

Bringing Modernity Home
Marathi Literary Theory in the Nineteenth Century
(along with an Anthology)

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PRACHI GURJARPADHYE



Indian Institute of Advanced Study
Rashtrapati Nivas, Shimla

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For my parents

SHEELA AND GANJANAN GURJARPADHYE

“Theory... does not emerge at any historical moment; it comes into being when it is both possible and necessary, when the traditional rationales for a social or intellectual practice have broken down and new forms of legitimization for it are needed.”

TERRY EAGLETON, *The Function of Criticism*

Key to the Diacritic Marks Used for Transcription from
Devnagari Script to Roman Script

Vowels:

अ आ इ ई उ ऊ ए ऐ ओ औ अं अः —
a ā i ī u ū e ei o au am/an aha ṛ

Consonants:

क	ख	ग	घ	ङ
k	kh	g	gh	ng
च	छ	ज	झ	ञ
c	chh	j	jh	ny
ट	ठ	ड	ढ	ण
ṭ	ṭh	ḍ	ḍh	ṇ
त	थ	द	ध	न ँ
t	th	d	dh	n ñ
प	फ	ब	भ	म ँ
p	f	b	bh	m ṁ
य	र	ल	व	श
y	r	l	v/w	ś
ष	स	ह	ळ	क्ष ङ
ṣ	s	h	ḷ	kṣ ṅ

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Introduction

Is there such a thing as Marathi literary theory?

Any indigenous literary theory is a strange beast. If it claims pedigree it seems to lose its authenticity and if it claims originality it only succeeds in looking outlandish. As a result, not many are willing to give it recognition. Perfectly reasonable people, who would amicably agree, for example, that the *rasa* theory from Sanskrit aesthetics and Structuralism from the Western tradition of literary theory, are animals of two very different species, would perhaps not extend such spirit of tolerance to any claims of citizenship status for Marathi literary theory. Most people would vehemently deny its existence. The more sympathetic ones would perhaps say that it has borrowed so much from the Classical theories and from the Western ones that it hardly stands on its own two feet to deserve being given the status of an independent entity in its own right.

If we were to set about building a methodical defence by beginning at the basics and ask what exactly 'literary theory' is, it would still leave us none the wiser. One would certainly begin well with the simple idea that theory is a set of principles that explain or account for a practical phenomenon, and it would logically follow then, that literary theory would mean a set of generalizations that underlie the literary practice in a culture, and that would, logically speaking, also govern the critical practice of that culture. The term 'literary theory' often used interchangeably with the term 'critical theory' generally means a culturally shared set of notions regarding questions such as: what is literature, what is the function of literature, what are the qualities of

great literature and great writers, what constitutes ‘literary’ expression and how it is different from ordinary language, what are the standard features of a literary form such as tragedy; and also, by extension, questions such as, what is the function of criticism, what are the qualities of a critic, which standards determine a literary canon and so on. In short, literary or ‘critical’ theories seek to systematize the area of creative expression and its evaluation in a society and they also define the boundaries of this area. What could be neater than that?

The glorious simplicity and clarity of such a definition proves utterly useless however, when we begin to survey actual theories from world literary histories. The *rasa* theory and Structuralism both talk about literature and how it works, for example, but that commonality more or less ends there. It is not as if they both begin with a common set of questions and establish their findings using a similar methodology. It is not as if, in the light of our present state of enlightenment, their tenets can be placed side by side and categorized once and for all into two neat categories: valid and invalid. It will indeed be quite difficult to arrive at a definite set of features that are typical of all literary theory irrespective of where it is coming from.

So where does all this leave us?

We shall presently enter this maze of meta-theory but before we do that, first let me give you a plain account of what this book is about, at a simpler level.

The primary goal of this study is to establish a set of texts in Marathi as theoretical texts. Between 1865 and 1895, as many as eleven such texts came to be written, that may be described, in this author’s opinion, as the early theoretical works in Marathi: three were written between 1865 and 1872 and almost all of the remaining eight were written during the 1880s. Written in various forms such as introductions, newspaper articles, letters, public lectures and also as sections

in books with a larger theme, these texts can be seen as a collective body of writing that represents the early attempts at literary theorisation in Marathi.

Written by six writers coming from three different generations, and from three different *varṇas* of the Hindu fold, these eleven texts reflect a range of some very complex aspects of colonial cultural politics in western India. Ironically, only *Nāval va Nāṭak*, the most tepid of these texts, has been acknowledged to some extent as constituting an attempt at theorisation, partly because it has had the advantage over other texts of appearing independently in a book form. However, now, after literary theory has enjoyed so much importance and has been the focal point of academic discussions world-wide, it may be said to be time to look more closely than that, at the corpus of nineteenth century writings in a modern Indian language like Marathi and to look for literary theory that we may perhaps call ‘Marathi’ literary theory.

These six authors are Dādobā Pāṇḍuraṅga Tarkhaḍkar (1814-1882), a *Vaiśya* religious reformer and scholar; Mahādeo Moreśwar Kuṅṭe (1835-1888), a *Citpāvan* educationist and intellectual; Kāśināth Bālkrīṣṇa Marāṭhe (1844-1918), a *Citpāvan* scholar, well-entrenched in the colonial administrative set-up, Jotīrāo Phule (1827-1890) a *Māli* cultivator, a successful businessman and a radical social and religious reformer, Gopāl Gaṇeś Āgarkar (1856-1895), a *Citpāvan* educationist, journalist and social reformer, often described as an atheist, and Paṇḍitā Ramābāī (1858-1922), a *Citpāvan* Sanskrit scholar and an early feminist figure, who had converted to Christianity. Kuṅṭe and Marāṭhe largely stayed close to the Brahminical fold but the remaining four figures were radical social reformers who consciously sought to distance themselves ideologically from the Hindu Brahminical establishment. Their writings on literature reflect the pulls and pressures of their cultural climate and

when placed in the context of their contemporary cultural politics their texts show evidence of a very sophisticated and nuanced reading of the notion of literature.

A small disclaimer: this history of Marathi theory does not claim to be an exhaustive one. It is more like a map and it would perhaps be possible to include some more texts in the list of theoretical works from the nineteenth century after a more extensive survey. I have not looked at the huge body of journal articles, for example, and to that extent this is a partial and incomplete history. The attempt here is to propose a possible canon and to show ways in which the newly emerging theoretical writing was an epistemological response to the presence of Western discourses in the nineteenth century cultural milieu.

The central argument of this study is that the degree of involvement of these writers in the cultural realities and conflicts has something to do with the way they approach the notion of literature. If they could say something original about the category of literature, it was not because they were borrowing freely from the West but because their grasp of their immediate cultural realities was strong and they could borrow intelligently and creatively.

The texts to be analysed in this study are given below in chronological order:

1. Introduction to *Yaśodāpāñḍuraṅgī* (1865) by Dādobā Pāñḍuraṅga Tarkhaḍkar
2. Introduction to *Rājā Śivājī* (1869), ‘an epic’ by Mahādeo Moreśwar Kuñṭe
3. *Nāval va Nāṭak Yāñviśayī Nibañdha* (1872) by Kāśināth Bālkrīṣṇa Marāṭhe
4. Introduction to *Vikāravilasita* (1883), a translation of *Hamlet* by Gopāl Gaṇeś Āgarkar
5. *GrāñthkārSabhes Patra* (1885) by Jotīrāo Phule
6. Letter to Māmā Paramānañda (1886) by Phule

7. Extracts from *The High Caste Hindu Woman* (1887) by
Pañḍitā Ramābāī
8. Extracts from *Satyadharmā Pustak* by Phule (1889)

The list also includes three essays by Āgarkar written after 1881 in the journal the *Kesarī*:

9. 'Kavī, Kāvya, Kāvyaṛatī'
10. 'Shakespeare, Kālidās āṇi Bhavabhūti', and
11. 'Marāṭhīt Cāṅgle Graṅtha kā Hot Nāhīt?'

The monograph is planned in five chapters. The first one, 'Theory/Theory' takes up the concept of literary theory or poetics and briefly charts its evolution in the Western tradition and argues in favour of a closely contextualized treatment of theory as against an abstract philosophical treatment. The second chapter titled 'Before Theory' presents the hypothesis regarding what must have been the underlying theoretical assumptions of the pre-colonial Marathi literary tradition, arguing that the category of literature as purely creative literature was absent in this tradition. Having hypothetically established the prelapsarian pre-colonial character of Marathi theory before its contact with the West, the chapter goes on to outline its Western counterpart, the Western literary theory that became available as a discourse to the colonial elite. This chapter then introduces the central argument of the monograph that Marathi theory emerges in the 1860s and is a product of the epistemological colonial encounter between India and the West.

Chapter 3, 'Making Theory "both, possible and necessary"', drawing on a cultural materialist conception of the logical inevitability of cultural phenomena, aims at throwing into relief the broader framework of the cultural politics of colonial western India within which Marathi theory

took shape. It enumerates the basic material structures of colonial India such as the emergence of the public sphere, print capitalism, the rise of the middle class elite, Western educational institutions and their impact on the linguistic and literary fields and seeks to reconstruct the ideological climate of those times.

The fourth chapter ‘Ushering in a Native Modernity’ examines the work of three early theorists Tarkhaḍkar, Kuṅṭe and Marāṭhe and analyses the implications of their arguments in terms of their cultural politics. While Marāṭhe is the most conservative of the three, and his *Nāval va Nāṭak* consistently betrays an ambivalence, Tarkhaḍkar and Kuṅṭe can be seen, to varying degrees, as representative of the new Western-educated elite who were beginning to carve out a space outside the hegemonic polarities of Western colonialism and orthodox Brahminism to explore a progressive and ‘modern’ mode of cultural imagination.

Chapter 5, ‘Interrogating Nationalism’ elaborates upon the work of Phule, Āgarkar and Paṅḍitā Ramābāī whose writings are ahead of the earlier generation of theoretical writings and whose insistence on keeping in mind the materiality of literature is more relentlessly radical.

What one would want to celebrate in thinkers such as these is their ideological strength which enables them to borrow from the West in a creative way and in such a way that the borrowed ideas can be engrafted within the structures of the native culture without them either sticking out as alien or without their swamping out the organic composition of the existing native culture.

It is of course important to acknowledge that in the context of the second half of the nineteenth century it was the liberalist discourse that was the mainstay of all epistemological manoeuvring. It is within the framework of liberalism alone that alternative paradigms of thought are offered by these thinkers. What is fascinating is that the limitations of Western

liberalism are diagnosed and by-passed correctly by them while at the same time avoiding ideological pit-falls such as cultural revivalism or jingoism.

The emphasis in my study on the individual mind, suggesting a direction towards building an intellectual canon may seem naïve in today's age of post-structuralism. Current modes of analysis used to understand colonialism and nationalism have consciously sought to move away from locating agency within the individual, especially, in the 'leaders' and have gone on to explore much more layered and nuanced patterns of the collective psyche. However, my analysis has deliberately set before itself the limited aim of examining the extent to which the conscious intellectual agency of these social thinkers could tap into the extremely complex cultural processes of colonialism.

The question of the agency of the colonized is an important aspect of the complex story of colonial cultural politics. The intellectuals of the colonized world are often cast in postcolonial studies as a monolithic class of "the new Western-educated elite" with their bourgeois politics. I have tried to argue in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 of this work that there is more to this class than is readily acknowledged. The theorists of Marathi, I argue, were "organic intellectuals" though, to varying degrees. Meaningful theoretical interventions would not have been possible without a set of such intellectuals deeply engaged in contemporary cultural politics. Most of the significant figures that I discuss had the strength to lock horns with the so-called liberal elite and were swimming against powerful political currents of their times. I have found it useful to recycle the rather old-fashioned notion of a "canon" of Marathi theorists in order to do justice to the important idea of the agency of the colonized. Without wanting to put them on any pedestal, one would like to do justice to the intentionality and to the newness of the morality of their ideological choices.

Needless to say, such an evaluation of their contribution, indeed any historiography dealing in canon-formation, will have to be from the vantage point of today's understanding of the past. As larger cultural history of colonialism is being constantly rewritten, it would not perhaps be pointless to propose a new canon of literary theorists in the light of what we now know of the cultural politics of colonialism.

Am I then suggesting that these intellectuals are cosmopolitan? Yes, but there is also something additional in their thought that I wish to name. Quite often colonial cosmopolitanism takes such flights of imagination that mundane realities such as caste-discrimination fall by the wayside in its all-too-noble conception of the world order. This group of authors is remarkably free from this flaw. How do they achieve this quality? Howsoever we identify their ideological affinities today, as liberalist, radical liberalist, socialist, anti-casteist or as feminist, there is also something else in them that sets them apart as more effective practitioners of those ideologies than many other contemporaries who can be claimed to have followed the same ideologies. Where does that effectiveness come from? I think these qualities come, not from their being more selfless or being more devoted to their principles, but rather, from their being engaged with the local cultural dynamics. We need a category to understand this engagement, which to my mind, explains a great deal of their far-reaching political impact and long-standing relevance and hence the deployment of the term 'nativism'.

The broader argument of the monograph is that collectively, these six writers can be said to have put forth a 'nativist' conception of literature. Nativism, I argue, is a more sophisticated political technology than nationalism, in the sense that it does not react to the ideological pressures of colonialism in any exaggerated way. As a result, ideologically speaking, a nativist conception of literature reflects both, a

sensitive anti-colonial stand and a complete lack of the later maladies of cultural revivalism as well as of cultural amnesia. While it is contiguous with the pre-colonial world of cultural concepts, it also, at the same time, maintains a safe distance from the nostalgic exercises of memory and identity-construction that nationalism suffers from. If nationalism has been about hyper-imagining, nativism may be said to be about a steady assimilation and careful and critical self-fashioning.

To put this in another way, nativism can be described as the response of a culturally stable sensibility to colonialism. To invert the opposition described by Edward Said between the Western Self and the oriental Other, one can say that nativism is sufficiently self-assured to be able to take a critical look at the Self as well as to not be overwhelmed by the presence of its supposedly superior Other.

A very interesting facet of nativism is that, rather than being an unanchored commitment to a set of ideas, it is more about a commitment to the immediate cultural politics of a region. Its rootedness in the immediate, the temporal and the local makes it resilient enough to withstand and resist both, the excesses of an exaggerated anti-colonial sentiment and the swamp of the colonial processes of co-option. In fact, more than as an ideology, nativism perhaps needs to be re-assessed as an approach to the world of ideas. If nativism has been maligned in postcolonialist scholarship because of its parochial varieties, and rightly so, it is also not advisable that we throw the baby out with the bathwater and altogether discard the category of nativism as regressive. It is perhaps worthwhile to reconfigure it as an approach, a tool or a methodology.

My work also indirectly seeks to show that by using the intellectual tools of a radical variety of liberalism (radical in the sense that it envisioned a radical overhauling of unjust social structures, not in the sense of any particular political denomination) these theorists evolved an indigenous

concept of modernity. The powerful agency of interlocutors such as these ensured that modernity as a project could never really be an imposition of the colonialist imagination. The focus of this study is to map how the notion of literature came to be imprinted in the writings of these thinkers with their agenda of negotiating the terms of colonial modernity to tame and to appropriate it. The greatest achievement of their theorization about literature is that they make the category of literature a part of this distinctly nativist imaginary of modernity.

Chapter 1

Theory/Theory

Why should anyone be writing a book on literary theory in a postcolonial nation when in the West it seems to be losing its steam? Western scholars began to turn *Against Theory*¹ as early as 1985 and lately, even theory's best known enthusiast Terry Eagleton is allegedly getting "bored by it"². Is this the usual effect of the time lag we experience vis-à-vis the West? My answer to this vexing issue is that there is a special relevance of the study of theory in our context. My contention is that a closely historicized treatment of theory will not only be an alternative to the abstract notions of theory located within the discourse of philosophy, both in the West and in India, it will also contribute in new ways to our understanding of the dynamics of the colonial experience.

Western Definitions of Literary Theory

'Literary theory', 'poetics' and 'aesthetics' are used interchangeably in this work, but it will perhaps be useful to run through their different shades of meaning and points of origin in the Western critical and philosophical tradition. Between aesthetics and poetics, the former encompasses a larger field while the latter is more ancient as a branch of knowledge. Poetics concerns only literature while aesthetics is about the principles of beauty itself and talks about all fine arts as well as nature. "Aesthetics is the name of the philosophical study (investigation or science) of art and natural beauty"³ and its rise in the early eighteenth century "coincides precisely with the rise of capitalist, free market

middle class society.”⁴ Poetics, much older as a subject, derives from the Greek word ‘*poesis*’ which meant “making”, in the sense in which Aristotle used it, and approaches art or craft as something which is “made” and discusses the formal features of literary genres that have evolved through tradition. Poetics, in the history of Western philosophy, therefore has come to mean principles of literary practice and extended to refer to literary theories in general.

‘Theory’ etymologically derives from the Greek ‘*theoria*’, which has undergone a number of interesting transformations in its meaning. *Theoria* first meant “those who have seen or contemplated”⁵. While *aesthesis* meant perception, *theoria* originally meant the collective aesthesis of an event by citizens of some standing in society, a perception that was more reliable and legitimate. This early meaning changed in Plato’s thought to mean “a vision of true and universal objects or ideas”. For Plato, *theoria* entailed, “a solitary thinker who withdraws from the world of human plurality to enjoy the *noetic* [*nous*: the eyes of the mind] vision of desensitized and therefore abstract and universal objects.”⁶

In modern Western usage, theory has come to be opposed to action and practice, and has come to be understood as “a system of concepts that aims to give a global explanation to an area of knowledge or to construct the methodological tools for such an explanation.”⁷ The term ‘theory’ is, thus imbued with many shades of these varied meanings. In elaborating the principles of aesthetics or poetics a philosopher would need this special kind of seeing from a vantage point and his/her generalizations would reveal the truth of art, in this case, literature and offer some insights into the world of literature.

This claim of theory, of a superior neutral standing from where a practice can be judged with accuracy, came to be questioned persistently in the West during what has been

called “the theory wars” of the 1980s. It is clear from the Western debates of the 1980s that while literary theory has some insights to offer into literary practice, it cannot be overriding practice and the relationship between the two has to be conceived of as a dynamic two-way relationship⁸. Scholars like Stanley Fish have argued that literary theory is based on the knowledge of the history of literary practice and hence will invariably be governed by that history. It can never escape its moorings in the local and the particular and reach the universal⁹.

A related and very significant development in the late twentieth century West has been the linking of the concepts of aesthetics, poetics and of literary theory with the idea of culture. The Western liberal or positivist fetish with universalism and its fondness for closed structural models such as Marxism and Feminism subsided by the late twentieth century giving way to a postmodernist and poststructuralist orientation towards human realities. Significant contributions by continental philosophers such as Derrida, Lyotard, Foucault, Deleuze, Gadamer and Habermas and by thinkers such as Edward Said brought in far greater self-reflexivity and a far greater relativistic awareness from 1970s onwards.

Cultural contexts, especially cultural biases that construct the categories through which we become aware of the world and through which we understand and approach art have since then assumed central importance in the study of literature and the arts. Aesthetics and poetics today are far from being isolated from other branches of knowledge such as history or sociology or psychology. This redefinition of the study of literature and the arts towards the end of the twentieth century has led to an intense awareness of the paradoxes and ironies of Positivism. Located within cultural studies, proponents of literary theory in the West draw heavily on cultural materialism while the opponents of literary theory draw on the limitations of cultural knowledge, but both

camps are dealing with the idea of culture when they approach the concept of literary theory.

Along with this irreversible linkage with the notion of culture and cultural politics several new notions of literary theory that were proposed, also tended to invest it with a degree of radicalism. A very interesting example of a rigorous, streamlined definition of theory is offered by Mas'ud Zavarzadeh and Donald Morton in the early 1990s. They distinguish between the term 'theoretician', by which they mean "one who is well-versed in theory" and the term 'theorist' by which they mean "one who conceptualizes and then participates in the production of social meanings with urgency and as a partisan." The theoretician's interest is limited to the "specialist" and "disciplinary" interest while a theorist is involved in a living dialogue in society. Zavarzadeh and Morton's definition of theory is connected to their understanding of the concept of culture and it is summarized as follows:

Culture is a site of struggle between various social groups conducted along the axes of class, race, gender and... [theory is] part of a larger social discourse the purpose of which is to produce concepts that articulate social priorities and to elaborate and justify a political agenda.... Theory, that is, is not just an academic subject, it is a critique of the social and the ethical, rhetorical or political categories that are deployed to make it intelligible.¹⁰

The merits of this definition are obvious. Such a definition, by placing theory in the context of culture, allows one to look at it in its dynamic aspects more clearly than would be possible in a purely literary or philosophical framework. It allows one to combine the abstract principles about the nature and function of literature or criticism with the concreteness of specific historical situations and to look at theory as a part of the whole picture.

There are thus interesting possibilities in the recent Western development of placing literary theory within the

context of culture and that perhaps it can provide us a useful point of departure.

Is there an 'Indian' Poetics?

Having examined the journey of the notion of theory in the West we could now think about what possibilities are open to us in terms of the ways in which one could come back to the concept of literary theory from one's own location. There are several recent projects coming from a certain variety of the nativist school of thought, of re-constructing an Indian poetics which is distinct from Western poetics. Is this particular history of Marathi poetics a part of any such larger project of reconstructing an Indian poetics?

Scholarly discourse on Indian literary theories always seems to begin with Sanskrit poetics¹¹. Invariably, Sanskrit is conflated with Indian, more out of sheer habit, inherited from Orientalist and Indologist discourses than out of any serious rationalization. Making one linguistic tradition bear the weight of the entire sub-continent is, not only unrealistic, but also unfair to the numerous younger traditions in all the other languages of India. While the Sanskrit/Classical literary theories are extremely interesting and engaging and there is tremendous merit in the idea that we need to understand them closely, to extend those theories to a pan-Indian poetics and to claim that they emerge from a perennial and stable Indian cultural tradition from which Saussure also took inspiration¹², is the academic equivalent of the tourism discourse of 'Incredible India'. The present exercise of reconstructing a Marathi poetics therefore, is certainly not taking the same route to Ithaca.

G.N. Devy's very comprehensive and earnest work *Indian Literary Criticism: Theory and Interpretation*—which begins an account of Indian poetics with Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* and *rasa* theory, the Tamil *Tholkāppiyam*, Bhartrihari's *Vākyāpadīya*

and the concept of *sphoṭa* and *dhwani*, Ānaṇḍavardhan's *Dhwanyālok*, Daṇḍin's *Kāvyaḍarśa*, Dhanaṇjay's *Daśarūpaḥ*, Kuṇṭaka's *Vakrokti*— cannot however be entirely painted by the same brush. It shows the kind of self-reflexivity that most writings with Orientalist leanings sadly lack. Devy is acutely aware of the problematic equation between Sanskrit and Indian and he broadens his ken by acknowledging that there are texts in Pali, for example, that deserve to be included in such a project. His sensitivity to the problem of the disproportionate attention given to Sanskrit also reflects in his inclusion of figures like Dnyāneśwar, Amir Khusro, Al Badāoni and Gālib in the list of Indian critics and theorists.

This attempt to open up the concept of Indian literary theory can only remain very random at best, however, given the sheer breadth of the project and its inadequacy is evident in the motley group of thinkers such as Tagore, Aurobindo, B.S. Mardhekar, Krishna Rayan, Suresh Joshi, Bhalchandra Nemade and then Gayatri Chakravarti Spivak and Aijaz Ahmad that Devy puts together under the rubric 'Indian'. Given the gigantic scope of the subject it is hardly surprising that this list of theorists is more like a stray sampling than being truly representative of the Indian literary theoretical scene as a whole.

Sisir Kumar Das's work on the History of Indian Literature, where the pan-Indian story emerges through a minute, detailed account of India's minor traditions, is perhaps a no less ambitious but more achievable alternative to committing oneself unrealistically to any such Herculean task. Das seems to have begun with the insight that the meaning of the word 'Indian' has to be constantly deferred in the same manner as one would peel an onion in order to look for an inner core. Anyone who knows about the rich pluralism of India knows that when one talks about the 'Indian' one has to talk about the peels rather than the core. Can something similar be done for a history of Indian poetics?

Yes and no. For, even the comprehensive project of understanding Indian literature in its full pluralistic glory is still only an ambitious humanist enterprise. If a comparatist were to aim at catching up with the post-humanist turn in the academia, he/she can perhaps take after a more cryptic and impish line of thought. Terry Eagleton's 1983 academic best-seller *Literary Theory: an Introduction* begins by showing how there is no constant concept of literature throughout European cultural history and what is literature today was not literature yesterday and will most certainly not be literature tomorrow¹³. Perhaps a similar rug-puller can be of some use to us in our quest for an Indian poetics.

But is there Such a Thing as Literary theory, in the First Place?

An amazingly unappreciated fact is that literary theories on their own, or in an abstract sense, do not refer to any given reality about literature, and in fact, are often inconsistent systems of thought. There is an inherent problem in treating theory as purely abstract thought completely divested from its social context. While theorizing is undoubtedly about generalizing and abstractions, is literary theory really about arriving at general principles about literature? Will such generalizations be valid at all times and places, the way scientific theories would claim to be? Literary and critical theories (unlike scientific theories) certainly do not follow any formulation of hypothesis-experiment-verification of hypothesis pattern vis-à-vis literary and critical practice.

Instead, literary theory seems to be more about its own contemporary cultural climate than about any abstract reality of literature per se. Its meanings will change, mutate to adapt to the contours of a specific cultural reality, even when theoretical concepts are being borrowed across cultures. In other words, the same concept or principle would have two different functional meanings in two different cultural

contexts. French realist theory and English realism are, in fact, as different from each other as chalk and cheese. Charting out the amazing range of changes that can be witnessed in the notion of realism as it travels from country to country within nineteenth century Europe and thence to the Indian colony will illustrate this point in greater detail.

The noted comparatist Rene Wellek discussed this in considerable detail in his eight volume work *A History of Modern Criticism*.¹⁴ Wellek explained how realism, which overtook the European literary scene by mid-nineteenth century, spread to different parts of Europe from France. In 1826 the term 'realism' emerged in France as a literary doctrine that emphasized faithful imitation, not of the classics but of nature itself. (p.1) It came to refer to accuracy of details, and later, to a minute description of contemporary manners. Honore de Balzac, the originator of the modern social novel, in his preface to *Comedie Humaine* (1842) declared that he wanted to write "the history, so often forgotten by historians, the history of manners." (p.3) The paintings of a contemporary artist Gustave Courbet, which shocked and antagonized followers of academic art in mid-nineteenth century, with their simple themes of peasant and bourgeois life came to be described as 'realistic' (p.2).

