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ACADEMIC SPECTRUM

(A Multidisciplinary Peer Reviewed Journal)



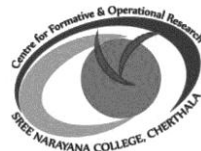
**CENTRE FOR FORMATIVE AND OPERATIONAL RESEARCH
(RESEARCH PROMOTION COUNCIL)
SREE NARAYANA COLLEGE
CHERTHALA**

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SREE NARAYANA COLLEGE
CHERTHALA, KERALA, INDIA

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EDITORIAL

The current volume is really a remarkable one as it has made another big stride towards academic excellence. The journal which acquired a novel title since the previous volume, has also garnered the interest of veterans in the field who ventured forth as reviewers. Moreover, peer review from across the state has given the journal a new sparkle. The editorial board is pleased with the successful launching of this issue as it once again integrates the best scholarly articles from colleges far and near.

Though the country has transformed tremendously with the advancements of modernity, academic arena remains stagnant across many states in India. Despite continuous efforts, many areas of our country remain resistant to change when it comes to innovative thoughts and ideas. As teachers, we always want the best for our students. It is also imperative that teachers should gain actual control over their student's future. A vibrant and strife-free campus would be a good move towards this objective. Innovative programmes undertaken in our educational institutions and the system at large are no doubt the secrets to success. In order to assist the students in their academic achievements, the educators should be able to use suitable means necessary for polishing the students' potential. Thus administrators and teachers should be offered more flexibility and creativity in what is taught and how it is taught.

This is a period of profound and boundless changes. The student of today is an individual, a real person with feelings of self-esteem, sympathy, obligation and empathy. It is essential to identify, appreciate, applaud and foster the fine blend of sensibilities in a student. A teacher, therefore, has to be equally subtle and competent with a flair for creativity. It is said that the mind, like a parachute, works best when it is opened. This humble initiative is to set the budding minds free, allowing them to roam unfettered in the realm of imagination and experience, through investigation and research to create a world of intellectual beauty. For the current volume, we sincerely hope to get generous support from more knowledge seekers.

With Regards...

Principal
Dr. K, Anirudhan

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Guidelines to the authors

Academic Spectrum is a Multidisciplinary Peer reviewed Annual Research Journal of Sree Narayana College, Cherthala, Alappuzha devoted to the publication of original research papers in all disciplines.

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON THE ALGAL FLORA IN RELATION TO ECOLOGICAL FACTORS IN (KOTTANKULANGARA, PAYALAKKAVU AND ARACKAL-KULAM) THREE TEMPLE PONDS OF KOLLAM DISTRICT, KERALA

Sreeja Krishnan and Stephy K. A.

Post Graduate Department of Botany, Sree Narayana College, Cherthala, Alappuzha, Kerala.

ABSTRACT

Biodiversity is a precious biological resource that is irreplaceable. The United Nations Environment Programme defines biological diversity as the variety and variability of all animals, plants and micro-organisms. The wealth of earth is its living wealth, which supplies an abundant and essential supply of indispensable goods and service to mankind. Fresh water of the world is collectively experiencing markedly accelerating rates of qualitative and quantitative degradation. The conservation of this freshwater resource and its sustainable utilization has to be central to all developmental planning, especially in developing countries. The present study was carried out during 07th October 2013 to 11th March 2014 in three temple ponds of Kollam district, Kerala. A total of 12 algal taxa were collected from three freshwater habitats. They belonged to 3 classes viz. Chlorophyceae (50%), Bacillariophyceae (16.7%), and Cyanophyceae (33.3%). The highest number of algae was collected from Arackal-kulam temple pond (5 species from 5 genera), followed by Payalakkavu temple pond (4 species from 3 genera) and the least number of algae collected from Kottankulangara temple pond (3 species from 3 genera). Physico-chemical analysis revealed that bicarbonate content, dissolved oxygen, pH and water temperature bring highest variability to the algal communities of the temple ponds and the organic carbon inversely affect the growth of algae. However when compared, Arackal-kulam temple pond and Payalakkavu temple pond are encountered by greater organic input than Kottankulangara temple pond. From this study it is clear that all the three ponds are mesotrophic and are undergoing eutrophication. Therefore there is a necessity to maintain the ecosystem of these ponds. The data generated in the form of record, can be used as a decision maker for the conservation and effective utilization of these water bodies.

Introduction

The diversity and rarity of indigenous fresh water biota depends upon the habitat. Biodiversity in this context means the full expression of the natural components of the ecosystem that were present before widespread habitat modification,

harvest of native species, and introduction of exotic species, whether by accidental or intentional means. Species richness, genetic diversity and unmodified indigenous communities are all components of biodiversity.

The freshwater ecosystem is of lotic and lentic types: lotic include streams, canals, waterfalls, rivers and rivulets. The lentic system includes the pools, puddles, ponds, reservoirs, lakes and the agricultural fields like paddy fields. The algae in freshwater ecosystem is differentiated into various types of planktons (free floating), benthons (attached to sediments), and epiphytic algae (on stones, sand, mud and rock of reservoir and lakes). Depending on the seasons the algae appear and disappear. Temple tanks are wells or reservoirs built as part of the temple complex in Indian temples. Bathing in the sacred waters of these tanks is thought to cure diseases and maladies.

Algae are microscopically small, unicellular organisms, some of these form colonies and reach a size visible to naked eye as minute green particles. The organisms are finely dispersed throughout the water and may cause considerable turbidity showing the maximum algal bloom.

Algae play a major role in maintaining the biological balance and quality of water (Pandey et al., 1998).

Materials and Methods

The present investigation of algae was carried out in the temple ponds of Chavara panchayath, Kollam District which is situated in the south-eastern part of Kerala state. The study was conducted during a period from October to March (2013 – 2014). The three temple ponds come under lentic water system and are roughly rectangular in shape. Random sampling method has been applied in the algal collection procedure.

Algal samples were collected from three temple ponds of Chavara panchayath from 7th October 2013 to 11th March 2014 and stored in 4% formalin. The detailed studies were carried out by using calibrated Phase Contrast Trinocular research microscope with PC and Stereo Trinocular research microscope with PC (Zenith).

The water samples were analyzed for the various chemical parameters. The standard methods given in Strickland and Parsons (1972) was followed. Carbonate, Bicarbonate, and Dissolved oxygen, were measured. Water temperature was recorded with the help of a good grade Celsius thermometer of $\pm 0.5^\circ$ accuracy. The hydrogen ion concentration (pH) of the water samples was measured using digital pH meter.

Results and Discussion

(i) Algal Study

1. *Volvox aureus* Ehr. Plate 1. Fig.1

Iyengar & Desikachary, 1981, pp.468-470, fig. 24:1-12; 274; Prescott, 1962, p.78, pl.2, fig. 5; Anand, 1998, p.25, fig. 69.

Colony globose, composed of 500-1000 cells; cells ovoid 3.2-6.87 μ m broad; biflagellate, directed outwards; interconnected by protoplasmic strands; chloroplast single, cup-shaped with pyrenoid; nucleus single; dioecious, reproduction by auto-colony formation, sexual reproduction oogamous.

Collection: No. KOL -12, November 30, 2013, free-floating. (KOL: Kollam)

Distribution in India: Banaras (Uttar Pradesh); Chennai (Tamil Nadu); Dehradun (Uttaranchal).

2. ***Hydrodictyon reticulatum* (Linn.) Lagerheim** Plate 1. Fig.2
Philipose, 1967, p. 134, fig. 48.
Colonies net-like, hexagonal; cells elongate & cylindrical, 28-42 µm broad, 185-250 µm long.
Collection: No. KOL-24, February 15, 2013, free-floating.
Distribution in India: Banaras (Uttar Pradesh); Mumbai (Maharashtra).
3. ***Spirogyra fluviatilis* Hilse** Plate 1. Fig. 3
Randhawa 1959, p. 332, fig. 322.
Vegetative cells 44.2 µm broad and 234.6-241.4 µm long; septa plane, chloroplast 2, making 3-5 turns; reproduction by zygospores, conjugation scalariform; tubes formed by both gametangia, receptive gametangia cylindrical upto 60 µm in diameter; zygospores oblong to ovoid, 40.8-47.6 µm broad 61.2-68 µm long, mesospore wall brown, smooth.
Collection: No. KOL- 4, December 21, 2013, free-floating.
Distribution in India: Kayamkulam (Kerala); Uttar Pradesh.
4. ***Cosmarium connatum* Bréb.**
Plate 1. Fig. 4
Prasad & Misra, 1992, p. 157, pl. 23, figs. 10-15.
Cells symmetrical, small, moderately constricted; cells 47.6 µm broad, 61.2 µm long, isthmus 40.8 µm, open sinus, semi-cells sub-elliptic with flat apex; chloroplast with two large pyrenoids.
Collection: No. KOL-26, November 30, 2013, free-floating with other algae.
Distribution in India: Allahabad (Uttar Pradesh); Jaintia Hills (Assam); Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh); Nagpur (Maharashtra); Warangal (Andhra Pradesh).
5. ***Vaucheria borealis* Hirn.** Plate 1. Fig. 5
Venkataraman, 1961, p.71, fig. 47.
Filaments branched, 61.2-68 µm broad; coenocytic; oogonia sessile with a horizontal beak, 78.2-88.4 µm broad, 102 µm long; oospore filling the oogonium, antheridia 20.4-27.2 µm broad, 81.6-91.8 µm long.
Collection: No. KOL-9, January, 2014, on wet soil.
Distribution in India: Devikulam (Kerala)
6. ***Chara gymnopitys* Braun**
Sindhu & Panikkar, 1991, pp. 741-742. fig. 1-6.
Plants erect, monoecious, 9-10 cm long; stem 450-500 µm broad; internodes 1-2 cm long; stipulodes in single whorl acute; cortex diplostichous; spine cells solitary; branchlets 4-12, partially corticate or ecorticate; bract cells 7-8, acute; oogonia ellipsoid, 271-34 µm broad, 350-400 µm long; spiral cells 8-9; coronula cells 119 µm broad, 68 µm long oospores black 185-240 µm broad, 257-314 µm long antheridia, 250 µm in diameter.

Collection: No. KOL-18, November 10, 2013; attached to substratum.

Distribution: Depalpur, Gonda, Indore (Uttar Pradesh); Khar, Khadala, Kolhapur (Maharashtra); Kollam (Kerala); Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh).

7. ***Gomphonema lanceolatum* Ehr.**

Plate 1 Fig.7

Hustedt, 1938. p. 376, fig. 700; Prasad & Srivastava, 1992; p. 25, pl. 33, fig. 13.

Valves linear - lanceolate with rounded ends raphe thin; central nodules bent; terminal fissures curved; axial area narrow; central area broad; striae parallel; median striae short, widely placed; 11.2 μm broad, 52.8 μm long, striae 11 in 10 μm .

Collection: No. KOL-28, October 07, 2013, free-floating with other algae.

Distribution in India: Ahmedabad (Gujarat); Bandhargarh (Madhya Pradesh); Chennai (Tamil Nadu); Kolhapur (Maharashtra); Mysore (Karnataka); Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh).

8. ***Gomphonema parvulum* (Kuetz.) Grun.**

Plate 1 Fig. 8

Hustedt, 1938. p. 372, fig. 713 a; Prasad & Srivastava, 1992, p. 255, pl. 33, fig. 19.

Valves small, lanceolate, rounded apex; raphe thin, straight, median; central nodules distinct; axial area linear; central area small; striae thin, lineate; 6.4 μm broad, 24 μm long, striae; 15 in 10 μm .

Collection: No. KOL-27, February 21, 2014, free-floating with other algae.

Distribution in India: Ahmedabad (Gujarat); Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh), Dharawar (Karnataka), Kolhapur (Maharashtra), Mumbai (Maharashtra), Partabgarh (Rajasthan), Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh).

9. ***Lyngbya martensiana* Menegh. ex Gomont**

Plate 1 Fig. 9

Desikachary, 1959. p.318. pl.52. fig.6; Anand, 1989, p.31, fig. 55; Prasad & Srivastava, 1992, p.95, pl.11, fig. 3.

Thallus caespitose; filaments more or less flexible; sheath hyaline; un-lamellated; trichome 13.6 μm broad, not constricted at the cross walls; cells 6.8-10.2 μm broad, 3.4 μm long, end cell rotund.

Collection: No. KOL-51, December 21, 2013, free-floating.

Distribution in India: Ahmadabad (Gujarat); Chamba State (Punjab); Katni (Madhya Pradesh); Khasia (Assam).

10. ***Spirulina gigantea* Schmidle**

Plate 1 Fig. 10

Desikachary, 1959, p. 197, pl.36, figs. 12, 14-17.

Trichome 4.8 μm broad, blue-green, flexuous, loosely coiled, spirals 9.6 μm broad, distance between the spirals 12.8-14.4 μm .

Collection: KOL-60, December 21, 2013, free-floating.

11. *Nostoc kihlmani* Lemmermann.

Plate1 Fig. 11

Starmach 1966, p. 528, figs. 807, 808.

Thallus globose, gelatinous; filaments many parallel; trichome 3.2 μm broad; cells spherical 3.2 μm in diameter; heterocyst spherical 4.8 μm in diameter; spores spherical 4.8-6.4 μm in diameter.

Collection: No. KOL-14, February 21, 2014, on wet soil.

12. *Scytonema pseudohofmanni* Bharadwaja

Plate 1 Fig.12

Desikachary, 1959, p.478, pl. 94, fig. 2.

Thallus caespitose, filaments 12.8 – 14.4 μm broad, densely entangled, sheath firm, 4.8 μm thick with parallel stratification, trichomes 6.4 – 8 μm broad; cells usually barrel shaped, 6.4 μm broad, 3.2–4.8 μm long; heterocysts single broader than trichome, quadrate 8 μm broad, 9.6 μm long.

Collection: No. KOL-17, October 21, 2013, on the wall of temple pond.

(ii) Ecological Study

The study on the physico-chemical parameters showed that the atmospheric temperature ranged between 32°C-33°C. The highest water temperature was noted in Kottankulankara temple pond in the month of March. The pH of the water ranges from 6.98-7.2 in three ponds. The dissolved oxygen concentration varied between 5 mg/l – 7mg/l in three ponds during October to March. The

minimum value was recorded in Kottankulankara temple pond and the maximum value was recorded in Payalakkavu temple pond in the month of January. The carbonate content varied between 0.0009 mg/l – 0.0012 mg/l in our study area. The maximum value was recorded in two ponds, ie. Arackal-kulam temple pond & Payalakkavu temple pond . The minimum value was recorded in Kottankulankara temple pond during the month of January.

The bicarbonate content in three ponds varied from 0.009 mg/l – 0.0014 mg/l. The maximum value was recorded in Payalakkavu temple pond and the minimum value was recorded in Arackal-kulam Temple Pond during the month of January. The organic carbon in the soil was varied from 0.03%- 0.19%. The minimum value was recorded in Arackal-kulam temple pond and the maximum value was recorded in Kottankulankara temple pond during the month of January. A total of twelve algal taxa were collected from three fresh water habitats they belonged to four classes viz. Chlorophyceae (50%), Bacillariophyceae (16.6%) and Cyanophyceae (33.3%).

Five species of algae, were collected from Arackal-kulam temple pond of which 3 from Chlorophyceae (*Volvox*, *Hydrodictyon*, and *Spirogyra*), and 2 from Cyanophyceae (*Spirulina*, *Scytonema*). This pond contained 41.7% of total algal population. Four algal species, were collected from Payalakkavu temple pond, of which 1 was from Chlorophyceae (*Chara*), 2 were from Bacillariophyceae (*Gomphonema*) and another 1 from Cyanophyceae (*Lyngbya*). This pond

contained 33.3% of the total algal diversity. Three algal species were collected from Kottankulankara temple pond of which 2 from Chlorophyceae (*Cosmarium*, *Vaucheria*) and 1 from Cyanophyceae (*Nostoc*). This pond contained 25% of the total algal population. Maximum algal specimens were obtained from Arackal-kulam temple pond and minimum from Kottankulankara temple pond.

Summary and Conclusion

The aquatic habitats were predominated by Chlorophycean algae. Maximum algal diversity was seen during November to January, while the months of February & March showed minimum abundance. Of the three ponds, the maximum Chlorophycean and Cyanophycean algae were obtained from the Arackal-kulam temple pond which is comparatively rich in dissolved oxygen and bicarbonate content. The Bacillariophycean members were predominately seen in the Payalakkavu temple pond which contain comparatively good concentration of dissolved oxygen and bicarbonate. Comparatively less algal density is seen in Kottankulangara temple Pond due to less amount of dissolved oxygen and bicarbonate and may be due to high amount of carbonate content. The organic carbon in the soil inversely affect the algal growth. The pond water temperature ranged between 32⁰-34⁰C and is good for the algal growth. The pH of the water, which ranges from 6.5-7.6 during the present study, also influence the algal bloom. The data shows that the Kottankulangara, Arackal-kulam and Payalakkavu temple ponds are

mesotrophic and are undergoing eutrophication. Hence measures should be taken to minimize the fresh water pollution.

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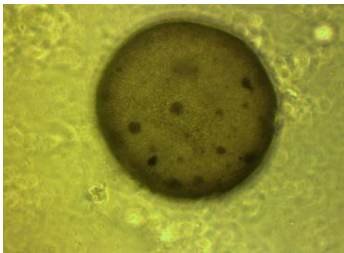
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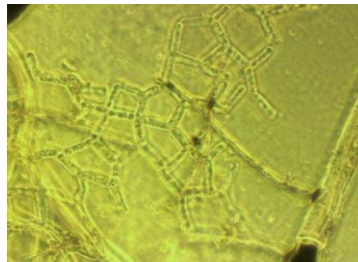
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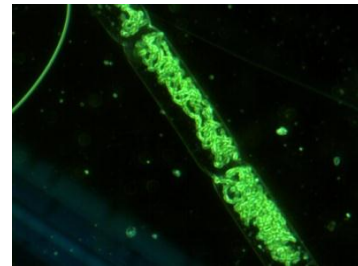
PLATE 1



1
Volvox aureus



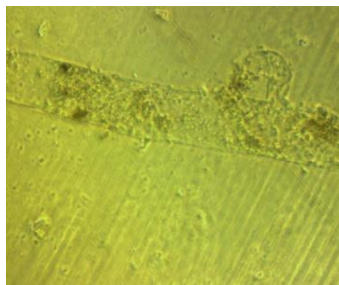
2
Hydrodictyon reticulatum



3
Spirogyra fluviatilis



4
Cosmarium connatum



5
Vaucheria borealis



6
Chara gymnopitys



7
Gomphonema lanceolatum



8
Gomphonemaparvulum



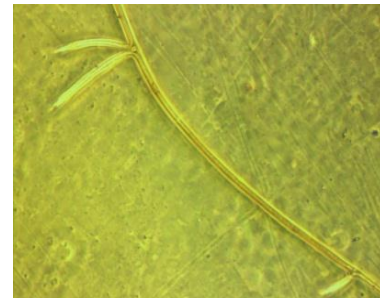
9
Lyngbya martensiana



10
Spirulina gigantea



11
Nostoc Kihlmani



12
Scytonemapseudohofmanni

WATER QUALITY ANALYSIS OF SAMPLES FROM S. N. PURAM LOCALITY IN TERMS OF DISSOLVED OXYGEN CONTENT

Dhanya Viswam*, Shamjith S.

Department of Chemistry, Sree Narayana College, Cherthala

ABSTRACT

Dissolved Oxygen (DO) is an important water quality parameter, for drinking water. The range of dissolved oxygen in safe drinking water source is 4-5 mg/L. The work was carried out by collecting water samples from various water sources in and around Sree Narayana College, Cherthala. By comparing the dissolved Oxygen content in various sources, the water sources best suited for drinking purpose were determined. Titritic/Wrinkler's Method was adopted for this study.

Introduction

Dissolved oxygen¹ analysis measures the amount of gaseous oxygen (O₂) dissolved in an aqueous solution. Oxygen dissolves in water by diffusion from the surrounding air, by aeration (rapid movement), and as a by product of photosynthesis of aquatic plants. Dissolved oxygen (DO) is one of the most important indicators of water quality parameter². It is essential for all plants and animals. Oxygen availability throughout the year is influenced by other chemicals present in the water, biological processes, and temperature³. Warm water is capable of holding less dissolved oxygen than cold water⁴. When water holds the entire DO it can hold at a given temperature, it is said to be 100 percent saturated with oxygen. If water holds half as much oxygen as it can hold at a given temperature, it is 50% saturated. The total dissolved gas concentrations in water

should not exceed 11 mg/L. The concentrations above this level can be harmful to aquatic life⁵. Fish in waters containing excessive dissolved gases may suffer from "gas bubble disease"⁶; however, this is a very rare occurrence. The bubbles or emboli block the flow of blood through blood vessels causing death. External bubbles (emphysema) can also occur and be seen on fins, on skin and on other tissues. Aquatic invertebrates are also affected by gas bubble disease but at levels higher than those lethal to fish. Adequate dissolved oxygen is necessary for good water quality. Oxygen is a necessary element to all forms of life. Natural stream purification processes require adequate oxygen levels in order to balance the purification process.

Biologically speaking, however, the level of oxygen is a much more important measure of water quality than faecal coliform. As dissolved oxygen levels in water drop below 5.0 mg/l,

aquatic life is put under stress, lower the concentration greater the stress. Oxygen levels that remain below 1-2 mg/l for a few hours can result in the death of aquatic organisms⁷.

Oxygen is absolutely essential for the survival of all aquatic organisms; not only fish but also invertebrates such as crabs, clams, zooplankton, etc. Moreover, oxygen affects a vast number of other water quality parameters directly and indirectly, not only biochemical parameters but also the aesthetic physical properties like appearance, odour, clarity and taste. Consequently, oxygen is perhaps the most well-established indicator of water quality⁸. A high DO level in a community water supply is good because it makes drinking water taste better. However, high DO levels speed up corrosion in water pipes⁹. For this reason, industries use water with the least possible amount of dissolved oxygen.

Materials and methods

Chemicals

All chemicals were of analytical grade and were used without further purification:

Sodium Thiosulphate (A.R. grade, Merck), Potassium Dichromate (A.R. grade, Merck), Manganese Sulfate dehydrate (A.R. grade, Merck), Sodium Hydroxide (A.R. grade, Merck), Concentrated Sulphuric Acid (Nice Chemicals), Potassium Iodide (A. R. grade Sigma Aldrich) and Starch (A. R. grade, Merck).

Reagents

1. Alkali-Iodide reagent

To prepare this reagent, 70 g of Potassium hydroxide and 15 g of potassium iodide were dissolved in distilled water, and made up to 100 mL.

