brahma*.

X. Conclusion

Mana (mind) is the means to attain salvation, *Mana*(mind) is the cause of bondage, *Mana*(mind) is the indicator of lack and *Mana*(mind) is the indicator of happiness. It is better if you know the art of controlling the *Mana*(mind). The one who has purified his mind is a saint. The more empty the *Mana*(mind), the more valuable life will be. This is the message given by Sri Abhirama Paramahansa Deva.

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