By mid-nineteenth century Gustave Flaubert's novels like *Madame Bovary* (1851-56) brought a clearer programme of realism to light. Flaubert strove for complete objectivity in art, for detachment, and impersonality. (p.7) 'Impersonality' as a technical device meant that "the author must be absent from his novel, must not comment on his characters, must not moralize or philosophize about them." (p.7) On the one hand it meant a close scientism, objectivity and on the other aestheticism and disregard for moral implications. (p.7) Flaubert's ideal was opposed to the novel with a purpose and also to the novel of sentiment. What mattered was patience and concentration on the subject. Both Flaubert

and his disciple Maupassant believed fervently in particularizing. They believed that a novelist must make us see in what way “a carriage horse does not resemble fifty other horses that follow and precede it.” (p.13)

The trend towards exactitude was further strengthened by Emile Zola in his theory of naturalism. He was to invent the term “the experimental novel” in the 1880s, to mean a novel written in the spirit of a scientific experiment and observation. “Man is governed by laws of heredity, by the pressure of the environment, by the whole causal structure of the universe... (p.14) and the novelist must study this structure as a botanist will study an organism and its environment. The scientific parallel ensured that any subject matter could be treated, however low and repulsive or vulgar.” (p.16)

In England the trajectory of the realist school of art was quite divergent. In 1858, G.H. Lewes was the first in England to declare that art is a representation of reality. Lewes, however, emphasized the selection of typical elements rather than specific details in a novel. He disliked an excessive interest in details and criticized Dickens for an overactive imagination and found his characters wooden. *Jane Eyre* was blamed for melodrama and improbability by Lewes’s standards. George Eliot, by far the most impressive of the English realists, made Truth her hero and sought to convert the sordid details of life into ‘the raw material of moral sentiment’ (pp.150-51).

While there were differences amongst the French realists and they were far from being unanimous practitioners of any single theory of realism, we would not be entirely wrong if we were to generalize on the basis of Wellek’s survey and say that the French tried to escape morality while the English realists seemed to embrace it. In comparison, the reformulation of the principles of realism in the writings of nineteenth century Indians was of an altogether different

tone and texture. Ideas about realism in a Marathi theorist such as K. B. Marāṭhe can perhaps be described as a Utilitarian version of realism. Novels have to turn out to be useful in order to be good novels. They have to be cleverly managed combinations of real people and false actions or false people and real actions that would offer moral elevation along with entertainment by way of controlled flights of fantasy – this is Marāṭhe’s prescription for a realist novel in 1872.

The ideas may have come from the same stock but compared to the happy tone in Marāṭhe’s writing, the English conception of a realist novel is a shade or two darker in its emphasis on useful lies. Marāṭhe’s taste for realism is not as staid as that of G. H. Lewes. His description of a good novel, though largely of the moralistic bent, does not suffer from the gloomy moralist intellectualism of George Eliot or Mathew Arnold. There could be several ways of accounting for this difference. The simplest and the most obvious reason could be perhaps found in the fact that Marāṭhe represented an emerging elite class in western colonial India while the Victorian intellectual felt to be on the brink of a disintegrating culture.

Literary concepts, thus, can hardly be separated from the culture that gives rise to them. There is no essence of realism that can somehow be distilled in any theory, which then, can be taught or learnt. There are only versions of realism eclectically merged with diverse traditions. As the concept travelled to India, the existing literary traditions, the imposing edifice of imperialistic discourses and the dynamics of the new emerging class structure, served to alter the concept in more ways than one. The French intense passion about an objective, scientific portrayal of human social life in all its aspects, of poverty, ugliness, human interaction and day-to-day mundane reality could not come to be accepted in Marathi theory even after European novels came into India by the twentieth century.

In order to go beyond a flat statement that Marathi theory was influenced by Western theory, we need to pay close attention, then, to ideas absorbed as well as ideas left out and to how certain ideas are modified to suit local purposes. This is not to say, however, that all this was happening at a general social level and that the individual's mind or his/her conscious politics did not play any role in this process.

Our historiography must also take note of facts such as only a discerning intellect like Rājwāḍe could point out in his essay 'Kādāmbarī', written in 1902, that the genuinely great models among the realists in World literature are the French and the Russian writers, not the English. Such an intervention undoubtedly added a wider perspective to his contemporary understanding of the form of the realist novel. Individuals, thus, are as relevant in the story of the making of a theory as is the contemporary cultural mood.

A Little Historiography

The project of building the historiography of Indian literary theory beginning with Sanskrit theory, then, is obviously too grand and too abstract for anyone who seeks to understand literary theory in terms of micro-level cultural politics. Instead one must perhaps take a closer look at a smaller episode within that historiography, paying attention to the cultural drama it involved. The historical, economic, political and social peculiarities of a region, inflections brought in by communities and subcultures, that evolve over centuries much like the imperceptible geological changes, make any cultural articulation so very complex that decoding it would need a very close reading of its local temporal context.

It is worth reinforcing here that Marathi theory, in this analysis, is not taken as representative of all Indian theories. Devy, too, has argued elsewhere that the idea of Indian literature and Indian culture as a unified field of study is an outcome of the Orientalist and Indologist disciplines and is

misleading¹⁵. The trajectories of the pre-colonial histories of the literatures and criticisms in different Indian languages and consequently of the distinctive ways in which Western contact was absorbed by each of them are so divergent that it will be a mistake to claim any commonalities among them without carefully studying each case.

What is more, admittedly, the term 'Marathi' is far from being free of a heavy baggage of its own historical contingencies. The linguistic state of Maharashtra came into existence only as late as 1960. During the medieval and colonial era, Marathi as a language was spoken in a larger part of the subcontinent than is covered by the state of Maharashtra today. The tradition of Marathi literature in South India, at places like Tanjore, Madras, Coimbatore, Madurai, which flourished until the mid-nineteenth century, due to the influential and enterprising Marathi families who migrated to these regions during the medieval times for economic, political, professional or religious reasons¹⁶, or the Dakhanī literature in the Persian script that emerged in Golconda and Vijapur in the late fifteenth century and was active till the early eighteenth century¹⁷, are good examples of the unacknowledged scope of the concept of Marathi literature. Literature in Marathi, written by Christian and Muslim compatriots is often ignored in discussions of Marathi literature. Moreover, isolating one linguistic tradition from its other co-existing linguistic traditions that were organically linked to it, for purposes of academic discussion is itself an artificial exercise. As a result, even a project as limited as this is as incomplete and as inadequate as any other larger project of outlining an Indian poetics. This little historiography is therefore conceived in the nature of a few notes towards a deconstructionist Indian poetics.

Texts discussing Sanskrit poetics¹⁸ in Marathi are obviously to be kept aside in this history of Marathi theory because the conjectures and analyses of these works are more in the realm of the abstract that has little connection either with the

literary practice in a vernacular language like Marathi or with their immediate contemporary socio-cultural reality.

Another extremely important idea that has determined the selection of writers who qualify as theorists is, the idea that literature, criticism and theory together form the whole picture and a strong connection between all the three parts has been made an important criterion of judging which theorists constitute the canon of Marathi theory. Critical opinions or extensive literary discussions by themselves cannot be taken to qualify for the term theory if no consistent and definite criteria of judgment, no specific concept of the nature and function of literature emerges from those discussions.

For example, it is commonly known that a writer like Jotirāo Phule has no criticism or theory to his credit but his literature is so well grounded and he shows such clear understanding of the function of literature, its relationship to social structure that it will be unfair not to discuss the radical principles underlying his writings. Phule, like the later figures of B. R. Ambedkar or P.S. Sāne (alias Sāne Gurujī), may not have produced any sustained critical work, but even the random contributions of such writers carry greater value because of the clarity of their vision and because of their unerring grasp of literature as a site where cultural meanings are contested. Their stray pieces of theorization are in fact far more significant than the critical volumes written by the so-called doyens of Marathi criticism such as V.B. Paṭwardhan or N.S. Phaḍke or S.K. Sahasrabudhdhe, who have been on academic syllabi and in anthologies of criticism for several generations.

Why Theory?

Theory for a Postcolonial Culture

If then, we are to read Marathi theory as colonial cultural politics what do we expect to find there? When Marathi

theory is revisited as indigenous resistance to colonial discourses, a number of fascinating aspects of the dynamic relationship between the colonizer and the colonized come to light.

A quick preview of the overall impressions one gathers will be in order. The colonial project of creating a historical consciousness that would allow natives to see the faults of their own civilization, was subverted by Marathi literary theory by reflecting a mirror image of the backwardness, immorality and despotism the imperialists read into the indigenous culture. Questions about the legitimacy of colonial rule are raised here in this critical discourse. Even in as mild a theorist as Kuṅṭe we have a clear formulation of the idea that great literature can flourish in a society that is charged with nationalism, not in an oppressed one. He points out that Tukārām's greatness became possible because of the dignity bestowed by Śivājī on the entire society. Āgarkar questions the absence of great figures such as Demosthenes, Socrates or Plato in Greek history once it was conquered by Rome. Most discussions of progressive literature and social reform turn to the ill-effects of Anglicised education, of jobs in the public service that dissuade citizens from pursuit of "real knowledge" and to the paradox between the philosophy of Enlightenment and the ruthless exploitation of India. The idea of liberty, the demand for equality and human dignity are a strong component of colonial Marathi theory.

Anti-imperialism, thus, was undeniably the basic impulse of all this theorization. It yielded a rich harvest of conceptual terms that drew attention to the autonomy of the native culture. Marathi theory consistently refuses to let Marathi literature be subsumed under a liberal-humanist order of literary values. Ideas like "*abhiruchi*": popular taste, as the ultimate determinant of literary conventions and values, the assertion that it is necessary to have "the eyes and the tongue" of the nation whose literature one wants to understand and

judge; time and again reiterate that our literature cannot be judged by foreign or so-called universal values.

Reading theory as an ideological tool wielded by the colonized has very broad implications for the cultural history of colonial India. Unlike any earlier invasions on India the Western colonial invasion was as much an epistemological invasion as an economic and political one because of the technological aids it used for a rapid and wide spread of ideas and hence had to be countered on an epistemological level. Positivism remained a solid foundation of Western discourses about knowledge and more particularly, of the numerous literary theories that came to be studied in India from the nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century: Romanticist, Utilitarian, neoclassical, historicist and sociological, psychological and materialistic. The basic problem with Positivism was that while it acknowledged the historicity of the object, it implicitly expected the subject to transcend his own historicity through his rationality. By implication, it could be possible to stand “above”, as it were and manoeuvre reality and such an orchestration would be possible because of the superior “objective” position of the onlooker. The imperialist project of educating, rendering more moral and more useful “the millions whom we govern” was based on this fundamental view of human knowledge and experience.

By contrast, a vernacular, pluralistic culture in western India had almost evaded historicity, a linear conception of time, through its incessant indulgence in philosophical and mythical discourses. Its dissent with the *śiṣṭa paramparā* or the Sanskritic *Mārga* tradition was also not a rebellion that took authoritarian discourses head on, but a covert act that ensured an inclusive participative order in which each member would have a degree of autonomy. Rationality was never a central value of this culture, nor was the intellect of an individual writer, artist or thinker seen as possibly superior

to that of the rest. A collective reality, collective welfare, and above all, an awareness of the discursive nature of knowledge were the foundations of this culture.

The most seductive challenge of the study of Western knowledge, in terms of epistemology, therefore, was an assimilation of the idea of historicity that was supposed to lift the individual out of the gray mass of ahistorical native knowledge systems into a rarefied realm of a universal knowledge system. While the seemingly scientific, rational style of thought of Western literary theory had to be adopted as the new standard, accepting the positivist-liberalist theoretical framework would also indirectly concede the inferiority of the ahistorical moorings of the colonized native culture. The real challenge for the native theorists, therefore, lay in exposing Western epistemology's own historicity, in subverting its positivist claims of universality and in being able to assert the difference and sovereignty of native cultural values.

Specifically for literature, the colonial denigration of native literatures as inferior could be countered only by understanding the culture-specificity of literature. Such an understanding would have to take into consideration sociological factors such as readership, literacy, the role of the law and the state in formulating public taste etc. more than the vague Universalist values like the ethereal joy of poetry and art or the autonomy of the individual artist, popularized by British colonial liberal education. Such an understanding would also have to consciously reinstate the organic relation between the listener and the speaker of the pre-colonial native culture, in place of the merely notional reader-writer relationship of the print age, by giving an equal status to the reader and by rejecting the elevation of the author-genius in the nineteenth century Western theory.

Theorists who had this awareness were the only ones who were able to produce a meaningful theoretical apparatus, while theorists who tried to adopt an abstract position and a belief in Universalist values, miserably failed to make any worthwhile contribution. One of the key arguments of this study is that the theorists who could understand the rules of this epistemic negotiation were, invariably, prominent social thinkers in Maharashtra, rather than being mere academicians or creative writers, (both of which, anyway, were new and unfamiliar categories to India). They alone had the necessary engagement with contemporary cultural politics to be able to address literary issues with any clarity. Above all, their writing exhibits a grasp of theory as a consistent and sustained framework of thought which systematically interprets a socio-cultural context rather than as being about any abstract universal reality of literature itself.

Apart from its rendezvous with the West, another equally fascinating impulse that conditioned the growth of Marathi theory was its awareness of the internal colonizing structures of caste, class and gender. Along with the formation of the patriarchal Hindu nationalist consciousness during the late nineteenth century there also emerged the counter-hegemonic discourses and the changing social dynamics in colonial western India find a clear reflection in the theoretical discussions in Marathi. The point of departure for the purposes of this work is that theory should be seen as interplay of cultural meanings being contested in the public sphere. By seeking to redefine the notions of literature the contesting groups stake their claims in the cultural politics. As the public arena opens for contestation to different groups, different voices begin to intervene. When someone like Phule or Paṇḍitā Ramābāī talk about what they think is literature, they are talking to very specific political groups in the interest of a certain kind of politics they advocate.

A Cultural Materialist Definition of Theory

Having proposed a justification for the study of literary theory in our postcolonial context and having differentiated our interest in theory from the Western debates on theory it is time to return briefly to the task of defining literary theory.

A significant reference point from contemporary Western theory can be worth noting as being roughly similar to the exercise undertaken here in this kind of study. Recent literary theories in the West, specifically, those of new historicism and cultural materialism have now for a long time drawn attention to the dynamic relationship between history and literature and have read it in terms of a complex interplay of cultural politics. The combination of a sophisticated application of Marxist theory and of poststructuralist concept of power-play has been a consistent strength of this set of theories. The idea taken up here is that literary theories of an era would be a particularly fascinating site of study because in theory-making cultural power play is palpably close to the surface level of articulation. This needs some elaboration.

A few purely axiomatic arguments first. Hopefully, they will be vindicated during the course of this publication. Theorists, in as much as they try to deal in abstractions and try to systematize the field of contemporary literature, come closest to comprehending and articulating the cultural politics of their age. To a certain extent, one can argue that the higher this awareness in the consciousness of a theorist the clearer and the more consistent will be the theoretical framework s/he will construct out of the available data. It is possible, of course, that a theorist will be logically consistent and yet be hopelessly blinkered in his/her understanding of the political crosscurrents at work. The blinkers can be of his/her personal ideological affiliation to some race, gender, class, caste or regional identity. There can be consistency of thought in fundamentalist politics too. Indeed, Sāvarkar and

Tilak can also be called literary theorists if one were to go only by that criterion.

Then one can argue that when a theorist succeeds in rising above these limitations, the closures of any theoretical scaffolding s/he may have created may be said to have been redeemed. Voices that pass the two tests – of a consistently framed thought-system and the test of the ability to rise above contemporary social biases have been selected to document the history of Marathi literary theory. In order to “rise above”, the theorist would need a value-system in which the values of social justice and equality/individual human dignity will be central. In the context of the nineteenth century one could say that a radical liberalism—radical because it can address deep-seated systemic causes of social oppression and liberalism because it retains a general universal humanist framework—was the ideology that could possibly provide such a value-system.

Universal humanism may be a jarring term here because of our current awareness of the problems of humanism. But the examples of the most significant theorists of Marathi discussed here will illustrate the point that a cultural rootedness, an awareness of the specificities of the local political forces can effectively salvage the sanity that a generalized Universalist humanism with its essentialist categories lacks. Specificities of an immediate local reality can always be a powerful antidote to any totalizing narratives. This monograph will also go on to argue that the term nativism can be usefully deployed in our understanding of the formation of modern Marathi literary theory to mean such a combination of an engagement with immediate political reality and a commitment to a radical liberalism.

This study, thus, begins with a highly differentiated idea of theory. Theory in this view is not just a random articulation of the notions about literature, it is a *consistently* argued out conception of literature, imprinted with the theorist’s

cultural location and also with the theorist's consciously adopted ideological commitment to radical liberalism.

Let us now put aside, for the time being, our knowledge of the Western trajectories of the concept of theory and begin our story of the making of Marathi theory at the very beginning.

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Chapter 2

Before Theory

It is an intriguing fact that Marathi, although it had had a long unbroken tradition of literary practice since the late twelfth century, had never had any articulation of its literary theory before the 1860s. The emergence and development of Marathi theory throughout the colonial period, therefore, needs to be located within the context of the cultural processes of colonization. Rather than being any inward-looking process of discovery, it will be useful to understand it as a 'dialogue' between the native and the Western modes of constructing knowledge, as a process of negotiating the Other.

Pre-colonial Marathi Literary Tradition and Literary Theory

While evidence of literacy and the use of Marathi for a literate audience dates back to the late tenth century, it is only from the late twelfth century that we have any evidence of a body of literature in the written form being created in Marathi. By the seventeenth century, Marathi had behind it an entire tapestry of literary forms suffused with a wide range of philosophical and religious thought of a number of religious *sampradāys*. The *panthas* or *sampradāys* were mainly reformist and in general had a common goal of spreading a liberal religious message among the masses using the medium of simple folk literary forms in the Marathi vernacular, such as the *ovī*, *abhaṅga*, *gavaḷaṅ*, *virāṅī*, *bhārūd* and the folktale. This ensured that saint literature came to be easily absorbed into the folk culture in western India.

What must have been the sources of the dissemination of this literature in the medieval society and what must have been its reach? Sheldon Pollock has tried to show that “the script-mercantilism” in India offered a very effective technology, perhaps superior to print, to sustain a rich literary culture in Indian languages. He has also drawn interesting links between the invention and adoption of manuscript culture and the emergence, specifically in Sanskrit, of *Kāvya*, “an expressive, imaginative, formally ordered type of language use” as a “new cultural form”.¹

One may assume then that this technology was also available to the writers who chose to write in the vernacular and indeed a great deal of their work did survive until the advent of print through the manuscript culture. Oral culture of course did not die out with the coming of the script culture. In fact, the long-standing oral tradition of folk literature was complemented effectively by such ‘written’ literature that was mainly meant for listening or *shravana*, not reading. The well-known practice of listening to the expositions on the *Purāṇas* regularly, for example, ensured the transmission of ideas to a large majority in spite of general illiteracy. The *purāṇik* or the one who read from these texts to an audience that comprised men and women from all classes would interpret the text and explicate its principles through a dialogue with the listeners.

The *Bhaktī Sampradāy*, in particular, promoted another similar tradition of *kīrtans* that combined the elements of music and dance with the explication and interpretation of classical texts. The *Vārī*, an annual pilgrimage on foot to Pañḍharpūr, can be another example of a cultural practice that ensured wide connectivity and reach. Recent understanding of medieval India seems to discount the earlier view that the advent of printing technology during colonialism made the transition from the scribal age to a more “democratic” nature of literary activity possible as it

made literary and non-literary texts available to a large number of people who became “readers” from “listeners”². Contrary to this belief, it now appears that the medieval Marathi literary culture was very much a vibrant culture with very competent institutions of disseminating thought. It most certainly involved a close participation of the masses, of a kind that could never be possible later, in the print era and in the era of Western education. Conventional scholarship in Marathi has credited this aspect of the literary culture of medieval Marathi with being responsible for preserving aspects of Hindu religious and philosophical thought in spite of foreign or non-Hindu oppressive regimes.³ We may wish to leave aside the celebratory tone of those contentions but we may validate the implication that the medieval literary culture was far from being in a dormant state.

Just as the oral and written cultures remained contiguous with each other, the vernacular culture that began to take shape from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in western India did not quite supplant the elite Sanskritic culture. Both co-existed as parallel streams well into the nineteenth century. These two strands of the intellectual culture in medieval western India are known as the *śiṣṭā paramparā* or the elite and Sanskritic tradition and the *loka paramparā* or the popular tradition. The *śiṣṭā paramparā* represents the mainstream intellectual tradition – with the Bhagavadgītā, the *Mahābhārat*, the *Dharmaśāstras* and the *Purāṇas* in Sanskrit as its central texts. These texts of the mainstream were simplified and made accessible by the *saṃpradāys* to the masses through the vernacular, forming the parallel *lok paramparā*.

The earliest such known texts come from the work produced by the *Mahānubhāv* saints, largely in prose, in the form of texts such as *Sūtra Pāṭh* and *Driṣṭānta Pāṭh* by Kesobās and *Smritisthaḷe* by Nāgdev apart from the well-known *Līlācaritra* but also in verse, in the form of the canonical *Sāṭī*

Grantha which include *Vācāharaṇ* by Dāmodar Paṇḍit, *Rukmiṇiswayamvar* by Narendra Ayācit, *Śiśupālavadhā* and *UddhavGītā* by Bhāskarbhāṭṭa Borikar. An overwhelming majority of texts in the vernacular come from the *Vārakarī* or *Bhāgvat* sect, founded by Dnyāneśwar, which instituted *Bhaktī* as the easier and more accessible form of attaining *Mokṣa* for the common man as against the more exclusive and difficult *Yogamārga* or *Dnyānamārga*. The texts *Dnyāneśwarī* by Dnyāneśwar, *Bhāvārtha Rāmāyaṇ* by Eknāth and *Tukārām Gāthā* by Tukārām come from this extremely important movement. A lot of literature was born out of the efforts of the *Nātha Saṃpradāy*. *Līlācaritra*, the first Marathi biographical text, by Mhāim̐bhāṭ, written in the thirteenth century comes from this tradition. This *saṃpradāy* had also influenced the *Sufī* tradition in western and northern India. Some less prominent of such sects are the *Jain Paṇṭha* (that brought a number of Gujarati literary forms into Marathi), the *Datta Saṃpradāy* and the *Samartha Saṃpradāy*.

Centrality of religion seems to be the organizing principle even in Marathi texts that emerge during this period outside the Hindu mainstream. *Kriṣṇadās Sāmā* or *Sāmarāj's Tikā* on the *Daśamaskandha* of the *Bhāgvat*, written in the Goa region and in the Roman script in 1526 AD or Fr Thomas Steven's (1549-1619) *Kristapurāṇ* written in 1614⁴ are good examples. Fr Etienne Crucius's *Discurso sobre a Vida do Apostolo Sam Pedro em que se refuta os pricipaes erros do gentilismo* (Biography of St Peter with an expose of Hinduism), written in 1619, a book with a Portuguese title, but written in Marathi in verse form, is also about religion⁵.

On the whole, one may say that Marathi literature of medieval western India between the twelfth and the seventeenth century largely revolves around the concept of *Dharma*. Translations of the central religious texts like the *Purāṇas*, the *Upaniśadas*, the *Vendānta Sūtras*, commentaries and expositions on them, hagiographies of saints—these seem

to predominate in the body of work produced between the twelfth and the seventeenth century. Although Marathi literature of the medieval times was born out of reformist religious movements, such movements had primarily emerged in order to make the tenets of Hinduism, otherwise locked in learned *Vedāntic* literature in Sanskrit, accessible to the masses.

In fact, the continuity of Marathi writings of this tradition with the Sanskritic tradition cannot be denied categorically. When Mukuṇḍarāj chose to write his *Vivekasīndhū* in the vernacular in the late twelfth century, his primary aim was to make the *Advaita* philosophy of the eighth century philosopher Śaṅkarācārya accessible to the non-brahmin castes. The concept of *Mokṣa*, a relief from the cycle of birth and death and the principles of *Māyā* and *Brahman* remained the pivotal points of this religious philosophy and its literature. The main tenets of Hindu religion were carried over intact into the vernacular sphere, making it more an extension of the *Advaita* philosophy in Sanskrit than a challenge to orthodox Hinduism. While vernacularisation certainly brought in an element of democratization, it did not quite bring in an out and out challenge either to the *varṇāśram* system or to Sanskritic hegemony.

As the concept of Dharma, in its special sense of organization and regulation of all aspects of social life has a bearing on all secular aspects such as law, education, mathematics, history and medicine, all these came to be subsumed under religion and this cultural feature had significant implications for the aesthetics of this literary tradition. There have been several efforts in Marathi scholarship of understanding the aesthetics of this large body of medieval Marathi literature, invariably using the traditional *rasa* concept from Sanskrit poetics. Several Marathi scholars⁶ have argued that the Marathi saint literature of the Middle Ages is different from traditional

Sanskrit literature in prioritizing the *Bhaktī rasa* and by unambiguously rejecting the classical norm of designating *śringār rasa* as the ‘*rasarāj*’, the chief among the nine *rasas* recognized by traditional Sanskrit poetics.

Pāṭhak⁷, for example, has observed that the critical sensibility that one can trace in the saint literature of the Middle Ages consistently projects some clear ideas regarding the role of a poet, the role of a *rasik* listener, about a relationship of mutual respect between the two and also regarding the pre-eminence of the *Śānta* and *Bhaktī rasa* among all *rasas*. According to Pāṭhak, as a new sensibility it spurns the pedantic, elite Sanskritic tradition of learned textual criticism and assumes the role of a humble and appreciative listener who is enjoying the *rasas* emanating from the philosophical texts of yore. The series of commentaries on the Sanskrit religious texts such as the *Gītā* and the *Bhāgvat* that came to be written in Marathi and that form the bulk of the saint literature of the Middle Ages, according to Pāṭhak, represent a break from and at the same time, a sign of maturing and growth within, the Sanskrit critical tradition.