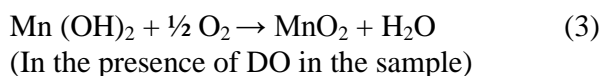
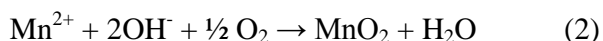
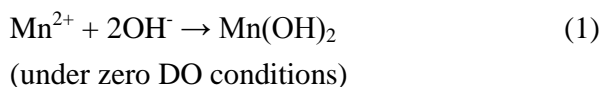
Method

Wrinkler's Method

Principle

The Wrinkler's (iodometric) method¹⁰ depends on the fact that oxygen oxidizes Mn^{2+} to a higher state of valence under alkaline conditions. In higher states of valence, it is capable of oxidizing iodide ions to free iodine under acidic conditions¹¹. The free iodine thus released is equivalent to the dissolved oxygen originally present in the sample and is measured by titration with standard sodium thiosulphate solution in the presence of starch as indicator.

When $MnSO_4$ and alkali-iodide ($NaOH + KI$) reagent are added to a sample in which no DO is present, a white precipitate of $Mn(OH)_2$ is formed. If dissolved oxygen is present, it oxidizes some of the Mn^{2+} ion to Mn^{4+} ions, forming MnO_2 floc, as follows:

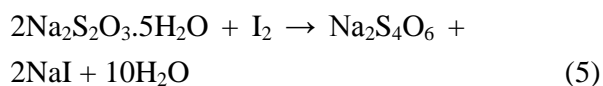


The amount of Mn^{2+} ions thus oxidized depends on the amount of dissolved oxygen

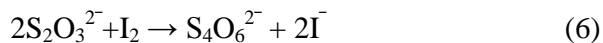
present in the sample. The MnO_2 floc on acidification with H_2SO_4 oxidizes iodide ions to free iodine:



The resulting free iodine is measured by titrating against sodium thiosulfate in the presence of starch as indicator:



Or



When starch solution is added to the sample, the free iodine gets adsorbed on the surface of the colloidal starch particles and gives a blue colour to the solution. During titration the free iodine is desorbed from the starch particles and is converted to iodide. When all the iodine is desorbed and converted to iodide, the blue colour disappears. The disappearance of the blue colour of the solution is identified as the end-point.

1. Preparation of standard $\text{K}_2\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_7$

For preparing standard dichromate solution 0.48 g $\text{K}_2\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_7$ is accurately weighed and made up to 1L, shaken well for uniform concentration.

2. Standardization of Sodium Thiosulfate

20 ml of standard potassium dichromate solution is pipetted out into a conical flask; 4 ml of concentrated H_2SO_4 followed by 10 ml potassium iodide solution is added. The solution is titrated against sodium thiosulfate solution from the burette using starch as indicator until the blue colour changes to green.

2. Estimation of dissolved Oxygen (Winkler's method)

250 ml water sample collected into a BOD-bottle is treated with 2 ml MnSO_4 solution and 2 ml alkali-iodide reagent. Stopper the bottle avoiding air bubbles and mix the contents by inverting the bottle for at least 15 times. Allow the contents to settle. After half of the contents of the bottle become clear of the manganese hydroxide flocs, shake once again and allow resettling for 2 minutes or more till at least 100 ml of clear supernatant is produced. Quickly add 1 ml concentrated H_2SO_4 , allowing the acid to run down the neck of the bottle. Re-stopper the bottle and mix by gentle inversion until all the manganese hydroxide flocs get dissolved. Ensure that the liberated iodine is uniformly distributed throughout the bottle before the sample is pipetted for the next step.

Pipette 100 ml of the sample into a conical flask and add a few drops of starch solution. Titrate against standard $\text{Na}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_3$ solution taken in a burette. Note down the quantity (in ml) of $\text{Na}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_3$ rundown to obtain the end-point. The complete disappearance of blue colour is considered as the end point of titration.

Results and Discussion

The Winkler's Method is a technique used to determine the dissolved oxygen in water bodies. Dissolved oxygen is used as an indicator of the health of a water body, where higher dissolved oxygen concentrations are correlated with high productivity and little pollution. Considering the significance of dissolved oxygen as a water quality parameter,

we have carried out this study to get an idea about the quality of drinking water used in and around Sree Narayana College, Cherthala. For this study we selected 5 samples from the following sources.

1. Sample No. 1—Tap water (Bore-well water)
2. Sample No. 2—Well-water
3. Sample No. 3—Drinking-water in the college
4. Sample No. 4—Well-water
5. Sample No. 5—Pond-water

Winkler's Method is based on the oxidizing property of dissolved oxygen. The free I_2 liberated during the titration is equivalent to dissolved oxygen present originally in the sample. By titrating a water sample against standardized sodium Thiosulphate, the normality of oxygen can be calculated using the equation $N_1V_1=N_2V_2$. Knowing the normality of oxygen mass per litre of oxygen or dissolved oxygen can be calculated. From our studies we got an idea about the quality of drinking water selected. The dissolved oxygen of selected water samples:

Sample	Dissolved oxygen
Sample No. 1—Tap-water (Bore-well water)	3.948 mg/l
Sample No. 2—Well-water	6.8848 mg/l
Sample No. 3—Drinking-water of the college	7.7016 mg/l
Sample No. 4—Well-water	7.5920 mg/l
Sample No. 5—Pond-water	4.73 mg/l

From our studies, we can conclude that among the samples studied, sample No. 3 (College drinking-water) is the most desirable water for drinking. The sample No. 4 (Well-water from the college premises) contains the next highest quantity of dissolved oxygen, and in the order sample No. 2 (Well-water) stands next. Sample No. 1 and 5 contain less dissolved oxygen and are therefore unfit for drinking.

Conclusion

The aim of the present study was to get a comparative assessment of the suitability of water sources available in S. N. Puram area for drinking purpose. The study was carried out by determining dissolved oxygen content by Winkler's method. The study showed that sample No. 1 has very low dissolved oxygen content, the value lower than the permissible limit and hence it is not suitable for drinking purpose. The college drinking-water has comparatively higher dissolved oxygen value of 7.7016 mg/L; the reason for the high value may be due to the fact that this source is subjected to pre-water treatment. It has thus been confirmed that this source is the most suited one for drinking purposes. The two well-water sources have almost the same value of dissolved oxygen. The pond-water source has a very low concentration of dissolved oxygen and is not that much fit for drinking. High algal growth and temperature can possibly be the reasons for the depletion of dissolved oxygen in pond-water.

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NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENT PARADIGM, COLLECTIVE IDENTITY AND LGBT MOVEMENT IN INDIA: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Archa Arun

P. G. Department of Political Science, Sree Narayana College, Kollam

ABSTRACT

Debates and scholarship on New Social Movements (NSMs) occupy a significant place in neo-liberal development context. The theoretical perspective on NSMs emphasizes on the rejection of class based analysis of social structure and highlights the notions of collective identity that are derived from the common interest, feeling and solidarity of a group of people sharing similar goals. Collective identity is perceived as one of the most effective frameworks for analyzing the nature, content and scope of NSMs and the reason behind their functioning and survival. Against this context, this paper attempts to understand the movement of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Groups in India, popularly known as LGBT community, from the framework of NSMs and collective identity. In the last two decades, LGBT community has become articulate, visible and begun to assert their basic human rights. There are many studies in the US and West European context, approaching the LGBT movements as NSMs that reflect collective identity. However, such attempts are relatively less in Indian context, mainly because of the later entry of LGBT movements into the mainstream new social movement paradigm. This paper specifically attempts to bridge the lacuna in research by exploring the basic tenants of LGBT movements in India. The paper concludes that though there are diverse views and ideological conflicts among LGBT community, the common thread that binds these groups is their specific 'sexual orientation' that negates the prevailing notion of morality and culture.

Introduction

Debates and scholarship on New Social Movements (NSMs) occupy a significant place in neoliberal development context. The theoretical perspective on NSMs emphasizes on the rejection of class based analysis of social structure and highlights the notions of collective identity that derive from the common interest, feeling and solidarity of a group of people sharing similar goals (Taylor, 1989). This framework requires a platform for collective

action at different levels to identify resources and action plan and utilize them for the benefit of the entire community. Collective identity is perceived as one of the most effective frameworks for analyzing the nature, content and scope of NSMs and the reason behind their functioning and survival (Fominaya, 2010).

Against this context, this paper attempts to understand the movement of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Groups in India, popularly known as LGBT community, from

the framework of NSMs and collective identity. In the last two decades, LGBT community has become articulate, visible and began to assert their basic human rights.

Section 1

LGBT Movement and NSM Paradigm

New Social Movements, according to Della Porta and Diani (1999:16), “are informal networks, based on shared beliefs and solidarity, which mobilize about conflicting issues, through the frequent use of various forms of protest”. This definition of NSMs indicates that these groups are based on commonly shared beliefs and solidarity attained based on these shared beliefs. Simply put, NSMs examines the political organizations and movements of different groups that are formed on the basis of their collective identity and fight for their rights and common goals (Edelman, 2001). The most important determinant of NSMs is their attempt to move out of the traditional working class movement paradigm and project hitherto ignored issues of a new platform of varied identities based on race, caste, gender, location, land ownership etc. NSMs are non-hierarchical, participatory and represent the politics of social change through consensus (Edelman, 2001).

New Social Movements and Collective Identity

Collective identity occupies a prominent place in NSM theories. Though there are many studies on collective identity, the concept is still vague. Polletta and Jasper (2001) defines

collective identity as ‘an individual’s cognitive, moral and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution’. It is a feeling of togetherness created and shared between members of a community. According to Fominaya (2010), “its essence resides in a shared sense of ‘oneness’ or ‘we-ness’ anchored in real or imagined shared attributes and experiences among those who comprise the collectivity. Embedded within the shared sense of we is a corresponding sense of collective agency.”

Taylor (1989) relates collective identity with members’ common interests, experiences and solidarity. However, the most sophisticated and theoretically sound approach towards collective identity in NSMs was provided by Melucci (1996). Melucci links collective identity with ends, means and field of action of a group. The group that emerged out of a specific collective identity reflects these attributes through a set of rituals, practices, and cultural forms. According to Melucci, the members of NSM constituted on the basis of collective identity, need not share a common ideology or belief altogether. Melucci perceives the basis of NSMs as ‘emotions and affective ties’ which forms collective identity.

Taylor (1989) argues that collective identity formations in NSMs are predominantly opposite to dominant cultural practices and norms in the society. This aspect of collective identity formation is predominant among the NSMs that question the prevailing value system and culture of the society in which it functions. The

‘salience’ or predominance of a particular identity over other identities inspires a group of people to join and form an alliance to reflect, represent and fight for their salient collective identities. From the collective identity perspective, these groups are called New Social Movements.

LGBT Movements and NSM Paradigm

While considering the NSMs from collective identity paradigm, it is evident that the LGBT movements across the world represent the collective identity of sexually alienated and marginalized groups. The term LGBT stands for the **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender** groups that stand for their equal rights and opportunities in society. Under the pretext of the prevailing cultural and social norms, the LGBT community is often denied basic human rights including right to property, right to marriage and right to lead a normal life. Hence, they live under constant threat, social exclusion and discrimination (Chauncey, 1995).

The stigma associated with their sexual orientation makes life difficult for the LGBT community. Naturally, LGBT movements began to emerge world wide as a protest against the dominant human rights paradigm determined by mainstream gender and cultural norms. These movements articulate their separate identity and demand social equality along with male and female. The LGBT movements use different platforms and agencies including mass rallies, street plays, social media, lobbying, celebrity endorsement,

arts and culture to highlight their collective identity (Adam, 1995; p. 265-79).

According to Mary Bernstein, LGBT movements have two fundamental goals. One is cultural. It implies challenging the mainstream constructions of masculinity, femininity and the heterosexual nuclear family system (Bernstein, 1997). The second goal is political. It implies working together for the implementation of equal rights, laws, benefits and protection from social and institutional violence on sexual minorities. LGBT groups strongly oppose the ‘conversion therapies’ or arbitrary efforts to change their sexuality. They, instead, perceive that their sexuality is natural, innate and cannot be changed consciously (Bernstein, 1997). In many countries, marriage of same sex is still a taboo due to the influence of religious and cultural norms and LGBT people are looked down upon with stigma and considered as immoral. In the case of transgender community, stigmatization is extreme and they are often abandoned by family and denied legitimate rights over property and inheritance (Adam, 1995; p. 265-79).

Theorists regard LGBT movements as NSMs because they reflect “non-institutional politics which is not provided for in the doctrines and practice of liberal democracy and the welfare state” (Offe 1985:826). As in the case of any NSM, LGBT movements also respond to the different forms of domination and exploitation (Offe 1985:845). According to Francesca Polletta and James M. Jasper (2001: p. 286), like any other NSMs, LGBT movements

also seek “recognition for new identities and lifestyles,” and therefore, make every effort to be visible and articulate.

Section 2

LGBT Movements in India: An Analysis

Though gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual people have been living in India since centuries, their identities were hardly visible in the society due to the social stigma associated with sexual minorities. The social norms and the legal system do not permit LGBT community to assert their identity and desire same sex marriage in India. Therefore, the visibility and articulation of their natural self was hidden until recently (CREA, 2006). As the report of CREA suggests, many of the sexual minorities were unaware of their rights within the legal system. Broadly speaking, the LGBT movements in India are New Social Movements of sexual minorities struggling with many issues: identity, marginalisation, denial of property rights, invisibility, discrimination, human dignity and oppression (Aniruddha, 2012). At the same time they deal with different ideological issues within and between movements. These internal conflicts and approaches make it difficult to forge common interests, goals and strategies. Unlike other NSMs that broadly share common ideals and ideology, in LGBT movements, the only binding force is their sexual identity (Aniruddha, 2012). Hence, it is extremely difficult to foster solidarity on the basis of their prominent collective identity.

Human Rights Violation of LGBT

In India, sexual activity between two persons of the same sex is a criminal offence. However, India is one of the few countries in which the third gender is recognised officially. Apart from that, the public meetings, celebrations and rallies of LGBT community are not an offence in India (Siddique, 2010). Under Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, homosexual intercourse is a criminal offence. In 2009, the Delhi High Court had given the verdict in *Naz Foundation v. Govt. of NCT of Delhi* that Section 377 is under direct violation of fundamental rights sanctioned by the Indian Constitution (Mahapatra, 2012).

But in 2012, Ministry of Home Affairs, opposed the decriminalisation of homosexual activities and argued that homosexuality is immoral within the Indian social system. Later on the government reversed their stand. In December, 2013, however, the Supreme Court set aside the historic decision of the Delhi High court on Section 377 and noted that the debate should be deliberated in the Parliament (Nelson, 2013). The ruling of the Supreme Court was indeed a big set back to the LGBT community in India who are struggling to get their identity recognised within law (www.rappler.com, 2015).

In 2013, when the Supreme Court ruled out the decriminalization of Section 377, thousands rallied in Jantar Manter and other cities in India demanding the repeal of such anti-human aspects of Indian Penal code. The LGBT community received support from the

influential people across society. Since then LGBT movement became popular across the country.

The two key factors that play an important role in making the issue visible are the publication of stories, confessions, newsletters and magazines by LGBT community members and different groups that support them. Secondly, globalization and information revolution opened up the avenues for linking with the groups in other countries and understanding the nature and scope of their struggles (Vanita, 2002). Hence many of them began to confess their identity and join alliances. The NGOs working among the LGBT community also tried to foster building collective identity based movements among them.

The LGBT movement in India is making strides, but homophobic views and practices force them to be silent. Though the LGBT community is present in offices, educational institutions, or even at home, they still prefer to be invisible. This seriously affects the building of collective identity among them (Kole, 2007).

While analyzing the role of LGBT movements in India, it is evident that they are mainly engaged in (1) fighting in courts to abolish Section 377, (2) organizing common platforms, film societies, rallies etc, (3) creating campaign on AIDS awareness, and (4) lobbying for inclusive welfare policies. These movements do not have a monolithic structure. Some of them are associated with NGOs that receive foreign funding. Unlike Dalit and environmental movements, LGBT movements do not have

mass appeal and a majority of them work through urban centers. They are concerned about changing the societal norms and hegemonic culture. Hence, it is a daunting task.

Impact of LGBT Movements and Main Achievements

The LGBT movements and their mobilization strategies indeed make positive policy influence. The Tamil Nadu state in India was the first state to introduce a transgender (hijra/aravani) welfare policy. Tamil Nadu was also the first state to form a Transgender Welfare Board with representatives from the transgender community (Times of India, 2012). On 15 April 2014, the Supreme Court of India declared transgender people as a socially and economically backward class entitled to reservations in Education and Job, and also directed the union and state governments to frame welfare schemes for them (Radia, 2015). On 24 April 2015, the Rajya Sabha passed *The Rights of Transgender Persons Bill, 2014* guaranteeing rights and entitlements, reservations in education and jobs (2% reservation in government jobs), legal aid, pensions, unemployment allowances and skill development for transgender people. It also contains provisions to prohibit discrimination in employment, prevent abuse, violence and exploitation of transgender people (Radia, 2015). Recently, the Kochi metro recruited trans-genders which made a landmark in the state.

Other than the policy level impact, the LGBT movements were able to make some important achievements. Firstly, the LGBT

movement was able to provide visibility to the issues of the sexual identity of gays, transgender people, lesbians and bisexuals. The civil society, political parties and the government became aware of the existence of the LGBT identity and began to pay attention to their concerns. The LGBT community members also began to get rid of their inhibitions about sexual preferences and initiated public gatherings, meetings and conferences (Kang and Krishna Das, 2015).

Secondly, they effectively used different forms of media including social media to popularise their agenda. Theatre, stories, films, magazines, newsletters and social media platforms were used to forge the alliance and build collective identity among the members amidst internal conflicts. The use of communication and media facilitated cross border networking and organising as well (Vanita, 2002).

Thirdly, the LGBT movement was able to represent their community in various cases in different cases. They also facilitated members with different capacity building programs to create awareness about their constitutional rights and legal protections. This was instrumental in fighting against the repressive policies and police atrocities. The strategic litigation process followed by the movement later helped the government to understand the gravity of the issues and make favourable reservation and welfare policies accordingly (CREA, 2006).

Major Challenges of LGBT Movements in India

The LGBT movements in India face several challenges. The lack of civic space and political representation make it difficult to expand their demands beyond the existing boundaries. Religious beliefs, existing social norms and lack of political support repress and shrink their space for meaningful political engagement. This weakens the movement ((Kang and Krishna Das, 2015). Stigma, discrimination and continued criminalisation of homosexuality under the law pose serious questions to the effectiveness of the movement. Power struggles, ideological issues and internal conflicts between different categories is another serious challenge against the building of collective identity in LGBT movement. Within the broad spectrum, transgender community receive legal rights and privileges. However the same sex marriage is still a problematic question in India. The priority related issues that often emerge within the movement negatively affect sustainability of the LGBT fraternity (Kang and Krishna Das, 2015).

Most of the members lack expertise in movement building and forging alliances as the LGBT movement is still in nascent stage. Lack of strong leadership, persistent security threats and lack of media support affect the organic growth of these movements (CREA, 2006).

Another serious limitation is the lack of internal consensus within the movement. Many of the agenda and advocacy strategies are influenced by global movements without

understanding local realities. This often leads to mismatch within the organizations. It is widely criticised that the LGBT movement is driven by international donors than local interests (Aniruddha, 2012).

It is critical for LGBT activists to function beyond the framework of police atrocities, moral policing and abolition of Section 377. They need to highlight sexuality as a politics and combine it with other politics and progressive movements. The other NSMs like Dalit, Adivasi and Environmental movements were able to forge effective alliance with the mainstream political parties in this regard. However, the LGBT groups and their articulation still remain in its infancy, and they unfortunately lack civic spaces to represent their issues. This is a serious concern. Alliances that combine sex workers, LGBT-identified communities, health activists, and women's activists will be an effective strategy to avoid the compartmentalisation of the common issues of sexual minorities. Also efforts should be made to influence the progressive movements within the country to endorse the issues of sexual minorities.

The existence of different identities within the collective identity of LGBT is a challenge for the NSM to move forward. For example, many of the state governments had already accepted the demands of transgender community. But the demands of gay and lesbian groups are very rarely accepted. As a result, even though transgender people are active and increasingly visible in public places, gay and lesbians are less

visible. These problems related to the variance in acceptance level of society seriously erode the prospects of building collective identity among the members.

Conclusion

From the above analysis, it becomes evident that LGBT movements vary in their style, objectives and structure. Nevertheless, they have a common identity in general—they represent the hitherto ignored and invisible social and political aspirations of sexual minorities. Since LGBT movements represent the collective identity of the members of the group and it articulates the interest out of the traditional 'class politics' offered by Marxism, LGBT movements in India can be considered as NSMs. LGBT movements in India share common features of NSMs like: loose and non-hierarchical structure, lack of specific organizational form, existence of internal differences, sporadic nature of protests, use of social media as communication tool etc. (Bernstein, 1997).

The LGBT movements in India articulate protest against the different forms of domination and exploitation as any new social movement does (Offe 1985:845). The LGBT movements in India, also campaign for the recognition of new identities, life styles and cultural norms. New Social Movements follow the same principle as suggested by Polletta and Jasper (2001:p.286). As Bernstein (1997) explained in the context of America, the LGBT movement in India asserts both cultural and political features. On the one side the LGBT movements articulate their unique social and cultural identity through expressing

sexual preferences and on the other side they politically fight for their equal rights. Besides, in India they are fighting for a structural change in the societal norms.

Above all, the most important feature of the LGBT movement that makes it a classic example of NSM is the collective identity shared among the members of the community. Though there are diverse views and ideological conflicts among the LGBT community, the common thread that binds these groups is their specific 'sexual orientation' that negates the prevailing notion of morality and culture. Thus, the "we" consciousness and the problems associated with their sexuality force them to join together, become visible and articulate their genuine rights and privileges denied by the social norms and public policy. Hence, the LGBT movements in India can be approached from the NSM paradigm using collective identity framework.

In short, the LGBT movement is still in a nascent stage in India. Besides, their strategy and approach are mainly influenced by the western counterparts. In fact, most human rights organizations in India have not begun to address the question of rights of LGBT. Sexuality is still perceived as a moral issue even among radical and progressive movements. In such a situation, it is difficult to project sexuality as a freedom and a basic human right. This has affected the growth and prospects of the LGBT movement in India and elsewhere as a new social movement. Also, compared to other NSMs building collective identity is extremely difficult as the LGBT community are reluctant

to express their sexual identity because of the social stigma.

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SREE NARAYANA GURU'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE AND HIS BLOODLESS REVOLUTION FOR THE DOWNTRODDEN IN KERALA

Aparna Ajith

Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of English, Central University of Rajasthan, Kishangarh

ABSTRACT

Sree Narayana Guru, the renowned social reformer, philosopher, saint and sage played a prominent role in elevating a society like Kerala engrossed in caste evils and untouchability to a state that stands in front in equality and literacy now. Guru's mantra of "with malice towards none and love for all" enabled him to fight against the heinous acts of casteism and became the voice of the marginalized. His indefatigable preaching of the doctrine "one caste, one religion, one god" turned out to be a clarion call for the multitudes of oppressed sections of Kerala to make them aware of the need for the social and spiritual upliftment. In order to materialize his dream for the unfortunates, he began temples and educational institutions with the motto "progress through education, strengthen through organization". The proposed paper will begin by examining the role of Narayana Guru and how his philosophy of life succeeded in earning a status for the 'Avarnas' or the low castes with his silent revolutionary competence. The paper intends to focus on the social inequalities he also faced in his own Ezhava community where they had to keep a certain distance from other higher castes as per the unwritten hierarchy. He envisioned a noble place where "all live in brotherhood without difference in caste or color of religions". The study will throw light on his Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam, consecration of the Ezhava Shiva temple at Aruvippuram that created a maelstrom in Kerala, Vaikkom Satyagraha and Temple Entry Proclamation. His proficiency in Sanskrit, Tamil and Malayalam are reflected in the form of literary outputs like "Atmopadesa Sathakam", "Darsanamala" and translation of "Thirukkural" into Malayalam. The aura of this magnetic personality inspired Kumaran Asan, one among the trios of the Modern Malayalam poetry to prove that his pen is mightier than the sword with his realistic poems. The paper will end with a note of optimism underlying the fact that Sree Narayana Guru and his contributions to Kerala can be never be ignored. Hence 'posterity will not willingly let this charismatic prodigy die'.

Sree Narayana Guru, the renowned social reformer, philosopher, saint and sage played a prominent role in elevating a society like Kerala engrossed in caste evils and untouchability to a state that stands in front in equality and literacy now. Being a karma yogi and Jnana yogi rolled

into one, his mantra of "with malice towards none and love for all" enabled him to fight against the heinous acts of casteism and become the voice of the marginalized. According to him, there is no such thing called caste. He exhorted one caste, one religion and one god

for man, the same genitals, and the same form, difference therein none. When all human beings are born in the same way, in the same form, what is the point in attributing differences between them in society into Varnas like Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya or Shudra? He opined that determination of caste or Jati on the basis of birth has no scientific basis and he never accepted these distinctions in society at all. His own poem Jathi Nirnayam (The Critique of Caste) opens with the very words

Manushyanam manushyathvam

Jaatir gotvam gavam yadha

na brahmanadirassaivam

*ha thathvam vethi ko pina*¹

As bovinity is the distinctive quality of a cow, humaneness is the quality of a human being. The man made categories like Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra, Nair, Namboodiri, Ezhava, Pulaya and Paraya are not castes or Jatis like “bovinity” or “humaneness”³. Sree Narayana Guru laments “no one knows this truth” like Veda Vyasa lamented in his epic. His indefatigable preaching of the doctrine “one caste, one religion, one god” turned out to be a clarion call for the multitudes of oppressed sections of Kerala to make them aware of the need for the social and spiritual upliftment. In order to change the mindset of the mass of Kerala steeped in the evils of casteism, untouchability, unshadowability and unseeability, it required a true revolution. The grandeur of Guru lies here in his non violent and bloodless revolution for bringing a radical transformation in Kerala

(then princely state of Travancore) from being a “lunatic asylum” (in Swami Vivekananda’s words) to one of the most egalitarian states in India. Perhaps Kerala is the only place in India today where overt casteism and its differentiation are completely absent. His ardent call for self reliance and self improvement is explicitly penned by his favourite disciple and one among the trio of modern Malayalam poetry, Kumaran Asan – “*Reform, change the rules! Else those very rules will be your downfall. Reform, change the rules! Else they will change you*”. The paper intends to focus on the role of Narayana Guru and how he succeeded in healing the corrupt human nature around by his universalism envisioning a noble place where “all live in brotherhood without difference of caste or cancor of religions”. The paper stresses on the alchemic message and how the saga of this Mahatma influenced, inspired and enlightened many ignoble strifes of “madding crowds” following the superstitions of caste and creed.

The remarkable journey of Sree Narayana Guru born as Narayanan (Nanoo) on August 20, 1856 at a hamlet called Chempazhanthy of Thiruvananthapuram is quite commendable. Hailing from a humble “Ezhava” community to which his Vayalvarath family belonged to, he elevated to the status of a “Jnana and Karma yogi” by his sheer perseverance, indomitable belief in himself and his philanthropic nature. He was born at a time when Kerala was the hotbed of casteism and religious discrepancies. The “Ezhavas” originated from the Uzhavars of

the ancient Dravidian or Tamil culture of South India. Uzhavar means one who ploughs. It is just a functional description and not a caste name. The Aryan Brahminical penetration from the North did despoliation to the work oriented social set up that existed in the South. In the old days, till the Namboothiri Brahmins came, the dominant group was the tiller class of Uzhavars. There were other skilled functionaries like carpenters, fisherman and unskilled labourers. The advent of the Namboothiri Brahmins and the Aryanisation of the South created havoc. It led to many rifts in Uzhavar class and a new group called Sudras came into existence. The clever Namboothiris usurped these people's holdings, restricted their worship places and branded them "Avarnas" (outside the varna or caste system) and untouchables. The life of the average Ezhava was terrible, yet they were relatively privileged, as 'low sudras'. There were many wealthy land-owning Ezhava families, and many of the Sanskrit scholars and Vaidyans in Kerala were from Ezhava community, in a way due to the truly eccentric reason that Namboothiri Vaidyans would lose caste if they touched anybody other than 'high-caste' patients. Whereas an Ezhava Vaidyan could lay his hands on any patient: and he was temporarily 'promoted' to the caste of the patient. The truly oppressed Scheduled Castes, such as the Parayas and Pulayas, suffered the worst. They were expected to work as agricultural labourers—in effect slave labourers—from dawn to dusk, and they were generally not paid in cash, but in rice or vegetables. Very few people from Ezhava community were allowed to hold a

government job, which in those days was highly prestigious. They were usually not entitled to gain education. None of the 'low-caste' Hindus had access to temples. Temple entry was denied to them, but not to Muslims or Christians! There were also many social ills among the 'low-castes'. Some of them practised polyandry or polygamy. They often held elaborate and expensive ceremonies where they ended up feeding large numbers of people: the *thirandu kalyanam* to announce the menarche of their daughters; the *talikett* (a rather bizarre pseudo marriage where children were 'married' to each other, but that did not mean they were, or would have to be, married to each other when grown up); the *pulikudi* in which a pregnant woman was made to drink a concoction of seven sour things in her seventh month.

Of course, most of this was the product of superstition, the result of being uneducated: it flowed from the fact that they were oppressed and dispossessed people. Perhaps the worst oppression, in retrospect, was that the 'low-castes' were banned from worshipping the great deities of Hinduism. Not even faith was allowed to them. They had quasi-temples, under a tree or on a roadside, where they worshipped not the Trinity or Sakti, but relatively primitive local deities—such as *madan*, *maruta*, *yakshi*, *chathan*, *muthappan*, and other frightening, autochthonic powers which were in a way distorted versions of Siva and Sakti. These powers were pacified with offerings of liquor and meat. This, then, was

the social environment into which Sri Narayana Guru was born. Narayana Guru deserves mention here as the role played by him is vital in Vaikom Satyagraha and Temple Entry Proclamation. The great temple at Vaikom was known as Dakshina Kasi (Varanasi of South). It was so important among the temples of Kerala. The temple was enclosed by high walls alongside of which ran public roads. There were similar roads leading up to the gates on the other three sides. On all these roads there were sign boards prohibiting entry to non-caste Hindus beyond a certain point. Hindus belonging to the Ezhava community and below were not free to go beyond these sign boards. But the restrictions were not applicable to Christians or Muslims. This sparked a social revolution which ended with the Temple Entry Proclamation by Maharaja Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma in 1936 who abolished the ban on the so-called 'low-caste people' or Avarnas from entering Hindu temples in the Princely State of Travancore. Guru was of the opinion that one should enter wherever entry is banned and one has to put up with the problems arising out of it. One should be prepared even to die. He discerned that those who think that the touch of another man would defile them should not be allowed to go undefiled.

Even though Guru was not interested in the activities of Indian National Congress, he extended his full support for Vaikom Satyagraha to sanctify Hindu society from its flaws. In fact this was what Guru also attempted through his words and deeds. This created an incredible

acclaim with the culmination of the Temple Entry Proclamation. This promulgation was a reform of far-reaching importance, not only to the teeming millions of Travancore but a momentous act of emancipation to the whole of India. In his *Atmopadesha Shatakam* (One Hundred verses of Self Instruction), he quotes,

*pala matha- saravum- ekamennu- para-
Thulakil- oru- aanayil- andharennapole
Pala- pala yukti paranju paamaranmaar
Alavathu- kanda-alayath- amarnnidenam*³

It states that people's understanding of religion is like the idea behind the story of the blind men and the elephant. Each one thinks that what he has felt is the shape of the elephant. Similarly each one feels that his religion is the true religion. He is blind to the fact that all religions mean the same.³

The Guru believed that "it doesn't matter which religion you belong to, you just have to better yourself". He also fought against the irrational practices comprising 'thirandukuli' and 'pulikudi' which stood in the way of progress. He advocated commensality and inter-marriages between different castes as a means of achieving social cohesion and evolving a casteless cum classless society. He set up shrines dedicated to 'Lord Siva' as a parallel system to that of the Hindu castes who denied entry of Ezhavas in their temples. His consecration of Siva temple at Aruvippuram (1888) deserves special mention here. It had been deeply ingrained into the minds of everyone in Kerala that this is the way things

had always been: only ‘upper castes’ were allowed to worship the great Trinity of Hinduism. Only Brahmins were allowed to consecrate temples. Why was this? Nobody knew and nobody questioned these practices. He once caused great consternation amongst the Brahmins by gently suggesting that he had merely consecrated an “Ezhava Siva”. The very idea is absurd, as though the Infinite, the Creator himself, could be categorized into a small, watertight compartment! This is how he responded to the orthodoxy blinded by religious superstitions. Aruvippuram is an extremely unlikely location to start a revolution: a small, quiet village on the banks of the Neyyar River, near Trivandrum. After Marutvamala, the Guru went to this charming, bucolic location. He found a cave to reside in and a hilltop boulder where he could meditate, while enjoying the bounteous beauty of nature all around. Incidentally, the Guru had a particular talent for identifying locations of great natural beauty where he would set up his abodes: for example, Sivagiri at Varkala. News spread far and wide about the arrival of the holy man, and the simple villagers began to arrive to have darshan of this sage and to ask for his advice. They also asked him to cure their sickness. A combination of the Guru’s knowledge of Ayurveda, his sympathetic attention, and their faith in him, would have helped to cure a number of people. Perhaps there was also the effect of mystical powers he had gained from rigorous penance. The story of miracles wrought by the Guru started bringing large numbers of pilgrims to the site. Over the

years, the Guru had become a Siva devotee, although in his youth he had been successively a devotee of Subrahmanya and of Krishna. His knowledge in Malayalam, Tamil and Sanskrit literature is astounding and is reflected in the form of literary outputs like “Atmopadesa Sathakam”, “Darsanamala” and the translation of “Thirukkural” into Malayalam.

But by the time of his tapas at Marutvamala, his *ishtha deva* or personal deity was none other than the Lord Siva, who as Pasupati or the Lord of the Animals graces the seals of the Indus Sarasvati Civilization, who as Dakshinamurthi is the giver of boons; He, who, as the Nataraja of Chidambaram dances the Universe into existence; and who as the terrible Kala Bhairava, Black Time, destroys his own creation (Indira J. and Srinivasan, Rajeev 2003). The most complex and the most enigmatic of the deities of Hinduism, the celibate mendicant was the elegant Ardhanariswara, Siva, the deity that the Guru wished to consecrate at Aruvippuram. This ran into an immediate logistical problem: who would consecrate the image? As everybody knew, only Brahmins were allowed to do so. And which Brahmin would come to this jungle to do this? The auspicious date and time for the consecration were chosen: midnight, on Sivaratri night in the month of Kumbham (Aquarius), 1888 CE. A large boulder on the eastern bank was chosen as the pedestal for the consecrated image. The area around it was cleansed and festooned with garlands; traditional temple music was played. The Guru sat nearby, deep in meditation. The organizers of the event began to

get a little restive: where was the image? Who would consecrate it? From Kumaran Asan's unfinished biography of the Guru, here is a quoted eyewitness account:

At midnight, Swami took a dip in the river. He rose after a moment with something in his hands, a cylindrical stone in the shape of a sivalinga, and he walked into the makeshift temple. He stood there with his eyes closed in deep meditation, his hands holding the sivalinga to his chest, tears flowing down his cheeks, oblivious to the world. For a full three hours, he stood motionless, while the crowd rent the midnight air with the chant Om Nama Sivayah, "Om Nama Sivayaha". They had only one impulse, one thought, one prayer, 'Om Nama Sivayah!' (Indira J. and Srinivasan Rajeev, 2003).

This was a singular moment, a moment in which a man became as God, achieving union with Him, Siva, the One. At three in the morning, the Guru placed the sivalinga on the pedestal, performing all the formalities of that sacred rite. The significance of this consecration is hard to overstate. It was a silent, but the courageous assertion of the fact that the Sanatana Dharma belonged to everyone, not only to a priestly class, or those who had anointed themselves as 'upper castes'. It showed a determination by the *bahujan* to reappropriate, to reassert their rights to, what was really theirs. The dharma belonged to the masses; it had been given in trust to the Brahmins and Kshatriyas so that they might protect and nurture it, not so that

they might own it. In Kerala too, the orthodox raised the question: "How could a non Brahmin consecrate an image?" To which, the Guru replied, with characteristic dryness, "I have only installed an Ezhava Siva." That simple statement brings out a sublime paradox: how could Siva, the Infinite, the Creator, be 'merely' an 'Ezhava Siva'? Conversely, how could Siva, the Infinite, the Creator, be 'owned' by the Brahmins, so that they alone could interact with Him? And why exactly is a Brahmin's brahminhood determined solely by birth, and not by his actions, even if he were a criminal or a murderer? Why would a learned monk, purified by decades of penance and meditation, not have the right to do the consecration? Obviously all of these concepts were questionable: and this is how the Guru exposed the absurdities that had overtaken Hinduism. In the harsh glare of true intellectual enquiry, it was clear that casteism had no basis to rest on, either in the Vedas or the Upanishads or in the Bhagavad Gita. The orthodox had no answer to the challenges thrown up good humouredly by the Guru. And orthodoxy never recovered from this blow to their cherished beliefs. On the other hand, this was the signal act that rescued the Sanatana Dharma in Kerala. Otherwise, following trends hitherto, Kerala would have been completely converted to Christianity and Islam by now, a mirror image of Pakistan, Bangladesh and the converted Northeast. The Guru gave the downtrodden masses of Hindus a stake in the system, a reason to stay on in the faith, a glimmer of hope that they too would one day be treated as free men, equal to all others. They could dream of

the ideals the French Revolution had stood for, years before: liberty, equality and fraternity. And it has to be said in all fairness that the Hindus of Kerala deserve credit for recognizing the truth behind this shock to their belief system. That was the consecration by him of his first Siva Temple at Aruvippuram in Kerala. The words he inscribed on the temple wall eloquently declare his vision of the oneness of man:

This is the model abode

Where all men live in brotherhood

Without any caste distinction

Or religious animosities ⁴

Today the conditions in Kerala are totally different. Though casteism still exists, untouchability has been eradicated to a great extent. The Guru's teachings and work have contributed a great deal towards the making of modern Kerala. When we can truly say that our land becomes "that exemplary abode" of brotherhood and solidarity, we would have finally accomplished what the Guru set out to do. That will be our Rama Rajya, our millennium, our City on the Hill.

The Guru unleashed the momentum for the secular and social thrust by being the inspiration and fountain head of a reformist movement namely the S.N.D.P. Yogam. There are very few instances of a *Jnanin* becoming the founder and life time president of such an organization. Luckily the Guru had in Dr. Palpu and Kumaran Asan, two illustrious lieutenants. Dr. Palpu himself was a great victim of the

atrocities of caste. Despite having a higher degree, he was denied a job in the government service as the caste labeled on him was the "Ezhava". During those days, Ezhavas were not allowed to join government service and especially they were not allowed to earn more than 5 rupees a month. They took upon themselves the main burden of organizing and building up the Yogam. In fact, the Yogam was the brain child of the tireless; its foster mother was the poet. The Guru became the fountain source of a torrential flow which inundated the parched social land scale of Kerala. It washed away the dross and dirt of the bygone days. Dr. Palpu himself was a victim of caste and hence an inveterate enemy, but diverse were the ways in which he fought this evil. It happened that he met Swami Vivekananda and took his advice during the latter's visit to Bangalore. The Swami is truly the Father of Modern India, as none else had understood the nation and felt its pulse as he had done. Dr. Palpu realized that it would be ideal to get it transformed into the organization he had in mind. It could be the vanguard of the depressed and exploited groups, especially of the non caste sections. The Guru fully approved of Dr. Palpu's suggestion. There was identity of views. He too had felt the need of a wider forum to further his life's work. His mission was not to be confined within segregated limits. The target of his religious thrust was universalism. "Thus, in the year 1903, the Temple Sabha became the S.N.D.P. Yogam. Its aim, as the full title declared, was to further as well as implement the Moral Law expounded

by Shri Narayana Guru. His protégé and disciple, Kumaran Asan, was assigned the general secretary-ship. Guru's influence in the personal life of Kumaran Asan is so profound that enabled him to become the "Mahakavi" of Modern Malayalam Poetry. The Guru himself agreed to be its lifetime president. One of the inspiring exhortations of the Guru was: "*Educate to be free*". The others which went with it were, "*Organize to be strong*" and "*Thrive through industry*" as for all, its emphasis being on universalism. The SNDP Yogam had several important objectives: first, to administer and manage various temples and monasteries; second, to educate and uplift the downtrodden masses and improve their morality; third, to demand justice and fairness through the power of collective bargaining; and fourth, entirely practical but perhaps surprising coming from a yogi, was an emphasis on economic progress. Hence, "become wealthy through your own industriousness." There is nothing wrong with accumulating wealth through fair means: indeed this is the dharma of the vaishya. But the Yogam certainly did not ignore the other objectives. It set about building schools, and later colleges, where anybody could study. The Guru suggested the study of English, as he foresaw the coming demand for the language; he insisted that women be educated the same as males. As Dr. Palpu emphasized in the first annual meeting of the Yogam: "A society or for that matter a group, makes durable progress and achieves prosperity only through education. In our community there should be none without at least primary education. For that one and all

should specially strive. When you refer to an Ezhava male or female, it should imply that he or she is one who knows how to read and write." It was education not only in the traditional sense of the term, but also in the removal of excesses and ostentatious, wasteful ceremonies. For social reasons, most people chose to ignore that last bit of advice, but an Ezhava wedding must now be the simplest in India. It takes a grand total of ten minutes, for the bride and groom to exchange rings and garlands, for the mangalasutra to be tied, and for a ritual circumambulation of the sacred fire. Included is a minute to sign their names in the Yogam's register so that a valid marriage certificate may be issued. The Guru's instructions about the temples he consecrated were simple. They would obviously be open to all Hindus; they would avoid unnecessary expenditures such as those for fireworks and festivals; they must all have schools, vegetable and herb gardens, and industry attached to them. By industry, he meant any manufacture, even something as simple as the conversion of raw coconut kernels into value added products like lampshades and utensils. The point he made, foreshadowing Gandhi yet again, was that investment in small scale industry, handicrafts, etc. would provide substantial returns that would help the community improve itself economically.

The aura of this magnetic personality inspired many prodigies of India. This is obvious from the profound expression of admiration of the Guru couched in chiseled simplicity of diction by Gurudev Ravindranath Tagore after meeting this great, yet frail, figure who was a

beautiful blend of Sankara, Ramakrishna and the Mahatma. He says,

I have been touring different parts of the world. During these travels, I have had the good fortune to come into contact with several saints and maharshis. But I have frankly to admit that I have never come across one who is spiritually greater than Swami Sree Narayana Guru of Malayalam—nay, a person who is on a par with him in spiritual attainment. I am sure; I shall never forget that radiant face illumined by the self-effulgent light of divine glory and those yogic eyes fixing their gaze on a far remote point in the distant horizon².

It can be said undoubtedly that Sree Narayana Guru and his contributions to God's own country as well as to the entire humanity can be never be ignored. Hence "posterity will not willingly let this Yugapurusha die".

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മനസ്സിന്റെ ഇരുളിടങ്ങൾ

Lekshmi V. S.

Department of Malayalam, Sree Narayana College for Women, Kollam

ഫ്രോയ്ഡിൻ മനശ്ശാസ്ത്രത്തിലെ ഒരു പ്രധാന സംജ്ഞയാണ് അബോധമനസ്സ്. ഇതു മനസ്സിന്റെ ഇരുളടഞ്ഞ തലമാണ്. ബോധം, ഉപബോധം എന്നിവയാണ് മനസ്സിന്റെ മറ്റു തലങ്ങൾ. അസ്വീകാര്യങ്ങളായ കാര്യങ്ങൾ അബോധമനസ്സിലേക്ക് അമർത്തപ്പെടുന്നു. ശൈശവകാലത്ത് മനസ്സിലുണ്ടായിരുന്നതും പിന്നീട് അബോധതലത്തിലേക്ക് ദമനം ചെയ്യപ്പെട്ടതുമായ ആഗ്രഹങ്ങൾ പിൻകാലത്ത് ബോധമനസ്സിനെ സ്വാധീനിക്കാറുണ്ട്. അമർത്തപ്പെട്ട ആഗ്രഹങ്ങളുടെ പുരണത്തിനുള്ള ശ്രമങ്ങളാണ് മിഥ്യാനുഭവങ്ങൾ (delusions) ആയി മാറുന്നതെന്ന് ഫ്രോയ്ഡ് അഭിപ്രായപ്പെടുന്നു. (Sigmund Freud-Interpretations of dreams, P.72)

അബോധമനസ്സിനെയും മിഥ്യാനുഭവങ്ങളെയും കുറിച്ചുള്ള ഫ്രോയ്ഡിന്റെ സങ്കല്പമനുസരിച്ച് അപഗ്രഥിക്കാവുന്നതാണ് ഇ. സന്തോഷ്കുമാറിന്റെ കഥകൾ. സാമൂഹികവിരുദ്ധപ്രവണതകളും അക്രമവാസനയും ചേർന്നു രൂപപ്പെട്ട സമൂഹമാണ് അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ മിക്ക കഥകളിലും കാണുന്നത്. കുറ്റവാസന, പക, സംശയം എന്നിവയെല്ലാം ചേർന്ന മാനസികഘടന ഈ കഥകളിലെ കഥാപാത്രങ്ങൾക്കുണ്ട്. ഇ. സന്തോഷ്കുമാറിന്റെ 'ജാരൻ', 'മൂന്നുവിരലുകൾ' എന്നീ കഥകളിലെ കഥാപാത്രങ്ങളുടെ മാനസികഘടനാവിശ്ലേഷണം അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ കഥാലോകത്തെ അടുത്തറിയാൻ സഹായകമാണ്.