Deśmukh⁸, writing along the same lines, argues that the Marathi saint poets were not only aware of the key critical concepts of the Sanskrit aesthetics, they have also ably contributed to that tradition by creating new *alaṅkāras* or by finely differentiating between a general term and its variations, such as *upamā*, *śléś* and *varṇak*, *driṣṭānta* and *vakroktī*. He also draws attention to Dnyāneśwar’s use of the term *rekhā* in the classical sense of *śaitī/rīṭī* or style. More importantly, he argues that theirs was a conscious rebellion against the classical aesthetics that followed the principle of “*Śringāro nāyakorasah*” (*Śringār rasa* is at the apex among all other *rasas*) as laid down by Rudrabhaṭ in his *Śringārtīlak*.

Such a hypothesis of a departure from classical poetics, interesting as it seems, obviously has not questioned an

implicit continuity of the *rasa* paradigm in the vernacular culture. While interpreting what they term as a *sāhityaśāstra* of Marathi, all these scholars have assumed that the vernacular literary culture extended and modified the classical Sanskrit norms. The terms of reference remain the same in their interpretation. Indeed there has been an abiding interest in the study of Sanskrit aesthetics in the Marathi literary scholarship and it reflects in an unbroken flow of scholarly works in Marathi that give us a thorough exposition of the *rasa*, *dhvanī* theories and of *alaṅkāraśāstra* and also explore their applicability to medieval and modern Marathi literature. All such analyses take the formalist position and fail to contextualize the literary practice they discuss.

If one were to situate medieval Marathi saint literature in its cultural context, perhaps the key question would be about its politics. The nationalist scholarship of pre and post-independence India that has repeatedly cast the *Bhaktī* movement as a powerful movement of social egalitarianism is being discounted in large measure today. Scholars such as Pollock or Naregal, among others, have called into question the traditional narrative of egalitarianism of the saint tradition. The question of how far this vernacular literature was conducive to a radical or progressive cultural politics moving towards notions of social equality and of individual dignity, albeit through religious discourse, has been debated recently.⁹

It can perhaps be granted that it was a social movement in a way the *Advaita* movement could never be, in its reach to the common people, in its ability to take a large number of communities with it, in its ardent appeal against an inhuman, conservative form of religious practice and that it did bring in humanitarian values to the forefront. Scholars argue today, however, that its challenge to orthodox Hinduism, especially to the *varṇāśram* was a limited one and

it failed to have any far-reaching impact on the existing power-relations. At any rate the cultural dynamics between these dual streams—of popular *Bhaktī* and elite *Vedāntism* is not quite fully understood yet and one must be wary of glib generalisations on that front.

I suggest that it might be interesting to attempt a departure from the *rasa* convention and from the nationalist re-casting of saint literature as modern-democratic and approach the question of the aesthetics of this literary tradition from a different angle. To start in a reverse direction, one could begin with a useful question: why is it that there is no purely creative secular literature emerging from this tradition? There is no text in Marathi from these times that can be unambiguously termed “creative” or *lalit*. How is it that the entire gamut of Sanskrit creative literature and Sanskrit aesthetics that had existed for at least for a thousand years got completely ignored in the vernacular culture for as many as five centuries? How is it that the ‘mainstream’ Marathi literature of this era is only about religion? This question can perhaps offer a productive entry point when we seek to map the history of Marathi literary theory in the nineteenth century for it is here that we come across an absence that can tell us which “new” elements begin to get assimilated into Marathi conceptual world during colonialism.

If there was no purely creative literature that emerged out of this system and by implication, if the very conception of a purely creative use of language was absent in Marathi culture, then how do we understand its underlying theoretical principles? In terms of genre we can say that there is a great deal of fluidity. Literature in this cultural system is a hold-all of philosophy, religion, history as well as *kāvya* and is always a mixture of entertainment and enlightenment. When it is not directly a comment on and an explanation of religious themes, descriptions of secular

aspects of life too, are couched in religious terms, often using characters from religious mythology. This fluidity also translates into the function of language or language use. Texts from the medieval era rarely distinguish between a prose style meant for referential purposes and a poetic or literary style meant for an expressive function. Both go together, in the sense that philosophical texts would use metaphors and the verse form freely or a historical account within religious discourse could merge the poetic, the metaphorical and the imaginative with the factual and the real. This flexibility in the way language functioned and fluidity between aesthetic and non-aesthetic uses of language can perhaps be identified as the single most prominent underlying theoretical principle of Medieval Marathi tradition.¹⁰

While this dominant literary trend does survive in a milder form, perhaps with an increased tendency towards Sanskritisation in the writings of later poets such as Mukteśwar or Śrīdhara well into the eighteenth century, by the end of the seventeenth century there is an onset of significant shifts. In the form of the *paṇḍitī* literature we see, for example, the rise of a more Sanskritised, refined writing by the *Paṇḍit* poets such as Vāmanpaṇḍit, Viṭṭhal Bīḍkar, Raghunāthpaṇḍit. These were all Brahmin poets and scholars, many of whom lived under the patronage of Maratha sardars and rulers. These poets too write on themes taken from religious mythologies. Marathi literary historiography often constructs the era of *paṇḍit kavīs* as an era of degeneration and decay that follows the more mass-based saint literature of the earlier era.¹¹ Again, one could put aside value judgments for the time being and pay attention to the objective fact that this literature was not of the people but of patrons and came from a single caste. That is, the base of this literature was much narrower in terms of its origin and readership than the base of the earlier literature.

A broad observation that one is led to when one looks at such changes in the literary world is that the emergence of the Maratha Empire and the cultural power of the state led to important inflections in the literary sphere. The mass base and affinity to the common people of the medieval saint literature came to taper off by the end of the seventeenth century and besides writers like Venābāi, Dinkar Gosāvī and Bahinābāi who continued to uphold the tradition of the *Vārkarī* movement in a smaller way, the strength and the presence of this kind of literature gradually diminished. State patronage gradually brought in secular elements in Marathi. From the late seventeenth century, we begin to witness the emergence of some literary forms that can be described as secular literary forms, such as the *bakhars*. During the Peshwa regime in particular, the *tamāśā* and the *śāhirī* gain state patronage and throughout the eighteenth century we see a steady growth of these “secular” writings. *Lāvṇī*, (a popular form of song accompanied by dance, on the theme of the erotic), *Povādā* (a popular song that described the bravery and achievements of heroes, mainly Maratha warriors) and the *Bakhar vāṅṅmay* (written accounts of history, commissioned by rulers) can broadly be classified as secular literature. Though of course, quite often the distinguishing line was thin. *Lāvṇī* could also be on metaphysical themes and the *Bakhars* would be composed like the *purāṇas* with a number of *ākhyāns* or interludes based on mythologies.¹²

One can be certain that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the East India Company rule began, Marathi hardly had an independent literary system. Its literature was mainly a corollary of Hindu philosophy and religio-social practices and to a lesser extent of the ideologies of the State. By mid-nineteenth century we have a distinctive interest in new purely fictional/creative literary forms and by the end of the century there is a massive body of writing which is unambiguously ‘literary’ in the new sense of the term. Thus

while one may concede that there are elements of secular creative writing present in the eighteenth century, it is only in the nineteenth century, that is, after the colonial intervention, that the category of “creative secular literature” becomes possible and gets generally accepted in Marathi literary culture. By the end of the nineteenth century this new meaning of the term ‘literature’ is quite well-established. Obviously, then, a significant cultural transition seems to have taken place in this span of a hundred years in the Marathi cultural world.

In England itself until the eighteenth century literature meant “‘polite letters’ ...writing which embodied the values and tastes of a particular social class”¹³. The category of literature as purely creative/fictional writing gains currency in England only in the nineteenth century. Eagleton has interpreted the emergence of the new category of imaginative literature and a corresponding denigration of the prosaic as an outcome of the “tragic contradiction” between the economic realities of industrial capitalistic exploitation and the glorious ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity that were in the air. Literary imagination under the Romantics came to be at odds with the former, and the eighteenth century notion of literature as the high values of the ruling class needed to be displaced in the new cultural logic.¹⁴

Yet, even if the notion of creative literature was ‘borrowed’ from the colonizing culture, one needs to understand how it interlocks with the cultural processes of the indigenous culture. In borrowing this new concept what happens to the assumptions of the pre-colonial categories of literature? Is there any attempt made by the colonial theorists to retain something from those categories? Is there any negotiation happening at the level of sign? It is important to analyse how this mutation takes place in a cultural space. The role of the theorists becomes relevant in such an analysis as

theorization is the site where the processes of cultural assimilation and resistance can be most clearly observed.

The Emergence of Marathi Theory

While creative expression and its appreciation both are a common feature of all human societies, conceptualization or systematization of the creative and critical practice is not. Not all cultures articulate their notions of art, form of language use or of their standards of evaluation. In Marathi in spite of its long history of seven hundred years and in spite of its richness of literary forms there was no tradition of theorizing and systematizing of this field of expression.

Marathi theory, which had long been a hidden undercurrent of traditional assumptions, came to be widely discussed, explained and re-examined only from the 1860s onwards. The emergence of theory in the 1860s was an entirely novel phenomenon in the long history of Marathi literature of seven hundred years. Only from this point of time did it come to be expressed in a logical, analytical style and presented from a linear, historicist cognitive point of view, both of which were the hallmarks of the new Western-educated elite.

Terry Eagleton has argued while surveying the changing function of criticism in the British critical tradition from the eighteenth century till the late 1960s,

Theory... does not emerge at any historical moment; it comes into being when it is both possible and necessary, when the traditional rationales for a social or intellectual practice have broken down and new forms of legitimization for it are needed.¹⁵

Though Eagleton makes this comment while explaining the rise of theory in the Western academia after 1960 when liberal humanism within the academy came to be seen as complicit with the formal systems of social reproduction, the same principle, a similar process, seems to be at work in the

1860s in western India. Marathi theory does indeed emerge at a special historical moment when new forms of legitimization as well as new ways of interpretation were called for.

The emergence of Marathi theory was fundamentally an ideological need of a colonized society. The new Western cultural systems that came to be engrafted on the existing social structures of communication, education, justice, religion, and knowledge jeopardized the assumptions underlying the indigenous structures. The re-legitimization of these postulates, in case of literature, a reinvention of the native literary traditions in the context of the new imperial hegemony became imperative.

At the same time, the notions of freedom and equality ushered in by the French Revolution and American Civil War and the loosening of the socio-economic soil that colonialism brought in, gave rise to a strong impulse, from within the culture, to reorganize its own hegemonic power-structures.

The essential nature of the traditional oral and *śrauta*—listened—literature that was based on an organic relationship between creative and non-creative functions of language, that did not distinguish between the informative and the expressive, between the imaginative and the rational, between knowledge and art had to be reassessed and reasserted if possible, at this vulnerable point of time in its history.

The core challenge before the pioneers of Marathi theory, as brought out earlier, was to deal with a new cultural category of “creative literature”, as a body of creative work, in which the ornamentation, play of imagination, emotional impact achieved by it, etc. take precedence over its factual truth, its intellectual conviction or its religious value. Terms such as “*sāhitya*”, “*kāvya*”, “*vāṅmay*” or “*vidagdha vāṅmay*” came to be used gradually to mean secular creative literature:

a sense that was not attached to them in the vernacular literary culture until the mid nineteenth century. With them begins a process of recasting the available body of writings in Marathi as “literature”.

Attempts at theorization invariably forced the early theorists to absorb or reject this new notion of literature. In the process of evaluating a writer from the traditional body of writing in Marathi or in the process of writing an “epic” poem about Śivājī, in the new Marathi idiom or in the process of explaining anew the very concepts of the genres of the novel or drama, these theorists also had to indirectly deal with the Western category of “literature”. While such a conceptual bifurcation was certainly not unknown to Indian readers, in recasting the Marathi textual tradition anew and in aligning that understanding with contemporary developments, it was challenging to stick to that bifurcation. Since a substantial portion of the Marathi texts were religious texts, their “literary” value had to be retrieved before they were relegated to the “not useful” category during what Ravinder Kumar has described as “the utilitarian deluge”.¹⁶ The functional value of the traditional text underwent a change. Texts read as religious texts so far and whose value was self-evident now had to be reinterpreted in the new critical idiom.

How did one classify a text such as *Tukārāmgāthā*, for example, only as “literature” when its content clearly went much beyond the nineteenth century Western notion of literature? Alternatively, if one wanted to acknowledge it as a religious text one was in a curious way facing an unwanted choice between “appreciating” it and being “modern”.

We must also pay some attention to the fact that these early theorists inherited and contributed to a cultural process in which the new standardized Marathi language gradually came to be re-positioned, more strongly than ever, as the Other, not of English, but of Sanskrit. The processes of an

“imagined community” which can be traced back to the seventeenth century in the case of western India seem to have taken an interesting turn in the nineteenth century. In that play of forces, “Marathi Literature” became a category to be played against “Brahminical, Sanskrit Literature”, its popular, vernacular antecedents were foregrounded, thus conveniently making it ‘always-already’ modern.

One will thus have to aim at reading the cultural problematic of colonialism in order to understand the emergence of Marathi literary theory as a cultural discourse. Literary theory emerged in Marathi at a time when it became necessary to engage actively in identity formation. In defining what literature is, answers were also being formulated for the grand question of the age: who are we as a people, as a nation? While the colonial imagination could be said to have a project, how did the imagination of the colonized respond? In its quest for modernity, how did it recast its own tradition, how did it address the alterity of English? These and such questions can help us map the story of the making of Marathi literary theory during colonialism.

Secondly, we need to keep in mind the broad intellectual trends and conventions that the colonial educated subjects were privy to when they set out to reshape Marathi critical standards. The exact sources that were operative, in the nineteenth century western India are not always clearly identifiable beyond a certain extent. Moreover, it will not be sufficient to trace that the writings of William Jones, Max Muller, John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, Thomas Babington Macaulay, Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine were available and were actively read by the nineteenth century Western-educated elite but it will also be then necessary to trace which of these ancient and modern European writers each of them was drawing on. We do not know fully, which translations of Greek, Latin, French, German or Italian writings were into circulation and what kind of influences

they carried into colonial India with them.

At this stage, it is easier for us to understand where the Western critical tradition stood in general and to assume that in different shapes some of those influences were flowing into India. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge, to howsoever limited an extent, that the course of Marathi theory was dependent on the acculturation as well as reformulation of the concepts drawn from different Western traditions that percolated into colonial India through a range of sources such as the syllabi of government, missionary as well as native schools, a general print culture and translations of different kinds of Western literary and non-literary works. In looking at the Western influence on the theories emerging in the Marathi vernacular, it is necessary to have a sufficiently good understanding of both, the Western theories that became available as discourses in the colonial world as “modular forms” to use a phrase by Partha Chatterjee¹⁷ as well as of how exactly those discourses were processed by the colonial world. For example, unless one knows what is Western Romanticism it is not possible to understand clearly which elements of Western Romanticism were adopted in Marathi theory and which of the elements were rejected by the borrowing culture.

The Moorings of Western Theory

A study of the philosophical trends of modern Europe that had shaped this tradition will give us an overview of the Western critical tradition available in the colonial world. Of course ideas about equality, freedom and about the social contract influenced colonial imagination in a big way as information about American and French revolutions became available. But more fundamentally, one will have to talk about general philosophical and critical schools of thought in modern Western Europe.

Positivism is particularly relevant in that regard because it made a deep imprint on the modern British intellectual culture and affected colonial India most directly. Auguste Comte's *A Course in Positive Philosophy* (1830-1842) and *Positive Polity* (1851-1854) began the new positivist movement in Western branches of knowledge, which put sociology at the apex of all sciences. Positivism implied that social phenomena like the physical phenomena can be reduced to laws and science and that all philosophy should be focused upon the moral and political improvement of mankind.

The entire English philosophical tradition of Francis Bacon, Hobbes, John Locke, Hume and Jeremy Bentham had developed a strong materialistic bias, a preference for generalizations based on scientific facts, which was seen as related to the advancement in trade and industry. The Comtean belief that it was time to give up metaphysics in favour of concrete observation and scientific experiment was particularly suited to the intellectual environment of England and its influence on the nineteenth century English philosophy, science, education, administration and literature was decisive. English thinkers such as Herbert Spencer, whose work *First Principles* was influential in the growth of realism in art and literature, John Stuart Mill and Frederick Harrison were strong adherents of the French philosopher and through their work Comte's influence spread in numerous ways in the Empire too.

Broadly speaking, apart from Positivism, the thought of two eighteenth century German philosophers Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) too had influenced literary discussions in the West in the first half of the nineteenth century. Peter Zima has argued that all modern Western criticism has its umbilical cord connected to Western philosophy and it is in the context of Western philosophy that the concerns of critical schools of thought were shaped.¹⁸ Kantian and Hegelian

philosophical thought is particularly important since Romanticism, Socialism and Realism as modern European literary and critical schools of thought derived their intellectual base from these philosophical schools. The problems and solutions articulated by the thinkers of these traditions had shaped the modern Western literary world and were indirectly going to influence the Indian literary scene. It will be useful to keep in mind the general drift of these philosophical schools of thought before approaching the actual theoretical writings that emerge in Marathi during colonialism.

The Kantian idea that art and the Beautiful cannot be defined by conceptual means and the Hegelian idea that works of art are accessible to conceptual analysis had dominated the critical debates in the post-enlightenment Europe. The neoclassical rationalist tradition in Western poetics was challenged by Kantian aesthetics that foregrounded imagination as a superior mental faculty and the aesthetic experience as inaccessible to the rational level of the human mind. Kant's own dualist philosophy was a rejection of the utilitarian point of view of enlightenment philosophy. By "an aesthetic Idea" Kant meant an experience beyond thought and language. Kant believed that aesthetic pleasure, because it transcends conceptual thought will be universal and the aesthetic judgment is universally valid.¹⁹

This separation of the aesthetic and the rational was questioned by Hegel who sought to reinstate poetry in the realm of knowledge. Unlike Kant, Hegel does not view art and the beautiful in terms of the aesthetic response it evokes, but in terms of the articulation of a historical consciousness. Hegel believed that ideal equilibrium between the material form and the conceptual can be found in the Classical art whereas the post-Renaissance art is inferior and we witness the domination of the word and the concept in that era. For Hegel, poetry is a lower form of expression of historical

consciousness and will be overcome by philosophy.²⁰ He says, “Philosophy has the same content and end as art and religion; but it is the highest manner of comprehending the Absolute Idea, because its manner is the highest – the Notion.”²¹

A critique of Hegel was in turn offered by German Romanticists like Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling (1775-1854) and Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829) and by Young Hegelians and again later by Friederich Nietzsche (1844-1900). Schlegel considered art as the core of humanity mainly because of its virtue of “incomprehensibility”, its “irreducible polysemy”, and “its inexhaustible source of poetic inspiration”²².

These broad intellectual currents of continental philosophy entered the colonial world in numerous ways. A number of literary and artistic movements also percolated into this world through the agency of the colonialists. Moreover, oscillating between the Kantian and the Hegelian polarities, such movements were also reactions to their immediate literary background. As a result, movements that came to be known as Romanticism, Realism or Art for Art’s Sake in various Western countries were far from being uniform in character. In actuality, each of those movements had their distinctive variations in each of those countries. Their influence reached the colonial intellectual world in an undistinguished general form and an arbitrary manner.

England, France and Germany form a golden route of literary and philosophical exchanges and yet the literary processes in all three are at great variance from each other. Wellek²³ shows this by enumerating several instances of such differences. Art for Art’s Sake, in the early nineteenth century France, was more a reaction to the bourgeois didacticism that the Revolution had ushered in by the late eighteenth century than being truly inspired by German Romanticism. Writers such as Theophile Gautier (1811-72) who appropriated the German Romanticist theories of the

autonomy of art and asserted that literature and the arts do not influence society and that “[N]othing truly beautiful serves a purpose: everything useful is ugly.” (p.29) were actually reacting to the political situation at home. Wellek sums up the French Art for Art’s Sake movement as “a Bohemia that felt very keenly its divorce from the bourgeois society”. (p.29)

In England, the cultural mould was set differently for any ideas of artistic autonomy to take root in spite of the writings of Coleridge, Lamb and Hazlitt. By the 1830s and 40s writers of a different ilk, writers such as Carlyle, John Stuart Mill, Macaulay and Ruskin had brought in the well known Victorian attitude marked by

a didacticism rooted either in a utilitarianism that extended far beyond the Utilitarian group or in an Evangelicalism that distrusted art as secular and frivolous. The Standard of utility, of social use, was combined with a distrust of the intellect, the free play of the mind, the speculative, the theoretical. Art became suspect as mere amusement, or worse, as a stimulus to sensuality or as a revolutionary subversive force. (Wellek, HMC, Vol.3, p.86.)

Thus, an entire backdrop of wildly divergent European critical thought became an indirect presence in the colonial intellectual world and elements from its different strands were borrowed randomly and indiscriminately by the colonial intelligentsia. This study will not aim at taking an exact inventory of Western texts read by Marathi theorists but will point to general influences wherever possible. The ways in which the weight of an entire tradition shaped the new form that Marathi theory began to assume because of its contact with the Western intellectual tradition were, like osmosis, extremely subtle and deep-seated and it will be futile perhaps to concentrate too closely on exact sources.

To sum up the above discussion, Western theory, born in another milieu, at another time and carrying the weight of a very complex lineage came to bear on the process of the

emergence of literary theorization in Marathi, with its own set of concerns, most importantly, its distinction between art and knowledge, between the aesthetic and the conceptual. From the stage of its articulation in 1860 Marathi theory struggled to retain its original shape and sought to defy that bifurcation even as it assimilated these new concerns on the terms dictated by the imperialistic discursive framework.

The story of the emergence of a literary theory can never be understood adequately, by looking at the Western influence on Marathi theory in any simplistic or reductive way. There is another dimension we need to add to the notion of “influence” to tell a fuller story. As I have already suggested, we must broaden the notion of Western influence by seeking to incorporate in it our understanding of the sociological corollaries of the processes of Western imperialism. In order to know in what way the mid-nineteenth century environment provided a stimulus to the emergence of Marathi theory we need to keep in mind at least three important sociological co-ordinates: the emergence of the public sphere, standardization of language and education and the presence of missionary discourses. The following chapter will examine these and such other cultural and material conditions that were attendant at the time of the emergence of theory and that made theory “both, possible and necessary” in Marathi.

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Chapter 3

Making Theory “both, possible and necessary”

If the history of literary theory is part of the history of the cultural struggle in an era then a very logical question comes to mind: while cultural struggle is present everywhere in history why does literary theory emerge at a specific point of time in western India? The answer echoes Eagleton’s insight quoted earlier, that it was perhaps not possible and necessary before that point. It became *possible* only in the nineteenth century, in terms of the new sociological processes such as print capitalism, emergence of a middle class readership, of the public sphere etc. and in terms of the vocabularies and categories of thought such as liberalism, literature, criticism, historicity and so on that became available as the new ways of knowing or imagining. It also became *necessary*, in terms of contesting the internal and external colonization along the axes of race, class and gender and also caste. Such contestation could take place with a force that was not possible before, only within the discourse of social justice, hence, theory by default had to be invested with liberal, progressive politics. The interesting paradox of the epistemological negotiation, described earlier, was that Marathi intellectual discourse had to work out a position transcending the limitations of the humanist subject position while simultaneously seeking to salvage liberal ideals.

The Rise of Liberal Critical Discourse

The study of literary cultures has recently been subjected to sociological analysis to yield interesting insights into the

dialectical relationship between literarisation (Sheldon Pollock's term), aestheticisation and the emergence of the public sphere and of the modern nation-state. Western scholars such as Jurgen Habermas, Peter Hohendal, Chris Baldick and Terry Eagleton have closely analysed the ideological connection between the emergence of the public sphere and the rise of liberal critical discourse in the eighteenth century Europe. That the field of literary criticism is a product of certain sociological processes is brought out convincingly by such analyses.

Terry Eagleton, in *The Function of Criticism*¹ has charted an entire range of ideological functions that criticism played from the early eighteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century in England. By placing the history of the changes in the public sphere against the trends in criticism that we witness during its different phases, Eagleton seeks to identify the cultural political roots of criticism as a discourse. Eagleton cites the opinion of Peter Hohendahl that the concept of criticism cannot be separated from the institution of the public sphere, and that historically, the modern concept of literary criticism is closely tied to the rise of the liberal, bourgeois public sphere in the early eighteenth century. "Modern European criticism was born of a struggle against the absolutist state. Within that repressive regime, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the European bourgeoisie begins to carve out for itself a distinct discursive space...."²

Outlining Eagleton's argument briefly will be worthwhile. Eagleton argues that in the early eighteenth century England, Addison and Steele's impressionistic criticism that sought to cultivate good taste among its readers, through the *Tatler* and the *Spectator* was symptomatic of a 'cultural consensus' between the mercantile class and the landed gentry. (Pp.10-11)

Eagleton describes this phase of criticism as 'phatic'

communication among: "...equally propertied interlocutors: a deployment of the appropriate forms and conventions of discourse which has as its goal nothing more than the delightful exercise of taste and reason." (pp.26-7) Eagleton thus draws our attention to the functional intricacies with which bourgeois culture operates through critical discourse.

Throughout the eighteenth century as increased literacy and the processes of the capital gave rise to a new plebeian culture and to what Eagleton calls a counter public sphere, criticism had to step down from its candid humanism to become embroiled in political controversies and partisanship. The Romantic criticism of the nineteenth century, in turn, was a reaction to this sociological phenomenon. Increasingly separated from a homogeneous audience, the critic now is forced into a philosophical isolation from where he observes and prophesies about the future of this divided society. This is how the nineteenth century 'sage' is born. "What the sage represents, one might claim, is an attempt to rescue criticism and literature from the squalid political infighting... constituting them instead, as transcendental forms of knowledge." (p.39)

The growth of idealist aesthetics in Europe, imported into England by Coleridge and Carlyle, and practiced by Kingsley, Ruskin, and Arnold seeks to extricate literature from the arena of realpolitik. Mathew Arnold's vacuous phraseology ('perfection', 'sweetness and light', 'the best that has been thought and said') is interpreted by Eagleton as criticism which is in denial. "In the face of the palpable existence of the proletariat, organized interests beyond the bourgeois sphere, for critics like Arnold, culture must be 'classless', and 'the men of Culture the true apostles of equality' and the language of criticism must be ill-defined enough to conceal their class-roots." (pp. 62-3)

If one were dealing with the history of popular criticism and not of theorization per se, several interesting parallels

may be drawn between Eagleton's analysis and an analysis of the emergence of popular criticism in Marathi beginning with the *Nibandhamālā* in the late nineteenth century and growing exponentially later in the twentieth century colonial western India. One cannot indulge in that, except perhaps in a tangential way, from time to time, especially to identify how the theoretical texts selected for discussion here compare with the overall trends in popular Marathi criticism. We may now first explore the nature and impact of the significant sociological changes witnessed in the nineteenth century colonial India.