അനുനിമിഷം സംശയങ്ങൾ പെരുകിവരുന്ന വിഭ്രാന്തമായ മനസ്സിന്റെ ആവിഷ്കാരം 'ജാരൻ' എന്ന കഥയിൽകാണാം. ശിരസ്സിൽ സംശയത്തിന്റെ തീ അണയാതെ സൂക്ഷിക്കുന്നവനാണ് ഈ കഥയിലെ നായകകഥാപാത്രം. ഭാര്യയുടെ

ജാരനെ അയാൾ എപ്പോഴും പ്രതീക്ഷിക്കുന്നു. ജോലി ചെയ്യുന്ന ഫാക്ടറിയിൽ നിന്ന് അസമയത്ത് വീട്ടിലേക്കോടിയെത്തി ജാരന്റെ പാദമുദ്രകളന്വേഷിക്കുന്നു. അയാളുടെ മനസ്സിലെ മായാപ്രണങ്ങളാണവ. ഈ സംശയങ്ങളൊന്നും അയാളുടെ ഭാര്യക്ക് അറിയില്ല. അവർ സ്നേഹസമ്പന്നരാണ്. എങ്കിലും സംശയം അയാളെ വിട്ടുപിരിയുന്നില്ല. അസ്വസ്ഥമായ മനസ്സോടെ ഫാക്ടറിയിൽ നിന്ന് വീട്ടിലേക്ക് അയാൾ മടങ്ങിവരുന്നു. ജാരനെ ബന്ധനത്തിലാക്കാമെന്നു പ്രതീക്ഷിച്ച്.

സംശയഗ്രസ്തമായ മനസ്സിന്റെ ശിഥിലവും വിഭ്രാന്തവുമായ ചിന്തകൾ ഈ കഥയിൽകാണാം. തന്റെ രൂപത്തെയും പ്രായത്തെയും കുറിച്ച് അപകർഷബോധം നായകന്റെ ഉള്ളിലുണ്ട്. തന്റെ പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾ അയാളൊരിക്കലും തുറന്നു പറയുന്നില്ല. ഇത് അയാളെ ദ്രോമകചിന്തകളിലേക്കു നയിക്കുന്നു. ഫ്രോയ്ഡ് ഇത്തരം ചിന്തകളെ ശൈശവകാല ഭീതികളുമായാണ് ബന്ധപ്പെടുത്തുന്നത്. ഈ ഭീതി പിന്നീട് പൗരുഷനഷ്ടവുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട ഭയം (Fear of castration) ആയി മാറുന്നു. ഏറ്റവും വിലമതിക്കുന്ന ഒന്നു നഷ്ടപ്പെടുമോ എന്ന ഭയമാണിത്. (Andrew Slade: Psycho Analytic Theory and criticism, page 61) താൻ കാണാൻ ആഗ്രഹിക്കാത്തതും എന്നാൽ കാണുമോ എന്നു ഭയപ്പെടുന്നതുമായ ഒന്ന് വ്യക്തിയെ നിരന്തരം പിന്തുടർന്നു ശല്യപ്പെടുത്തുന്നു. ഈ നഷ്ടം ഭാവന മാത്രമാണ്. എന്നാൽ വ്യക്തി ഇതു തിരിച്ചറിയുന്നില്ല. ഇപ്രകാരം നായകന്റെ വിഭ്രാന്തഭാവന മെനഞ്ഞെടുക്കുന്ന മിഥ്യാനുഭവമാണ് ജാരൻ. മനസ്സിലെ ആഗ്രഹപുരണ ശ്രമങ്ങളാണ് മിഥ്യാനുഭവങ്ങൾ

എന്ന ഫ്രോയ്ഡിന്റെ നിരീക്ഷണം ഇവിടെ ശ്രദ്ധേയമാണ് (ഡോ. എൻ. എം. മുഹമ്മദലി, ഫ്രോയ്ഡിന്റെ ജീവിത കഥ). വ്യക്തിയുടെ ബോധ മനസ്സിൽ അല്ലാതെ മനസ്സിന്റെ മറ്റേതോ ഭാഗത്തു നടക്കുന്ന സവിശേഷപ്രക്രിയയിലൂടെയാണ് ആഗ്രഹങ്ങൾ മിഥ്യാനുഭവങ്ങളാക്കി മാറുന്നത്. താൻ എന്തായിരിക്കണമെന്ന് അയാൾ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നുവോ അതാണ് ജാരനിൽ നായകൻ കണ്ടെത്തുന്നത്. തന്റെ ചിന്തകൾക്കു നായകൻ നൽകുന്ന ഉണയോണു ജാരൻ. സുന്ദരനായ ജാരനെ തന്റെ അഭ്യുക്തനായ പ്രതിയോഗിയായി അയാൾ കാണുന്നു. നിഴലിനോടൊന്നുവണ്ണം ജാരനോടു യുദ്ധം ചെയ്യുന്നു. ചുളയിലെ ജോലിയിൽ നിന്നു രൂപംകൊണ്ട പ്രത്യേക മനസ്ഥിതിയുമായി തന്റെ സ്വപ്നങ്ങളെ ബന്ധിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. അയാളുടെ മനസ്സിലും ചുള തിളയ്ക്കുകയാണ്. ഫാക്ടറിയിലെ ചുളയുടെ ചുടും കാലിലെ വ്രണത്തിന്റെ നീറ്റലും അയാളുടെ ഉള്ളൂരുകളുടെ വ്യഞ്ജകങ്ങളായി മാറുന്നു. “ഇല്ല, അവനു കണ്ണട കാണില്ല. വെള്ളെഴുത്തുള്ളത് എനിക്കല്ലേ? അകാല നരയും എനിക്കാണ്.” (സന്തോഷ്കുമാർ ഇ., ജാരൻ (കഥകൾ), പുറം 108.) എല്ലുന്തിയ ശരീരത്തിൽ നോക്കിയപ്പോൾ അപകർഷം തോന്നി. കണ്ടിട്ടില്ലാത്ത അവനെ ഓർത്തു. ശരിയാണ്. ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ ഓരോ വളവിലും അവൻ കടന്നുവരുന്നു. മുഖമില്ലാത്ത ശത്രു. അവന്റെ ശരീരം എങ്ങനെ ആയിരിക്കും? വിടർന്ന നെഞ്ച്, ശക്തമായ പേശികൾ, രോമാവൃതമായ ശരീരം.” (സന്തോഷ്കുമാർ ഇ., ജാരൻ (കഥകൾ), പുറം 109.) ഇങ്ങനെ നിരന്തരവീക്ഷണത്തിലൂടെ നായകൻ താനുമായി ജാരനെ താരതമ്യം ചെയ്യുന്നു. താരതമ്യങ്ങൾ അയാളുടെ അപകർഷങ്ങൾ തീക്ഷ്ണമാക്കുന്നതേയുള്ളൂ. ഉറുകുന്ന ചുളയുമായുള്ള സാർവ്വം വളരെ വേഗം അയാളിൽ വ്യവസ്ഥപ്പെടുകയാണ്. സംശയത്തിന്റെ തീച്ചുളയിൽ സ്വയം എറിഞ്ഞടങ്ങുന്നതിൽ നിഗൂഢമായ ഒരാനന്ദം അയാൾ അനുഭവിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. കാരണം പൗരുഷത്തെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള സ്വന്തം സങ്കല്പമാണ് ജാര

നിൽ അയാൾ കാണുന്നത്. തന്നിൽ ആ സങ്കല്പത്തിന്റെ അഭാവവും അയാൾ തിരിച്ചറിയുന്നു.

‘മൂന്നുവിരലുകൾ’ എന്ന കഥയിലെ ജോസഫ് മോനായി എന്ന കഥാപാത്രത്തിനും വിചിത്രമായ മാനസികഘടനയാണുള്ളത്. സംശയം അയാളിലും രൂഢമുലമാണ്. പക്ഷേ ആ സംശയം കലയുമായാണ് ബന്ധപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നത്.

കഥാകൃത്തു ജോലി ചെയ്തിരുന്ന കമ്പനിയിൽ ടൈപ്പിസ്റ്റായിരുന്നു ജോസഫ് മോനായി. അസാധാരണ സ്വഭാവത്തിനുമുമ്പായിരുന്നു അയാൾ. മോനായിയുടെ കൈയിലെ മൂന്നു വിരലുകൾ നഷ്ടപ്പെട്ടിരുന്നു. ചുണ്ടുവിരലുകൊണ്ടാണ് മോനായി ടൈപ്പു ചെയ്തിരുന്നത്. ആ ജോലിയിൽ അയാൾക്ക് അസാമാന്യവൈദഗ്ദ്ധ്യമുണ്ടായിരുന്നു.

ഓഫീസിനടുത്തുള്ള അന്ധയായ കൈനോട്ടുകാരി കൈനോക്കിപ്പറഞ്ഞ കാര്യങ്ങൾ അയാളുടെ മനസ്സിൽ ചലനങ്ങളുണ്ടാക്കി. കൈയിൽ രക്തഗന്ധമുണ്ടെന്നു പറഞ്ഞ് അവർ അയാളെ ഒഴിവാക്കുകയായിരുന്നു. ഈ സംഭവം മോനായിയെ വളരെയധികം അസ്വസ്ഥനാക്കി. ടൈപ്പു ചെയ്യേണ്ട കവറുകളിൽ അയാൾ സ്വന്തം മേൽവിലാസം തന്നെ ആവർത്തിച്ചു ടൈപ്പുചെയ്തു തെറ്റുചൂണ്ടിക്കാണിച്ച കഥാകൃത്തിനോട് “ചില സമയത്ത് എനിക്കു ശ്രദ്ധ പാളിപ്പോകുന്നു. അപ്പോൾ എന്തെങ്കിലും കാര്യങ്ങൾ ചെയ്യുകയാണെങ്കിൽ ഒരു മാറ്റമില്ലാതെ അതു തുടർന്നു കൊണ്ടിരിക്കും അതൊന്നും എനിക്ക് ഓർമ്മയുണ്ടാവില്ല.” (സന്തോഷ്കുമാർ ഇ., മൂന്നു വിരലുകൾ (കഥകൾ), പുറം 307.) എന്നയാൾ മറുപടി പറഞ്ഞു. വൈകുന്നേരം കഥാകൃത്തുമൊരുമിച്ചു മദ്യപിച്ച മോനായി എഴുത്തുകാരെയും കലാകാരന്മാരെയും അധികേഷപിച്ചു. വളരെയധികം ബുദ്ധിമുട്ടിയാണ് കഥാകൃത്ത് അയാളെ വീട്ടിലെത്തിച്ചത്. വീടിന്റെ പരിസരം മുഴുവൻ മോനായി സംശയത്തോടെ നോക്കി. വീടിനുള്ളിൽ ആരോ ചിത്രം വരയ്ക്കുകയാണ് എന്നായിരുന്നു അയാ

ളുടെ സംശയം. മോനായിയുടെ വീട്ടിൽ അതിസുന്ദരിയായ ഒരു സ്ത്രീയെക്കണ്ട് കഥാകൃത്ത് വിസ്മയിച്ചു. വാക്കുകൾക്ക് അതീതമായിരുന്നു അവളുടെ സൗന്ദര്യം. അവളെ അവഗണിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് മോനായി മുറിയാകെ പരിശോധിച്ചു. അവിടെയുണ്ടായിരുന്ന ചിത്രകാരനെ അവൾ പിൻവാതിലിലൂടെ രക്ഷപെടുത്തിയോ എന്നായിരുന്നു മോനായിയുടെ സംശയം. പരിഭ്രാന്തനായ അയാൾ സ്വന്തം ചിത്രങ്ങൾ വീണ്ടും വീണ്ടും കോറി വരച്ചുകളഞ്ഞു. ദയകൊണ്ടല്ല അവളെ സംരക്ഷിക്കുന്നതെന്നും അവളെ വരയ്ക്കാനാണു തന്റെ ശ്രമമെന്നും അയാൾ പറഞ്ഞു. എന്നാൽ ആ ചിത്രം പൂർത്തിയാക്കാൻ ഒരിക്കലും തനിക്ക് കഴിഞ്ഞിട്ടില്ല എന്നും അയാൾ വിലപിച്ചു. വരയ്ക്കാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞാൽ ലോകത്തിലെ ഏറ്റവും മികച്ച ന്യൂഡ് പെയിന്റിംഗ് ആയിരിക്കും അതെന്നും അയാൾക്ക് ഉറപ്പുണ്ട്. എന്നാൽ ആ സൗന്ദര്യം പൂർണ്ണമായി ചിത്രീകരിക്കാൻ ഒരിക്കലും അയാൾക്ക് കഴിഞ്ഞില്ല. മറ്റൊരാളെയോ അതു വരച്ചു പൂർത്തിയാക്കാൻ ശ്രമിക്കുകയാണെന്ന് അയാൾ സദാ സംശയിച്ചു.

“സർച്ചിങ് ഫോർ എ പെർഫെക്ട് ന്യൂഡ്” ആയിരുന്നു മോനായിയുടെ ലക്ഷ്യം. തിരുത്തിയും മിനുക്കിയും എണെങ്കിലും അതു ശരിയാകുമെന്ന് അയാൾ പ്രതീക്ഷിച്ചു. പക്ഷേ ചിത്രം പൂർത്തിയാക്കാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞില്ല. അസഹനീയമായ പരാജയബോധം അയാളെ കീഴടക്കി. കഴിവുകേടിനുള്ള ശിക്ഷയായി തന്റെ ഇടതു കൈപ്പത്തയിലെ മൂന്നുവിരലുകൾ അയാൾ മുറിച്ചുമാറ്റി. രക്തംകൊണ്ട് ചുവരിലെല്ലാം അവളുടെ പേരെഴുതി.

ചിത്രം വരയ്ക്കുന്നതിൽനിന്ന് തന്നെ തടയാൻ ആരാക്കെയോ ശ്രമിക്കുന്നുണ്ടെന്ന് അയാൾ വിശ്വസിച്ചു. അവർ തന്നെ തടവിലാക്കി ഇനി മേലിൽ വരയ്ക്കരുതെന്നു ഡോക്ടറെക്കൊണ്ടു നിർദ്ദേശിച്ചു എന്നെല്ലാം അയാൾക്കു തോന്നുന്നു. പക്ഷേ അവളെ വരയ്ക്കാൻ ഇനി ആരെയും താൻ അനുവദിക്കില്ലെന്ന് അയാൾ

ശപഥം ചെയ്തിരിക്കുകയാണ്. പിന്നീട് മോനായി ജോലി ഉപേക്ഷിക്കുകയും കഥാകൃത്തിനെ വിട്ടുപോവുകയും ചെയ്തു.

ഏറെക്കാലത്തിനുശേഷം കഥാകൃത്തിനു മോനായിയുടെ കത്തുകിട്ടി. കിഴവിയുടെ പ്രവചനവും തന്റെ കയ്യിൽ അവർ അറിഞ്ഞ രക്തഗന്ധവും ശരിയായിരുന്നു എന്നയാൾ എഴുതിയിരുന്നു. അതോടൊപ്പം തന്റെ സർഗ്ഗവൈഭവത്തിനു മുന്നിൽ വെല്ലുവിളിയായി നിന്ന പെൺകുട്ടിയെ താൻ ഇല്ലാതാക്കി എന്ന വിവരവും മോനായി അറിയിച്ചിരുന്നു. “ചോരവാർന്നു കിടക്കുമ്പോൾ അവളുടെ മുഖത്ത് വല്ലാത്ത ഒരു ശാന്തതയുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. മഹത്തായ അനേകം ന്യൂഡ് പോർട്രെയ്റ്റുകളെ അവൾ മറികടന്നിരുന്നു.” (സന്തോഷ്കുമാർ ഇ., മൂന്നു വിരലുകൾ (കഥകൾ), പുറം 318.) എന്നുപറഞ്ഞാണ് അയാൾ ആ കത്ത് അവസാനിപ്പിച്ചത്.

സ്വന്തം കഴിവുകേടിനെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള അപകർഷം മോനായിക്കുണ്ട്. താൻ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്ന കഴിവുകളെല്ലാമുള്ള ഒരാളെ അയാളും സങ്കല്പിക്കുന്നു. തനിക്ക് ചെയ്യാൻ കഴിയാത്തത് അയാൾ ചെയ്യുമോ എന്ന് ആശങ്കപ്പെടുന്നു. ഇതും ഒരു തരം മിഥ്യാസങ്കല്പമാണ്. കലയുടെ പൂർണ്ണതയ്ക്കുവേണ്ടി അയാൾ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നു. എന്നാൽ ചിത്രത്തിനുള്ള മാതൃക അയാൾക്കു വെല്ലുവിളിയാകുകയാണ്. കലയുടെ പ്രചോദനം അബോധമനസ്സിലെ ഭ്രമകല്പനയിൽ നിന്നാണ് ഉദ്ഭവിക്കുന്നതെന്ന് ഫ്രോയ്ഡ് നിരീക്ഷിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. നിരവധി ആന്തരികപ്രതികരണങ്ങൾ തരണം ചെയ്താണ് പ്രചോദനം സാക്ഷാത്കരിക്കപ്പെടുന്നത്. ആന്തരികപ്രതിരോധങ്ങളെ മറികടക്കുമ്പോൾ ഭാവനസ്വതന്ത്രമാകുന്നു. ഭാവനയുടെ ഈ സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യം മോനായിക്കു ലഭിക്കുന്നില്ല. ഈ അത്യുപതിയാണ് അയാളുടെ പരാജയബോധത്തിനടിസ്ഥാനം. ഭാവനയിലൂടെ അദ്ദേശ്യമായ ഒരു പ്രതിയോഗിയെ സൃഷ്ടിച്ച് അയാളോടുള്ള മത്സരത്തിലൂടെ ഈ പരിമിതി മറികടക്കാനാണ് അയാളുടെ ശ്രമം. അതു സാധ്യമാകുന്നില്ല. ചിത്രത്തിന്റെ മാതൃക

യെത്തന്നെ ഇല്ലാതാക്കിയാണ് സംഘർഷത്തിൽനിന്ന് അയാൾ മുക്തനാകുന്നത്. ഇനിയൊരിക്കലും അവളെ വരയ്ക്കില്ല എന്ന സത്യം അയാളുടെ മനസ്സിന്റെ പിരിമുറുക്കം കുറയ്ക്കുന്നു. സൗന്ദര്യത്തിനു മുന്നിൽ പരാജയപ്പെടുകയല്ല അതിന്മേൽ വിജയം നേടുകയാണു താൻ ചെയ്തതെന്ന് അയാൾ വിശ്വസിക്കുന്നു. എന്നാൽ ഇത് ഒരുതരം സ്വയംഹത്യയാണെന്നയാഥാർത്ഥ്യം അയാൾ തിരിച്ചറിയുന്നില്ല.

രണ്ടു കഥയിലെയും നായകന്മാർ സ്കിസോഫ്രേനിക് സ്വഭാവമുള്ളവരാണ്. അവരവർക്കു മാത്രം മനസ്സിലാകുന്ന യുക്തിയിലൂടെ ചിന്തിക്കുകയും സംസാരിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നവരാണ് സ്കിസോഫ്രേനിക്കുകൾ. തങ്ങൾക്കെതിരെ ഒരു ചാരസംഘം പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നതായുള്ള തോന്നൽ (delusions) അവർ വെച്ചുപുലർത്തുന്നു. സ്വന്തം കഴിവുകേടിൽ ദുഃഖമുള്ളവരാണ് ഇരുവരും. ഉള്ളിലുള്ള കാര്യങ്ങൾ തുറന്നുപറയുന്നതിൽനിന്ന് ഏതോ ശക്തി അവരെ വിലക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു. തിരുത്താനാവാത്തവിധം ദുഃഖവും വിചിത്രവുമാണ് അവരുടെ പെരുമാറ്റങ്ങൾ. ആത്മനിന്ദയും ആത്മവിശ്വാസമില്ലായ്മയും അവരിൽ പ്രബലമാണ്. യഥാർത്ഥ ജീവിതത്തിൽ ഇത്തരം പ്രവൃത്തികൾ ഭയമോ വെറുപ്പോ, പരിഹാസമോ ആണ് സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്നത്. എന്നാൽ രചനയുടെ മാന്ത്രിക വിദ്യയിൽ ഈ പെരുമാറ്റങ്ങൾ സൗന്ദര്യാനുഭൂതിയായി മാറുകയാണ്.

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മൊഴിമാറ്റത്തിലെ സാതിക വിശുദ്ധി

Atheena Niranj

Department of Malayalam, N.S.S. College, Cherthala

ഭാരതീയസാഹിത്യത്തിലെ ഹരിതവിസ്ഫോടനമാണു രവീന്ദ്രനാഥടാഗോർ. കവിത, നാടകം, നോവൽ, ചെറുകഥ, ആത്മകഥാനിരൂപണം, ഉപന്യാസങ്ങൾ, സംഗീതം എന്നിങ്ങനെ വിശാലമാണ് അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ രചനാസാക്ഷര്യം. ഏകദേശം നൂറ്റിയറുപതിൽ അധികം വരും ടാഗോർ ഗ്രന്ഥങ്ങൾ. ഇവയെല്ലാമാകട്ടെ അർത്ഥഭാവധാനി സമ്പുഷ്ടവും! അങ്ങനെയല്ലാതെ ഒരു രചനയും അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റേതായില്ലെന്ന് ആ പ്രതിഭാപരിസരവുമായി സംവദിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള ആർക്കും ഉറപ്പിച്ചു പറയാനാവും. ആർഷപാരമ്പര്യത്തിന്റെ സമസ്ത സവിശേഷതകളും സമന്വയിക്കുന്ന രചനാസൗഷ്ഠ്യം ദേശീയരെ മാത്രമല്ല വിദേശീയരെയും ആകർഷിച്ചു. ഭാരതത്തിലെ എല്ലാ ഭാഷകളിലുമെന്ന പോലെ യൂറോപ്യൻ ഭാഷകളിലും ഒരു വലിയ സ്വാധീനമായിരുന്നു ടാഗോർ. അതുകൊണ്ടാണല്ലോ അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ കൃതികൾ ലോകമെങ്ങും അംഗീകരിക്കപ്പെട്ടത്. ഏണസ്റ്റ് റൈസ്, എഡ്വേർഡ് തോംപ്സൺ, യേസ്സ് എന്നിങ്ങനെയുള്ള പ്രതിഭാധനർ കണ്ടെത്തി രേഖപ്പെടുത്തിവെച്ച ഭാവതരളിത നാം മറന്നു പോകരുതല്ലോ!

സകല ജീവജാലങ്ങളുടേയും ഹൃദയരഹസ്യം അറിഞ്ഞു കൊണ്ടുള്ള പെരുമാറ്റവും സകല മനുഷ്യരും സമാനരാണെന്ന വിചാരവും മർത്തജന്മത്തിന്റെ പരമമൂല്യമായി ഭാരതീയ പൈതൃകം കരുതിപ്പോരുന്നു. അവിടെ ആത്മീയതയും ഭൗതികതയും സമന്വയിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു. ഈ അറിവ് ലോകസമക്ഷം ബോധ്യപ്പെടുത്തിക്കൊടുക്കുകയാണ് ടാഗോർ ചെയ്തത്. അങ്ങനെ, സംസ്കാരത്തിന്റെ ഉൾജ്ജം മുഴുവൻ ഉൾക്കൊണ്ട് അവതരിപ്പിച്ച ടാഗോർ കൃതികൾ ലൗകികവും അലൗകികവും ആയ മേഖലകളിൽ സ്വയം പ്രതിഷ്ഠിതവുമായി.

ഭാരതീയസാഹിത്യരചയിതാക്കളെ നിരന്തരം പ്രചോദിപ്പിച്ചു കൊണ്ടേയിരിക്കുന്ന വിഖ്യാത കൃതിയാണ് ടാഗോറിന്റെ ഗീതാഞ്ജലി. 1910 ജൂലൈ മാസത്തിലാണ് ബംഗാളി ഗീതാഞ്ജലി പ്രസിദ്ധീകരിച്ചത്. ഇതിൽ 157 ഗാനങ്ങളുണ്ട്. വ്യക്തി ജീവിതത്തിൽ അഭിമുഖീകരിക്കേണ്ടി വന്ന കഠിന വ്യഥകളുടെ സ്മരണമാണ് ഓരോ കവിതയുടേയും പ്രമേയം. ദുഃഖത്തിന്റെ ഏകതാനമായ മൗഢ്യം ഈശ്വരാഭിമുഖമായപ്പോൾ അത് ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയായി പിറവി കൊണ്ടു. ഇപ്രകാരം ഈശ്വരനോടുള്ള തീവ്രാഭിലാഷം പല കവികളും മുമ്പും പിമ്പും അവതരിപ്പിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. എന്നാൽ ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയിൽ പ്രകടമാവുന്ന ഈശ്വരപ്രേമത്തിന്റെ ജീവകണങ്ങൾ മറ്റെങ്ങും കണ്ടെത്താനാവില്ല.

മലയാളത്തിൽ ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയുടെ അനേകം തർജ്ജമകൾ ഉണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ട്. അവയ്ക്കെല്ലാമാധാരം ഇംഗ്ലീഷ് ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയാണ്. അതാകട്ടെ, ബംഗാളി ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയിൽ നിന്നും ഒട്ടൊക്കെ വിഭിന്നവുമത്രേ! ടാഗോർ തന്നെ തിരഞ്ഞെടുത്തു പരിഭാഷപ്പെടുത്തിയതും 103 ബംഗാളി ഗാനങ്ങൾ ഉൾപ്പെടുന്നതുമാണ് ഇംഗ്ലീഷ് ഗീതാഞ്ജലി. ഇതിൽ അൻപത്തിമൂന്നുഗാനങ്ങൾ മാത്രമേ ബംഗാളി ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയിൽ നിന്നും ഉള്ളൂ. ബാക്കിയെല്ലാം ഗീതിമാല്യം, നൈവേദ്യം, ഖേയാ, ശിശു എന്നീ കൃതികളിൽ നിന്നും സമാഹരിച്ച ഗീതങ്ങളാണ്. ബംഗാളി ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയുടെ നേരിട്ടുള്ള തർജ്ജമയാകുന്നു ജി.ശങ്കര കുറുപ്പിന്റെ ഗീതാഞ്ജലി. ഇന്നു നമുക്കു ലഭിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള ഏറ്റവും മനോഹരമായ ഗീതാഞ്ജലി വിവർത്തനവും അതുതന്നെ.

1906-1910 കാലഘട്ടത്തിലാണ് ഗീതാഞ്ജലി രചന സാധ്യമായിട്ടുള്ളത്. 1912 ലെ ഇംഗ്ലണ്ട് പര്യടനത്തിനിടയിൽ ടാഗോർ തന്നെ അത് ഇംഗ്ലീഷിലേക്കു മൊഴിമാറ്റം നടത്തി. 1913 ൽ നോബൽ സമ്മാനത്തിനർഹമായി. അങ്ങനെ നോബൽ സമ്മാനം നേടിയ ഒരേഒരു ഭാരതീയ സാഹിത്യകൃതി എന്ന പ്രത്യേകതയോടെ നമ്മുടെയെല്ലാം അഭിമാനത്തിന്റെ അടയാളമായി ഗീതാഞ്ജലി മാറി. ഇംഗ്ലീഷിലുള്ള ഗീതങ്ങൾ ബംഗാളി ഭാഷയിലുള്ള ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയുടെ തനി വിവർത്തനങ്ങളല്ല. ഭാരതീയകാവ്യസങ്കേതങ്ങളും ശബ്ദാർത്ഥലങ്കാര വിചിത്രതകളും പാശ്ചാത്യവായനക്കാർക്ക് സുഗ്രാഹ്യമല്ലാത്തതിനാൽ മൂലത്തിലെ പല ഗാനങ്ങളും ഒഴിവാക്കി. എന്നിരുന്നാലും ബംഗാളിയിലുള്ള യഥാർത്ഥ ഗീതാഞ്ജലി വായിക്കാനോ ആസ്വദിക്കാനോ ആവാത്ത നമുക്ക് മഹാകവി തന്നെ തയ്യാറാക്കിയ ഇംഗ്ലീഷ് ഗീതാഞ്ജലി വളരെ പ്രിയപ്പെട്ടതാകുന്നു.

വിശിഷ്ടസാഹിത്യം വിവർത്തനത്തിലൂടെ സ്വന്തമാക്കുക മലയാളിയുടെ ഒരു സ്വഭാവമാണ്. പ്രത്യേകിച്ചു കാരണമൊന്നുമില്ലാതെത്തന്നെ ചില കൃതികൾ നിരന്തര വിവർത്തനപ്രക്രിയയ്ക്കു വിധേയമാകുന്നു. ശാകുന്തളം പോലെ. ഓരോരോ പുതുവായനയും പുത്തൻ മൊഴി മാറ്റത്തിന് വഴിയൊരുക്കുന്നു എന്നതാണ് ശരി. ഗീതാഞ്ജലിക്കു മുണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ട് നിരവധി വിവർത്തനങ്ങൾ. എൽ. എം. തോമസ് (1937), ജി. ശങ്കരക്കുറുപ്പ് (1959), വിദ്വാൻ എം. കൃഷ്ണപ്പിള്ള (1964), കെ.സി. പിള്ള & ഡോ. വി. എസ്. ശർമ (1978), കെ. ജയകുമാർ (1994), നിത്യചൈതന്യയതി, എൽ. സി. യോഹന്നാൻ (2001), എൻ. കെ. ദേശം (2010), ഏറ്റുമാനൂർ സോമദാസൻ (2011), കെ. വി. സജയ് (2011) എന്നിങ്ങനെ പോകുന്നു അപൂർണ്ണമെങ്കിലും ശ്രേഷ്ഠമായ ആ പട്ടിക. ഇക്കൂട്ടത്തിൽ “എന്നുടെയൊച്ച കേട്ടുവോ വേറിട്ട്”⁽¹⁾ എന്നു ശങ്കിക്കുന്ന ഒരു പാവം കവിയുമുണ്ട്. ഭാവതീവ്രതയും താളലയഭംഗിയും ധ്വനിസമ്പൂർണ്ണതയും ആവോളമുണ്ടായിട്ടും “കേരളം വേണ്ടു നന്ത്ര കണ്ണുതുറന്നു കാണാത്ത”⁽²⁾ ഒരു സാധ്യ

കവി; ശ്രീ. എൻ. കെ. ദേശം. “ഗീതാഞ്ജലിക്ക് സ്വന്തമായൊരു മൊഴിമാറ്റം വേണം എന്നു നിശ്ചയിക്കുന്ന ഇന്നത്തെ കവികളിൽ എൻ. കെ. ദേശം ഏറ്റവും ശ്രദ്ധയാകർഷിക്കുന്നു.”⁽³⁾ എന്ന ഡോ. എം. ലീലാവതിയുടെ കണ്ടെത്തൽ ദേശത്തിന്റെ കാവ്യലോകത്തേക്ക് ഒരു വാതിൽ തുറന്നിടുന്നു. 2010 ജൂണിലാണ് ദേശം തന്റെ ഗീതാഞ്ജലി വിവർത്തനം ആസ്വാദകസമക്ഷം സമർപ്പിക്കുന്നത്. ആരെല്ലാം ഇത് വേണ്ടത്ര കണ്ടു. ആവോളം കേട്ടു, നന്നായി അറിഞ്ഞു എന്നൊന്നും നിശ്ചയമില്ല. അപ്പോൾ

‘നിറപ്പകിട്ടില്ലൊട്ടും; മണവും കുറവാകിലുമിരിക്കുമും ഉതകാവുതവസേവ;യ്ക്കതിനായ് ഉടനടിനുള്ളുക സദയം’⁽⁴⁾

എന്നു പാടി പിന്നോട്ടൊതുങ്ങി നിൽക്കുന്ന വിന്യയം കവിയുടെ മുഖഭാവമാകുന്നു.

ഭാവതീവ്രതയും താളഭംഗിയും കവിപ്രതിഭയും ഒത്തിണങ്ങുന്ന കവിത ബാഹ്യനിർബന്ധങ്ങളേതുമില്ലാതെ സ്വയം ആഗതയാവുന്നു എന്നു പറയാറുണ്ടല്ലോ. അതുപോലെ, അത്രകണ്ട് അനായാസമാണ് തന്റെ രചനാപ്രക്രിയ എന്ന് ആസ്വാദകവൃന്ദത്തെക്കൊണ്ട് പറയിപ്പിക്കാൻ പര്യാപ്തമാണ് ദേശത്തിന്റെ വചോവിന്യാസം. സന്ധ്യാനേരത്ത് ഉച്ചത്തിലുള്ള നാമം ചൊല്ലലും മറ്റും ഭക്തിയുടെ ഒരിനം പ്രകടനങ്ങളാവുമ്പോൾ അങ്ങനെയൊന്നുമില്ലാതെ, പരമമായ വിശ്വശക്തിയെ യഥാവിധി തിരിച്ചറിഞ്ഞ്, മനോവാക് കർമ്മങ്ങളാൽ നിരന്തരം പ്രണമിച്ച് അതിലാണ് അന്തരംഗ വിശുദ്ധി കുടികൊള്ളുന്നത് എന്ന് വിശ്വാസിക്കുന്ന ദേശത്തെപ്പോലൊരു കവിക്ക് ടാഗോറിന്റെ ഇമ്മാതിരിയൊരു വ്യക്തിത്വം എങ്ങനെയൊക്കെയായിരിക്കും അനുഭവപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുണ്ടാവുക ? ആ ഒരു ആകർഷണമായിരുന്നിരിക്കണം ടാഗോർ മൊഴികളുടെ നിത്യനൈർമ്മല്യവുമായി സഹവസിക്കാൻ ദേശത്തെ പ്രേരിപ്പിച്ചതും അവിധം സ്വയം സ്ഫുടം ചെയ്യേണ്ടത് അനിവാര്യമാണെന്നു തോന്നാൻ ഇടയാക്കിയതും. വിശ്വമഹാ

കവിയുടെ കാവ്യചേതസ്സുമായി വേർതിരിക്കാനാകാത്തവണ്ണം അലിഞ്ഞു പോകുന്ന നിർവൃതിയുടെ തീവ്രത ദേശത്തിന്റെ ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയും കൈക്കൊള്ളുന്നു. അപ്പോൾ സ്വാനുഭൂതിയുടെ കവിഞ്ഞൊഴുകു തന്നെയായി വിവർത്തനം പരിണമിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു. അതായത് ഒരു ഭാഷയിൽ നിന്ന് മറ്റൊരു ഭാഷയിലേക്കുള്ള പകർച്ച എന്ന മറ്റൊരു ഹൃദയത്തിലേക്കുള്ള ഒഴുക്ക് എന്ന തലത്തിലേക്കെത്തുന്നു. ഈ ഒരു താദാത്മ്യം ദേശത്തിന്റെ ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയിൽ ആദ്യന്തം അനുഭവിക്കാം എന്നതുകൊണ്ട് ട്രാൻസ്ലേഷനല്ല ട്രാൻസ്ക്രിയേഷനാണ് ഇവിടെ സംഭവിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളതെന്ന് ഡോ. ലീലാവതി കണ്ടെത്തുന്നു.⁽⁴⁾

വരികളിലൂടെ.....

The holy streams of thy music breaks through all stony obstacles and rushes on എന്ന മൂന്നാമത്തെ ഗീതാഞ്ജലി മൂലം മലയാളത്തിലേക്കു മാറ്റിയപ്പോൾ

‘താവകസംഗീത പുണ്യതരംഗിണി താവും ശിലാകീർണ വിഘ്നമെല്ലാം തട്ടിപ്പൊളിച്ചു തകർത്തിട്ടു മുന്നോട്ടു തത്തിപ്പുള്ളിച്ചു കുതിച്ചിടുന്നു.’

എന്നായിരിക്കുന്നു. ദൈവത്തിന്റെ വരദാനങ്ങളും അപാരസ്നേഹവും ധ്വനിപ്പിക്കാൻ ഉതകുന്ന മട്ടിലുള്ള പദവിന്യസനം എത്രയോ ഹൃദ്യം. താവക സംഗീത പുണ്യതരംഗിണി, താവും ശിലാകീർണ വിഘ്നം എന്നീ വാക്കുകൾ The holy stream of thy music breaks through all stony obstacles എന്ന ഇംഗ്ലീഷ് പദങ്ങൾക്ക് പകരമാവുമ്പോൾ രൂപംകൊള്ളുന്ന ചേതോഹാരിത്വം ഭാവുകന്റെ വൈകാരിക തീവ്രത പതിന്മടങ്ങു വർദ്ധിക്കുന്നു. ആ ശബ്ദങ്ങളുടെ ചേർച്ചയും അവിധം തന്നെ പക്ഷെ, rushes on എന്ന ഒറ്റ പ്രക്രിയ വിശദീകരിക്കാൻ ‘തട്ടിപ്പൊളിച്ചു തകർത്തിട്ടു മുന്നോട്ടു തത്തിപ്പുള്ളിച്ചു കുതിച്ചിടുന്നു’ എന്ന് നീട്ടിപ്പറയേണ്ടി വന്നു. എന്നാൽ തന്നെ വായ

നാസുഖം ഇല്ലാതാക്കുന്ന എന്തെങ്കിലും ഒരസ്വസ്ഥത അവിടെ ഉണ്ടായോ ? ഇല്ലേയില്ല : എന്നു മാത്രമല്ല ശിലാവിഘ്നങ്ങൾ തകർത്തു മുന്നേറുന്ന സംഗീത തരംഗിണിയിൽ മുങ്ങിത്താഴാൻ വായനക്കാരനും ആവോളം സാധിക്കുന്നു. സ്വന്തം സ്വത്വത്തെ പാട്ടുകാരനായി വിഭാവനം ചെയ്യുന്ന ടാഗോർ പ്രതിഭയെ, ഇവിധമുൾക്കൊള്ളാൻ ശ്രീ. എൻ. കെ. ദേശത്തിനു മാത്രമേ ആവൂ എന്നു കരുതുന്നതിനാൽ അയുക്തിയില്ല.

ഗീതാഞ്ജലി പദ്യരൂപത്തിൽ വിവർത്തനം ചെയ്യുമ്പോൾ താളത്തിനു മുന്നിൽ പൊഴിഞ്ഞു പോകുന്ന ഭാവത്തെ പ്രതി ആകുലപ്പെടുന്നവർ ഒട്ടനവധിയുണ്ട്. വൃത്തം, പ്രാസം, സമാസം മുതലായ ഘടകങ്ങൾ ഒന്നിക്കുമ്പോൾ ഉളവാകുന്ന അനുഭൂതി സംവേദനം ഗദ്യത്തിൽ നിന്നും ഒരു പാട് ഭിന്നമാണ്. “ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയുടെ സാംഗത്യം” എന്ന ലേഖനത്തിൽ ശ്രീ. കെ. പി. ശങ്കരൻ അഭിപ്രായപ്പെടുന്നത് നോക്കുക. “ കവിതയുടെ മൂലധാതുക്കൾ ഏത് എന്ന് തിരിച്ചറിയുകയും അതു സംബന്ധിച്ചുള്ള തെറ്റിദ്ധാരണകൾ തിരുത്തുകയും ആ ധാതുക്കളുടെ സഹലമായ ഉപയോഗം എങ്ങനെ എന്ന ധാരണ തിളക്കിയെടുക്കുകയും ഒക്കെ ചെയ്യേണ്ട അവസ്ഥയിലാണ് ഇന്നു നാം അകപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നത്.”⁽⁵⁾ ഇത് വൃത്ത പ്രാസാദി കാവ്യാംശങ്ങൾ പരിഹാസമാണ് എന്നു ചിന്തിക്കുന്ന പുതുപ്പിറപ്പുകൾക്കുള്ള ഒരു ഉദ്ബോധനം കൂടിയാണ്.

‘നുള്ളുക ചെല്ലത്താരിതിനെ,കൈക്കൊള്ളുക വയു വിളംബം വാടിക്കൊഴിയും വൈകിപ്പോയാൽ വാടിയിലെപ്പൊടി മണ്ണിൽ’

“പുഷ്പാഞ്ജലി” എന്ന ആറാം ഗീതം പ്രസ്തുത വരികളിലൂടെ ആരംഭിക്കുന്നു. pluck this little flower and take it, delay not ! I fear ‘best it droop’ and drop into the dust. ഇവിടെ "droop and drop’ എന്ന മൂലഭാഷയ്ക്കു സമാനമായി ‘വാടിക്കൊഴിയും’ ‘വാടിയിലെപ്പൊടി മണ്ണിൽ’

എന്നീ വാക്കുകൾ കൈക്കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. droop മിറ drop എന്ന പദദ്വയം സദൃശശബ്ദങ്ങൾ കൊണ്ടുള്ള ലയഭംഗി ഉള്ളവാക്കുന്നുവല്ലോ. ഏകദേശം തത്തുല്യാനുഭൂതി വായനക്കാരനിൽ ഉന്നമിപ്പിക്കാൻ ‘വാടിക്കൊഴിയും’ ‘വാടിയിലെപ്പൊടി മണ്ണിൽ’ എന്നീ പദങ്ങൾക്കും കഴിയുന്നു. എന്നാൽ ‘വാടി’ എന്നതിനു സമാനമായ പദം മൂലത്തിൽ കണ്ടെത്താനാവില്ല. പുകൾ വിരിഞ്ഞു നിൽക്കുന്നത് വാടിയിൽ അഥവാ പുകാവനത്തിൽ ആണെന്ന സ്വഭാവീകാർത്ഥം എടുത്താൽ ‘വാടി’ എന്ന പദത്തിന്റെ ചേരുവ സന്ദർഭാനുഗുണമായിട്ടുണ്ടെന്ന് നിസ്സംശയം പറയാം. അതൊരു വേണ്ടാത്ത കൂട്ടിച്ചേർക്കലാണെന്ന തോന്നൽ ഉള്ളവാക്കുകയുമില്ല. ഭാവധാനി സമ്പുഷ്ടമാണു താനും.

ഇവിടെ നാം അറിയാതെയെങ്കിലും ജി. ശങ്കരക്കുറുപ്പ് വിവർത്തനം ചെയ്ത ബംഗാളി ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയിലെ (87-10 ഗീതം) വരികൾ ഓർത്തു പോവുക സ്വാഭാവികം.

‘താമസമരുതേ നുള്ളൊൻ
താരിതിനെക്കൈക്കൊള്ളൊൻ
കൊഴിയുകിലോ ഞാൻ വാടി-⁽⁶⁾
പ്പൊടിയിലതാണെൻ പേടി ’

വിവർത്തനത്തിലെ സാദൃശ്യത്തേക്കാൾ വിവർത്തകർ കൈവരിക്കുന്ന പ്രതിഭോത്സാഹമായ ഐക്യവും അതുവഴി വായനക്കാരനനുഭവിക്കുന്ന ആത്മ പ്രഹർഷവും ഓർക്കുക. വാഗതീതം കാവ്യവിസ്ഥയം എന്നല്ലാതെ മറ്റെന്തു പറയാൻ.

‘അനാചാരനം’ എന്ന തലക്കെട്ടിനു കീഴിൽ വരുന്ന ഏഴാം ഗീതത്തിൽ അഴിഞ്ഞു വീഴുന്ന കവിഗർവത്തെക്കുറിച്ചൊരു പരാമർശമുണ്ട്.

‘എന്നിലെക്കവി ഗർവമൊക്കെ നിൻ
മുനിൽ മായുന്ന ലജ്ജയാൽ
സാദരം വന്നിരിപ്പു ഞാൻ കവി-
സാർവഭൗമ നിൽ കാൽക്കലായ്
ഉള്ളഴിഞ്ഞു നിനക്കു പാടുവാ-

നുള്ളൊരോടക്കുഴലു പോൽ
ഏകിയാലുമെൻ ജീവിതത്തിനു
ലാഘവാർജ്ജവ സൗഭഗം’

ദൈവത്തിന്റെ അപരിമേയ സ്നേഹത്തിനു മുന്നിൽ നേർത്തു നേർത്തില്ലാതാവുന്ന കവി ഗൗരവമാണിവിടെ അനാവൃതമാവുന്നത്, My poet’s vanity dies in shame before thy sight o master poet, I have sat down at thy feet. Only let me make my like simple and straight like a flute of reed for thee to fill with music. എന്നിങ്ങനെ അവസാനിക്കുന്നു ഇംഗ്ലീഷ് മൂലം. poet’s vanity എന്നതിന് ‘കവി ഗർവ്വമെന്നും master poet എന്നതിന് ‘കവിസാർവഭൗമ’ എന്നും let me straight എന്നതിന് ഏകിയാലുമെൻ ജീവിതത്തിനു ലാഘവാർജ്ജവസൗഭഗം എന്നും കവി അർത്ഥം വെക്കുന്നു. ഇവയെല്ലാം ഇംഗ്ലീഷ് മൂലത്തോട് എത്രയധികം തുല്യത പാലിക്കുന്നു എന്നറിഞ്ഞുകൂടാ. എന്തായാലും കാവ്യസന്ദർഭത്തിന്റെ ആശയവും ഗാനലയചാതുരിയും ഇവിടെ ഇണങ്ങുന്നു. വിവർത്തനത്തിൽ ദേശം സ്വീകരിച്ചിരിക്കുന്ന പദങ്ങളും പ്രാസവും അതൊരു വിവർത്തനമല്ല സ്വന്തം രചന തന്നെ എന്ന പ്രതീതി വായനക്കാരനിൽ ഉള്ളവാക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു. എന്നിൽ-മുനിൽ, സാദരം-സാർവഭൗമൻ, ഉള്ളഴിഞ്ഞ-ഉള്ളൊരു എന്നീ വാക്കുകളിൽ അനുവർത്തിച്ചിരിക്കുന്ന ആദിപ്രാസവും ദ്വിതീയാക്ഷരപ്രാസവും ശ്രദ്ധിക്കുക. അവ സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്ന പ്രസാദഗുണവും തന്മൂലം സംജാതമാവുന്ന സുവ്യക്തതയും കാവ്യഭാഗം കൈവരിച്ച ദ്രാവിഡത്തനിമയെ തെല്ലൊന്നുമല്ല പരിപോഷിപ്പിക്കുന്നത്.