Literary Theory as a Discourse of Modernity

The larger academic debate under which such an exploration may be subsumed is the debate inaugurated in the 1990s by Partha Chatterjee in *The Nation and Its Fragments*³ in which Chatterjee has argued that the discussion of the making of a modern nation has to be freed from the normativity of the "modular" Western forms as analysed by Benedict Anderson. The process by which a community imagines itself into a nation is not to be understood in purely political terms but also in terms of the claims staked within an inner, cultural domain which will include the aesthetic, religious, educational, linguistic, and the domestic domains. Chatterjee identifies this process in Indian colonial history as preceding that of overt political nationalism. As the colonizers bequeathed their gift of nationalism to the colonies, the colonized did not accept it without investing their own imaginations into the project. Surely, the colonized cannot be conceived of as "perpetual consumers of modernity".⁴

Without using Chatterjee's ready-made distinction of inner and outer, spiritual and material domains in which the nationalist imagination enacts its bid for sovereignty, this

study will try to explore the ways in which the inherited structures of modernity were negotiated actively by the agency of the colonized. A close look at sociological factors that frame the emergence of Marathi theory will discount any clear bifurcation between the material domain and the aesthetic domain and in the life and ideas of each Marathi theorist we find a simultaneous play of attraction and resistance to aspects of both these domains. My broad intervention in the above-mentioned debate is that by creating a new category of the nativist imagination to replace the category of nationalist imagination around which Chatterjee’s analysis of colonial reality is woven, one can perhaps move closer towards a more judicious understanding of an alternative modernity and by extension of that ‘fragment’, to a “universal history of the modern world”.⁵

Ideologically the rules of the game were clear. If the Western Other was the modern, the native Self had to be refashioned into the modern without being a replica or imitation of the Other: the Self had to be crafted as a native modern. The native Self had to aspire for the liberal ideals in self-consciously native ways, and if possible, proving the Other “less modern”, to beat the colonisers at their own game.

Marathi literary theory is, therefore, above all, part of a native discourse through which a community is fashioning its modern Self. In reaching out towards the ideals of humanist liberalism it has to first come to terms with its own ugly faces of caste and gender injustice before it could morally claim to be more modern than the racist colonisers. While nationalist discourses threatened to abort this process of fashioning a modern Self that seemed to be underway in nineteenth century western India, theorists of Marathi did not flinch from accepting truths about their society. Characteristically, they are writers and thinkers who could

understand the logic of colonialism and who refused to be governed by that logic but at the same time, their commitment to their land and people was broader than could be contained within the narrow categories of nationalist politics.

Colonialist Epistemology and the Shaping of Marathi Theory

Contact with the West was a cultural experience that proved unique because of a fundamental change it brought about in the modes and systems of knowledge in the colonized world. As Marathi theory was being articulated, it was also being moulded into a Western form since it mainly attempted to answer questions thrown up by contact with the West.

Colonial interventions in the educational, linguistic and religious domains had a direct bearing on the formulation of the central concerns of Marathi theory. As a labyrinthine web of sociological processes of resistance, acculturation, assimilation, revivalism and nationalism struggled to come to terms with the overwhelming presence of an invasive British imperialism within western Indian society, theoretical issues related to literature emerged as a part of the debates on wider cultural issues. Questions, that were not raised before, such as what constitutes Truth or aesthetic appeal or morality in literature or what is the correlation between civilization and literature, became topics of intense, fiery discussions.

Issues, hitherto unknown, pertaining to the survival and the material progress of a civilization, the validity of religious and cultural assumptions such as caste, the divine status of Sanskrit, of the *Vedas* and even of the Gods, the legitimization of the obscene in Indian religious discourses, came under a sharp focus in public debates and discussions for the first time as Western systems of administration, polity, religion, education and economy, came to be grafted on the Indian

social structure. The Otherness of the Western civilization, together with the British imperialist will to impress the natives with their superiority unleashed a frenetic process of adjustment and readjustment of values and standards of judgment in the Indian social psyche.

The answers, invariably, were determined by the drama of cultural confrontation enacted in each theorist’s mind and life. Each theoretical text is a complex site where the processes mentioned earlier can be seen in operation. Factors like a government job or education at a missionary school or caste with its changed configurations with the Empire economy have obviously played an important role in the answers to the new questions. In analyzing the Western influence on Marathi theory and its formulation, one therefore, should not make the mistake of stopping at the translations of Western texts or at the list of works that a theorist has read. There are deeper and subtler channels that contributed to the Western influence and even a close analysis can merely outline its broad contours.

Many scholars have drawn attention to how the various Indian forms of knowledge such as law, religion and the languages were converted into objects of observation and analysis through the application of European scholarly methods (such as the comparative method). This European quest for controlling India through knowing her, through converting her into an archaeological object of study spawned numberless anomalies as far as knowledge was concerned. Bernard Cohn, in his paper ‘The Command of Language and the Language of Command’⁶ has shown the overbearing nature of the colonial modes of enquiry, analysis; the reductive imaginary of colonialist scholarship through an analysis of the extensive research conducted by British administrators and scholars in Indian classical and vernacular languages and dialects in the second half of the eighteenth century.

In the words of Bernard Cohn, "...they had not only invaded and conquered a territory, but, through their scholarship, had invaded an epistemological space as well."⁷ Scholars like Partha Chatterjee too have drawn our attention to the instinctive recognition and rejection of the fundamental postulates of Western empirical tradition of knowledge such as historicism, scientism or evolution and progress in the thought of later nationalist leaders like Gandhi.⁸

In the context of the study of literature too, it may be claimed in general that certain very fundamental differences in perception lay at the heart of phenomena like the emergence of literary theory in Marathi in the nineteenth century. As a cultural discourse Marathi theory was, to borrow Cohn's words, a resistance offered by the Indians to "the authoritative control the British tried to exercise over new social and material technologies."⁹

The rise of theory in Marathi, with articulations in the writings of Marāṭhe, Kuṅṭe, Dādobā Pāṇḍuraṅga, indeed with its sure steps, certainly results from a community's desire to master a discourse that seemed to embody the power structure of that society. While Western modes of thinking, analytical models were increasingly adopted as the ground rules of this discourse, within that frame a place had to be carved out for indigenous cultural stakes.

Literature as a New Category

The following analysis shows that the early Marathi literary theory is the colonial liberal intelligentsia's attempt to retrieve elements of Western liberalism and weave them seamlessly into the traditional indigenous corpus of works, which now they begin to call "literature". Sanjay Seth's analysis of the study of Sanskrit during colonialism has brought out vividly the process of subsuming Indian

knowledge systems under Western paradigms, rendering their study “critical”, “historical”, “comparative” and “philological”. He points out that it is not that the study of Sanskrit declined during the colonial rule, on the contrary, it seems to have increased because of royal patronage, but the traditional methods and purposes of the study declined. The traditional study of Sanskrit came to be cast in the Western, modern methods of study, of historicizing, critically analyzing and comparing and was reduced to being “so many source materials” for constructing a historical past.¹⁰

A similar process of getting subsumed under a Western category may be said to be taking place in the case of Marathi literature as well. The category of “literature” as “creative literature” along with its exteriority that the print culture brought in, becomes dominant and earlier categories of “literature” (‘*sāraswat*’, ‘*vāṅmay*’, ‘*sāhitya*’) as philosophical, religious works that reflect Truth, or as oral culture that is part and parcel of day-to-day lived experiences, get subsumed under this new category. As this transition takes place, the theorists of the first generation seem to seek to imprint the newly emerging category with indigenous cultural modes of textuality. In subsequent generations too, as will be discussed later, one can find an effort to hold on to the traditional concept of literature and to resist the imposition of the reductive notion of literature that colonialism brought with it.

Apart from the anti-imperialism at the level of epistemology inherent in this reaction one also discerns an equally ardent bid for a reformulation of the power structures along the lines of class, caste and gender, within the nation. The cultural nationalism or the revival of a Brahminical Hinduism was countered on three fronts during this phase: reform-orientated moderate politics, political nationalism of the *bahujanamāj*¹¹ and early feminism. The second group of theorists—Āgarkar, Phule and Paṇḍitā

Ramābāi represent these three prongs. They certainly see literature and literary theory as an opportunity to negotiate the stakes afresh. The interests of the internally colonized are rallied forcefully in their writing and the ideological agenda of this discourse is to hinder a reassertion of the existing upper caste male hegemony. Even as a new class structure emerges towards mid-nineteenth century the distribution of power along the lines of caste boundaries is effectively forestalled from being translated into its new version.

Theory, then, we may say, has two prominent functions in western India between 1860 and 1900: to formulate a new power relationship with the West and more immediately with the British and to reorganize the power structures within the community along more equitable, democratic lines.

Let me first outline the cultural context in which early Marathi theory takes shape before I approach a close textual analysis of a few theoretical texts from around the mid-nineteenth century.

In reconstructing the sociological-material-ideological dimensions of the culture in which theory became “both, possible and necessary” we need to take stock of sociological processes such as the emergence of the middle class, emergence of the public sphere, emergence of print capitalism, of institutions of Western education, of material processes such as the standardization of language, emergence of bilingual spheres, and ideological factors such as Orientalism, Aryanism, the missionary discourses apart from, of course, nativism or nationalism. A complete and comprehensive understanding of all these processes is quite obviously well beyond the scope of a work of this nature, but drawing on some directly relevant insights from contemporary research work about each of these processes we would be able to posit a sustainable argument about how the emergence of theory became inevitable by mid-nineteenth century.

Emergence of the Public Sphere and Print Capitalism

It is generally agreed now that the emergence of the public sphere in colonial India was qualitatively a very different process than its Western parallel¹² and some have even argued that the Indian phenomenon was “at best a caricature of what was witnessed in Europe”.¹³ It is true that the homogeneity and majority that characterized the Western bourgeois class of eighteenth century Europe, the largely secular and democratic nature of the eighteenth century European public sphere, the favourable conditions created by the Industrial Revolution, are all missing when we compare the emergence of the public sphere and of modernity in colonial India. It is all the more interesting, therefore, to examine how exactly the discourses of liberalism that became available to the colonial Indian society were deployed by the colonial intellectuals and were put to what purposes.

It is possible to understand the response of the colonial intelligentsia to their unique predicament as an intelligent, calculated response when one looks carefully at the extent to which their writings reflect their awareness of their situation in numerous ways. It can be argued that the colonial intelligentsia was sensitive to the reality that liberalism here was not a natural offshoot of an organic socio-economic condition as in the West, but was merely an imported discourse, an artificial implant. They were sensitive to the problem that they did not really enjoy a hegemonic position in their society, that no common arena to be negotiated with a common language was available to them to stake their claims and win leadership. On the other hand, they were also acutely aware of the counterfeit nature of the political liberal discourse in the larger imperialist context.

In response to these felt problems, an important section of the liberal bourgeois intelligentsia of colonial India do two things: firstly, they shift to a radical position and invoke

the logic of moral-intellectual integrity and not of hegemony and/or secondly, they begin to muster the resources of their imagination, and begin to recast the past in a liberal mould, to establish a continuity between their envisioned future and the past that was being reconstructed—as if to create a soil on which modernity could easily be transplanted.

The field of literary theory, of discussions of Marathi aesthetics, is an interesting site where the dynamics of this cultural politics of colonial modernity play out in interesting patterns. It is very interesting to observe how writers who seek to conjure up an aesthetic language for the emerging modernity negotiate the distance between the colonial liberal discourse and their own socio-economic reality. In articulating a theoretical discourse, how do they position themselves? Which tactics are they using to deal with Western liberalism with its moral pretensions and also, with the realities of their own fragmented cultural sphere?

In mapping the growth of Marathi literary theory, one is also mapping the trajectories of the ideological shifts occurring within the colonial modernity. The themes and concerns that preoccupied the theorists of Marathi reflect the political contradictions of both colonial liberalism and of an ascendant nationalism. The argument of this work is that the theorists of Marathi are negotiating a discursive space and succeed, largely, in salvaging the critical liberalism that Habermas posits as an ideal of modernity. They come up with a number of conceptual tools that help them manoeuvre within the minefield of colonial liberalism.

Sociological studies of colonial India have drawn attention to the need to understand the emergence of a public sphere within the colonial context. Drawing inspiration from the process that shaped Western modernity, measures were taken along similar lines by both colonizers and the colonized to facilitate a discursive space that would bring about a modern India eventually. Far from being any check on any

absolutist state the way the Habermasian eighteenth century bourgeois public sphere was in Western Europe, in India the public sphere was a pet collaborative project of the colonial rulers and colonial elite. It was more an arena in which the literate colonial population could establish a negotiating platform and consensus with the ruling elite. Public institutions such as the Bombay Literary Society (1804) which later became a branch of The Royal Asiatic Society, Students’ Scientific and Literary Society (1848), the Bombay Association (1852) and the Sārvaṅjanik Sabhā (1870), created this new version of the public sphere in India.

Along with public institutions and institutions of Western learning print capitalism also contributed to the formation of this public sphere. A positive view of the connection between print capitalism and the forces of modernity that it can unleash became a shared sentiment between the colonizers and the colonial elite. One of the early printing presses was the press called ‘Navavidyākālānidhi’ started in 1805, by the prince Sarfojī of Tanjore who was inspired by the tutelage of the Danish missionary Christian Frederick Schwartz. *Bālbodhmuktāvalī*, a translation of Aesop’s fables by Sakhaṅṅā Paṅḍit, a part of the *Bhāvārtha Rāmāyaṇ* by Eknāth were among the first books that were published in Marathi from this press.¹⁴ The need to spread Christianity was another major driving force behind the rapid expansion of the printing presses in India. Mathew’s *Gospel* was translated with the help of Vaijanāth Paṅḍit and printed in Marathi from the Serampore Mission press under the management of the Protestant English missionary William Carey as early as 1806.¹⁵

Naregal’s work has taken stock of the structure of colonial vernacular print industry.¹⁶ The Bombay Courier Press started using Marathi print from 1802 in Modī type. Serampore Press too used the Modī script for its publications. The American Mission Press launched Marathi publications

from Bombay in 1817. The Native School and School Book Society formed in 1821 began to publish Marathi books from the Bombay Courier Press in the Bāl̥bodh font. Naregal has thrown light on the heterogeneous character of the vernacular readership—indeed a deep divide existed between a popular-revivalist and a progressive-reformist readership in the vernacular sphere. She points out that the earliest Marathi printer-publishers Gaṇapat Kriṣṇājī whose press was active between 1846 and 1900 and Jāvajī Dādājī who launched the *Nirṃaysāgar Press* in 1864 were of the *Koḷī Bhaṇḍārī* and *Marāthā* castes respectively and hardly saw themselves as the part of the upper caste elite reformists. Their enterprises catered to a neo-Hindu ideological trait and had a wider popular appeal. *Prabhākar Press* (1847) of Bhāu Mahājan is the first press with a consciously reformist agenda and which advocated modern impartial and rationalist modes of communication by giving a fair representation to all points of view. Vernacular print culture thus expanded in more ways than one and catered to different sections of the already relatively small middle class vernacular readership.¹⁷ Periodicals like *Darpaṇ* (1832), the first batch of purely Marathi publications such as *Mumbai Akhbār* (1840), *Prabhākar* (1841), *Dhūmaketū* (1843) and *Dnyānaprakāś* (1849), and later bilingual publications such as *Indu Prakāś* (1862), *the Native Opinion* (1864) and *Subodh Patrikā* (1873) began to stage a discursive negotiation in the public sphere until gradually this public sphere came to be overwhelmed by nationalist discourses by 1880s.

It was largely the “microscopic minority” (as the British liked to describe them) of the urban Westernized middle class that came under the influence of print and its reach cannot be said to have radically transformed the political structures of the entire Indian subcontinent. However, as an important cultural innovation in colonial India, print directly led to the emergence of a new kind of literary culture.

It is a striking feature of the functioning style of the nineteenth century early theorists of Marathi that they consciously assumed a role as influential players within the colonial public sphere through their membership of various public forums and through their print-savvy styles of communication. That an early theorist like Dādobā was conscious of the power of print is evident from his move to publish his grammar of the Marathi language from Gaṇapat Kriṣṇājī’s private press, at his own expense,¹⁸ when it was refused patronage by the Education society. Phule’s frustration with *Śudra* publishers who did not dare to publish his *Śetkaryācā Asūḍ* and his reluctant reliance on the manuscript culture is reflected in one of his letters (discussed in detail in Chapter 5) in 1881. Paṇḍitā Ramābāī showed an astute awareness of the importance of projecting her point of view extensively and consistently through print to a local, a national and an international audience. All of them understood the indispensable nature of the new technological modes of commanding a public presence and effectively pressed that knowledge into the service of the articulation of Marathi literary theory.

Benedict Anderson’s analysis of the emergence of the modern nation-state¹⁹ has emphasized the crucial role played by print capitalism in modern Europe. A salient feature of Western nationalism and Western modernity was the presence of a large base of middle class vernacular readership, which fed on the materials churned out by the printing presses generating a “public sphere” in which a community could actively engage into imagining itself as a nation. In colonial India this process was compromised by the lack of such a large readership and the print capitalism of colonial India was manipulated more as a tool within a severely compromised public sphere by imperialist and nationalist projects. The processes of the selection and standardization of print languages such as Marathi leading

to the formation of a strong regional nationalism by the end of the nineteenth century, as they played out in colonial India, were not so much the spontaneous processes of a large literate and self-driven powerful liberal bourgeois class but processes regulated by the agenda of the colonial rulers and of colonial elite.

The perspicacious appreciation of these emerging social structures and the ability to manoeuvre within their constricting frameworks is an important feature of the achievements of Marathi literary theorists. Their contributions to the intellectual and epistemological climate of colonial India can be appreciated particularly well by paying attention to this feature of their work.

Western Education

A key enabling factor behind the emergence of literary theory in western India was also the influence of Western education. A great deal of work was done in the area of education in the first half of the nineteenth century under the governorship of Mountstuart Elphinstone, Warren Hastings and Lord Bentinck. Even before the Utilitarian ideology overpowered the scene of Indian education a great many changes flooded the field of education in western India. The new standardized education replaced the earlier flexible parochial or religious pedagogy. Textbooks, regular school-inspections, teacher-training altered the face of an Indian school beyond recognition. Secular education gained more prestige as it prepared men for employment and the possibility of rise in the financial and social status began to attract the lower castes to formal education.

Recent researches have analysed in great depth the tremendous ideological impact of the project of Western education through all its changing policies during the days of Mountstuart Elphinstone and subsequently of Macaulay

and Wood’s Dispatch and of Sir Erskin Perry. Western education as the ‘mask of conquest’ or colonial modernity as a pedagogical project has been a constantly reworked theme in the studies of Western education from the 1990s. However, an important recent intervention adds something substantial to the understanding of the nature of colonial education and that discussion is of direct relevance to the broader argument of the present study. Sanjay Seth’s incisive analysis²⁰ has shed some light on the problematique of the place of Western knowledge in the colonial cultural imaginary as a projected vehicle of modernity. Seth has shown effectively that the colonial subject who was ‘subjected’ to the project of colonial education was far from being rendered a product of it and there was an interesting cultural dynamics at work that led to the (willed) slips between what was taught and what was learnt.

In a chapter titled ‘Vernacular Modernity’²¹, Seth persuasively argues that in the nationalist imagination being modern was indispensable, in fact traditional systems of knowledge were never mounted as alternatives to Western knowledge but what was considered more indispensable was an indigenous processing of that knowledge. Illustrious leaders, such as Lala Lajpat Rai, Rabindranath Tagore and M. K. Gandhi, who sought to envision alternatives to colonial educational system, insisted on designing modern citizens but modern citizens who would not be denationalized.

This reconfiguring of modernity into indigenous terms is symptomatic in Seth’s analysis of the fact that modernity and nation both need to be understood outside of the frames provided by Western knowledge and Western cultural traditions. Several aspects of Western modernity such as individualism and instrumental reason are merely incidental to Western modernity and not inherent to it.²² Seth has sought to understand the project of colonial education as an arena where identities were imposed, contested and

reformulated. There were significant convergences and departures regarding the evaluation of the success of that project in its various stages between the colonialists and their subjects. What emerges through these convergences and departures is that an unproblematic binary between the colonizer and the colonized is not sustainable when we understand that knowing modernity through the categories of Western knowledge was not the same as being modern.

The insights garnered from Seth's work can be tested afresh and usefully in the context of the new category proposed in this study of nativism, as against nationalism, with reference to individual theorists. Almost all the theorists presented here, critique the Western educational system but invariably draw upon the resources of Western knowledge while at the same time indelibly imprinting it with an indigenous cultural imagination to refashion and redirect the project of ushering in modernity in India. In recasting native systems of knowledge, these intellectuals were not constrained by any Western epistemological categories imported and imposed on them and seemed to have sufficient cultural resources to question and reset those categories in significant ways.

Ideological Cross-Currents

Several ideological cross-currents operative during the nineteenth century featured in subtle ways, in the process of theorizing about literature. Orientalist imagination was an overriding presence and specifically, theories of Aryanism within Orientalism were obsessively discussed in the colonial public domain. Ideas of racial purity, superiority or inferiority could be worked out in a seemingly scientific way to corroborate or discount both external as well as internal colonialism. Especially during the nationalist phase, the idea of race became an important tool both, to establish a "kinship

with the British rulers and praising the gifts of the Raj”, or “to inscribe rigid lines between communities, to offer a narrow and particularizing definition of their racial and religious identity.”²³ Ballantyne’s work has looked at the engagement with the concept of the Aryan race and the ideological implications of that engagement, of Dayanand Saraswati of the *Arya Samāj* and of B.G.Tilak, a revivalist who could partake equally of both Hindu *Sanātani* and Western scientific discourses.²⁴ Several features of Aryanism, the interest in Vedic history, philology, Sanskritism, colonial anthropology that tied up with this larger theme were in the air and had to be dealt with by anyone who understood the cultural scenario with any clarity.

Do the theorists of Marathi participate in this discourse? When they do, how do they position themselves? What are the ideological drives behind the stances they take? These questions have to be asked to understand the shaping of Marathi theory during the colonial period. We shall see later, how Kuṅṭe for example, could not fully absorb the romantic notion of the noble savage because the notion of Aryan superiority of the upper castes never quite went away from the back of his mind. Phule took special efforts to set-up a counter theory of Aryans as the treacherous and cowardly colonizers of the noble and brave indigenous tribes who were rendered *Śudras* during the course of India’s ancient history.

Like race, religion became a sore point due to the proselytizing project of the missionaries. A criticism of Hindu religious principles and practices such as idolatry, polytheism, lack of a sense of proper moral standards was a perennial theme of missionary writings. Fr Etienne Crucius’s 1629 Marathi text titled *Discurso sobre a Vida do Apostolo Sam Pedro em que se refuta os principais erros do gentilismo* (Biography of St Peter with an expose of Hinduism) written in the oṽi metre aimed at telling the new converts why Hinduism was

reprehensible. Viṣṇu who, as Rām, abandoned an innocent Sītā all alone in the forests, as Vāman, betrayed a dedicated devotee such as Baḷī and pushed him down into the underworld, Paraśurām, who killed his own mother, Kriṣṇa who incited brothers against each other and brought about massive destruction, Gaṇapati, who was made of bodily dirt, how can all these be worthy of worshipping? That is the line of argument adopted by Crucius. The book mentions a number of old Hindu religious texts such as *Yogavāsishtha*, *Aśwamegh*, *Bhāgvat*, *Mārkaṇḍeya* and *Droṇa* Puranas and it is obvious that the Jesuit missionaries studied the Hindu scriptures in detail in order to refute them.²⁵

Several works along the same lines were published in the nineteenth century. *Tribhuvanānchya Goṣṭī* published by the American Mission in 1822, *Tarkaśāstra: A Treatise on Logic* (1848) by Rev. Amos Abbott, Dr. Stevenson's Dialogues, *Sam̄bhāṣaṇe: Kityek Brāhmaṇ Marāṭhī Ityādi āṇi Kristadās yāmadhye Hindudharma āṇi Khristidharma Yānviśayī* (1829), *Bhagvadgītece Sār: Analysis of the Bhagawut Gīta* (1832) by Rev. Robert Nesbit, *Hindudharmāce Pahile Prasiḍhdhīkaraṇ* (An expose of the Hindu Religion) (1832) and *Dusare Hindudharmāce Prasiḍhdhīkaraṇ* (1835) by Dr. John Wilson, are some of the examples of such works. Periodicals such as the *Prabhoday*, the *Oriental Christian Spactator*, *Satyādīpikā*, *Eikyavardhak Patrikā*, *Bālbodhमेवā* etc. kept up the agenda of setting up an alternative moral code for the mainstream Hindu society through their writings.

Western education, in itself was believed to be a substantial threat to Hindu beliefs and practices. As a result both Christian and the Government educational institutions actively invested in the study of the secular sciences.²⁶ The problem, however, was that while the missionary schools were taking care to replace the destroyed faith with a new religious sentiment, the government schools were not doing that service and as a result left behind "scepticism, impiety and

immorality”.²⁷ Missionaries launched a sustained attack on the godless education of the colonial government towards the end of the nineteenth century. The propagation of the study of science and history and geography, the starting of schools for girls and for lower castes also gave the missionary organizations a powerful presence in the moral universe of nineteenth century colonial India. In fact schools run by the various missionary organizations distinguished themselves consciously from the government schools and a number of intellectuals came to engage into that discourse of a moralized modernity.

The attack mounted by the Missionaries on Hindu social and religious practices was countered in publications like *Dharmavivecan* by Dādobā Pānḍuraṅga Tarkhaḍkar, *Vedoktadharmaprakāś* by Viṣṇubuā Brahmācārī or in newspapers like *Prabhākar* and *Satyaprakāś* and in periodicals such as *Upadeśacaṅdrikā*. All major religious reformist programmes on the entire Indian subcontinent were influenced by this encounter between the religion from the West and native religious traditions.

It is within this context of incessant social dialogue and change that the hitherto dormant Marathi theory was taking shape, and as it was being articulated its age-old assumptions were also being refashioned in subtle ways.

A New Linguistic and Literary Culture

Four important aspects emerged during the nineteenth century as the aspects of a new literary culture of a colonial western India: standardization of the Marathi language, the emergence of the bilingual spheres with unequal cultural importance, the spread of a translation culture and the adoption of new literary forms and popularization of literature.