അതേ ഗീതത്തിൽത്തന്നെ

‘ആഭരണങ്ങൾ നമ്മൾ തമ്മിലും-
ഉളാത്മബന്ധം തകർത്തിടും’

എന്ന ഈരടിയുണ്ട്. Ornaments would mar our union എന്നാണ് മൂലഭാഷ. ആഭരണങ്ങളും ആത്മ

ബന്ധവും തമ്മിൽ എത്രത്തോളം അസ്വാഭാവികമുണ്ടെങ്കിലും വായനക്കാരന്റെ നോട്ടമെത്തുക ആ പദഭരണങ്ങളിലൂടെയല്ല ആശയസ്പർശത്തിലാണ്. ഈശ്വരോന്മുഖമായ സ്നേഹം ഉറന്നൊഴുകുമ്പോൾ ശരീരബോധം തന്നെ നഷ്ടപ്പെടുന്നു. നിതാന്തവും ജാഗരൂകവുമായ ഭക്തി ഈശ്വരസംഗം മാത്രം ലക്ഷ്യം വയ്ക്കുന്നു. മലയാളിയിൽ നിലീനമായിരിക്കുന്ന ദൈവവിചാരം പ്രണയാർദ്രമേഖലയിലൂടെ സഞ്ചരിച്ച് ഒടുക്കം ഐശ്വര്യത്തിൽ വിലയം പ്രാപിക്കുന്നതിന്റെ വിവിധാവസ്ഥകൾ നമുക്കു സുപരിചിതമാണല്ലോ. ആശാൻ, ജി. ശങ്കരക്കുറുപ്പ് മുതലായവരുടെ കാവ്യപാരമ്പര്യം അവകാശപ്പെടുന്നതും അതുതന്നെ!

‘എത്ര മനോഹരമാണവിടുത്തെ ഗാനാലാപനശൈലി’ എന്ന അതിസുന്ദരമായ ലേഖനത്തിൽ ശ്രീ. കെ. വി. സജയ്, ടാഗോറും ടാഗോറിന്റെ കവിതയും നമ്മുടെ പ്രിയപ്പെട്ട എഴുത്തുകാരെ എങ്ങനെ, എത്രത്തോളം സ്വാധീനിച്ചു എന്ന് വിശദീകരിക്കുന്നു. ആശാൻ, ജി, ചങ്ങമ്പുഴ, പി. ഭാസ്കരൻ, ആർ. രാമചന്ദ്രൻ, ബഷീർ, വിജയൻ എന്നിങ്ങനെ മലയാളിയുടെ വായനാപാരമ്പര്യത്തിലേക്ക് അമൃതകണങ്ങളിറ്റിച്ച അവരോരുത്തരും തങ്ങൾ അനുഭവിച്ചറിഞ്ഞ ടാഗോർ സത്ത സ്വന്തം കൃതികളിൽ വിടർത്തി നിർത്തുന്നു. അതിനെപ്പറ്റി മേൽപ്പറഞ്ഞ ലേഖനത്തിൽ ഹൃദയമായി പ്രതിപാദിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്.

വിവർത്തനത്തിന്റെ ധ്വനിഭംഗി വർദ്ധിപ്പിക്കാൻ അല്പസ്വല്പം കുട്ടിച്ചേർക്കലുകളും വിട്ടുകളയലുകളും ആവാം. വിവർത്തകൻ മൂലത്തോടു പാലിക്കേണ്ട വിശ്വസ്തതയുടെ തരക്കേടാണ് അത് എന്നു പറഞ്ഞ് കുറ്റപ്പെടുത്തുന്നതിൽ യുക്തിയൊന്നുമില്ല. കാവ്യഭാഗത്തിന് സൗഷ്ഠവമേറ്റുന്ന അത്തരം ചില സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യങ്ങൾ വിവർത്തകന്റെ അവകാശമാണ് എന്നുതന്നെ പറയാം. ‘പാടാൻ കരുതിയ ഗാനം’ എന്ന പതിമൂന്നാം ഗീതത്തിൽ,

‘കണ്ടിട്ടില്ലവനുടെ മുഖ, മാ-
ക്കളമൊഴി കേട്ടിട്ടില്ല;

എങ്കിലുമെൻ മൺകുടിലിൻ നേർ-
മുനിലെഴും പെരു വഴിയിൽ
കാതോർക്കെ നുകർന്നെന്നാത്തു-
ക്കാൽപ്പെരുമാറ്റം മാത്രം.’

എന്ന് ദേശം എഴുതുന്നു. ഇവിടെ സൂചിതമാകുന്ന ‘അവൻ’ ഈശ്വരൻ ആണ്. കളമൊഴി, മൺകുടിൽ, പെരുവഴി, തൂക്കാൽപ്പെരുമാറ്റം എന്നീ വാക്കുകൾ വായനക്കാരനെ ആസ്വാദനത്തിന്റെ ഏതേതെല്ലാം മേഖലകളിലേയ്ക്കാണ് ഉണർത്തി വിടുന്നത്. മലയാളി നിത്യവും അനുഭവിക്കുന്ന ഗൃഹാതുരതയിലേക്ക്, വായിച്ചു മറന്ന കാവ്യതല്പജങ്ങളിലേയ്ക്ക്, റോമാന്റക് ഭാവന സമ്മാനിക്കുന്ന ആർദ്രതകളിലേയ്ക്ക്, കാവ്യപാരമ്പര്യങ്ങളിലേയ്ക്ക് എല്ലാം നമ്മെ കൊണ്ടെത്തിക്കാൻ ഈ പദസഞ്ചയം ധാരാളം മതിയാകും.

I have not seen his face, nor have I listened to his voice; only I have heard his gentle foot steps, from the road before my house എന്നാണ് മൂലം. ഇവിടെ - voice കളമൊഴിയാവുന്നു; his gentle foot steps തൂക്കാൽ പെരുമാറ്റമാവുന്നു. -road പെരുവഴിയാവുന്നു; house മൺകുടിലാകുന്നു. അന്യഭാഷാപദങ്ങൾ ഉണർത്തുന്ന (ഇംഗ്ലീഷ് തന്നെ) ഭാഷാപ്രതീതിയല്ല വിവർത്തകൻ സ്വീകരിച്ചിരിക്കുന്ന പദങ്ങൾ ഉള്ള വാക്കുന്നത്. കളമൊഴിക്കും തൂക്കാൽപ്പെരുമാറ്റത്തിനും പെരുവഴിക്കും മൺകുടിലിനും മറ്റും തുല്യമായ പദങ്ങളല്ല മൂലത്തിലെ voice, his gentle foot steps, road, house മുതലായവ. എന്നിട്ടും പ്രകൃതത്തിന്റെ ആശയഭംഗിയും മലയാളകവിതയുടെ ലയസുഭഗതയും ഇണങ്ങിയ പദങ്ങൾ തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കുമ്പോൾ ധ്വനി ഭംഗിക്കും ചോർച്ച സംഭവിക്കുന്നതേ ഇല്ല. മറിച്ച് മലയാളത്തിനുമയുടെ മാധുര്യം കൂട്ടുന്ന സാന്നിദ്ധ്യമായി അവ പരിണമിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു. ഇത്തരത്തിൽ ഒരവതരണം പതിനാറാമത്തെ ഗീതമായ ‘ലോകോത്സവ’ത്തിലും കാണാം.

ആലംബം മധുരവും അസ്‌പഷ്ടവും ആയ ആ അസ്വാസ്ഥ്യം തന്നെ കവിയെ കവിയാക്കുന്ന സുപ്രധാന ഘടകം എന്നു വരുമ്പോൾ ടാഗോറിന്റെ മുലഭാഷയെന്തെന്ന് നോക്കാം. Alas, why are my nights all thus lost ? Ah, why do I ever miss his sight ? Whose breath touches my sleep ? Alas. Ah മുതലായ വ്യാക്ഷേപകശബ്ദങ്ങൾ ഉള്ള വാക്കുന്ന അത്യുപ്തി തെല്ലുപോലും തുവിപ്പോവാതെ ആവിഷ്കരിക്കാൻ ദേശത്തിനായി എന്നത് സത്യം. മുൻപറഞ്ഞ അസ്വാസ്ഥ്യത്തിന്റെ പ്രതികരണമല്ലേ അതിനാസ്‌പദം? അതെ എന്നു തന്നെപ്പറയാം. വിവർത്തക ഹൃദയം കവിഹൃദയത്തിലേക്കു ചേക്കേറിയത് എത്ര കണ്ട് നിശ്ശബ്ദമായിട്ടാണ്. Traslation അല്ല Transcreation ആണ് നടന്നിരിക്കുന്നത് എന്നു പറയാൻ ഇനിയും ആലോചിക്കേണ്ടതുണ്ടോ? ഒരു മനസ്സനുഭവിക്കുന്ന കവിഭാവപൂർണിമ മറ്റൊരു മനസ്സും അതേ തോതിൽ അനുഭവിക്കുന്നു എന്നത് ഓർക്കാൻ തന്നെ സുഖം.

‘സൗന്ദര്യം, വിരഹം, നിർവേദം, ആനന്ദം, പ്രതിഷേധം തുടങ്ങിയ ഭാവങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ച് പ്രതിപാദിക്കുമ്പോൾ കവി ഒരിക്കലും തൃപ്തനല്ല. കൂടുതൽ കൂടുതൽ അന്വേഷണത്തിനായി അദ്ദേഹം തുനിയുന്നു. പല കവിതകളിലും ഇതു പ്രകടമായിക്കാണാം. ടാഗോർ കവിതയുടെ ജ്ഞാനാത്മകമായ ഭാവം ഉത്ഭവിക്കുന്നത് ഈ അപൂർണതാബോധത്തിൽ നിന്നാണ്. അപൂർണതയിൽ നിന്ന് കൂടുതൽ പൂർണതയിലേക്കാണ് ടാഗോറിന്റെ ഭാവന ചൂഴ്ന്നു ചൂഴ്ന്നു പോകുന്നത്.’⁽⁸⁾ എന്ന എൻ. ഇ. ബൽറാമിന്റെ അഭിപ്രായം ഈ സന്ദർഭത്തിൽ സ്മരണീയം.

മുപ്പത്തഞ്ചാം ഗീതമായ ‘സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യസ്വർഗത്തിലേക്ക്’ നതോന്നതാ വൃത്തത്തിലാണ് വാർന്നു വീണിരിക്കുന്നത്. "In to that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake’ എന്ന വരികളുടെ പരിഭാഷ നോക്കുക.

അങ്ങോട്ടാങ്ങോട്ടാ വിശുദ്ധ-
സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യ സ്വരാജ്യത്തിലേ-
യ്ക്കെൻ പിതാവേ! യെന്റെ രാജ്യ-
മൊന്നുണർന്നാവൂ!

ഇവിടെ ‘അങ്ങോട്ട്’ എന്ന പദം ആവർത്തിച്ചു പ്രയോഗിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു. തന്മൂലം ‘സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യസ്വരാജ്യപ്രാപ്തി’ ഒരു സുഗമപ്രക്രിയയല്ല എന്ന അവബോധം വായനക്കാരന് ലഭിക്കുന്നു. മാത്രമല്ല അങ്ങോട്ട് എന്ന പദത്തിനെ പിന്തുടർന്ന് ‘വിശുദ്ധം’ എന്നുപ്രയോഗിച്ചപ്പോൾ പ്രാർത്ഥനാഗീതത്തിന്റെ വൈകാരിക സത്ത മിഴിവുറ്റതായി. ‘സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യം’, ‘സ്വരാജ്യം’ എന്നീ പദങ്ങളുടെ അത്യുദാരമായ ചേർച്ചയും എടുത്തു പറയേണ്ടതാണ്. സ്വരാജ്യം കൊണ്ട് കവി ഉദ്ദേശിക്കുന്ന സ്വർഗരാജ്യവും അതിന്റെ മഹിമയും കാവ്യഗീതത്തെ ഇതരഭിന്നവും ധനിഭാവസമ്പുഷ്ടവും ആക്കുന്നു. ‘Heaven’ എന്ന പദം ദ്യോതിപ്പിക്കുന്ന അർത്ഥം പ്രപഞ്ചത്തിനേക്കാൾ വ്യാപ്തിയും ആഴവും പ്രകാശിപ്പിക്കാൻ സ്വരാജ്യപ്രയോഗത്തിന് ആവുന്നില്ലല്ലോ! Let my country awake എന്നതിന് എന്റെ രാജ്യമൊന്നുണർന്നാവൂ എന്നു പറഞ്ഞത് പരിഭാഷകന്റെ വിനയനമ്രമുദ്രയായി കണക്കാക്കാം. എങ്കിൽ മാത്രമേ ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയുടെ പ്രാർത്ഥനാ പുഷ്പകലതയും ദേശത്തിന്റെ പ്രാർത്ഥനാ നിർഭരതയും രണ്ടല്ല ഒന്നുതന്നെ എന്നു തീർച്ചപ്പെടുത്താൻ വായനക്കാരനാവൂ !

‘എന്നാവോ’ എന്ന നാല്പത്തിനാലാം ഗീതം അവസാനിപ്പിക്കുന്നിടത്ത് അനർഘസുഗന്ധം പരന്നു തുവുന്ന കവി കല്പന കാണാം. സൗന്ദര്യത്തിന്റെ മറുവാക്കായി നിൽക്കുന്നു ഈ ഗന്ധസന്നിവേശം. ‘In the meanwhile the rain is filling with the perfume of promise’ എന്ന ടാഗോർ ഭാഷയുടെ പരിവർത്തന ക്രിയ താഴെ കൊടുക്കുന്നു.

‘ചിരിതുകും ഞാനൊറ്റയ്ക്കിടയിൽ-
ച്ചിലചില ശീലുകൾ മൂളും,
നിറവു പരിസരവായുവിലിപ്പോൾ
ശുഭവാഗ്ദാന സുഗന്ധം’

പരിസര വായുവിൽ നിറയുന്ന വാഗ്ദാന സുഗന്ധം സമാനഹൃദയരുടെയെല്ലാം അന്തരംഗം പരിപൂതമാക്കുന്നു. 'Perfume of promise' എന്ന കല്പന ഒരു മലയാളി വായനക്കാരനെ ഓർമ്മിപ്പിക്കുന്ന ആസ്വാദന സ്ഥലികൾ എത്രയോ അധികം! ഭഗവത് സാന്നിധ്യം വായനക്കാരനുള്ളിലും ഭക്തമനസ്സിലും ഉന്നിദ്രമാക്കാൻ

'വായുവിലാഹാ ഹരിചന്ദന പരിപാവനഗന്ധം' ⁽⁹⁾

എന്ന ഒരൊറ്റ പ്രയോഗം മതിയായിരുന്നു സുഗതകുമാരിക്ക് എന്നോർക്കുക. സുഗന്ധത്തിന് തത്തുല്യാനുഭൂതി കൊടുക്കുന്ന നിരവധി പദങ്ങൾ വേറെയിരുന്നിട്ടും 'സുഗന്ധം' എന്നുതന്നെ പ്രയോഗിച്ച് വായനക്കാരനിൽ നിദ്രാണമായ സൗഗന്ധിക സഞ്ചയം ഒന്നാകെ ഉണർത്താൻ വിവർത്തകനായത് വിലോഭനീയം.

ഈശ്വരാസ്പദമായ ആനന്ദത്തിൽ മനുഷ്യനോടൊപ്പം ദൈവവും പങ്കുചേരുന്നു എന്ന ആശയം പ്രകാശിതമാവുന്ന ഗീതങ്ങൾ കുറച്ചേറെയുണ്ടല്ലോ ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയിൽ. ഏതോ ഒരു അദ്യശ്യകര സാന്നിധ്യം തന്റെ പ്രവൃത്തിപഥത്തിൽ അനുഭവപ്പെടുന്നുണ്ടെങ്കിലും അത് എന്ത്, എങ്ങനെ, ആരാൽ എന്ന് കൃത്യമായി വ്യവചരിക്കാനാവാതെ വിഹവലനാകുന്ന മൂഷ്യന്റെ നിസ്സഹായാവസ്ഥ ഇത്തരം ഗീതങ്ങളുടെ പ്രത്യേകതയാവുന്നു. 74-ാം ഗീതം നോക്കുക. :- In the lonely lane there is no passer-by, in the river.

I know not if shall come back home. I know not whom I shall chance to meet. There at the fording in the little boat the unknown man plays upon his lute. എത്രയോ അമൂർത്തമായ ആശയത്തെ മുർത്തമാക്കാനുള്ള പ്രയത്നമാണ് ഇവിടെ നടന്നിരിക്കുന്നത്. അരുപനീശ്വരൻ സ്വരൂപനാകിൽ ആശ്ചര്യപ്പെടാതെ തരമില്ലല്ലോ! എന്നിരിക്കലും ആ 'unknown man' ഈശ്വരനാണ് എന്നുറപ്പിച്ചുപറയാൻ ആവുന്നു

മില്ല. എത്രകണ്ട് പ്രയാസമാണ് സത്യസാക്ഷാത്ക്കാരം എന്നോർക്കുക. നിരന്തരമായ സൗന്ദര്യോപാസനയുടെ വിശിഷ്ടമായ പാരമ്പര്യം അവകാശപ്പെടാൻ ടാഗോറിനായി എന്നത് പരമാർത്ഥം. എന്നാൽ ആ അമൃത ബിന്ദുക്കൾ ആസ്വദിക്കാം എന്നല്ലാതെ അനുഭവിക്കാൻ വായനയുടെ, ഇങ്ങേ അറ്റത്തിരിക്കുന്ന നമുക്കാവുന്നുമില്ല. പുഴയിലേക്ക് എന്ന് പേരിട്ട വിവർത്തനത്തിൽ ദേശമെഴുതുന്നു,

'ഇടവഴി നിർജ്ജനം, പഥികരായില്ലാരും; ചിരകു കൂടയുന്നു തെന്നൽ വിണ്ണിൽ. തിരമാല പൊങ്ങുന്നു, കുമ്മിയടിക്കുന്നു ചിരികളിമേളക്കൊഴുപ്പിലാറ്റിൽ. പുരയിൽത്തിരിച്ചു ഞാനെത്തുമോ? കാണുവാൻ തരമാവതാരെ? - അറിഞ്ഞുകൂടാ. ചെറിയൊരു തോണിയിൽ വീണമീട്ടുന്നു, ഞാനറിയാത്തൊരാളപ്പുഴക്കടവിൽ.'

യാത്രക്കാരില്ലാത്ത ഇടവഴി; വിണ്ണിൽ ചിരകു കൂടയുന്ന തെന്നൽ; മേളക്കൊഴുപ്പിൽ കുമ്മിയടിക്കുന്ന തിരമാലകൾ; അവിടെ പുഴക്കടവിൽ ചെറിയൊരു തോണിയിലിരുന്ന് ഞാനറിയാത്തൊരാൾ വീണമീട്ടുന്നു; എനിക്കും പ്രകൃതിക്കുമിടയിൽ അജ്ഞാതനാമൊരു തോണിക്കാരൻ. എത്രമാത്രം ഭാവാനുസാരിയായ കല്പനയാണിത്. വിവർത്തനത്തിലെ വൃത്തവും പദഘടനയുമെല്ലാം തികച്ചും നൈസർഗികം! 'തോണിയിൽ വീണമീട്ടുന്ന അറിയാത്തൊരാൾ' എന്ന കല്പന അവാച്യമായ ഐശ്വര സാന്നിധ്യം ഈ ഗീതത്തിന് നൽകുന്നു. ഇങ്ങനെ വിവർത്തനമെന്ന് തോന്നിപ്പിക്കാത്ത നിരവധി കാവ്യമുഹൂർത്തങ്ങൾ ദേശത്തിന്റെ ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയിൽ കാണാം.

ഓരോ ഗീതത്തിനും അനുയോച്യമായ ശീർഷകം നൽകുന്നതിൽ വിദഗ്ധമായ കാവ്യാന്തരീക്ഷ നൈപുണ്യം പ്രകടമാവുന്നു. അക്കൂട്ടത്തിൽ ഏറ്റെടുത്തു പറയേണ്ടത് 'സൗന്ദര്യോത്തര തോപി' എന്ന അവത്തിമുന്നാം വിവർത്തനമാണ്. നാരായണീയത്തിൽ നിന്നും ഉചിതമായി എടുത്തി

ട്ടുള്ളതത്രേ പ്രസ്തുത കല്പന. തന്റെ ഗീതാ
ഞ്ജലീ വായനക്കാരന് ആഴത്തിലുള്ള ആസ്വാ
ദനം സാധ്യമാകണമെന്ന നിർബന്ധം വിവർത്ത
കൻ പുലർത്തുന്നു. പതിമൂന്നാമത്തെ ഗീതത്തിനു
'പാടാൻ കരുതിയ ഗാനം' എന്നും ഇരുപത്തിമൂ
ന്നാമത്തേതിന് 'നീയെന്ന്, നിൻപാതയെങ്ങോ?'
എന്നും ഇരുപത്തൊന്നാമത്തേതിന് 'എന്തുകൊണ്ട്?'
എന്നും മുപ്പത്തിമൂന്നാമത്തെ ഗീതത്തിന് 'ഭജനം
മുത്ത്' എന്നും അമ്പത്തൊന്നാമത്തേതിന് 'രാസ
ലീല' എന്നും തലക്കെട്ടുകൾ നൽകിയിരിക്കുന്നു.
ഇമ്മാതിരിയുള്ള നവരചന മാർഗ്ഗങ്ങൾ വിവർത്ത
നമല്ല പുനസ്സൃഷ്ടിയാണ് എന്ന പ്രതീതി ഭാവുക
നിൽ ജനിപ്പിക്കുന്നു.

'പതിക്കും വിണ്ണിൽ നിന്നൊരു കണ്ണന്റെ
മേൽ,
വിളിക്കും മുകമതെനെ;
എനിക്കായൊന്നുമില്ലിനി, നിൻകാൽക്കൽ
ഞാൻ
വരിക്കാം മൃത്യുവെത്തനെ'

എന്നവസാനിക്കുന്ന 97-ാം ഗീതത്തിന് 'ഗർഭ
ഭംഗം' എന്ന പേരല്ലാതെ മറ്റൊന്നാണ് അനുയോ
ജ്യമാവുക? അതുപോലെ വിരഹവും അന്യതാ
ബോധവും ചമക്കുന്ന അരക്ഷിതാവസ്ഥയോളം
ദുസ്സഹമല്ല മറ്റൊന്നും എന്നാവിഷ്കരിക്കാൻ '
വിരഹവ്യഥ' എന്ന തലക്കെട്ടിനാവുന്നു.

മറ്റു വിവർത്തകരിൽനിന്നു ഭിന്നമായി ദേശം
കൈക്കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന ഈ നയം-ഓരോ ഗീത
ത്തിനും ഭാവാർത്ഥസമ്പന്നമായ ഓരോ ശീർഷകം
എന്നനയം-ചില വായനക്കാരെയെങ്കിലും മുഷിപ്പി
ച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടാകാം. അർത്ഥവ്യക്തിയേക്കാൾ അർത്ഥ
ക്ലിഷ്ടതയാണ് ഇവ ഉണ്ടാക്കുന്നത് എന്നും പറയു
ന്നവരുണ്ട്. അവയൊന്നും ഔദ്യോഗികമായി
രേഖപ്പെടുത്തിയവയല്ല. വ്യക്തിസംഭാഷണത്തിൽ
നിന്നും കിട്ടിയ അഭിപ്രായങ്ങൾ മാത്രം.
എന്നാൽ, സ്വർണ്ണത്തിനു സുഗന്ധം കൂടി
വേണം എന്ന ശാഠ്യം അത്യാഗ്രഹമല്ലേ ആവൂ!

മൂലത്തെ അതിശയിക്കുന്ന ചില സുഷമാ
സന്ദർഭങ്ങൾ ദേശത്തിന്റെ ഗീതാജ്ഞലിയിൽ
നിന്നും കണ്ടെത്താനാവും ഒന്നാമത്തെ ഗീത
മായ 'ജീവിതഭാജനത്തിൽ'

'ദേവ, നീയുള്ളലിഞ്ഞെകുമനന്തമാം
ഭാവുകാനുഗ്രഹ സിദ്ധിയെല്ലാം
വന്നു ചേരുന്നതെൻ തീരൈചരിയൊരി-
ക്കുഞ്ഞിക്കരങ്ങളിൽത്തന്നെയല്ലോ'
എന്ന കല്പനയിൽ ഈശ്വരാനുഗ്രഹങ്ങളുടെ
അപാരതയും കുഞ്ഞികരങ്ങളുടെ നിസ്സാരതയും
എത്ര ഭംഗിയായി അനാവൃതമാവുന്നു. 'പാട്ടുകാ
രൻ' എന്ന രണ്ടാമത്തെ ഗീതത്തെ ധന്യമാക്കാൻ

'തൊടുവാനെക്കരു-
താത്ത തൂക്കാലിൽ പ്ലാട്ടിൻ
വിടർന്ന ചിറകിന്റെ
തുമ്പ് ഞാനുരുമ്മുന്നു'
എന്നൊരൊറ്റ ഈരടി മതിയാവും. 'നീയെങ്ങു,
നിൻ പാതയെങ്ങോ? എന്ന ഇരുപത്തിമൂന്നാം
ഗീതം അവസാനിക്കുന്നത് ഇങ്ങനെയാണ്,

'മുഖം കോട്ടിനിൽക്കും വനാന്തത്തിലൂടെ,
വളഞ്ഞൊടുമേതലാഗർത്തത്തിലൂടെ,
വരുന്നു ഭവാൻ, പ്രേമവാണെന്നടുത്തേ-
യ്ക്കിരുട്ടത്തു തപ്പിത്തടഞ്ഞെൻ
സുഹൃത്തേ?'

അന്ത്യപ്രാസം മനോഹരമാക്കുന്ന ഈ ഗീത
ത്തിന്റെ ഭാവതരളിത അവാച്യമത്രേ! ശബ്ദങ്ങൾ
ഭാവാനുചിതമാകുമ്പോൾ കാവ്യം കൈവരിക്കുന്ന
സമഗ്രഗുണസമ്പന്നത എത്രയോ അപാരം.

' മഴകാത്ത്' എന്ന നാൽപ്പതാം ഗീതത്തിൽ
' വരണ്ടാഹന്ത! വിണ്ടല്ലോ
വലാരേ, മമ ഹൃത്തടം'

എന്നു കാണാം. 'My God' എന്ന മൂലത്തിലെ ഭഗ
വദ് സംബോധനയാണ് 'വലാരേ' ആയി പുനർജ
നിച്ചത്. വരണ്ടു വിണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന ഹൃത്തടത്തിലേക്ക്
നിന്റെ തുഷ്ടചണ്ഡ മരുത്തിനെ കെട്ടഴിച്ചു വിടൂ
എന്നാണ് പ്രാർത്ഥന. 'Send thy anger storm,

dark with death, it is thy wish’ എന്ന മുലഭാഷ ഇങ്ങനെ മൊഴിമാറ്റിയിരിക്കുന്നു.

‘കെട്ടഴിച്ചു വിടു നിന്റെ
തുഷ്ട ചണ്ഡ മരുത്തിനെ,
മൃത്യു കാളിമയാർന്നോനെ,-
യിഷ്ടമങ്ങേയ്ക്കതാവുകിൽ’

ഭാവസമ്പൂർണ്ണവും ധ്യാനനിർഭരവും ആയ ഈ രചനാഗതിയും ‘വലാരേ’ എന്ന സംബോധനയും മറ്റും മുലത്തിലില്ലാത്ത ആസ്വാദ്യമേഖലകളിലേക്ക് വായനക്കാരനെ എത്തിക്കുന്നു; തർക്കമില്ല.

‘ ചപ്പുകുപ്പയ്ക്കിടയ്ക്കൊരു തനി-
പ്പത്തരമാറ്റു പൊൻതരി’

എന്ന ഈരടി അമ്പതാം ഗീതമായ ‘ രാജദിക്ഷു ’വിൽ കാണാം. ‘little gram of gold among the poor heap’ എന്ന മുലഭാഷയെ മൊഴിമാറ്റി പ്രതിഷ്ഠിച്ചിരിക്കുകയാണിവിടെ. എന്നാൽ വിവർത്തനത്തിന്റെ നേരിയ ലാഞ്ചന പോലും കാണാനില്ലാതാനും. ഇപ്രകാരമുള്ള പുനസ്സൃഷ്ടികൾ ദേശത്തിന്റെ ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയിൽനിന്നും എത്രവേണമെങ്കിലും കണ്ടെത്താം. കാവ്യം മുഴുവൻ വ്യാപിക്കുന്ന സൗന്ദര്യരേണുക്കൾ മനസ്സുകൊണ്ട് ആവോളം ആസ്വദിക്കുകയും ആവാം.

ടാഗോറിന്റെ പദാവലികൾ വിവർത്തനം ചെയ്തപ്പോൾ തത്തുല്യമായ മാനസികാവസ്ഥ ഒരു പരിധിയോളം ദേശവും കൈവരിച്ചിരുന്നിരിക്കണം. അല്ലാത്ത ആ അനുഭൂതി പ്രപഞ്ചത്തിലേക്ക് പ്രവേശിക്കാൻ പോലും ആവിലല്ലേ. ചുരുക്കത്തിൽ മൊഴിമാറ്റത്തിന്റെയല്ല മൊഴിയുടെ തന്നെ സാതികവിശുദ്ധിയാണ് ദേശത്തിന്റെ ഗീതാഞ്ജലിയിൽ അനാവരണം ചെയ്തിട്ടുള്ളത്. അത്രമാത്രം നിഷ്കളങ്കവും നിശ്ശബ്ദവുമായ സാത്മീകരണമാണല്ലോ ഇവിടെ സംഭവിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത്.

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PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES ON ENVIRONMENT

Soumya R. V.

Department of Philosophy, Sree Narayana College, Cherthala.

ABSTRACT

Environmental issues are gaining attention on an ever ending basis. Multiple approaches can be highlighted. Among them philosophical approaches are getting undivided attention from ethicists as well as environmentalists. Though the tag is philosophical approaches, human centered approach is also the one which is well discussed. Anthropocentrism in its extreme sense is not healthy for the environment. On the one hand a moderate anthropocentric approach is inevitable; a non-anthropocentric approach is ideally preferable. Sustainable development in its healthiest form is traceable in the literature of Indian Philosophy, especially in Vedas and later Vedic texts. Approaches like Deep Ecology and Gaia Hypothesis incorporate many ideas from Indian schools like Buddhism. Apart from discussion, what one ought to do is the development of consciousness of the intrinsic value of nature.

Key Words: Anthropocentrism, individualism, Non-anthropocentrism, dualism, scientific development.

The current environmental issues are nothing but the serious after effects of human activities. Today, man is compelled to approach and solve out these manmade effects that have harmed Mother Nature. The twentieth century was a remarkable period in terms of expansion in human populations. It was marked chiefly by production and consumption. On the one hand it resulted in enormous benefits to humankind in terms of health, education etc. But the contradiction is that these gains have been purchased at a large cost to the environment. This is what compels one to make a re-examination on the current environmental issues.

The ideas namely Individualism, subjectivism, and egoism are chief aspects of modern life. In a way it leads to a sort of materialism by considering instrumental value as the goal of human development. It makes deterioration in terms of universal benevolence, mutual care and trust. It promotes individual domination and subjugation. It provokes dualism in every sphere of life. It is evident from the scientific and technological development that the present universe is acting just like a global family. Everyone can have access to what is happening in the world. Materialism in its extreme sense, in every aspect of life, is a heyday without value and morality. It also lacks, love, care and mutual trust. History has been teaching us

lessons on these issues. For example, when Tsunami occurred nobody took its responsibility because it was a natural calamity. But at the same time, it is evident that most of the natural calamities today are nothing but the outcome of irresponsible human actions. A series of natural transformations such as global warming, ozone depletion, air, water, soil pollutions and many more cause serious threat to mankind in general. Scientific explanations cannot deny it. The application of science leads to materialism at its peak and thereby creates voluminous hurdles to mankind in general. Scientific development in general should be assessed in terms of its ethical dimensions also. The question should be asked, “Is it really needed to develop this technology? Any development however great is of no use if we are not concerned with its consequences.

The renaissance took the cosmos as a living organism. The living character of the world organism meant not only that the stars and planets were alive, but that the earth too was pervaded by a force giving life and motion to the living beings on it. The earth was considered to be beneficent, receptive and nurturing female. The organic frame work that constitutes a Mother-Earth image was a moral restriction against the severe exploitation of nature. It was conveniently replaced by an experimental science. The experimental science extended a world view that considered the nature as a machine—dead, inert and insensitive to human action. Francis Bacon advocated the domination of nature for human

benefit. The new man of science, he wrote, must not think that the,

“Inquisition of nature is in any part interdicted or forbidden”. Nature must be “bound into service” and made a “slave,” put “in constraint,” and “molded” by the mechanical arts. (Abbot,1988)

While speaking about philosophical perspectives on environment it is essential to make clear the way in which we value things. We can distinguish between two ways of valuing a thing. We can value thing in itself, as an end, or we can value it instrumentally as a means towards something else. Valuing something as an end shows its intrinsic value. But it does not mean that if something does not have intrinsic value, then, it can be valued only as a means.

In the case of environment there are various thoughts which consider only use value of Nature. There are also some approaches that extend a non-instrumental value to Nature. For example, one of the environmental approaches view environment in terms of its use value to humans. The influence of this approach is still so pervasive that people started to claim that they are thinking environmentally. Approaches which hold a non-instrumental value of environment view, the environment insist that we do or should value the nature as having moral properties that are not dependent on humans or human nature.

The question of value we extend to environment is based on how we perceive the

environment. Philosophy has an important role in analyzing the way we look into the relationship between man and environment. The nature and justification of the perspectives on environment is an important issue and it is a philosophical subject too. There is an urgency to clarify many of the issues so that we can bring an objectivity and rigour to the discussion of philosophical perspectives on environment. Through a study of philosophical perspectives on environment we can have an examination of the nature of our perceptions and how they connect to reasons for actions. An analysis and reexamination of philosophical perspectives may not resolve all the questions. But it will definitely help us to clear the way for more suitable ways to understand them. It can also make reflective or explanatory considerations about the environment in our thinking. It is in this sense that a study of philosophical perspectives on environment becomes relevant. Philosophical perspectives on environment can be generally divided into anthropocentrism and non-anthropocentrism.

The most dangerous attitude that the present human generation has adopted is the attitude of enjoying anthropocentrism in every aspect of life. It results in environmental degradation and in general it poses a serious threat to the mankind. If this is the case with anthropocentrism, non-anthropocentric approach, on the contrary, pleads for a radical change of human attitude towards nature so that nature can be treated not as a mere store house of materials but as a beholder of all biotic and abiotic community. This could be justified in

restoring the intrinsic value of natural entities. Non-anthropocentrism thereby brings a message of coexistence where every natural entity maintains a harmonious life with others. It tries to establish that all non-human living organisms are morally valuable in themselves as each of them possess intrinsic value. It annihilates moral hierarchism within biotic communities, restores equal moral status, and restores environmental justice, mutual care, love and sympathy. It equally cultivates individual rationality by means of which one can realize that his own self is no longer different from other and every individual self is essentially merged with the Self.

One of the important extensions of non-anthropocentrism is environmental holism which takes the biosphere as a whole into moral consideration. It enlarges the boundary of moral community by including soil, water, plants and animals, or collectively the land. As Leopold in his celebrated article "Land Ethics" says,

"A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community, it is wrong when it tends otherwise." (Callicot, 1989)

This theory is also linked with Platonism where ethical priority was given to community rather than individual. In Hinduism it is said that land which sustains and preserve us is the embodiment of the divine mother. Environmental holism actually leads to Gaia hypothesis where Earth behaves like a single living organism. So, considering the whole nature as a single family

is the message of non-anthropocentrism where exploitation and subjugation of one species by another, extinction of one species by another, is ruled out. It has pleaded for a consciousness movement based on environmental holism and extension and the realization of the self.

Deep ecologists hold that if everything is fundamentally one then the distinction between what is self and not self can no longer be sustained. If everything is part of one's self and one is aiming self-realization, then the realization of all living organisms is necessary for one's full realization. The other aspect of self-realization is that it would diminish exploitation of one class by another class and where there is a scope or possibility of exploitation and extinction, it would equally reduce potential self-realization.

In this regard it can be said that complete self-realization implies the realization of all potential self-realization where there is no scope of exploitation, subjugation and extinction of one class by another. This reflects that self-realization is the manifestation of all life and self-identity involves increased identification with others and this can be portrayed through altruism. The transition from self-love to Self-love is an upward transition that cures alienation completely and thereby makes a homely relation with nature, gives to a disposition to live in harmony with nature. Feeling homeness with nature and maintaining a harmonious relationship with nature would create joy or *ananda* or peace to the individual. It would annihilate hatred, the evil thought of exploitation, subjugation and extinction of one

class by another. All these things go in favor of an environment that would create a harmonious environment.

The message of Buddhism is also relevant here. According to Buddhist thought, persons are not alone but thoroughly relational which ultimately leads to the crucial concept of no-self. As there is no permanent, unchanging substance in all the cosmos, there is no separate, eternal soul or ego as commonly conceived in western religious and psychological traditions. Even in *Atharva* Veda nature has been described as: 'O Mother Earth!' In Upanishads it is conceived that the Universe is the creation of Supreme Power meant for the benefit of all. Individual species must be therefore learning to enjoy its benefits by forming a part of the system in close relationship with other species.

The Universe is an extended family where one can realize that all living beings in the universe are only citizens of the household. It refers to all species on earth as the members of the same extended family of Devi Vasundhara. The spiritual approach of Indian tradition proclaims that nature or the environment as such needs to be looked up on as our own self as it possesses the same essence as we do possess. Nature therefore needs to be protected, preserved not because it has its inherent worth. Maintaining self-existence without subjugating other would be the primary objective of all species. But this primary objective can only be sustained with mutual care and cooperation with other.

Voicing dualism in terms of self and non-self, in terms of consciousness and unconsciousness, in terms of mind and matter is not favorable in maintaining and preserving a habitat environment. The true reality is that self and non-self are only to be distinguished, but not to be separated. This is also reflected in the *Samkhya* system. Being an ontologically dualistic system, *Samkhya* postulates two uncreated, independent and eternal principles known as *Purusha* and *Prakrithi*. *Purusha*, the spiritual principle and *Prakrithi*, the material principle are the transcendental essence of our consciousness (self) and unconsciousness (non-self) principles. All experiences arise from the duality between *Purusha*, the knower and *Prakrithi*, the known. Together they form the matrix from which the phenomenal universe evolves. According to this system nature behaves towards man as a veritable fairy godmother.

We think that non-anthropocentrism at the first order level (modified anthropocentrism) cannot protect environmental degradation. It can at best resist partially the rapid deterioration of environmental degradation. It deals with physical environment by devising norms to regulate our conduct in respect of nature globally. So, when we call for non-anthropocentrism instead of anthropocentrism we cannot confine ourselves within the physical environment known as modified anthropocentrism, rather we seek for a mental environment—an environment where one would be in a position to realize himself what he is.

So environmental ethics at the very outset proclaims non-anthropocentrism or even modified anthropocentrism and thereby tries to restore the intrinsic value of all biotic as well as abiotic communities. This principle has been subsequently defended by biocentrism, environmental holism and deep ecology. It started with bio and ended with a-bio and thereby encompassed biosphere as a whole single family based on relational whole that came through the process of self-realization. It deviates or transforms arrogant, conquering human attitude towards nature. It dilutes materialism, individualism, and subjectivism and thereby formulates a new form of life based on mutual trust, care and love. It seeks for environmental justice that would not be possible if one fails to realize the truth that his own being belongs to we-being. It seems clear from the above observation that when we plea for non-anthropocentrism, we do prescribe a mental resolution through which every individual would come to realize what he is. This would reflect the true nature of reality through which individual comes to know what he ought to do in order to survive in the world peacefully along with others.

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EFFECT OF SUB LETHAL CONCENTRATION OF MERCURY ON BRAIN AND OVARY OF *ANABAS TESTUDINEUS*

Reshmi V.* and Dhanushya Kannezhathu

* Post Graduate and Research Department of Zoology, Sree Narayana College, Cherthala,

Email: reshmirenjithv@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

*Mercury levels in the aquatic environment have been increasing at an uncontrollable level raising the possibility of damaging fish population and bioaccumulation. The objective of this study was to examine the toxicological effects of heavy metal pollutant mercury on aquatic animals. After 96 hours of exposure, LC₅₀ value of HgCl₂ on *Anabas testudineus* was found to be 0.3 ppm. After the determination of LC₅₀, five sub lethal concentrations (0.02, 0.04, 0.06, 0.08, 0.1 ppm Hg) and control were maintained for 15 days. After 15 days of exposure, brain and ovary were used for histochemical analysis. Harri's Haematoxylin-eosin was used for histochemical studies.*

*Noticeable degenerative histopathological changes were observed in both brain and ovary after exposure to sub lethal concentrations of mercury. Control fish ovaries exhibited characteristics of ovarian development. The extent of ovarian damage was such that there was complete breakage and dissolution of ovigerous lamella. Large interfollicular spaces could be seen in ovary exposed to high concentration. Shrinkage of oocytes prior to atresia was also noticed due to the effect of mercury. *Anabas testudineus* treated with mercury showed vacuolation in brain. This vacuolation was becoming worst in the order medulla, cerebellum, ventral regions of the tectum, cerebrum and other regions. Vacuolation in the medulla was widespread and was accompanied by occasional necrotic cell bodies and diffuse necrosis of the white matter.*

Key words: *Anabas testudineus*, HgCl₂, brain, ovary

Introduction

Environmental pollution, which causes hazards to fauna and flora as well as human health, has become a major global issue. Heavy metals are the most toxic inorganic pollutants which occur in water and can be natural or anthropogenic (Sekabira *et al.*, 2010). Heavy metals become toxic when they are not metabolized by the body and accumulate in the soft tissues. Among different toxicants of river

water, mercury plays a major role in pollution. Mercury (Hg), the black listed element by environmentalists, is released into the environment by several sources, such as mining and fossil fuel combustion, thermal power projects, by the use of fungicides, bactericides and pharmaceuticals (Martin *et al.*, 2007). Being an element, mercury is persistent. It cannot be broken down in the environment, only its form can change. Human population is primarily exposed to mercury *via* food, as fish being a major source

of methyl mercury exposure (Ayyappan and Ali, 2007). In aquatic environments, several species of microorganisms make mercury available to organisms including fish.

Fish tissue can accumulate heavy metals and serves as a sensitive indicator of aquatic pollution. So this study investigated the histopathological alterations caused by mercury on the brain and ovary of *Anabas testudineus*. Adverse biochemical and physiological changes in an organism finally results in histopathological alterations. According to Selvanathan *et al.* (2012) histopathological approaches should be obligatory components of environmental assessments and may be used to formulate monitoring system. *Anabas testudineus* was selected as an experimental model because of its hardness, availability round the year and adaptability to laboratory. In order to assess the toxicological effects of the heavy metal, mercury, on the brain and ovary of the fresh water climbing perch, *Anabas testudineus*, the fish was exposed to sublethal concentrations of mercury for 15 days.

Materials and Methods

The present experiment was conducted in the aquatic laboratory of the Research Department of Zoology, Sree Narayana College, Cherthala. Healthy living specimens of *Anabas testudineus* weighing (20 ± 0.5)gm and (15 ± 2) cm in length have been brought from a fish farm and used for the experiment. The fish were transported to the laboratory in large well-aerated containers. Healthy specimens were immediately transferred into glass tanks

(50 x 25 x 25 cm) containing tap water with each tank containing 10 fish of almost the same size and then maintained there for about 6-7 days in a static condition. The fish were fed with artificial pellet diet twice daily. The water medium was changed at 24 hrs interval with clean water.

For preliminary trial, the fish were exposed to 7 different concentrations of HgCl₂ (0.05ppm, 0.1ppm, 0.2 ppm, 0.4 ppm, 0.6 ppm, 0.8ppm, 1.0 ppm, 1.2 ppm, 1.4 ppm). The mortality of animals in each concentrations of the toxicant was observed and recorded daily up to 96hr exposure. In each concentration, the dead animals were to be removed from container. The effect of each concentration was tested in duplicate to verify reproducibility. The logarithmic value of each concentration of the HgCl₂ was noted. The recorded mortality of animals in each concentration was then converted into mortality percentage and then into Probit kill (%) by referring to the table of Probit transformation.