Publishing in the vernacular languages, for the purposes

of education and political and religious propaganda indirectly led to a need to standardize the Marathi language. Publishing made uniformity of usage indispensable. Grammars and dictionaries came to be compiled by the dozen by both, foreign and native scholars. What was so far only a spoken dialect that varied every five miles acquired a recognizable form as 'a standard language'. Missionary institutions like the American Mission, Scottish Mission, institutions like Bombay Native Schoolbook and School Society or *Mumbaīcī Haiṇd Sāla va Sālāpustak Maṇḍalī*, which later became known as *Śikṣa Maṇḍalī* in Marathi and notable figures such as Molsworth, Major Candy, Bālśāstrī Jāmbhekar, Harī Keśavjī, Sadāśiv Lakṣmaṇ Chhatre among several others, served to bring standardization in Marathi language. A close government involvement with the native language continued till 1850 when Erskin Perry became the chairperson of the *Śikṣa Maṇḍalī* and enforced the educational policies laid down by Macaulay in 1835.²⁸

Another simultaneous change was a vigorous introduction of translation culture into Marathi. The first missionaries, the Jesuit missionaries from Portugal who started coming to India from the sixteenth century to settle down in Goa and southern India had already brought the translation culture with them. A reference to Franciosco Roiz's translation of a Marathi text *Yogarāj-tīlak* into Portuguese can be found as early as 1550. Franscisca Garcia (1580-1659), a Portuguese missionary translated a number of Marathi texts such as *Harīṣcaṇḍrākhyān*, *Vikramāditya*, and *Simhāsanbattiṣī* etc. into Portuguese in the mid-seventeenth century.²⁹

In the nineteenth century, however, with a more systematic institutionalization of translation projects and a methodically developed collaboration with the native elite, translation culture came to have a deep and far-reaching impact on the general literary scene in western India.

Maya Pandit has identified three stages that the British

colonial efforts at inculcating a translation culture among the native population went through.³⁰ While the first phase, between 1818 and 1850, saw the translation of textbooks for “instructional and moral” purposes, in the second phase between 1850 and 1874, the emphasis seems to have shifted to translations of literary works. Marathi no longer being used as a medium of instruction, the government decided to change their translation agenda. To improve the taste of an audience “who take great delight in reading myths alone...” it was desirable to present to them new literary models “full of extraordinary adventures...”, (*Arabian Nights* and *Captain Cook*, for example) “works that are calculated to please imagination and... require some effort of intellect to understand them.”³¹ Pandit argues that by 1860s, the native tradition was implicitly rejected by the rulers for its exclusive focus on religion and mythology and they sought to expose the native population to English literary works such as *Rasselas* and *Othello*.

During the third phase, i.e. 1875 to 1900 the colonisers’ involvement in translation minimized and among the translators themselves there came to be some amount of independent rethinking of whether adaptations are to be preferred over faithful translations and about the selection of works for translation. Popular trend seemed to be of adaptations and simplifications to suit the native taste but more rigorous standards in these matters came to be proposed by thinkers such as Āgarkar and Rājwāḍe. Pandit has assigned these new standards to the nationalist project, but in a somewhat unconvincing way. Later in this work, I have argued that figures like Āgarkar or V.K. Rājwāḍe cannot really be pigeonholed with mainstream nationalists. There is more to their thought, than that. A number of issues taken up by Marathi literary theory thus indirectly come from these ideologically fraught measures and practices of a new translation culture.

These broad linguistic developments conditioned the literary culture in a big way, most strikingly in the form of the growth of a “popular” literary culture and in the adoption of new literary forms. Somewhat inaccurately described as the Indian Renaissance, in the field of literature, it was an age of journals and newspapers, of a keen interest in medieval poetry, in classical Sanskrit literature and poetics and of translations of both, Sanskrit and English plays into regional languages like Marathi³².

Mālatī Mādhav (1861), *Mricchakaṭik* (1862), *AbhidnyānaŚākuntalam* (1861 and 1870), *Nāgānanda* (1865), *Jānakīpariṇay* (1865), *NalaDamayaṅtī* (1879) were among the Marathi translations of classical Sanskrit plays. Mahādeośāstrī Kolhaṭkar’s translation of *Othello*, the first translation of Shakespeare in Marathi and *Daivasenī*, a long narrative poem, an adaptation of Scott’s *The Lady of the Lake*, by Bajābā Rāmcaṅdra Pradhān, were both published in 1867. *Nārāyanrāo āṅṅi Godāvārī* (1879), *Vikāravilasit* (1873), *Vijay Singh* (1872), *Tārā* (1879), *Śaśikalā āṅṅi Ratnapāl* (1882), *Zunzārrāo* (1890), and *Mānājīvrāo* (1898) were all translations of various plays by Shakespeare. Other Western writers translated into Marathi were Sheridan, Milton, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Longfellow, Poe, Thomas Hood and Emerson.

The first fifteen years saw an immense growth in Marathi prose through publication of journals like *Marāthi Dnyānaprasārak* (1850), *Śālāpatrak* (1861), *Vrittadarpaṅ* (1860), *Nibaṅdhamālā* (1874), *Sarvasaṅgraha* (1860), *Kāvyetiḥās-saṅgraha* (1878), *Vividhadnyānavistār* (1867), *Bhāshāntar* (1894) that became platforms for discussing socio-economic and political issues and mainly for inculcating a nationalist spirit among the educated.

A number of Western literary forms were borrowed from English into Marathi. Bābā Padmanjī’s *Yamunāparyātan* (1857), the first ‘novel’ in Marathi, and Vināyak Bālkriṣṇa

Dāmle’s *Avliyā* (1859) were among realistic novels, followed by a spate of fantastic novels or romances like *Muktāmālā* (1861), *Mañjughoṣā* (1868), *Ratnaprabhā* (1878), and also by the historical novels such as *Mocangad* (1871) and *Hambīrrāo āṇi Putalābāi* (1873). In 1873 also appeared the first novel by a woman novelist Sālūtāi Tāmbvekar called *Caṇdraṇḍāvirahavarṇan*. *Thorale Mādhavrāo Peshve* (1861) was the first tragedy to be published in Marathi by V.J. Kirtane.

Harī Nārāyaṇ Āpte’s illustrious career that parallels Bankim Chandra’s career in Bangla in the realistic genre of the novel began with the publication of *Madhalī Sthitī* in 1885. Apart from novels and short stories like *Paṇ Lakṣyāt Koṇ Ghetō?* and *Ājkālcya Goṣṭī* that depicted the life of the middle classes Apte also wrote plenty of historical novels such as *Uṣakkāl* (1897), *Maisūrcā Vāgh* (1891), *Caṇdragupta* (1902-04) that evoked nostalgia. At about the same time Keśavsut was writing poetry that made use of themes from day-to-day life and a simple diction—poems that were, however, only posthumously published—that were to inaugurate a romantic age in Marathi poetry in the early part of the next century. Towards 1890 Aṇṇāsāheb Kirloskar, inspired by English plays, formed his own dramatic troupe *Kirloskar Nāṭak Maṇḍalī* and inaugurated the era of Marathi *Sanḡīt Nāṭak*.

Thus, this was the large cultural backdrop that made theory “both, possible and necessary”. Without factors such as the emergence of a colonial public sphere, print capitalism, Western educational institutions and the general literarisation that it led to, theory would not have become possible and if there had been no ideological onslaught on native cultural systems on various fronts it would not have been so urgent and necessary. While one is not aiming at providing a deterministic model of explaining the emergence of a phenomenon like this, and care has been taken earlier to underline the importance of the agency of

individual theorists, outlining these “material conditions” helps us to keep in mind the cultural climate to which the contemporary literary theory was a response.

The first phase of the articulation of Marathi theory can be said to have begun in the 1860s, when the policy of Western standardized education promoted by Macaulay and Mill had reached an important stage in the form of the establishment of the Bombay University. The first generation graduates of this University were already enjoying a visibility in the social life in western India. Under the influence of the new education this particular class had begun to, or rather, had been conditioned to re-examine its inherited culture and had also been motivated to change it in a large measure. Indeed, social change was a great concern of this group. If one considers the strategic role that theory plays in the cultural sphere it should not be a wonder that the theoreticians in the period between 1860 and 1900 were not merely professional writers, novelists, poets or critics. Although they all had a fine literary sensibility and wrote with an awareness of literary forms, style and tradition, they were all primarily educationists and social thinkers. The following chapters attempt to show that the greatest strength of their theoretical writing, produced between 1860 and 1900, is perhaps its resistance to a new conception of literature as purely imaginative literature.

NOTES

1. Eagleton, Terry, *The Function of Criticism*, London: Verso, 1984.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11, subsequent page numbers cited in the text.
3. Chatterjee, Partha, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, Delhi: OUP, 1994.
4. *Ibid.*, p.5.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
6. Cohn, Bernard, ‘Command of Language and Language of Command’, in Guha, Ranajit (ed.), *Subaltern Studies: Writing on South Asian History and Society*. Vol. 4, Delhi: OUP, 1985, pp.276-329.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 325.

8. See Chatterjee, Partha, ‘Gandhi and the Critique of Civil Society’, in Guha, Ranajit (ed.), *Subaltern Studies*, vol.3, Delhi: OUP, 1984, pp. 153-195.
9. Cohn, ‘Command of Language and Language of Command’, p. 329.
10. Seth, Sanjay, *Subject Lessons: The Western Education of Colonial India*. New Delhi: OUP, 2007. pp. 172-75.
11. See Aloysius, G., *Nationalism without a Nation in India*, New Delhi: OUP, 1997, pp.131-154.
12. See Schenk, Hans, rev. of *Civil Society, Public Sphere and Citizenship: Dialogues and Perceptions* by Rajeev Bhargava and Helmut Reifeld, (eds.), IAS Newsletter, Spring 2007.
Ali, Amir, ‘Evolution of the Public Sphere in India’, *EPW*, 36, 30 June, 2001: pp. 2419-25.
13. Panikkar, K. N., ‘Religion in the Public Sphere’, *Hindu*: 7 September, 2009. <<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/article16572.ece>>.
14. Pinge, S.M. *Yuropiyanañcā Marāṭhicā Abhyās va Sevā*, Pune:Venus, 1960, pp. 43-44.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
16. Naregal, Veena, *Language Politics, Elites and the Public Sphere: Western India under Colonialism*, pp. 160-200.
17. The number of subscribers for *Darpan* was 250 while that of *Kesari*, launched in 1881 and considered as the first publication to have reached a mass audience the circulation figure stood at 3500 in 1883. Naregal, pp. 195, 210.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 182, fn
19. Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso, 1983.
20. Seth, Sanjay, *Subject Lessons: The Western Education of Colonial India*, New Delhi: OUP, 2007.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 159 – 182.
22. *Ibid.*, 190-191.
23. Ballantyne, Tony, *Orientalism and Race: Aryanism in the British Empire*, New York: Palgrave, 2002, p. 169.
24. See Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race*, pp. 169-187
25. Pinge, *Yuropiyanañcā Marāṭhicā Abhyās*, pp. 19-20.
26. Seth, Sanjay, *Subject Lessons*, p. 49.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
28. Malshe S.G., *Gataśatak Śodhitānā*, Pune: Pratima Prakashan, 1989, pp. 11-13; Kulkarni, S.R. *Madhyayugīn Marathi Sāhitya*, p. 191.
29. Priyolkar, A.K., *Introduction to Yuropiyanañcā Marāṭhicā Abhyās va Sevā* by S. M. Pinge, Pune: Venus, 1960. p. 8.
30. Pandit, Maya, ‘Translation Culture and the Colonial Discourse in

Nineteenth Century Maharashtra', in Paranjape, P.N. and M.V. Nadkarni (ed.s), *Explorations in Applied Linguistics: M V Nadkarni Felicitation Volume*, Pune: Shubhada Saraswat Prakashan, 1995, pp. 168-181.

31. Ibid., quoted from Government records, p. 174.
32. The following brief sketch of literary history is compiled from Das, Sisir Kumar, HIL, Vol. 8; and Jog, R.S. (ed.), *Marathi Vāṅmayācā Itihās*, Vol. 4, Mumbai: Marathi Sahitya Parishad, 1973.

Chapter 4

Ushering in a Native Modernity: Theory between 1860 and 1875

Not surprisingly, the early Marathi theory was produced by the Western-educated, upper-caste elite of the Bombay and Poona region. Certainly, it was this group alone, which was equipped with the discursive competence to engage into a dialogue with the West in such a sophisticated cultural sphere. What needs to be investigated further, however, is the significance of this particular location on the contemporary ideological scene and how the theoretical articulation of the members of this class can be read today in terms of its cultural politics. Although they were created by the colonizers in their own image, did they use their free will to negotiate the discursive space that opened before them? To what extent were they playing by the rules set by the colonizing culture and to what extent were they refusing to be governed by that logic? To attempt any answers to these questions we need to better understand the relationship between the new elite and the colonial public sphere.

Emergence of the Colonial Middle Class

A sophisticated understanding of the nature and status of the colonial middle class is essential in order to correctly evaluate the role played by the theorists of Marathi in colonial western India and to justify the canon one is trying to establish since all the six theorists discussed here come from the middle class. Sanjay Joshi's recent publication *The Middle Class in Colonial India*¹ offers a comprehensive overview of

the various stages of our understanding of the concept of the middle class, especially of “the Westernized elite”. Beginning with Marquis of Dufferin’s phrase “a microscopic minority” which was a characteristic colonialist formulation that sought to delegitimize the middle class as representative of the Indian society, Joshi’s volume traces a gradual progression in the concept of the middle class right up to the present times.

In the context of this study, especially, one need not talk about the emergence of the middle class as a generalized phenomenon based on any economic indicators. As Joshi has argued, the middle class as a social category cannot be understood merely in terms of a common social, educational or professional background, and we need to see its members as acting upon their contemporary cultural politics. “It was the initiation of new cultural politics which allowed them to articulate a new set of beliefs, values, and modes of politics, thus distinguishing them from other social groups both below and above.”² This, what Joshi describes as the “cultural entrepreneurship” of the Westernized elite is, to my mind, a relevant concept in analyzing the emergence of literary theory in western India.

Of particular relevance to us is the essay by Michelguglielmo Torri, “The Myth of a ‘Westernized Middle Class’”³, from Joshi’s collection. It substantially consolidates the overall debates on the concept of the middle class and argues that a nuanced reading of this concept needs to go beyond two kinds of prevalent interpretations: the idea that this class was a homogenous elite group that ushered in modernity and the humbler assessment developed by the Cambridge school of historians, that it was a group of middlemen who were the go-betweens of the colonizers and leading social groups of colonial India. Torri proposes to go beyond these two common interpretations by using the notion of ‘organic intellectuals’.

The Gramscian notion of an ‘organic intellectual’ refers to an elite who comes from the middle class but who also has managed to disengage himself/herself from the politics of the class of his/her own origin and by virtue of his/her professional role as an intellectual, has managed to connect into wider, more holistic political processes of his/her times. Such a person then becomes able to “represent” the class-interests of an existing or an emerging autonomous social group that adopts him/her for such a role.

This study will try to show that while the popular criticism and general literary culture of Marathi evolved along the lines of the general dominant ethos of the newly emerging bourgeois culture during colonialism with strong revivalist overtones, in the work of the theorists of Marathi that are identified here, we do have instances of the exercises of such organic intellectuals who were “politically aware and active as theorists, strategists, organizers, and spokesmen on behalf of existing or emerging autonomous social groups.”⁴ I wholly concur with Torri’s argument that the Gramscian concept of an organic intellectual is a useful theoretical tool when one wants to analyse the Indian colonial reality. The six theorists of Marathi, selected as the canon of colonial Marathi theory are all intellectuals in this very specific sense, in varying degrees.

Who were the New Elite?

By mid-nineteenth century, the traditional ascendancy of the Brahmin caste was clearly taking a beating in western India and a new class of elite: of Western-educated upper-caste Hindus was emerging as a new semi-hegemonic formation. It was becoming increasingly difficult for the orthodox Brahmin camp to retain the royal patronage they enjoyed during the days of Mountstuart Elphinstone. The new elite that, of course, prominently featured a number of

Brahmins, were now pressing for a new liberal value system in which the principles of equality, social justice and common good were to be preferred over that of inherited social status and rank. Sociological studies of colonial western India such as those by Ravinder Kumar and Veena Naregal, have vividly outlined the story of the Dakṣiṇā fund⁵ as symptomatic of the losing battle waged by the conservative Brahmins and how in due course, the government, in the middle of protests by the new class of Western-educated liberal Brahmins and other Hindu castes, decided to make the fund available for “the general purposes of promoting education and rewarding acquisition of science”.

Kumar observes that if in the late 1830s and throughout the 1840s the Brahmin class from different parts of the Bombay presidency protested repeatedly about this decision and claimed that such withdrawal of the support the Brahmins and of their learning would lead to the erosion of the Hindu social values, in the 1850s there were a series of petitions from the new class of liberal Brahmins—all products of the new English education—arguing logically that since the funds were drawn from the revenue generated by the tax paid by *Kuṇbīs*, their utilization should be in the interest of the general population, not just of the Brahmins. It pointed out clearly that the concept of *Dakṣiṇā* was founded on “the old illiberal and barbarous prejudice of confining learning to the Brahmin caste and locking it up in stores which the great mass of people can never be able to hope to open....”⁶

This long drawn-out tussle culminated in the *Dakṣiṇā* fund being reorganized in 1850 to promote translation and printing of “useful” works in the vernacular⁷ and then in being taken over entirely by the Education Department in 1859 and eventually in fellowships being instituted for candidates of all castes⁸. The Poona Sanskrit College, which was set up by utilizing part of the *Dakṣiṇā* fund, was thrown

open to all castes in 1850 and after a number of reforms in the direction of Westernization, in 1864 it was renamed Deccan College.

While Kumar has cited the examples of Gopāl Harī Deśmukh, Goviṇḍ Vāsudev Jośī and Viśvanāth Nārāyaṇ Māṇḍlik as the representative figures of the new class of liberal Brahmins, he has grouped them with later figures such as Viṣṇuśāstrī Ciṭṭṭkar and Mahādeo Goviṇḍ Rāṇaḍe. It is, I think, an error to group these two generations together, as the politics of the first generation of liberal Brahmins seems to have been markedly different from that of the next generation. Naregal’s more perceptive observation is that the early colonial intellectuals were far keener on deploying “the discourses of modern scientific rationality and liberal political ideology”⁹ than their successors and she identifies an ideological shift occurring within the vernacular sphere towards orthodoxy from the 1860s¹⁰.

The argument emerging from these two discussions can be extended a little by including non-Brahmin figures such as Dādobā Pāṇḍuraṅga (*Vaiśya*), his brothers, Bhāskar and Atmārām Pāṇḍuraṅga Tarkhaḍkar, Rām Bālkriṣṇa Jaykar (*Paṭhāre-Prabhū*), Morobā Kānhobā Vijaykar (*Paṭhāre-Prabhū*) and Jagannāth Śaṅkarṣeṭ (*Sonār*) Jotīrāo Phule (*Māṭī*) etc. as part of the new elite and I would also differ with Naregal and argue that the shift towards orthodoxy begins towards the 1870s when Viṣṇuśāstrī Ciṭṭkar eclipses these Brahmin as well as non-Brahmin sources of liberal secular discourses completely, rather than in the 1860s. Throughout the 1860s there are still strong liberal voices present in the public sphere. Although it is true that Phule’s text of *Tritiya Ratna*— considered as the first modern Marathi play by some scholars¹¹, was rejected by the Dakṣiṇā Prize committee in 1855 on grounds of aesthetic deficit, texts like *Yaśodāpāṇḍuraṅgī* by Dādobā, discussed in detail below, or his autobiography, published in 1870, provide a counter-

evidence of the liberal imagination being alive through the 1860s. The Brahmin liberal voices may be said to be troubled by a dilemma about giving up their claims to social superiority and embracing the demands of a modern liberal democracy entirely, but they remain convinced of the moral righteousness of liberalism. They are not yet assuming an abrasive revivalist tone that the later Brahmin elite such as Tilak were to assume.

Liberalism did not begin to influence the new elite only through the vehicle of the English education made available and monitored by the government; it also came in with the missionary schools that were opened in western India from as early as the 1814¹². Missionary organizations such as the American Society, the Scottish Mission, London Missionary Society, the Church Missionary Society and Irish Presbyterian Missionary Society were active in the Bombay Presidency since the early nineteenth century.¹³ While the East India Company's education policy concentrated on the already literate upper castes largely, the missionaries worked with the lower castes as well. Phule, from the *Māṭī* caste had been educated in the missionary institutions and by mid-nineteenth century, convinced of the power of new education, had formed a clearly envisioned strategy of opening schools for the deprived sections of society. His educational activism beginning from the 1850s onwards had a direct impact on providing points of access for women and for the lower castes of *Mahārs*, *Māngs* to the otherwise fragmented public sphere.

From the point of view of the administrative policies that came to be adopted from the government's side, too there are a number of positive developments. The foundation of the three Universities in the three presidencies, the decision to increase the share of Indian participation in the administration in the wake of the 1857 revolt, etc. are important positive developments in the colonial history. It is

a different climate than the climate of the 1870s during which a mood of distrust and confrontation begins to build up.

Before Nationalism: the New Elite as Nativists

To sum up the preceding discussion, the mood of the 1860s is strikingly different from the mood of the 1870s. When one puts one's ears to the seashell sounds of the 1860s it is quite difficult to foresee the spirited attack on imperialism mounted by Viṣṇuśāstrī Cipluṅkar in the mid 1870s through his *Nibandhamālā*, his impatience with criticisms of Hindu society, his whipping up of the Maratha nationalist sentiment. One would never suspect that such strong winds of a strident political nationalism would gather storm by the 1880s.

In comparison, the 1860s seem to be a quiet period in the history of colonial western India. The first generation of upper-caste university graduates in western India, rapidly being absorbed during this time, into the administrative and educational edifice set-up during the Company rule seem to share a distinct mood of sincerity and cheerful self-confidence. The awareness that they indeed are the new elite envisioned by the proponents of Western education, that they are the mediators between the Raj and the natives, allows them a certain comfort level vis-a-vis the colonisers. Their knowledge of indigenous culture and their exposure to Western liberal ideals seems to place them in a fortunate position from where they could do a lot of good and new vistas seem to open before them through the enlightened colonial interventions. They seem to partner the creation of a new modern society with the rulers themselves and the rulers seem ever-willing to listen to their wise counsel.

In this mood of mutual admiration, there seemed to be a place for the industrious, meritorious Hindu in the new order of things and if the old world was dead there did not

seem much to grieve for. Under the British the Bombay Presidency seemed to be on a steady upward curve of social progress and modernization. The dissolution of the Satara State in 1848 seemed merely a matter of course. The Brahminical Peshwa regime was over long since and a new modern democratic society was emerging from its remains, of which these young Western-educated men were the undisputed makers.

Yet, it would be wrong to think it was largely a complacent mood. There was plenty of work lying ahead, of course. The Bombay Association established in 1852 under the leadership of Jagannāth Śaṅkarśeṭ and Bhāu Dājī Lāḍ among others had taken important steps towards making the East India Company answerable to the people by bringing greater transparency in its administration. Until the mid 60s it was an important political representative body in western India.¹⁴ Dādābhāi Naorojī had launched his East India Association in England in 1866 and its Bombay branch opened in 1869 with Bhāu Dājī Lāḍ as the president. Indeed some of the most rigorous and scathing critiques of imperialism and of Hindu dogmatism appear during this quarter, but the suspicious, hyperactive nationalist imagination was not the catalyst of these years. Rather, a progressive optimistic mood prevailed and the self-image of the colonized society was certainly a secure and positive one.

Even as this first generation of the Western-educated among the upper castes such as the Brahmins, the *Pāthāre-Prabhūs*, *Śeṇvīs* and *Vaiśyas* clearly and eagerly shared the Western agenda of setting off the forces of the Enlightenment here in India, it also had an inherent quiet faith in the soundness of the native tradition as a whole and more precisely in the ability of this tradition to reinvent itself. While the social problems related to caste and gender, were too serious to be condoned, it did not seem too difficult to gradually erase them from the Hindu culture, with the help

of modernization. It seemed, for the modern educated upper-caste and urban Hindus, merely a matter of time.

The infighting of the public sphere that many political scientists have noted within the Indian colonial modernity was yet to set in. For someone like Kriṣṇaśāstrī Ciplūṅkar, a Brahmin well-versed in traditional knowledge, as well as, at home with the forces of modernization, it was not very difficult to sympathise with and also to garner support from Jotīrāo Phule. The unbridgeable ideological gap between his son Viṣṇuśāstrī Ciplūṅkar and Phule, between M.G. Rānade and Phule that we begin to witness in the last quarter of the nineteenth century did not exist in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. It was possible for Dādobā Pāṇḍuraṅga's religious reformist organization *Paramahaṅsa Sabhā* to inspire Jotīrāo Phule. Even the polemical writings of Gopāl Harī Deśmukh or Viṣṇubuā Brahmaçārī have a sense of reasonable maturity about them.

Their larger ideological programmes did not seem to require them to paint their rivals in all black, and while expressing their pride in their own culture they did not feel there was any need of projecting any glorious past or that they had to sweep grossly evil social practices such as the monopoly of Brahmins over knowledge, untouchability and child marriages, under the carpet. In this era it was somehow easier to take a critical look at oneself, without feeling one is being sold out to the West.

I would also suggest that the temperament of the third quarter of the nineteenth century was qualitatively so different from that of nationalism that perhaps the term "nativism" may be used to aptly describe this phase. It was a state in which you continued to be your "native" self, that is, one did not feel that a part of one's cultural self was amputated from one's body and that one was somehow incomplete. Even if one was a modern liberal Brahmin, one did not feel any debilitating discontinuity between the earlier

generation and oneself. Lessons of the West were imbibed with the certainty of the ability to assimilate the new elements in one's cultural make-up.

One did not experience any violation of one's native cultural self and at the same time because one was already measuring yourself against an alien culture you were not just your native self. Nativism refers to a state when one is also growing self-conscious as a 'native', when one is not just naturally one's native self but is also involved in self-fashioning. The element of self-consciousness, self-reflexivity made one a nativist, rather than a native. The element of ease made it unnecessary to reject the foreign culture violently. Moreover, your self-consciousness was not the self-laudatory nationalist consciousness and nor was it the *babu* consciousness that shared the condescension of the colonizer. If nationalism was a reaction to colonialism, nativism can be described as the easy response of a society that had experienced culture contact, the umpteenth time, and was merely readjusting itself.