After 96 hours of exposure, the LC₅₀ value of HgCl₂ on *Anabas testudineus* was found to be 0.3 ppm. After the determination of 96hr LC₅₀ value of the heavy metal for the test organisms, five different sublethal concentrations (0.02, 0.04, 0.06, 0.08, 0.1ppm) were chosen for assessing long-term sub lethal toxicity of the heavy metal. Test and control fish were maintained for 15 days. From the experimental fish, brain and ovary were dissected out and fixed in 10% formaldehyde. The tissues were processed routinely and finally stained with Harri's Haematoxylin-eosin

Results and Discussion

The control fish ovaries exhibited characteristics of ovarian development such as the presence of large number of compactly arranged immature oocytes or primary growth stage follicles along with a moderate number of vitellogenic and yolky oocytes (Fig: 1). In fish exposed to toxicologically high concentration of HgCl₂, the ovaries showed inhibition of early vitellogenesis as they were full of concurrently degenerating vitellogenic oocytes and immature oocytes. The degenerative changes in immature oocytes included the ooplasmic and nuclear dissolution resulting in the presence of debris. (Fig: 3).

In addition to developmental suppression, atresia was observed in follicles which were immature and the number of follicles was decreased with increasing acellular patches and fibroblast proliferation (Fig: 2) in the ovaries exposed to 0.08 ppm. No atresia was found in the follicles of the ovaries at the control. At the dose of 0.08 ppm, fragmented ova with abnormal shape and arrangement was observed, while normal arrangement was found in the case of controlled fish. Karyolysis and complete breakage and dissolution of ovigerous lamella (Figure: 3) was seen in the ovaries treated with higher concentration. Large interfollicular spaces could be seen in ovaries exposed to high concentration. Shrinkage of oocytes (Fig: 3) prior to atresia was also noticed due to the effect of mercury.

The brain showed normal structure without oedema, vacuolation or necrosis in control fishes (Figure: 4). Astrocytes showed normal

morphology and distribution. Brains from HgCl₂ exposed *Anabas testudineus* showed considerable pathology. After 15 days of exposure, all the brains except the control showed vacuolation (Figure: 5). The pyramidal cells in the medulla and the apex of the brain appeared rounded, inactive of cell swelling. In the tectum, vacuolation was not only diffuse but also concentrated at the interface of the grey-white matter. There was marked hyperplasia of astrocytes and oedema in the frontal cortex. Karyolysis (degeneration of nucleus) and oedema were noted in the brains exposed to 0.06 and 0.08 ppm HgCl₂.

Previous research on endocrine-active chemicals has shown that chemical exposure can markedly alter the relative proportions of different staged follicles. For example, in female fathead minnows exposed to the aromatase inhibitor fadrozole for 21 days there was a significant reduction in histologically determined ovarian stage, and reduced vitellogenin uptake into developing oocytes (Ankley *et.al.*, 2002). Jensen *et.al.* (2004) reported increased numbers of early stage follicles and atretic follicles in female fathead minnows exposed to the anti-androgen flutamide for 21 days. Weisbrod *et.al.* (2007) reported increased numbers of previtellogenic oocytes and decreased proportions of early and late vitellogenic oocytes in female fathead minnows exposed to 1.2mg benzo phenone-2/L or 50 ng 17-ethynylestradiol for 15 days. Similar types of effects have been observed in Medaka (Kiparissis *et.al.*, 2003). Such shifts in the relative proportions of

differently staged follicles may reflect effects of the chemicals on the fish reproductive axis.

Deposition of mercuric chloride and significant decrease in RNA/DNA ratio after 9 days of exposure was reported in the pre-spawning ovary of *Labeo rohita* (Aditya et.al., 2002). Large degenerative changes in ovary and liver leading to decreased GSI and complete mortality of *Cyprinus carpio* were observed after 45 days exposure to 0.5 ppm HgCl₂ (Masud et.al., 2007). Deleterious effect of HgCl₂ at 0.5 and 0.1 ppm levels during 124 hr exposure was apparent on body colour and hematological responses in *C. carpio* (Masud et.al., 2007). Acute toxicity of HgCl₂ on the fish, *Anabas testudineus* during 24 to 96 hr exposure (Sinha and Kumar, 1992) causes adverse effects on haematological parameters. These multifarious deleterious effects of HgCl₂ at different dose levels on various physiological parameters of different fish species including *C. carpio* during short or long term exposures indicated that it is highly toxic even at low doses. Both organic and inorganic mercury are well known to cause damage to the central nervous system (CNS) of teleost fishes. According to Baatrup (1998), the organic methylated mercury compound readily passes the blood brain barrier and is considered by far the most neurotoxic form. Recently lipid peroxidative stress has been suggested as an additional mechanism by which mercury exerts initial neurotoxic effects in mammals. Mercury readily deposits in the mitochondria and selective disruption of the mitochondrial and

electron transport chain has been suggested as a specific mechanism which induce the formation of free radicals and lipid peroxidative stress (Aditya et al., 2002).

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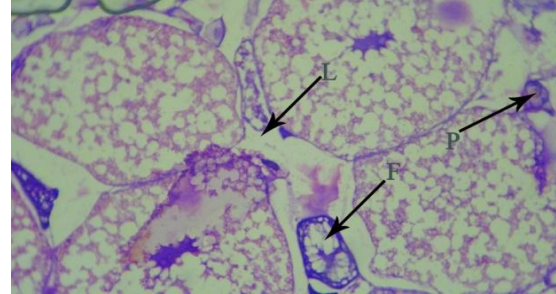
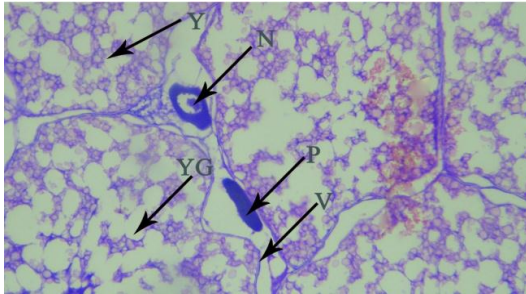


Fig. 1. Ovary of *A. testudineus* (control) **Fig. 2.** Ovary of *A.testudineus* treated with 0.6 ppm HgCl₂

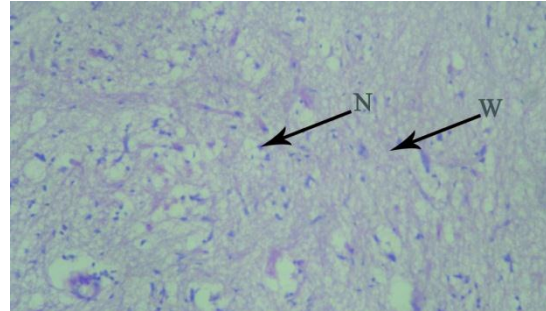
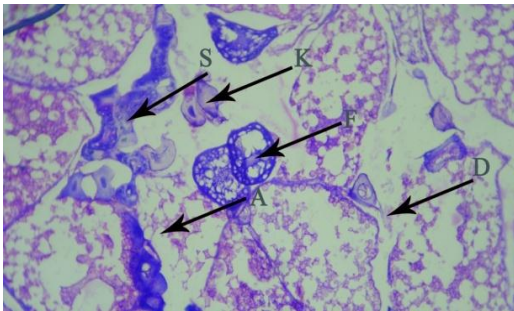


Fig. 3. Ovary of *A.testudineus* treated with 0.8ppm HgCl₂

Fig. 4. Brain of *A. testudineus* (Control)

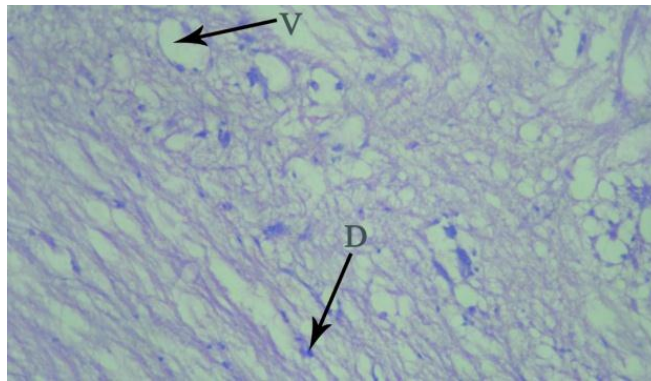


Fig. 5. Brain of *A.testudineus* treated with 0.2 ppm Hgcl₂ N- Necrosis, K-karyolysis, V- Vacuolation, N-Nucleus, Y- Yolk, D-Degeneration of cell F-Follicular epithelium A- Atretic oocyte.

A DISCOURSE ON THE ATHARVA VEDA AS A SINGULAR NARRATIVE OF THE VEDIC CORPUS

Geethu Amar

St. Joseph's College for Women, Alappuzha, Kerala.

ABSTRACT

From time immemorial the Vedas have been an integral part of Indian life and culture. However, the meanings we associate with them are always subject to critical and allegorical enquiry. This paper delves into the different interpretations given over the centuries by stalwarts like Sayana, Dayananda and Aurobindo. Atharva Veda stands out amongst the group as the most different and misconstrued one.

"The hymns of the Vedas are the primitive and sacrificial compositions of a still barbarous race, written around a system of ceremonial and propitiatory rites, addressed to personified powers of nature and replete with a confused mass of half-formed myth and crude astronomical allegories yet in the making (Aurobindo, 3)". Aurobindo successfully proves that, like the parables in the Bible or the prayers in the Koran, the Vedas too have their own symbolism, figurative language and imagery. Dayananda's interpretation of the hymns is governed by the idea that the Vedas are a plenary revelation of religious, ethical and scientific truth. Its religious teaching is monotheistic and the Vedic gods are different descriptive names of the one Deity; they are at the same time indications of His powers as we see them working in Nature and by a true understanding of the sense of the Vedas we could arrive at all the scientific truths which have been discovered by modern research. Such a theory is, obviously, difficult to establish.

The hidden aspects of the Atharva Veda, its scientific and sociological and medicinal knowledge has been used for generations. Hence they can be considered to have allegorical significance and different levels of significations compared to popular understanding. Though the four Vedas complement and highlight each other's meanings and significances, they also individually exist in a sphere of thought provoking uniqueness.

One of the greatest treasures of the Vedic age, considered to be so very interlinked with the history and heritage of the land of the Indus, is the Vedas. Centuries have tried to work on their exact origins, to find a clarity in their

myriad expressions and to merge knowledge and spirituality with them. In common parlance the modern man has come to define them thus. Though nothing is known clearly about the authors of these texts as in the Vedic tradition

the focus tends to be on the ideas rather than on the authors, which may allow one to look at the message without being influenced by the messenger. Vedic literature being religious in nature, tends to reflect the world view, spiritual preoccupations and social attitudes of the priestly class of ancient India. Vedas were first composed sometime around 1500-1000 BC in the north western region of the Indian Sub-Continent. The basic Vedic texts are samhitas, “collections” of the four Vedas. Rig Veda “knowledge of the hymns of praise”, for recitation; Sama-Veda “knowledge of the melodies”, for chanting; Yajur Veda “Knowledge of the sacrificial formulas”, for liturgy and Atharva Veda “knowledge of the magic formulas”, named after a kind of group of priests. Rig Veda acclaimed as the oldest and the primary text of the Vedas, is a collection of inspired songs or hymns. It is also the oldest book in the Indo-European language and consists of the oldest Sanskrit mantras dating back to 1500 BC-1000 BC. The Sama Veda is purely a liturgical collection of melodies. The Yajur Veda is also a liturgical collection and was made to meet the demands of ceremonial religion. The last of the Vedas, the Atharva Veda is completely different from the other three Vedas. Though very important from a historical and sociological perspective, a different spirit pervades this Veda. Its hymns are of a more diverse character and simpler in language. In fact, many scholars do not consider it as a part of the Vedas at all. As the common perception goes, the Atharva Veda consists of spells and charms prevalent at its

time and portrays a clearer picture of the Vedic society.

Over the years scholars gave many interpretations to the structure and sense of the Vedic chants, Sri Aurobindo being one among them. According to him the Vedas are much mis-constructed in their purpose and meanings by the indigenous as well as European scholarship. The most common one being “The hymns of the Vedas are the primitive and sacrificial compositions of a still barbarous race, written around a system of ceremonial and propitiatory rites, addressed to personified powers of nature and replete with a confused mass of half-formed myth and crude astronomical allegories yet in the making (Aurobindo, 3)”. Aurobindo tries to look into these works of great value as scholars look at the major religious texts of ancient religions. He successfully proves that, like the parables in the Bible or the prayers in the Koran, the Vedas too have their own symbolism, figurative language and imagery.

...when the spiritual and the psychological knowledge of the race was concealed for reasons now difficult to determine, in a veil of concrete and material figures and symbols which protected the sense from the profane and revealed it to the initiated. One of the leading principles of the mystics was the sacredness and secrecy of the self knowledge and the true knowledge of the Gods. This wisdom was they thought unfit, perhaps even dangerous to the ordinary human mind or in any case

liable to perversion and misuse and loss of virtue if revealed to vulgar and unpurified spirits. Hence they favoured the existence of an outer worship, effective but imperfect, for the profane, an inner discipline for the initiate, and clothed their language in words and images which had, equally a spiritual sense for the elect, a concrete sense for the mass of ordinary worshippers. The Vedic hymns were conceived and constructed on this principle. Their formulas and ceremonies are, overtly, the details of an outward ritual devised for the Pantheistic Nature Worship which was then the common religion, covertly the sacred words, the effective symbols of a spiritual experience and knowledge and a psychological discipline of self culture which were then the highest achievement of the human race. The ritual system recognised by Sayana may, in its externalities, stand; the naturalistic sense discovered by European scholarship may, in its general conceptions, be accepted: but behind them there is always the true and still hidden secret of the Veda, - the secret words, *ninyavacamsi*, which were spoken for the purified in soul and the awakened in knowledge (Aurobindo, 7-8).

It was the curiosity of a foreign culture that broke after many centuries the seal of final authoritativeness which Sayana had fixed on the ritualistic interpretation of the Veda. The ancient Scripture was delivered over to a

scholarship laborious, bold in speculation, ingenious in its flights of fancy, conscientious according to its own lights, but ill-fitted to understand the method of the old mystic poets; for it was void of any sympathy with that ancient temperament, unprovided with any clue in its own intellectual or spiritual environment to the ideas hidden in the Vedic figures and parables. The result has been of a double character, on the one side the beginnings of a more minute, thorough and careful as well as a freer handling of the problems of Vedic interpretation, on the other hand a final exaggeration of its apparent material sense and the complete obscuration of its true and inner secret. In spite of the hardness of its speculations and its freedom in discovery or invention the Vedic scholarship of Europe has really founded itself throughout on the traditional elements preserved in Sayana's commentary and has not attempted an entirely independent handling of the problem. What it found in Sayana and in the Brahmanas it has developed in the light of modern theories and modern knowledge; by ingenious deductions from the comparative method applied to philology, mythology and history, by large amplifications of the existing data with the aid of ingenious speculation, by unification of the scattered indications available it has built up a complete theory of Vedic mythology, Vedic history, Vedic civilisation which fascinates by its detail and thoroughness and conceals by its apparent sureness of method the fact that this imposing edifice has been founded, for the most part, on the sands of conjecture.

Hence the Vedas prove to be less ritualistic in its approach to a naturalistic form of worship and more the divine knowledge oriented. Of this revised knowledge, it is due to the survival of the theory with which European erudition started, that they belonged to the so-called Aryan race and were on the same level of culture with the early Aryan Greeks, Celts, Germans as they are represented to us in the Homeric poems, the old Norse Sagas and the Roman accounts of the ancient Gaul and Teuton. Hence has arisen the theory that these Aryan races were northern barbarians who broke in from their colder climes on the old and rich civilisations of Mediterranean Europe and Dravidian India. But the indications in the Veda on which this theory of a recent Aryan invasion is built, are very scanty in quantity and uncertain in their significance. There is no actual mention of any such invasion. The distinction between Aryan and un-Aryan which so much has been built, seems on the mass of the evidence to indicate a cultural rather than a racial difference. The language of the hymns clearly points to a particular worship or spiritual culture as the distinguishing sign of the Aryan,—a worship of Light and of the powers of Light and a self-discipline based on the culture of the “Truth” and the aspiration to Immortality,—Ritam and Amritam. There is no reliable indication of any racial difference.

It is always possible that the bulk of the peoples now inhabiting India may have been the descendants of a new race from more northern latitudes, even perhaps, as argued by

Mr. Tilak, from the Arctic regions; but there is nothing in the Veda, as there is nothing in the present ethnological features of the country to prove that this descent took place near to the time of the Vedic hymns or was the slow penetration of a small body of fair-skinned barbarians into a civilised Dravidian peninsula (Aurobindo, 26).

The incoherencies of the Vedic texts exist in appearance only, because the real thread of the sense is to be found in an inner meaning. That thread found, the hymns appear as logic and organic wholes and the expression, though alien in type to our modern ways of thinking and speaking, becomes, in its own style, just and precise and sins rather by economy of phrase than by excess, by over. From the preliminary analysis of the text, it is revealed that Atharva Veda was centred around the northern Sarasvati region and later became the text of the shamans in the Kuru kingdom which got established to the east of Sarasvati (in Haryana). Practitioners of Atharva Veda are now limited and they are found mostly in Maharashtra, Kerala and Gujarat.

As compared to the other three Vedas, the Atharva Veda speaks more of daily problems and solutions, like diseases and black magic. The name Atharva Veda is a compound of Atharva, the Rishi who compiled it and Veda, meaning Knowledge. The Atharvaveda was mainly composed by two groups of rishis known as the Atharvanas and the Angirasa.

Hence its oldest name is Ātharvāṅgīrasa. In the Late Vedic Gopatha Brahmana, it is

attributed to the Bhrigu and Angirasa. Additionally, tradition ascribes parts to other rishis, such as Kauśika, Vasiṣṭha and Kaśyapa. There are two surviving recensions (śākhās), known as Śaunakīya (AVS) and Paippalāda (AVP). The Schools; Shakas, paippalāda, are regions south of the Narmada River and stauda, mauda, śaunakīya, Jajala, Jalada, Kuntap, Brahnavada, Devadarsa, caranavaidya are regions north of the Narmada River.

Atharva Veda is also the first Indic text dealing with medicine. It identifies the causes of disease as living causative agents such as the yatudhāna, the kimīdinthe krimi or kṛmi and the durṇāma. The Atharvanas seek to kill them with a variety of incantations or plant-based drugs in order to counter the disease. This approach to disease is quite different compared to the trihumoral theory of Ayurveda. Atharva Veda suggests germs as a cause for leprosy and also talks about anti-biotics. Atharva Veda also talks about Warfare. A variety of devices were in use; such as an arrow with a duct for poison (apāskambha) and castor bean poison, poisoned net and hook traps. The use of disease-spreading insects and smoke screen was also prevalent. Abhicarika Prayoga or deployment of Black Magic is also a topic mentioned. The major rituals covered by the Atharva Veda are marriage in kāmṇḍa-XIV and the funeral in kāmṇḍa-XVIII. There are also hymns that are specific to rituals of the bhr̥gu-aṅgirasas, vrātyas and kṣatriyas. One peculiar rite is the Viṣāsahi Vrata, performed with the mantras of the XVII kāmṇḍa in a spell against female

rivals. Atharva Veda contains mantras for white magic (defensive magic) as well as black magic (offensive magic). It deals with rivalries between women in relationship with the same man, rivalries between two men, attracting /seducing a man by a woman or a woman by a man and suggests incantations that can be used in such situations. Many of the hymns in Atharva Veda, containing invocations to cure diseases or to ward of diseases and magical incantations to defend against evils done by enemies or to proactively attack evil-doers, indicate a religion and philosophy which has its parallels in the Shamanic traditions in the whole world.

Since Atharva Veda is the oldest text describing these practices and since it is still preserved without much modification, it is possible that Shamanic traditions worldwide have their origins in the Atharva Vedic religion. This could mean that the Shamaic traditions in Europe such as those in Ireland, Belgium etc. could have its origins in the Atharva Vedic-homeland in Saraswati-Ganga basins. Similar traditions are also found in the southern India and in various pockets of central and eastern India. This situation however can also be explained without a migration scenario. It is possible that the Shamanic tradition well-preserved in Atharva Veda was one important part of the global Shamanic traditions that had already spread throughout Asia, Africa and Europe during the early days of awakening of the human civilization. It is the black magic and the white magic aspect of AtharvaVeda

that is widely known. The medicinal and sociological perspectives enshrined in it are overshadowed by these. More than a hundred diseases, its cures and prescribed practices discussed in Charaka and Susruta Samhita can be traced to Atharva Veda. Even the modern day Reiki has its roots in Atharva Veda. Herbs are also detailed along with the diseases they cure. Human anatomy, physiology and embryology are wonderfully described in Atharva Veda. But it is the magic and witchcraft aspect of Atharva Veda that is widely known.

Dayananda's interpretation of the hymns is governed by the idea that the Vedas are a plenary revelation of religious, ethical and scientific truth. Its religious teaching is monotheistic and the Vedic gods are different descriptive names of the one Deity; they are at the same time indications of His powers as we see them working in Nature and by a true understanding of the sense of the Vedas we could arrive at all the scientific truths which have been discovered by modern research. Such a theory is, obviously, difficult to establish. The RigVeda itself, indeed, asserts that the gods are only different names and expressions of one universal Being who in His own reality transcends the universe; but from the language of the hymns we are compelled to perceive in the gods not only different names, but also different forms, powers and personalities of the one Deva. The monotheism of the Veda includes in itself also the monistic, pantheistic and even polytheistic views of the cosmos and is by no means the trenchant and simple creed of

modern theism. It is only by a violent struggle with the text that we can force on it a less complex aspect. That the ancient races were far more advanced in the physical sciences than is as yet recognised, may also be admitted. The Egyptians and Chaldeans, we now know, had discovered much that has since been rediscovered by modern Science and much also that has not been rediscovered. The ancient Indians were, at least, no mean astronomers and were always skilful physicians; nor do Hindu medicine and chemistry seem to have been of a foreign origin. It is possible that in other branches also of physical knowledge they were advanced even in early times.

But the absolute completeness of scientific revelation asserted by Swami Dayananda will take a great deal of proving. The hypothesis on which I shall conduct my own enquiry is that the Veda has a double aspect and that the two, though closely related, must be kept apart. The Rishis arranged the substance of their thought in a system of parallelism by which the same deities were at once internal and external Powers of the universe. Hence the modern world's superficial concept of the Vedas is given a new interpretation on the basis of Vedic symbolism. On the basis of this new interpretation, the rituals and mantras attain a deeper significance. This is also the case with Atharva Veda, known as the book of white and black magic. The hidden aspects of the Atharva Veda, its scientific, sociological and medicinal knowledge has been used for generations. Hence, they can be considered to have allegorical significance and

different levels of significations compared to popular understanding. Though the four Vedas complement and highlight each other's meanings and significances, they also individually exist in a sphere of thought provoking uniqueness. Atharva Veda stands out in these aspects.

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