The early theoretical writings in Marathi emerge in this environment of being at home. They come from the group of urban, upper caste Hindu individuals and exude this mood of relaxed optimism and reasonableness that prevailed among them. Theorization along Western lines begins in Marathi, through commentaries and introductions to various texts first and then in *Nāval va Nāṭak* we have the first sustained attempt to consolidate this impulse to theorize by writing an essay on the abstract concepts of the two new genres adopted by Marathi writers, of the novel and of the drama. Three texts of this period stand out as early theoretical works in Marathi: *Yaśodāpāṇḍuraṅgī*, the introduction to the text of *Kekāvalī*, edited by Dādobā Pāṇḍuraṅga Tarkhaḍkar, published in 1865, in Mumbai; the introduction to *Rājā Śivājī*, an 'epic' poem written by Mahādeo Moreśwar Kuṅṭe, published in Pune, in 1869 first

and then again in 1871, with another supplementary introduction; and finally the essay *Nāval va Nāṭak Yānviśayī Nibandha*, by Kāśināth Bālkrīṣṇa Marāṭhe first read as a lecture and published later in 1872, in Pune. All the three writers were closely affiliated to the educational and administrative institutions set up by the colonizers and the texts emerge in proximity to these institutions, which were an interface between the native subjects and their Western rulers.

Dādobā Pāṇḍuraṅga Tarkhaḍkar (1814-1882) and *Yaśodāpāṇḍuraṅgī* (1865)

Dādobā belonged to one of the most illustrious Western-educated progressive *Vaiśya* families in Bombay. Along with his brothers Bhāskar Tarkhaḍkar (1816-1847) and Dr Ātmārām Pāṇḍuraṅga Tarkhaḍkar (1823-1898), he contributed greatly to the intellectual life of Maharashtra. Together they represent the spirit of the early generations of Western-educated elite of western India.

Bhāskar Tarkhaḍkar's series of letters written under the pseudonym 'A Hindoo' in *The Bombay Gazette* in 1841 is among the earliest attacks on the ruthless economic exploitation of India at the hands of the British. It has been argued that his hard-hitting approach was very different from the early pro-British conservative reformers such as Bāl Gaṅgādhara śāstrī Jāmbhekar¹⁵. Dādābhāi Naorojī's lecture on the subject of economic drain delivered before the East India Association, London in 1867, makes an oblique reference to the secret society run by Bhāskar Tarkhaḍkar to discuss the effects of British rule on India¹⁶. Ātmārām Pāṇḍuraṅga, in 1851, was among the first batch of the graduates of the Grant Medical College, which had come into existence in 1845. Dr Ātmārām Pāṇḍuraṅga also was instrumental in founding the *Prārthanā Samāj* in 1867, which like the *Brāhmo Samāj* of Bengal sought

to revitalize Hinduism by rejecting its dogma and rituals and by retrieving its *Bhakti* elements, especially the element of social egalitarianism.

The *Prārthanā Samāj*, in fact was a culmination of similar experiments at religious reform carried out earlier in western India, mainly by Dādobā, from among the Tarkhaḍkar brothers, along with others such as Rām Bālkrīṣṇa Jaykar and R.G. Bhāṅḍārkar. Dādobā Pāṅḍuraṅga's treatise *Dharmavivecan*, written in 1843—which sought to radicalize Hinduism by questioning its principles of caste, polytheism and the infallibility of the Vedas—led to the formation of the two earliest religious reform organizations in western India: the first was the *Manavdharma Sabhā*, founded in 1844, in Surat, by Dādobā along with Durgārām Mehtājī, a passionate Gujarati reformer¹⁷ and the second was the *Paramahaṅsa Sabhā*, established by Dādobā after his return from Surat to Bombay in 1849, incidentally, in the same year when the *Dakṣiṇā* controversy sparked off. Phule was greatly influenced by *Paramahaṅsa Sabhā* and its programme of eradicating the caste system. Dādobā Pāṅḍuraṅga, thus, is undoubtedly, an important early figure of the new elite.

It is pertinent to note that in some ways the secret organization, the *Paramahaṅsa Sabhā* was more radical than the later *Prārthanā Samāj*, which eventually adopted a more conservative, softer approach to social reform and rapidly assumed an upper-caste bourgeois character. Unlike in the case of Dādobā, Ātmārām Pāṅḍuraṅga's career as a leader of the *Prārthanā Samāj* was not so rife with difficulties as to require any cover from social censure. While the *Prārthanā Samāj* certainly did have a presence in western India, because of the membership of stalwarts such as M. G. Rānade, G. H. Deśmukh (Lokahitawādi) and Sir Nārāyaṇ Candāvarkar, when the *Prārthanā Samāj* aligned itself with the *Brāhmo Samāj* in 1870s, its early radical potential somehow got compromised gradually and in fact Viṭṭhal Rāmji Śinde, a

missionary of the *Prārthanā Samāj*, who founded the Depressed Classes Mission in 1906, and contributed tremendously to the social cause of the untouchables, was disowned by the *Prārthanā Samājists* in 1910.¹⁸

It is interesting to compare the role played by the two elder Tarkhaḍkar brothers in contemporary cultural life. If Bhāskar Tarkhaḍkar ran a secret organization that criticized British imperialism, Dādobā the eldest brother ran another secret organization that took the ritualistic, caste-ridden Hindu society as its *bête noir*. Between them, the two Tarkhaḍkar brothers seem to represent the two fronts on which the Western educated intellectuals of the early modern India were poised to open their battle: economic-political reforms and social reforms. One battle was with the enemy outside and the other was with the enemy within.

As a case study of a representative of this early generation of English educated upper caste Hindu men of western India what do we know of Dādobā? The most interesting record of his life is found in his autobiography, *Ātmacaritra*, published in 1870, one of the early examples of the use of this genre in Marathi. What emerges through the pages of *Ātmacaritra* is the impression of a sensitive, judicious intellect that is candidly and faithfully recording the momentous cultural changes that were taking shape around it. Particularly noteworthy is his candidness in talking about caste and caste-bias with humaneness and without losing sight of larger liberal principles.

Dādobā was brought up on the new standardized education, in various private, government and missionary schools in Bombay, most prominent among them being the Elphinstone Institution.¹⁹ His subsequent career in public service has been summed up cogently in the following extract:

Dadoba Panduranga first held a variety of teaching positions. Beginning life as an assistant master at the Elphinstone Institution, on Rs 20 pm,

Dadoba moved to Surat as assistant English school master in 1840-41, and came back to Bombay in 1846, as director of the normal classes. In 1848, he was appointed superintendent, government vernacular schools, on a salary of Rs 300 pm, inclusive of a travelling allowance of Rs 100pm. In 1852, Dadoba was appointed deputy collector at Ahmednagar, from where he was transferred to Thane in 1858. The collector and magistrate of Thane, S P Morgan opposed the move. Apparently, harassment by the latter led Dadoba to resign at the age of 46 on a pension of Rs 116 and 8 annas. He was confident that he could maintain himself on his writings, but losses in the share crisis, and the small pension led to the government giving him the position of Marathi translator on Rs 200 pm in 1880.²⁰

It appears thus, Dādobā, born in the *Vaiśya* caste, had a fairly stable career in public service, seems to have made himself useful to the government in different teaching and administrative capacities and also had a parallel career as a serious social intellectual and an outstanding linguist and scholar. A radical book like *Dharmavivekan* was written at the age of twenty-nine by him and he also is credited with establishing the first two religious reform organizations of western India at the age of thirty and thirty-five. He headed the Marathi section of the *Dnyānaprasāraṅ Sabhā*, which was the vernacular wing of the Students Literary and Scientific Society, established in Bombay in 1848. His *Grammar* of the Marathi language and his dictionary had made a significant impact on the intellectual circle of those times and he came to be known as the Paṇinī of Marathi.²¹

In the flux of ideas and social processes around him Dādobā seems to project a clear perspective on his own relation with the orthodox Hindu religion and the Western knowledge system, which he had inherited along with its liberal humanism. This perspective, poised equidistantly between colonialism and a religious-nationalist revivalism is also evident in his reading of “literature”. He reassesses a late eighteenth century *paṇḍit* poet Moropant for breaking open the treasury of Sanskrit knowledge, making it accessible to the common people, in Prākṛit and by emphasizing his

lineage within the *Bhāgvat Dharma*: the reformist version of Hinduism, reflected in the *Bhakti* revival of the medieval times.

Yaśodāpāṇḍuraṅgī (1865)²², Dādobā's commentary on Moropaṅt's *Kekāvalī* carries an introduction which can be identified as one of the few first voices in Marathi theory. The preface to *Yaśodāpāṇḍuraṅgī* is an interesting document in the history of Marathi criticism. In the several pages of textual examples, illustrations from and appreciation of Moropaṅt's poetry, Dādobā displays his knowledge of the *rasa*, *dhwanī* theories and *alaṅkāśāstra* from the traditional Sanskrit poetics. His ideology is of course, far from being elitist. At various points in the introduction, his anti-Brahminical stance yields some very caustic remarks on the contemporary scholars, on *paṇḍit* poets like Vāman and on *Advaitavādīs* who moved away from the simple tenets of the *Bhāgvat Dharma*. (p.33) Dādobā begins his introduction with a biographical sketch of Moropaṅt deriving from stories orally handed down from generation to generation. He appreciates Moropaṅt's contributions at great length, in the context of the caste hierarchies of Hindu society. Moropaṅt is credited with an egalitarian, generous imagination comparable to that of the great Brahmin poets like Dnyāneśwar, Eknāth, Mukteśwar, and Vāman who translated Sanskrit scriptures into *Prākṛit*, that is, Marathi to make them accessible for the common people. This act of throwing open the forbidden treasures of Sanskrit literature, monopolized by Brahmins is described by Dādobā as a great philanthropic act (p.10).

Dādobā's progressive Hinduism is also apparent when he praises the *Bhaktī* school unambiguously for its inclusive nature and for its ability to transcend religious boundaries. He praises Moropaṅt for acknowledging and saluting the lower caste saints of the *Bhaktī* school from castes such as *Sonār*, *Māḷī*, *Śimpī*, *Kuṁbhār*, *Caṁbhār*, *Mahār*, *Kasāī* and

Musalmān. He says that it is obvious that Moropaṅt respected the lower caste saints such as Nāmdev, Tukārām, Sāvta, Gorhā, Rohidās, Cokhāmeḷā, Sajanā, Kabīr and Sheikh Mohammad as much as he respected the Brahmin saints (p.29).

In a footnote, Dādobā describes the miracles of Sheikh Muhammad as described by Mahipat in his *Bhaktivijay*, and recounts his own visit to Sheikh Muhammad's *math* at Śrigoṇde and quotes from his *abhaṅga* as an example of his unorthodox thinking (p.12). This deliberate emphasis on the anti-caste aspect of the *Bhakti* tradition reveals that the *Prastāvanā* is not intended as a purely academic exercise. More than being an 'objective' assessment of *Bhakti*, it also speaks of Dādobā's political and religious convictions and willingness to take a political stand on these issues in the contemporary public sphere. The agenda of reforming Hinduism, rescuing its egalitarian traditions from its rigid, orthodox Vedic forms, has a bearing on his reassessment of Moropaṅt in the tradition of Marathi literature.

Interestingly, in order to account for Moropaṅt's popularity Dādobā first turns, not to any intrinsic and unquestionable value of Moropaṅt's work, but to its adoption by *Haridāsas* and especially later by Rām Jośī, the well-known *shāhīr*, who was earlier famous for his *lāvaṅīs*.

He also describes the *haridāsivrittī*, a vocation lowest in the rank of *Vaidīks*, *śāstrīs* and *purāṇīks* but open for all castes and creeds and explains how during the Peshwa rule, as general scriptural knowledge increased, the *Haridāsas* required to spice up their simple Prākṛit *kathās* and *ovī* or *abhaṅgas* to impress their audience. It was at such time that Moropaṅt wrote his *āryās* that were comparable to Sanskrit poetry and when Rāmjośī came across these, he was so impressed by them that he gave up his earlier *lokaraṅjak tamāsgirī*, mere popular entertainment and adopted the *lokopadeśak haridāsivrittī*.

Dādobā's aversion to narrow Brahminical values, especially to the pretentious morality of the Brahmins becomes apparent in his effort to defend Rām Jośī. He commends his courageous act of dedicating himself to the art of entertaining the common people, in spite of being a learned Brahmin, well-versed in *sahityaśāstra*, when he could have applied himself, like the other *paṇḍits* of his times to winning the false prestige of shawls and *Dakṣiṇā* with his dry arguments (p.14). Dādobā says, this proves that Rām Jośī must have been a big-hearted and honest man. Rām Jośī's image in the mind of the people as a wayward and disreputable character, for Dādobā, is proof of his healthy nonconformist outlook that did not brook the rigid pedantic culture of the Brahmins (p.15).

In Tarkhaḍkar's hypothesis about the reasons behind Moropaṅt's popularity, one can trace an evidence of a new, historicist and sociological attitude to literature. At a time when traditional hagiographical writing was more common and biographical writing was far from being an established genre²³, this treatment of Moropaṅt was a significant attempt at a critical biographical sketch.

He appraises *Kekāvalī* in the context of the *Bhāgvat Saṁpradāy*. This contextualizing is significant as it stands in a stark contrast with the liberal-humanistic standards of judgment applied by Western critics to Indian poetry. The Christian missionaries often condemned traditional Marathi literature as vulgar and full of superstitions and falsehoods. For example, while discussing the element of vulgarity in Moropaṅt's poetry, Dādobā points out the perfect acceptability of the *śṛiṅgār rasa* in the *Bhaktī* tradition and in the native culture, in general. He cites examples of a number of Medieval Sanskrit and Prākṛit works such as *Gītagovinda*, *Śṛimadbhāgvat*, *Brahmavaivartak Purāṇa*, *Veṅṅisamhāra*, and argues that it was perfectly natural on the part of Moropaṅt to use *śṛiṅgāric* language at times. On the contrary, it is the

sparing use of *śringār rasa* that is surprising and commendable. “Then if it is so customary for the establishment [the Sanskrit tradition] to express a devotional love full of *śringār rasa* from a very ancient time, [why should it be not acceptable if] an ordinary Prākṛit poet uses a few drops of this *rasa* in some seven or eight verses?” he asks (pp.16, 34-35).

The terms Dādobā uses to theorize this observation are very relevant: ‘*lokavyavahār*’, i.e. the prevalent practices in a particular society and ‘*ruchī*’, i.e. popular taste (p.16)—precisely the criteria adopted by Śṛidhar Vyankateś Ketkar later, in 1935. These were also the criteria lost gradually by the mainstream Marathi criticism as it lost its way in the maze of Western poetics and presented warped judgments of their literature to its readers.

Dādobā’s comment in the preface to *Kekāvalī* that in order to appreciate the literature of a nation one needs the eyes and the tongue belonging to the same soil is a forceful formulation of the same principle. He says,

In order to rightly judge and enjoy the well-known poetic works of a country or society, one needs to have the eyes and the tongue of that same country. I am not saying that for others it is impossible to do so; perhaps if they are broad-minded enough they may even be able to evaluate a work of art justly but the joy experienced at the reading of such works by the native connoisseurs will be far greater than the joy experienced by those of another country. The reasons for this are many and complex. When one has lived among a people for generations together, when one has shared the same body of cultural practices, customs, skills and knowledge with them for ages, one’s mind is steeped in the colours of the thickly interwoven cultural fabric of those people and the emotional responses that the poetic works of this society will evoke in one’s mind cannot be evoked in a mind which is not steeped in the same colours. (p. 35, *Kekāvalī*, my translation)

Tarkhaḍkar seeks to distinguish between what constitutes morality and what does not, what constitutes obscenity in literature and what does not and draws our attention to how the dividing line is often unfairly drawn for us by intellectuals

who are slaves of either the Sanskritic or the English tradition. He argues that we need to look more carefully at the native social and linguistic conventions and judge by our own standards.

The thirty and odd pages long introduction to *Kekāvalī* is a sound piece of criticism, betraying no sign of stress at the contact with Western culture. Dādobā's objective, analytical style and especially a full grasp of the politics of language shows that he has assimilated valuable lessons from the West without allowing his cultural inheritance to suffer a set-back in the face of colonialism. One can feel the strong presence of indigenous standards of judgment and a clear awareness of the past traditions. While he upholds the tradition of dissent, anti-elitism in the native literary tradition he also exposes the futility of applying foreign standards of morality to native literature. These critical observations are a significant pronouncement, especially in the light of the eventual decline of this principle in the twentieth century.

It will be obvious that the contemporary concern of redefining Hinduism,—both, in the light of its Otherization in the missionary discourses, and in the light of its own harsh realities of social injustice and Brahmin monopoly of religious authority and knowledge—has played a role in Dādobā's theorization. The *Prastāvanā* of *Yaśodāpāñḍurāṅgī*, therefore, can be correctly understood as a response to the contemporary cultural politics.

Mahādeo Moreśwar Kuṅṭe (1835-1888) and
Rājā Śivājī (1869)

Kuṅṭe, like Dādobā, had been influenced by the new English education. He was himself a prominent educationist in Pune. Widely experienced as a teacher and an administrator in various schools and colleges in Pune, Kolhapur, Sind, Gujarat and Mumbai, Kuṅṭe had won the favours of Mr. Chatfield,

an officer in the Education Department of the Government that had been established in 1840 to implement educational policies revised after the acceptance of Macaulay's Minutes (1835). He had a fine command over Sindhi, Gujarati, Marathi, and English languages and some of his scholarly achievements include a book on *Mīmāṃsāsāstra*, called *Ṣad-darśanacīntanikā*, another named *Vicissitudes of Aryan Civilization in India*, which was sent to an association in Rome²⁴ and "A Lecture on Ceylon" (1888), in which Kuṅṭe said that there are only two races in Ceylon, the Aryan and the Tamilian, (some Singhalese scholars point to this as one of the early racist theories about Sri Lanka, leading to today's problems of racism). Kuṅṭe is also credited with writing the first elegy in Marathi, on the death of Chhatrapatī Rājārām of Kolhapur in 1870.²⁵

His long narrative poem, an epic called *Rājā Śivājī* originally planned in twelve parts, of which he completed six, is known in the history of Marathi literature for its introduction in English documenting the influence of Romanticism and Utilitarianism on him. The preface to *Rājā Śivājī* is said to have heralded a new school of poetry in Marathi and it was the first among similar manifestoes that sprang up in other Indian languages during and after the fifties. Raṅgalāl Baṅdopadhyāy wrote a long preface to his heroic poem *Padminī Upākhyān* in Bangla in 1858 which pleaded for a new poetry and new tenets of criticism that were different from the traditional ones. Narmadāśaṅkar, a Gujarati poet published similar views in the same year in his article 'Kavī aṅi Kavītā' with references to Hazlitt's reiteration of the definition of poetry by Wordsworth as a spontaneous expression of feeling. Both Raṅgalāl and Narmad used the concept of *rasa* to develop the romantic idea of poetry.²⁶

Interestingly, *Rājā Śivājī* was submitted for a competition announced by the Dakṣiṇā Prize Committee in 1867 and was published with an introduction written later, in 1869.

Gaṇeś śāstrī Lele, another contemporary poet who wrote in the Sanskrit poetic tradition, received the first prize of Rupees three hundred, for his *Shivaji Caritra*. Kuṅṭe, in spite of being a scholar of Sanskrit had chosen to write in his mother-tongue as he wanted to shape Marathi poetry in a new way. His experiment did not go unnoticed. Kriṣṇaśāstri Cipluṅkar, appreciated it by giving Kuṅṭe an award of Rupees hundred.²⁷

Rājā Śivājī was one of the early experiments in writing poetry in everyday Marathi dialect and Kuṅṭe seems to be expecting a lot of criticism from the establishment. To his critics – who he believes must have the qualities of ‘knowledge and large-mindedness’– he advises: “wait, think, compare and then weigh evidence. Kindly do not be hasty. An author does not seek to please you only. He seeks to paint an ideal, true, beautiful and just at all times and in all places. Hence a poet is judged by the present generation as well as by posterity.”²⁸

He begins on a defensive note in the introduction to the second volume, “My poetry belongs to a particular class and has its merits and defects. I am conscious of what I am about. I have received encouragement from all places in Maharashtra, and there are representatives of the school of poetry I belong to in Kolapore, Karad, Satara, Poona, Bombay and Dhulia. Encouraged by the common people who instinctively admire the true, the just and the beautiful without any learning, and by some of the rising generation, whose taste is really influenced by Western culture, I have published this second volume....”²⁹

Kuṅṭe, after the fashion of Wordsworth and the Romantic poets, writes an introduction to justify and explain his poetic practice. Even as he expresses his faith in the common man’s taste, he feels the need to explain his experiment to the people so that he will be judged correctly. “The public is seldom erroneous in its judgment.... But it is necessary, [so]

that the public may come to a correct conclusion, to acquaint it with all the facts and circumstances connected with what is brought before it.” (p.1)

Kuñṭe’s definition of poetry contains elements of English Romanticism as well as of Utilitarianism. Like the Utilitarians he seeks to confer a ‘useful’ role on poetry in the context of human civilization. He quotes a neat definition of civilization as “that state of society which secures for it the maximum of comfort with the minimum of the waste of means”. In other words civilization lessens human suffering and increases the stock of human happiness. Happiness being a composite of material and spiritual fulfilment, Kuñṭe then defines the purpose of science as to give man control over material aspects of life and the purpose of literature as to ‘soothe his feelings, humanize them, elevate the understanding and purify them all’. Hence, for the healthy growth of a civilization the presence of an ‘original’ school of poets is as important as that of physicists (pp.8-9).

He endorses the following definition of poetry: “Poetry in the largest sense given to it, is that which charms the feelings without offending the understanding. It is essential for a poem to conform to this definition and fulfil all the conditions it embodies. But its success depends upon the taste and feelings of its readers and the feelings or taste may be refined, pure, hypercritical or vitiated in the case of a nation as well as an individual. And a work of art therefore may not therefore be properly appreciated.” (p.1)

A common strand in his views and Dādobā’s views is their idea of popular taste. Dādobā had praised Moropaṅt for his ability to appeal to the masses and had criticized the *paṇḍit* poets because they veered away from the simplicity and purity of the *Bhāgvat* Sect, the religion of the masses. Kuñṭe, in a similar fashion, discusses the taste of Maharashtrian people, whom he classifies into three classes according to their tastes: 1. *Śāstrīs* and Sanskrit scholars, 2. the educated, i.e. those

who know English and 3. the uneducated “especially those who are indifferent to the Shastris or the educated and who follow what their instinct prompts and delight in what their nature likes”. (p.2)

He criticizes the first two categories for being quite away from the mark. The *Śāstrīs* are too preoccupied with details of style, and ornament and as a consequence ignore the overall effect of a work of art. “... I believe that the times are altered now. It is too late to attempt to write a poem on the model of Kirata or Naishadha. As masterpieces of art, they are almost unrivalled; but of an art which is not inspired by nature and which does not imitate it but which is opposed to it. The whole is too dazzling and gorgeous to be natural.” (p.3) This emphasis on the realistic style is derived from Western Romanticism and closely resembles similar emphasis in the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1802). In the Western distinction between the classicist and the romanticist Kuṅṭe finds a useful paradigm that can help him define his own place vis-à-vis the *Paṇḍit* poets and the Sanskritists. He categorises *Rāmāyaṇ*, *Mahābhārat* as Romantic poetry and Kalidās, Tukārām and Rāmdās as Romantic poets; while the *Pañcakāvya*, *Caṃpūs* and *Aryās* of Moropaṅt are described as Classicist. He expects his poetry to receive a lot of criticism for it was romantic in nature and the current taste, moulded by the *Śāstrīs* was classicist. (p.5) Such a distinction was certainly not quite the right kind of categorization of Indian literary traditions. But Kuṅṭe seems to set a trend here that was to continue well into the twentieth century. By the twentieth century the Romantics were eulogized to such an extent that every good poet in Marathi was classified as a romantic.

The Western-educated men, the second category, are good enough according to Kuṅṭe as long as they write in prose. As soon as they attempt to write in verse they backslide into imitating Moropaṅt and Vāman, the ‘degenerate

Sanskrit-Marathi poets'. (p.4) He finds their *padas* and *sākhīs*—vernacular literary forms—tolerably 'adapted to the lyrical style of poetry' but in their *ślokas* and *aryās* the over-dependence on Sanskrit phraseology makes their verse artificial and difficult to understand. He ridicules the new vogue of explaining the meaning of difficult words in footnotes that was started by these poets. While Dādobā admired Moropaṅt for making the classical texts available in Marathi, Kuṅṭe expresses reservations against the classicist character of Moropaṅt's poetry. If Dādobā was appreciative of the skilful way in which Moropaṅt could weave together seamlessly the sanskritized diction and the crude rustic diction of the Marathi dialect, Kuṅṭe is aiming solely at debunking the baggage of the Sanskritist tradition in Marathi. More than being a judicious evaluation of Moropaṅt, this has to be read as Kuṅṭe's response to the linguistic situation in his own time, which we will discuss in detail later.

The last category that Kuṅṭe finds most commendable is of the uneducated, the masses who have withstood the invasion of the Mohammedan culture and the Sanskrit or Brahminical culture and 'have retained amidst political revolutions and religious transitions their peculiar feelings and taste'. (p.6) (He is also proud that only the Marathas have succeeded in withstanding the overwhelming tide of Mohammendan influence while the rest of the northern part of India has fallen prey to this onslaught.) The masses are, however, susceptible to 'proper influences' like that of Tukārām, for instance, Kuṅṭe avers. (p.7)

Art not only functions to preserve the unspoilt taste of common Hindus it also has an egalitarian function within the Hindu community in Kuṅṭe's scheme. For Kuṅṭe, literature serves the purpose of bridging the gap between the elite, the upper classes and the masses. He not only uses the notion of '*abhiruchi*', he is also keenly aware of the growing division of taste caused by Western education. "In a country

where popular literature, easy, energetic and full of thoughts which deals with the intellectual, moral and animal aspirations of man does not exist, the lower classes are separated from the upper by a great gulf.” (p.9)

As examples of this principle, Kuṅṭe cites *Vedāntism* which did not have any followers because it lacked the support of popular literature and the text produced in the *Bhāgvat Saṁpradāy*, *Tukārāmgāthā*, which was primarily people’s literature. “So long as the whole nation is not animated by the same feelings and filled with the same aspirations, social, religious and political degradation must be the consequence.” When Śivājī rose to prominence, the bond of common sympathy inspired an entire people with nationalist feeling. A poet like Tukārām, the great representative of the common people, could flourish only during this period. In his nationalistic fervour, Kuṅṭe continues, without making it clear whether the spirit of the age gives birth to the poet or vice versa, “[hence,] apart from importing western science and art, the creation of a school of poets, who can popularize high thoughts and entertain popular feelings, and encourage the growth of that sympathy; which elevates the lower classes, and humanizes the upper and richer ones is essential” (p.9-10).

We may note here that although the earlier theoretical distinction between the functions of science and art is very neat, the examples of *Vedantism* and *Tukārām Gāthā* suggest an implicit inability to think of literature as a separate entity from philosophy. It may be safely assumed that this is not only result of the fact that Kuṅṭe could not possibly have a significant number of purely creative writings before him but also of the absence of cognitive distinction between art and other kinds of discourses, that the introductory chapter spoke of earlier.

A similar failure to differentiate between art and history is evident in his argument about why Rājā Śivājī should be considered an Epic. The *Mahābhārat* and the *Rāmāyaṇ* had

traditionally been called histories and when Kuñṭe insists that his poem is not a mere *powādā*, but is an epic, he feels the need to distinguish between the two genres. The criterion for such a differentiation between the *powādā* and the Epic as forms of poetry could be of the role that History plays in them, according to Kuñṭe. *Powādā*, he says is only a recording of popular or national sentiment, and not proper history, while an Epic is based on proper history. (p.18-19) What Kuñṭe is suggesting here is that his poem has greater objectivity, realism and “truth” in it and hence is serious poetry.

Sometimes the theorizing also leads him into embarrassing situations. While describing the beauty of the natural rustic art forms and developing his own notion of the noble savage he cites an example of a particular dance form of the Muslim festival Moharram in which the Hindus also participate. In a footnote Kuñṭe immediately clarifies that the participation of Marathas in Moharram, as an expression of the “unbounded natural energy within the rustic people, which is seeking release in the absence of any other channelization” is not to be read as an example of the adoption of the Mohammedan spirit by the Marathas but only of the ‘form’. Thus a distinction between the form and the spirit saves him from a contradiction with the earlier idea that the Marathas are the only people who have succeeded in preserving their culture intact in spite of the oppressive Muslim rules. A distinction between form and spirit, between an outer garb and an inner pure essence, perhaps taken from the Romantic mystique is employed to underscore and maintain the difference between the two communities. Kuñṭe is also aware that the ideological implications of a poem about the Hindu Maratha King and his successful exploits against the Muslim rulers might spread the feeling of enmity between Hindu and Muslim communities. (p.13)

Kuñṭe thus sees himself as a poet who wants to create a

new kind of poetry which will not only imitate Nature but will also be close to the common people. At the same time he should also be a poet who can popularize great thoughts, elevate the feelings of common people, and bind the rich and the poor with a common thread of sympathy. He sees himself as part of a civilization that has found a perfect balance of maximum comfort and minimum waste of resources, of material advancement in the form of the control offered by science on Nature and spiritual fulfilment in the form of literature. He sees a simple connection between the natural Marathi of the uneducated class and a genuine nationalism of Śivājī's era where no great gulf separated the elite and the masses. Thus, one finds a hotchpotch of Romanticism, Utilitarianism and Nativism in Kuṅṭe's thought. English Romanticism, with its emphasis on simple diction, love of Nature, and the distinctions between the Classical and the Romantic is adopted by Kuṅṭe while its fascination with the mysterious, the unfamiliar and the irrational does not surface in this scheme. The ideas of the educative purpose of literature, the need for an enlightened school of poets, the definition of civilization – all these are signs of the Utilitarian influence.

The preface to *Rājā Śivājī*, that deliberately selects a stance so similar to the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, then, is important for its reaching out after a sense of order in the field of literary criticism in Marathi. Kuṅṭe has tried to work out a consistent whole from the widely divergent thoughts that surrounded him. The preface is far from being a blind imitation of Romantic and Utilitarian theories of poetry. What we have here is an adaptation of stray elements of both in a new coherent form suitable to the changing literary establishment of Marathi. There is an effort to set up new paradigms, new standards of judgment that can better explain the beauty of poetry and that can also better establish a hierarchy of aesthetic values. Obviously Kuṅṭe was utilizing

all his learning—Eastern and Western, to cope with the literary situation that demanded the reception of Western literary aesthetic values and their rearrangement in the existing structure of literary consumption, which had already started shifting.

We may take a closer look at the sociological background of Kuṅṭe's theory, particularly, his classification of the poetic traditions and tastes of his time to gain valuable insight into the dominant currents in Marathi literary culture of the mid-nineteenth century. It is important to note the ambiguity about the intended readership in Western-educated writers like Kuṅṭe. Although both Dādobā Pāṇḍuraṅga and Kuṅṭe take a populist stance and speak for the native tradition as the most authentic source of literary standards of judgment, their writing itself is actually addressed to an upper section for whom such discussions of literary issues were relevant. Kuṅṭe's tripartite division of the readership as well as his appeal to his critics shows his awareness of the character of the new readership.

Homogeneity of an audience was a given in the pre-colonial situation in western India as literary expression was constantly interpreted and customized for a local audience by the literary systems. With the emergence of the public sphere also came the need to address diverse sections of society across the region. The comfort of the specific, local situation, of a direct live dialogue with the audience now had to be compensated for by defining and circumscribing the section of the audience one wanted to reach.³⁰ In the colonial cultural situation where the Sanskritic and Western literary traditions were given predominance, the entire balance of linguistic systems shifted in the first half of the nineteenth century. Sanskrit, which was praised by William Jones as “of a wonderful structure, more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either” in 1786³¹, and Persian had a special

prestige as classical languages and unlike the vernacular languages retained a place even after 1854, in the education system. The Royal patronage of Sanskrit also increased the status of the handful of Brahmins and upper castes who knew it or were entitled to acquire it, while it remained out of the reach of the lower castes till well into the post-independence period.³²

Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, English was not considered to be on par with the classical languages by Indians though a few people learnt it for the sake of the affluence it brought. A few administrators and scholars like Charles Grant, however, perceived a relationship between improving the moral and intellectual level of the natives and the learning of English by that time. The view that as a modern European language, English, more than the classical languages, would be beneficial to the Indians became preponderant in the first half of the nineteenth century and by the mid-century English had completely replaced the social relevance of the classical languages. The vernacular languages, once they were thrown out of the educational set-up were reduced to being considered unsophisticated dialects. Sisir Kumar Das has observed:

The Sanskritists, who had always despised the modern Indian languages, *bhasas*, and construed them inappropriate as vehicle of higher thought, felt that Sanskritization was the surest way to uplift them. The English-educated Indian, too, equally scornful of these vernaculars remained indifferent to them. Neither the classicists nor the anglicists, with noted exceptions, understood the genius of these languages, the nature of their relation with the people and the traditions of the country.³³

The readership in western India by mid-nineteenth century, thus, was divided into an elite literate class that felt no connection with the vernacular tradition and the masses who had access neither to Sanskrit nor to English. For Kuṅṭe and Dādobā, it seems to have been imperative to protest against the excessive importance given to Sanskrit and consequently

to Brahmin orthodoxy but at the same time there was no literate audience of the masses who could appreciate and sympathize with that stand. The gap between the elite and the masses had become so wide that, in spite of themselves, both these writers are actually speaking to the elite. The tradition of dissent vis-à-vis the *śiṣṭa paramparā* and upholding of the *lok paramparā* is undercut in their writing with the simple fact that they did not have the mixed, yet homogenous village audience of pre-colonial western India in front of them.

As articulation of theory the proletarian stand indicates continuity with the indigenous literary tradition and hence both Dādobā and Kuṅṭe have to be considered forerunners of Marathi theory but on the other hand there is a yet another mood that these texts capture and which needs to be emphasized in the context of the direction that nationalism was to take from the 1870s onwards. As members of the upper caste elite who, as we have seen, were gaining a rapid ascendancy in national politics, Dādobā and Kuṅṭe were also functioning as voices that were moulding the new political climate. The ambiguity about the intended readership that we spoke of earlier is perhaps not as conspicuous as is a tone of confidence and poise in the writings of Dādobā or Kuṅṭe and it can be said that it stems from their membership of the upper caste section that had become more and more vociferous in claiming social power. The filtration policy of Macaulay allowed a sharp distinction between the social mobility of the upper castes and of the lower castes eventually leading to the consolidation of the already privileged upper section of the Hindu society into a class-like formation. Except Phule and Paṅḍitā Ramābāī all the theorists of the period between 1860 and 1900 belong to this influential class of upper caste Western-educated young men whom the British had to woo. It felt its privileged position in the imperial set-up and sought to make the most of it.

Kāśināth Bālkrīṣṇa Marāṭhe (1844-1918) and
Nāval va Nāṭak (1872)

Like Kuṅṭe's *Rājā Śivājī Marāṭhe's Nāval va Nāṭak Yānviśayī Nibāṇḍha, An Essay on the Nature of a Novel and a Drama* (1872) carries an introduction in English. The Marathi title followed by an English subtitle or the English preface that is preceded by the 'Prastāvanā' written in Marathi, not only reflect the bilingualism that had become a mark of the public sphere by then, they are also symptomatic of the contrary pulls towards the native and the Western, the traditional and the modern in the mind of Marāṭhe and his audience.

This first explicitly theoretical document is a curious piece of work. Written by a *Citpāvan* Brāhmaṇ who enjoyed a presence in public life because of the opportunities offered by British educational and administrative set-up, this document bristles with all the ambivalences that had become part of the psyche of this class of Western-educated Brahmins. On the one hand they felt a great admiration and awe for the British and Western civilization and on the other hand, the memories of being a politically powerful caste during the Maratha empire and the consciousness of their cultural superiority within their own society created a subtle sense of pride among them. This ambivalence was to tilt in favour of revivalism by the mid 1870s, but in both Kuṅṭe's writing and Marāṭhe's writing one can find only this ambivalence. Both were to go with the tide later, but at this moment in time, the liberal values have not died down yet.

It is interesting to note that *Nāval va Nāṭak*³⁴ is the first purely theoretical essay in the history of Marathi criticism³⁵. It was published expressly for the purpose of correcting the 'misconceptions' of contemporary writers and teaching them the principles that guide the hands of an English writer. In both the 'Prastāvanā' and the preface of *Nāval va Nāṭak*, Marāṭhe takes the stance of being an intermediary between the superior Western literary tradition and the

unenlightened native writers. In the preface he says, “...all educated people will agree with me in saying that not even one in the hundreds of these (native) writers is acquainted with the principles and rules which guide the pen of a European Novelist or Dramatist in his pictures of real life.”(p.4). More importantly, however, this essay seems to contain within its small compass of thirty-four pages all the seeds of the trends that emerged in Marathi literary criticism until the 1950s, owing to the Western influence.

Influence of the West on *Nāval va Nāṭak* is most clearly evident in the proud reference to the sources of the essay being Addison, Scott and Macaulay (p.5) and in an acknowledgement of the British being instrumental in introducing new forms of creative writing in India. He gratefully points out that the British government has provided a favourable environment in India for the creation of good literature. By favourable circumstances he means “the most peaceful and quiet time” that the British rule brought and the public instruction, which is “coaching the public to appreciate superior literature”. Marāṭhe is confident that “after receiving more light from the West” India “will produce many Scotts and Shakespeares...” (preface, p.4).

Marāṭhe’s interpretation of the reasons behind the inferiority of native writers to English writers is that the excessive desire for government service among Marathas keeps them from pursuing “the pure and sublime purposes of extending the literature of their Vernacular and of conferring a blessing on their own people.”(preface, p.4) Although a lame attempt, this is one of the first interpretations offered to the question of a lack of ‘great’ literature in Marathi: a question that has intrigued almost all thinkers until today. It is significant as an expression of the aspiration to the Western standard of greatness that became an obsession with Indian literary figures. But it is

also important to note that Marāṭhe is far from considering the more earthly problems involved in the matter, namely, the absence, on account of sociological reasons, of a sufficiently large readership that could support a full-time novelist. Not until 1928 when S.V. Ketkar wrote about literature from the sociological point of view that the question was satisfactorily handled. The preface ends by a lofty appeal to “all friends of reform” to peruse Marāṭhe’s guidelines “so as to reform or to displace the various imperfect and unrefined compositions ... today.”(preface, p.5)

The method of organization adopted by Marāṭhe in this essay, with all the definitions, characteristic features, types, categorization, and historical review, can clearly be recognized as an influence of Western education. Like a true student trained in the Western critical tradition he begins his essay by defining the term ‘novel’. The novel, he says is a story full of surprising things and which fills the reader with wonder. The naiveté of this definition of novel as ‘*navalsamūha*’ i.e. a bunch of surprises has to be attributed to an effort to draw on the similarity between the English word novel and the Marathi word ‘*naval*’ meaning surprise, rather than being a serious effort to define the genre correctly. It also smacks of the general awe and a sense of wonder with which all things Western were viewed in India.

In a similar half-serious tone, he calls the ancient classics and religious texts of Hindus like the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* and the *Puranas* as collections of interesting and entertaining novels. He describes the *Mahabharat* as “an ocean of novels” (p.1). On the background of the series of books and sermons published by Western Orientalists and missionaries to debunk these sacred books, one wonders whether Marāṭhe’s audience must have found this remark scandalizing or amusing. The general tone suggests that Marāṭhe’s audience was somewhere in the middle of the two possibilities. It was not offended perhaps, because in

the light of Western culture and its rigid rationalism it could no longer take itself seriously. Nor was it yet sufficiently Westernized and alienated from its own culture as to laugh at its own traditional wisdom and beliefs. But one cannot miss the ambivalent mood and a shadow of doubt, albeit covered up with humour that is present in *Nāval va Nāṭak*.

The way Marāṭhe hastens to justify these scriptures as useful in their own way also sheds light on the anxiety in the contemporary psyche at being made to appear credulous and foolish. While admitting that these traditional ‘novels’ had an entertainment value because of the supernatural element in them, he also justifies them as vehicles of morality and history. Without them, history would not have reached the masses and kings like Rama or the Pāṇḍavas would not have been so alive in the popular imagination. Moreover, because of these myths moral values like generosity, tolerance, truthfulness and obedience have been easily inculcated in the minds of the readers (p.3). Mere, dry history would have been ineffectual without art. He even goes as far as defiantly saying, “a nation that does not have similar histories and biographies has, no doubt, missed out on a [special] kind of delight”(p.4).

Here we have the first articulation of the debate on the function of art and the relationship between art and morality that continued to engage increasing attention in Marathi criticism until the 1960s. Marāṭhe’s answers obviously derive from Bacon, Addison, Steele, Johnson and others whose writings were standard prescribed texts in the University syllabi at that time. But considering the role that the *Mahābhārat*, the *Rāmāyaṇ* and the *Purāṇas* played in the informal education of children and society at large, through institutions of *Kīrtanas*, bedtime stories told by grandparents, folklore, folksongs and festivals, one begins to wonder if Marāṭhe’s phrase ‘a kind of delight’ implies something more than mere escapist pleasure of ignorant masses.

Marāṭhe's Western training is also evident in his being keen on tracing the psychological and sociological causes behind the emergence of art in general and of the *Mahābhārat*, the *Rāmāyaṇ* in particular.

Human beings are endowed with the power of imagination and to enable the exercise of imagination there is no better way than telling fantastic stories, he avers (p.2). In a sociological analysis of the ancient histories, Marāṭhe reckons that the excessively supernatural elements must have been added onto the originally true stories sung by professional bards who earned their living by going from village to village. To secure the attention and interest of the village audiences the bards may have thrown in a generous sprinkling of supernatural and blown-up stories and great poets like Vyās may have contributed to this exaggerated form of those stories.

Reflecting on the current trend of Realism, and acknowledging that “[N]owadays there are quite a few people interested in pure truth in the developed countries and therefore true histories have become fashionable...” he points out that the fantastic and the false have not yet failed to charm people and ignorant masses will always enjoy falsehoods more than truth simply because it is entertaining. He draws attention to the fact that no one wants to buy *Marāṭhīyāñcī Bakhar*, a purely historical work while novels like *Mañjughoshā* and *Muktāmālā* have quickly gone on to their second editions. It is interesting to note that Marāṭhe's conclusion that this is proof of the fact that history mixed with imaginative fantasy makes for popular and entertaining literature (p.4), fails to distinguish clearly between history and literature. He seems to think of literature as a minor form of history or perhaps more correctly, he thinks of history as narrative.

At the same time, however, Marāṭhe also says that at least the basis of such stories should be truth, as it will not serve

any other purpose than the entertainment of the masses otherwise. In a philosophizing conclusion he says that falsehood is in itself worthless. It becomes appealing and useful only in the company of Truth (p.5). Thus, this reconciliation of aestheticism and utilitarianism— is roughly Marāṭhe’s conception of literature. He even says a very rigid adherence to truth will not serve any purpose when it comes to writing a novel. In some form or the other the imaginary has to come along with truth in a novel. Either the subject or the theme has to be true and the characters imaginary or if the characters are from true life the description has to be imaginary. He further loosens the definition of truth as probable things or actions. “...by ‘true description’ I mean just that each action with respect to each person should be, whether imaginary or true, should be probable”.³⁶

Marāṭhe does not seem to use the word ‘probable’ with any noticeable awareness of the Aristotelian concept of probability which implies a logically convincing sequence of actions within the organic framework of a play. Probability to Marāṭhe simply means realistic or natural—‘as it is found in real life’. He gives many examples from contemporary novels where impossible things happen in the story and leave the readers unconvinced and the artistic pleasure is spoiled.

Based on this elaboration, Marāṭhe proposes two types of novels:³⁷

1. Novels in which characters are real and the story is made interesting by adding imaginary, even fantastic actions to the life-story of these characters. He calls these ‘romances’ and says that they are a very useful type of novels.
2. Novels in which characters are fictional, but action is very much real, i.e. possible, probable and natural.

Where both, characters and action are false, the novel cannot be of any use.

This concern with the nature of art comes to India from the West. The native culture, so far, did not differentiate between art and life, imagination and reality in a strict sense. The dichotomy has seeped into the native mind through Western education. No wonder then that generations of critics, crowned, of course, with the Gandhian one, mulled over the question of the relationship between art and Truth.

Marāṭhe also makes some practical suggestions to contemporary novel writers—a trend that went on for several decades in the writings of N. S. Phadke, N.C. Kelkar and others, who wrote ‘how-to’ volumes on novel writing.

Some of these technical guidelines throw light on the kind of novels written in those days and more importantly, they also mark the beginning of Western realism in Marathi theory. Novelists should try to be suggestive rather than articulate, Marāṭhe says. There should be a synchronization of the period, characters and the location of the story being told. An aeroplane in a story set in an ancient kingdom doesn’t work. The character, thoughts and behaviour patterns described should be consistent throughout. Only then can it be convincing and effective. A realistic description is always more effective than a fantastic one.

Irrelevant details and meandering descriptions should be avoided. The theme should have an immediate appeal to its audience. The subject matter should stimulate and satisfy intelligent readers. *Arabian Nights* will not interest the learned, for example, but a novel about Śivājī’s life will be immediately popular because the subject matter is close to people’s heart. He foresees that the run of the mill novels being written today will soon perish because their subject matter does not evoke respect and love from the readers (p.15).

He advocates a simple, uncomplicated plot in the novel. Known, popular myths and stories can be a good source of subject matter for a great novel. Excessive show of erudition

and play upon words are out of place in a novel. He prescribes the information of a historian and the imagination of a poet as the right combination to write a novel and foresees that a novel about Śivāji's life will be extremely popular, which it indeed did within a few years.

Marāṭhe also points out that too much grief, too many calamities are described in contemporary novels. "That breeds a depression and cynicism among readers. Even in real life God does not throw anyone into a series of calamities. Better than such novels will be the novels that tell stories of greatness, of bravery, courage and generosity that will engender enthusiasm and hope among readers", he avers.

He examines Dickens's opinion that the stories can also be written about ordinary people (Marāṭhe calls them "people of inferior castes or of middle types"). But he does not agree with Dickens's argument that the behaviour of the lower class people is unsophisticated and therefore natural and truthful unlike the behaviour of the rich classes that is devious and false because of its very sophistication. Marāṭhe says that the description of the low category people will also be of inferior quality, because only among the great do we find true nobleness and seriousness and courage.

N. S. Phadke, another priest of the technicalities of novel writing, was to voice a similar criticism in 1966. Phadke declared in his celebrated work *Pratibhāsādhan* that it would be impossible to write a novel on the life-experiences of the lower castes, they simply don't lend themselves to the grand canvas of the genre of the novel³⁸. It can be safely deduced that the domination of the upper castes in the Marathi literary establishment prevented a thorough absorption of Romantic ideals for a long time and it took quite long to accept the depiction of the life of the lower classes as an equally legitimate subject in art.

Another interesting point to which attention must be drawn is Marāṭhe's fourth principle that the description of

outward/ superficial things like dresses, customs is less important in the novel. According to Marāṭhe, the common instead of the individual or the unique should receive full attention of the writer. Superficial things vary from community to community. Hence, in order to make our work enjoyable to all mankind a novelist should concentrate on “the soul” instead of the outward framework. “Things specific to a single community should not be described too much”, says Marāṭhe (p.13). This early expression of an eagerness to be cosmopolitan or universal by wiping out the particular and the local is symptomatic of the failure of urban colonial elite to see European universalism as provincialism.

Sometimes European aesthetic standards were blindly adopted by Marathi theorists. There is at least one instance of this blind application of foreign standards of judgment to Indian literature in *Nāval va Nāṭak*. Marāṭhe applies the Greek rule of “unity of place” to Marathi novels of his times. He says that if India is considered to be a single nation then this rule can be said to be followed in contemporary novels of his time. He does not however pause to think about if there is any necessity of following any such convention in the Indian context.

In the second section ‘What is Drama?’ Marāṭhe’s theorization soars high beyond practical ground into the realm of historical evolutionism. First, he defines and outlines the significant parts of a play on the basis of Sanskrit poetics and then gives a historical and chronological account of the development of drama in Europe and America. He also attempts comparison between the historical account of European and Indian drama. All this, however, is in no way a comprehensive, scholarly and sincere effort. It appears to be a rather too sketchy and perhaps an exhibitionist imitation of the European historicism and scientism.

The word ‘*nāṭak*’ had been in use in Marathi for several centuries and references to it in the early saint literature

suggest the presence of folk theatre in the form of the *ākhyān* or the *Daśāvtārī Khele* in Konkan, or the *tamāsā* or the *Yakṣagāna* in Karnataka in western India. There are as many as thirty-five plays in Marathi, assigned to the rajas of Tanjore, written between 1682 to 1833 now classified as ‘Tanjāvārī *Nāṭak*’. Both Tanjāvārī *Nāṭak* and the *paurāṇik nāṭak* tradition inaugurated by Viṣṇudās Bhāve in 1843 are more sophisticated plays that revolve around themes and characters from the *Purāṇas* and can be said to be extensions of the traditional folk theatre³⁹. Viṣṇudās Bhāve of Sāngalī and Sadāśiv Harī Gokhale of Konkan, Rāghopānta Āpte of Icalcarañjī were some of the well-known owners of *nāṭakmaṇḍalīs* who popularized the drama form in western India in the 1840s and 50s.⁴⁰

By the term ‘*nāṭak*’, however, Marāṭhe does not refer to this long indigenous tradition of drama. He has in mind the new kind of *Nāṭak* that was taking shape in Marathi from the 1850s onwards with translations of Sanskrit and English plays. These were first published as books and only in some cases were staged into performances; hence they came to be called ‘bookish *nāṭake*’. *PrabodhaCaṅdroday* (1851) *Dambhahārak*, *Sayujyasadanare* were among the early Marathi translations of Sanskrit plays. Translations of English plays begin from 1867 with the translation of *Othello* by Mahādeośāstrī Jośī. The *Icalcarañjīkar Nāṭakmaṇḍalī* gradually turned its attention to the performances of the new kind of “bookish *nāṭake*” and staged the bookish plays translated from Sanskrit by Paraśurāmtāyā Goḍbole, namely, *Nāgānaṅda* (1865), *Mālatimādhav* (1865), *Veṅisañhār* and *AbhidnyānaŚākuñtala* (1861) and Gaṇeś śāstrī Lele’s *Jānakīpariṇay* (1865). They also put up the performances of the early independently written Marathi bookish plays by V. J. Kirtane *Thorale Mādhavrāo Peśve* and *Jaypāl*. Their performances are said to have inspired Aṅṅāsāheb Kirloskar to write the new kind of bookish plays in 1880s⁴¹ and led to

the rise of the ‘*saṅgīt nāṭak*’.

Since Marāṭhe had not made any effort to link the indigenous theatrical tradition with this new kind of drama, he has had to over-rely on Sanskrit and Western poetics. He defines drama, not in terms of contemporary European standards but as it is defined by Sanskrit theoreticians/rhetoricians. He describes three parts of a play: *viśay* (theme), *nāyaka* (hero), and *rasa* (emotion) and also gives the details of each as prescribed in the Sanskrit traditional drama.

One such convention decrees that a prostitute should never be made the heroine of a play. Marāṭhe applauds this rule as proof of the high moral standards of our ancients. He also points out that the plays of Dryden and Congreve have been proved to be very distasteful (“useless”, to use his word) as they go against such an ideal rule.⁴² Elsewhere, however, he associates the greater humane treatment received by female characters in modern drama with social progress and education.

His comparison of Roman, Greek and Indian prejudices against role-playing and drama in general reveal his conservative bias. He says that role-playing and drama must have had greater social prestige among the Greeks than among the Romans or today’s Indians. The Romans probably associated acting with the vulgar level of popular art forms like our own *tamāśā*. He believes that the profession of an actor is not perhaps desirable but it is permissible to act the role of a brave man for a while for the entertainment of friends and gentlemen (P.43).

Marāṭhe comes through as a man walking on a tight rope. He is an established scholar, by the time of the publication of *Nāval va Nāṭak*, has a successful career in public service, and is a translator for the government. By virtue of his education he is certainly anxious to appear progressive but not at the cost of being unpopular, especially with the government.

He also describes the relation between Christianization of Europe and the ‘development’ of European drama. The immorality of Greek and Roman gods and goddesses described in earlier plays was disliked by Christians. As a result European drama had to undergo a sea-change. It shed all that was bad, wicked and immoral in it (p.44).

He identifies drama as a vehicle of social reform. While early European drama was to a great extent missionary in its purpose, in sixteenth century Britain there were plays that exposed social evils like bribery. Marāṭhe also says that if we too had the permission to stage similar plays then it would have been possible to correct social evils of the day.

Chivalrous romances, of the European tradition, he adds, were effective in inculcating courage and bravery among the people. He maintains, they became effective because the *vīra*, *karuṇā*, *śringār rasas* could be experienced in those plays. (One only remembers his ruthless criticism of romances like *Mañjughoshā* in Marathi.) His distinction between a novel and play is equally simplistic – “novels contain long prose story that spans many days. While plays deal with stories selected from a long history covering only a few days (p.45).

One of the early truly “modern” Marathi plays *Manoramā* (written by Mahādeo Bāḷkriṣṇa Citaḷe in 1871) that depicts a very sensitive picture of the social problems of child-marriages, child-widows and of non-companionate marriages, and that is considered an important work today, was criticized severely by Marāṭhe.⁴⁶ His orthodox traits come to the fore when he loses touch with native traditions, contemporary realities and tries to seek refuge in notions borrowed either from a reified past or from Western culture.

Marāṭhe obviously does not aim at precision or consistency or depth of scholarship. *Nāval va Nāṭak* is a rather bland work of the temperate first-generation of the Western-educated upper crust (especially when compared to the

rigorous work of Rājwāde and Ketkar, a couple of generations later), but today it is interesting not only as a historical curiosity, as the first work of literary theory, but also because it contains in microcosm the subsequent course Marathi theory was to take in future.

The new values of objectivity, historicism, realism and anthropological and sociological interpretation of literary genre; equality and other democratic values have obviously charmed the Marathi educated classes at this time. Yet religion and the consciousness of caste refuse to loosen their hold on their minds. As new cultural paradigms are being explored the old world-view cannot be easily sacrificed.

The lightly humorous and simplistic façade of *Nāval va Nāṭak* thus conceals the disturbing ruptures in the native consciousness in the grip of an invasive cultural imperialism.

Theorisation in the Context of Aestheticisation

We have seen the ideologically uncompromising radical progressivism in Dādobā's theorization and we have seen a sincere but ideologically flawed formulation in Kuṅṭe's theorization. In Marāṭhe we find a light-hearted, easy mood: theorization that is closest to popular criticism. As theorists, one can expect greater self-reflexivity and self-consciousness in these writers than one can expect to find among the general class of critics that emerged in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Very ably described by Naregal, as a process of aestheticisation that masked the shift towards orthodoxy, this general body of criticism in the colonial era is a topic of another study altogether.

We have discussed earlier that criticism as a cultural discourse that enacts a discursive negotiation in the contemporary social politics and manifests the claims of emerging class interests has been thoroughly investigated in the study of the emergence of modern criticism in Europe

in contemporary Western scholarship. There can be interesting parallels drawn between nineteenth century colonial critics and the eighteenth century European critics who inaugurated modern Western criticism. Viṣṇuśāstrī Ciplūṅkar, after whom sometimes this age in the history of Marathi literature is named, sensed the cultural parallel between eighteenth century England and the late nineteenth century India. Talking about Addison's England, Ciplūṅkar said, "The overall situation of this period was a lot like the situation here.... In terms of knowledge, the entire society was leaving its childhood stage behind and beginning its adulthood."⁴⁷

An obvious parallel comes to mind from Eagleton's analysis, cited earlier, that places the rise of literary criticism in the eighteenth century Europe in the context of the rise of the public sphere and his observation that "[The public sphere] is indeed animated by moral correction and satiric ridicule of a licentious, socially regressive aristocracy; but its major impulse is one of class consolidation, a codifying of the norms and regulations of the practices whereby the English bourgeois may negotiate an historical alliance with its social superiors."⁴⁸ One may concede that the general body of critical essays in Marathi between 1860 and 1900 was driven by similar needs to form 'a historical alliance' with the ruling class and to establish a 'cultural consensus' in the otherwise nuclear Hindu upper castes.

However, one must assign greater ideological poise to the theorists of Marathi. Without being oblivious of the cultural processes around them, they can be said to have risen above them by virtue of their vision of a Native modernity. To not acknowledge the clarity of vision in someone like Dādobā, to not appreciate its unambiguous political progressivism is to do gross injustice to the agency of the native intellectual. Unlike the early eighteenth century England the late nineteenth century western India did not witness the

creation of a “homogenous public sphere”. Nor can we infer with a simplistic parallelism that colonial criticism too gradually took the form of a polite conversation that mainly established class solidarity or that, to use Eagleton’s words, what was at stake, in “this ceaseless circulation of polite discourse among rational subjects”, was “the cementing of a new power bloc at the level of the sign”.⁴⁹

If the public sphere in colonial India was a fragmented one, and by the 1880, the bourgeois class solidarity had assumed the form of Hindu Nationalism, there also were significant interventions that held on to an alternative modernity. Piecing together these interventions, through the theoretical articulations in Marathi is also therefore to better understand the possibilities cherished by the genuinely liberal intellectuals of colonial western India.

In Tarkhaḍkar, Kuṅṭe, Marāṭhe, we find an interest in social improvement, religious reform and simultaneously an assertion of popular ‘taste’ as the most valid criterion of literary judgment. This taste, however, all of them further contend, needs to be trained, conditioned to be the right kind of taste. The “right kind of taste” was at odds with the dominant trend of aestheticisation taking shape around them and by the time Āgarkar and Phule begin to theorise in the literary sphere, the mood of optimism and confidence has already collapsed. Far from being a “polite conversation”, their criticism and theory is more like a crying out for social justice.

Nativism as Alternative Modernity

The clear emergence of ‘nativism’ is a striking feature of the theoretical articulations in Marathi during this period—the emergence of the very idea of a hypothetical “native” audience as distinct from the Western-educated, the falsely modern and the classical-educated, the downright regressive

audiences, is a new one. A continuous history of the ethnos/nation could be traced to this hypothetical people— a people who were ably represented by the *Bhaktī* saints and by Śivājī, enabling them to set up a resistance to the oppressive State. While in the context of the medieval times, the ‘state’ meant the Muslim rulers who destroyed the Hindu temples and exploited the common people the theme seemed to have continued relevance during the Raj. The threat to Hinduism, this time, came in a more sophisticated form – in the form of Western modernity, i.e., a Western liberal humanism, with its inbuilt Protestantism.

How does one resist this impending conversion to modernity itself? It was imperative to create an “Indian” version of modernity if one were to avoid turning into a reactionary. The effort to reclaim the past, by invoking its luminous memories of the saints and of Śivājī was simultaneously coupled by an effort to invest the notion of Hinduism with aspects of modernity. The elements of egalitarianism, humanism and rationalism came to be thrown into relief in this new alternative discourse. There seems to be a clear strand among the theorists of this phase of walking the tight rope—etching out an ideology that was neither Western-modern, nor orthodox-Hindu. A strand that, interestingly, was neither royalist nor nationalist. Nativism became their alternative— it became a tool to negotiate both internal and external hegemonies. In mirroring the European history of the Reformation in the native *Bhaktī* movement, in locating ‘romanticism’ in the medieval poetry of the *Bhaktī* saints, the new elite are only trying to carve out a “native” modernity—a modernity not blighted by the all-powerful Empire. It is a modernity that predates the coming of the British—but which is no less—it matches the democratic, egalitarian, socialist ideals enshrined in Western modernity. Moreover, unlike the intrusive colonial variety of liberalism the native modernity is actually more legitimate and morally unblemished.

NOTES

1. Joshi, Sanjay, *The Middle Class in Colonial India*, Oxford in India Readings series, New Delhi: OUP, 2010.
2. *Ibid.*, Introduction, pp. xviii and xix.
3. Torri, Michelguglielmo, in Joshi, Sanjay, *Middle Class in Colonial India*, pp. 47-68.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
5. See Kumar, Ravinder, *Western India in the Nineteenth Century*, London: Rutledge & Kegan Paul, 1968, pp. 264-74; Naregal, Veena, *Language Politics, Elites, and the Public Sphere: Western India under Colonialism*, New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2001, pp. 80-91. Naregal also charts the shrinking of the Dakṣiṇā fund from Rs 5,00,000 during the Peshvas to Rs 50,000 during the governor generalship of Mountstuart Elphinstone and to a paltry sum of Rs 6000 by 1850.
6. Qtd in Ravinder Kumar, *Western India*, p.271 from *Bombay State Archives*, petition by the liberal Brahmans of Poona to the Bombay Government dated September 1849.
7. Naregal, p. 87-88.
8. Kumar, p. 274.
9. Naregal, p.125.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 207-10.
11. See Bhagat, Datta (ed.), *Tritiya Ratna: (Marathi Bhāṣette Pahile Ādhunik Nāṭak)*, Shrirampur: Shabdālay, 2001.
12. Sunthankar, B. R., *Nineteenth Century History of Maharashtra*, vol. 1. Pune: Shubhada-Saraswat Prakashan, 1988.
13. *Ibid.*, pp.557-558.
14. See. 'Pascim Bhāratātīl Pahilī Rājakīya Saṁsthā: The Bombay Association' in Malshe, S G., *Gataśataka Śodhitānā*, Pune: Pratima Prakashan, 1989.
15. Naik, J. V., "Forerunners of Dadabhai Naoroji's Drain Theory", *EPW*, Nov. 24, 2001, pp. 4428-4432.
16. *Ibid.*, p.4428.
17. Rawal, R.L., *Mahipatram, Makers of Indian Literature Series*, Sahitya Akademi: New Delhi, 2002.
18. Pawar, G.M., *Maharṣī Viṭhthal Rāmjī Śinde: Jīvan va Kārya*, [2004], Mumbai: Lokavangmaygriha, 2006, pp. 266-267.
19. See Priyolkar, A.K. (ed.), *Dādobā Pāṇḍurāṅga Tarkhaḍkar: Ātmacaritra āṇi Caritra*, Bombay, Keshav Bhikaji Dhawle, 1947.
20. Ramanna, Mridula, 'Profiles of English Educated Indians: Early Nineteenth Century Bombay City', in *EPW*, Vol 27, no. 14, (Apr. 4, 1992) pp.716-717.: information compiled from *Shishu Bodh*, a book written by Dādobā's daughter Ahalyābāi, as cited in Priyolkar, A. K.,

RāoBahādur Dādobā Pāṇḍuraṅga: Ātmacaritra āṇi Caritra, pp. 228-29 and pp 348-49.

21. See: Dādobā Pandurang, *Ātmacaritra*, [1868], Pune: 1991.
22. Tarkhaḍkar, Dādobā *Pāṇḍuraṅga, Kekāvalī, RāoBahadur Dādobā Pāṇḍuraṅga Yānī Kelelyā Yaśodāpāṇḍuraṅgī Nāvācyā Vistārṇa Tīkesahit*, [1865] Mumbai: Saililā Magazine, 1931. Subsequent references to page numbers are cited in the text, my translation.
23. See HIL, vo.8, pp.175-77.
24. Adhikari, G.G., (ed.), Preface. *Rājā Śivājī*, by M. M. Kunte, Pune: Sarawat Prasarak Mandali, 1924.
25. *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Literature*, New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1988, p. 1154.
26. HIL, vol. 8, p. 145.
27. Adhikari, G.G. (ed.), *Rājā Śivājī*, Introduction.
28. Preface to vol. 2, May 1871 in Bhosle, S. S. (ed.), *Rājā Śivājī*, Aurangabad: Sahitya Seva Prakashan, 1992.
29. Ibid., Preface to vol. 2. Subsequent references from Preface to Vol. 1 cited with the text.
30. See Naregal, Veena, “Colonial Bilingualism and Hierarchies of Language and Power in Nineteenth Century Western India”, *New Literary Histories for Nineteenth Century India*, European association for South Asian Studies Conference, Prague, 9-12 September, 1998.
31. HIL, vol. 8, pp.24-26.
32. B. R. Ambedkar could only get a smattering of Sanskrit in school and had to give it up because of the unwillingness of teachers to teach it to an untouchable, and he graduated with Persian as his classical language. For his later study of the Vedic literature, he had to rely on English translations. – More, Sheshrao, *Dr Āmbedkarānce Sāmājīk Dhoran: Ek Abhyās*, (Pune: Rajahansa, 1998), p. 24.
33. HIL, vol.8, p.31.
34. Marāthe, K.B., *Naval va Natak: An Essay on the Nature of a Novel and a Drama*, Pune: Modern Book Depot, 1874. (references cited in the text)
35. *Kekādarśa* and *Yashodā-Pāṇḍuraṅgī* published earlier in 1860s were largely pieces of practical criticism.
36. Marathe, *Naval va Natak*, in Pawar, G.M. and M.D. Hatkananglekar (ed.s), *Nivadak Marāṭhī Samīkṣā*, New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1999, p. 4.
37. Ibid., pp. 4-5
38. Quoted in Kulkarni G.M. *Ādhunik Marāṭhī Vāṅmayāchī Sāṅskritik Pārshwabhūmī*, Pune: Mehta Publishing, 1994, p.165.
39. See ‘Ma. Phulepūrva Marāṭhī Nāṭak āṇi Marāṭhī Raṅgabhūmī’ in Bhagat, Datta (ed.), *Tritiya Ratna: (Marāṭhī Bhāṣetle Pahile dhunik Nāṭak)*, Shrirampur: Shabdalay, 2001.
40. See “Jhāṅśīwalipuḍhe Kheḷ Sādar Karṇārā ‘Sadobā Nāṭakwālā’ Koṇ?”

- in Malshe, S G., *Gataśataka Śodhitānā*, Pune: Pratima Prakashan, 1989.
41. See "Icalkarañjīkar Nāṭakmañḍaḷīci Bhariv Kāmgiri" in Malshe, S G., *Gataśataka Śodhitānā*.
 42. Ibid., p. 20.
 43. Ibid., p. 25.
 44. Ibid., p.25.
 45. Ibid., p. 28
 46. Bhagat, Dattg (ed.), *Tritiya Ratna*, p. 26.
 47. Cipluñkar, Viṣṇuśāstri, 'Ingrejī Bhāṣā', *Nibandhamālā*, 28, vol. 3, issue 4, April, 1876.
 48. Eagleton, *Function of Criticism*, pp.10-11.
 49. Ibid., p.14.

Chapter 5

Interrogating Nationalism: Theory between 1875 and 1900

The conservative backlash of the 1870s

The liberal progressivism of the third quarter of the nineteenth century seemed to be on the wane in the 1870s among the upper caste elite. Widow re-marriage movement, the centrepiece of the reformist agenda, was to receive a series of setbacks. Widow re-marriage was decreed to be illegitimate in the three upper *varṇas*, in a public debate held at Pune in 1870, presided over by the Śaṅkarācārya of KarvīrPīṭh. Following this debate many high profile proponents of this social cause, such as G. H. Deśmukh and Sadāśiv Kāśināth Chhatre, Kriṣṇaśāstri Ciplūṅkar had to take penance to escape excommunication, for the sin of having arranged and supported a widow-remarriage¹. Morobā Kānhobā, who had dared to defy his community of *Pāthāre-Prabhus* and married a widow, was found dead in a well along with his wife in 1871. It was said that they committed suicide². M.G. Rānade, a stalwart of the *punarvivāha* movement had himself given in to family pressure and social customs and married at the age of thirty-one an eleven year old virgin Ramābāī, within one month of the death of his first wife in 1873³.

Uma Chakravarti has summed up this change succinctly. Talking about the 1870s she observes:

For the rest of the decade the reformers dropped gender as an issue...[and] Poona Sārvaajanik Sabhā, an alliance of professional and landholding elites dominated by Brahmanas, [expressly professed] that

the body would deal only with 'political' issues (where one could unite as a class) and avoid divisive social and religious issues which would fragment them.⁴

The new ideological mood among the upper castes shifted during this decade not only towards avoiding uncomfortable issues of caste and gender. Inevitably then, the mood shifted towards glorifying the past.

Nibāṇdhamālā: Criticism as Cultural Nationalism

An important catalyst that fuelled this process was the periodical *Nibāṇdhamālā*, which appeared on the scene in 1874 and ran until 1881. Its editor Viṣṇuśāstri Ciplūṅkar, the self-styled 'Śivāji of the Marathi language' sought to ignite among his readers a sense of pride in native culture, native language and native history through his essays. The anticolonial content of *Nibāṇdhamālā* in the form of rationally worked out arguments exposing the colonial attitude of contempt towards the native culture inspired a number of nationalist intellectuals such as B. G. Tilak, G.G. Āgarkar and V.K. Rājwāde. However, one also needs to understand the nature of its impact on the public sphere in general, in terms of the cultural politics it generated.

It appears largely that the discourse of nationalism in the *Nibāṇdhamālā* was received as a discourse of Brahminical glory by its readers. Since Ciplūṅkar did not make any effort to address the problems within Hinduism, indeed, he completely lacked the vision to be able to do so, his agenda of awakening a just sense of self-worth among his readers turned out to be lopsided and except in very few intellectuals such as Āgarkar and Rājwāde, its influence led the popular opinion in the direction of self-aggrandizement. Ideologically speaking, *Nibāṇdhamālā* came to the rescue of the upper caste hegemonic formation in Maharashtra in helping it systematically stave off the need to address internal

structures of colonization. In an interesting analysis of Ciplūṅkar's writings Naregal has termed the ideological achievement of the *Nibāṅdhamālā* as "aestheticisation of political exclusion". Describing the readership of the *Mālā* as "provincial, lower-class, semi-literate audience that had little English", Naregal has argued that the publication played the dual role of cultivating a "high literary" taste among its readers and at the same time launching an attack on lower caste interests.⁵

Nibāṅdhamālā as a representative text of nascent cultural nationalism has important implications for the conceptualization of a history of Marathi literary theory. Ciplūṅkar is said to have popularized literary criticism in Marathi and the *Nibāṅdhamālā*, is particularly said to have had a seminal impact on the literary culture of Marathi. Histories of Marathi literature will often call the years 1874-1885 the Ciplūṅkar era or will use the publication of the *Nibāṅdhamālā* as a milestone in the history of modern Marathi literature. The literary criticism of Ciplūṅkar and its impact on the literary culture of colonial Maharashtra will be a separate topic of study. Here, however it is sufficient to draw attention to the deficiencies in Ciplūṅkar's thought that disqualify him from the title of a theorist.

In his essay '*Kavitā*'⁶ published in the periodical *Śālāpatrak* in 1872, he proposes the theory that the early poetry in all nations is in the form of crude, rustic metres, and mostly about heroic deeds. As examples, he cites the Greek poetry by Homer, which is about *vīra rasa* and also English and Scottish ballads. In Marathi too, he goes on to say, the early poetry in the form of *lāvaṅī* and *powādā* that emerged during the Peśwā rule, is the earliest poetry. He dismisses the poetry of Vāman and Moropaṅt as just a transliteration of Sanskrit poetry; it is not really Marathi poetry. The entire medieval Marathi literature is not part of this historiography at all, understandably perhaps, because that was not poetry in the

new sense of the term. In his scheme of things there are three stages of poetry, the earliest being the most natural and the most expressive making the early poets the best in any nation. Later poets seek refuge in ornamentation as they lack originality and their poetry therefore becomes second-rate. The last stage of decadence is when poetry has no inspiration and only ornamentation. The poets of this third category are imitators and in fact destroy the *rasa* of the early poetry when they steal their ideas from there.

Not only is this analysis over-simplistic, it is also inconsistent with his writings elsewhere. When he seeks to provide an extended description of these three stages in the context of English poetry in the subsequent issues of *Śālāpatrak*, the untenable nature of this theory becomes quite clear in his two essays titled 'English *Kavitā*'. The poetry of Chaucer, the earliest English poet, is put aside, as difficult to understand because he wrote in Old English. Shakespeare, Spenser and Milton are then described as "early" poets and therefore great and Dryden, Pope and Johnson who follow them are the second-grade poets and several lesser poets who wrote in the eighteenth century are the examples of the third kind of poetry. Ciplūṅkar then has to invent another theory to explain the "miraculous" efflorescence in English poetry in the nineteenth century, which is that in times of great historical change great orators and great poets are born. Ciplūṅkar tells the readers then that at the time of the French Revolution England had reached the peak of her success and great orators such as Burke, Pitt and Fox were rocking the parliament with their speeches. It was at this time that great poets such as Wordsworth, Scott, Byron, Shelley and Tennyson emerged. No attempt is made to establish any connection between the French revolution and British imperialism and these English poets. By the end of the essay, it is quite clear that none of his propositions really hold ground.

In another essay ‘*Nāṭake Karāvī Kī Karu Nayet’*’, published in the *Kesari* on 6th December 1881, having forgotten all about his earlier thesis that early poetry is great poetry, Ciplūṅkar describes the early folk art forms *tamāsā* and *lalit* as unsophisticated, crude forms of entertainment — as *bībhatsa* and therefore inferior art forms and describes modern plays as an improvement in the notions of entertainment in a nation. He uses the term *bībhatsa* to describe the demerits of Byron and Shelley’s poetry as well, without making any attempt to define the term or without arguing the case at all.

Extensive writings on literature in *Nibāṅdhamālā* thus do not yield any theory although they served the purpose of popularizing literature and literary criticism. For several generations ‘mainstream’ Marathi criticism was to use the same kind of simplistic, overdrawn concepts to discuss literature and many more critics were to win accolades for such ‘service’ to the Marathi language.

The second half of the decade of 1870s brought instability in the political climate of western India. In 1876 there was a famine in the Deccan and it led to riots by Deccan farmers, followed in 1879, by Vāsudev Baḷwant Phadke’s revolt against the British, which was quickly suppressed, though it created a permanent fear and suspicion of the Brahmins in the mind of the British. The Ilbert Bill of 1882 which was opposed vehemently by the Europeans also exposed the phoniness of the claims of liberalism and fair-play of the British, and brought to light their racial prejudice and set a new mood of distrust between the colonizers and the natives.

Viṣṇuśāstrī Ciplūṅkar died in 1882, which is also the year in which the political careers of Tilak and Āgarkar are launched with their imprisonment in the Barve defamation case. The political climate then came to oscillate between the Extremist and Moderate poles throughout the last two decades of the century. Tilak’s aggressive nationalism

enjoyed an increasing popular support and by 1895 it became impossible for the old liberals like Rānade and his followers like G. K. Gokhale to continue to work through the *Sārvaajanik Sabhā*, leading to the establishment of the Deccan *Sabhā* which would continue to work along liberal lines⁸. Āgarkar's death in 1895 and Rānade's death in 1901 wiped out the strength of the political Moderates and Tilak dominated the political scene until his death in 1920.

The process of Hinduization of the nationalist politics in India sets in with Tilak, taking on the mantle of Ciplūṅkar. The high point of this was the 1895 tour of America by Vivekānaṅda that conclusively established the mood of celebrating the ancient Hindu civilization that India was. Increasingly, from the 1890s, nationalism began to assume the mould of Hindu revivalist cultural language.

In the 1880s, sandwiched between the decade of conservative backlash of 1870s and the decade of cultural nationalism of 1890s, we find a new spurt of strong theoretical voices in Marathi. The writings of a new cluster of radical writers: Phule, Āgarkar, and Paṅḍitā Ramābāi can be read today as a counter discourse of the so-called 'mainstream' Marathi criticism and literary culture of which the *Nibandhamālā* was representative.

Jotirāo Phule (1827-1890)

Among his contemporaries, nobody seemed to have a firmer grasp of social oppression along the lines of class, caste as well as gender in the colonial Hindu society than did Phule, the radical social philosopher and activist. Born in the *māli* caste, a *Śudra* caste of vegetable and flower growers, lower than the *kuṅbī* caste, Phule came from an economically prosperous family and was himself a successful businessman⁹. His presence in the contemporary public arena was a compelling one and he certainly needs to be seen as an

organic intellectual of the colonial society.

Phule, born in the first generation of Western-educated members of western India, a contemporary of Tarkhaḍkar, was not a product of government education. As a result, the Western influence on his thought is of a different character from that perceived in the three liberal theorists discussed so far. A product of the missionary schools at Pune (1840-47), he was deeply influenced by Thomas Paine's work *The Rights of Man*, and by the writings of Orientalists such as John Wilson's *India Two Thousand Years Ago*, and Henry Mead's *A Sepoy Revolt*¹⁰. In general, Phule's thought was influenced more by his close relation with American missionaries, deists and his reading of American radical thinkers than by his reading of British Victorian thinkers.

Phule's writings, produced between 1853 and 1890, display an impressive range of his literary repertoire. He was as much a poet and a playwright as a pamphleteer and an essayist and a large chunk of his writing, mainly polemical, is cast in the traditional oral literary forms of poetry (*abhaṅga*, *powādā* and *ovī*), plays (*Tritiya Ratna* (1855) and *Gulāmgirī* (1873) and in the dialogue form (*Śetkaryācā Asūd* (1882), *Satsār* volumes and *Sārvajanik Satyadharmā Pustak* (1889). Phule's endeavours to revolutionize the socio-religious sensibilities of his times also naturally translated into his attempts to revolutionize the contemporary literary sensibility by experimenting freely with lexis and genre. Phule's astonishingly sophisticated understanding of the constricting nature of literary conventions is particularly evident in the fact that he modified 'abhaṅga', the traditional form of *Bhakti* poetry into a new form, which he called 'akhaṅḍa'.

The following section will try to argue that at a time when Marathi theory was in a nascent state, Phule gauged the political impulses behind the literary and critical practices of his time and succeeded in posing a powerful question mark against the entire project of aestheticisation that was

taking shape in the Marathi mainstream. The idea that literature is a powerful social construct underlies all of Phule's creative as well as polemical writing. Though he did not write explicitly on literary theory all his other writing consistently indicates that he did indeed have a well-formulated theoretical concept of what literature is and what is its function in society.

*Phule's Anti-Brahminism and
His Views on Nationalism and Education*

It is obvious that Phule's literary theory can be unravelled only in the context of his overtly political writings. Phule's perceptive understanding of the social dynamics at work during his times is evident in his views on education and on representational politics. Both need to be appreciated in some detail, in order to place his ideas regarding literature in a wider perspective.

The pivotal point of his political agenda was his anti-Brahminism. In Phule's world-view, Brahmins, more than the British, were the first enemy of the Hindu masses. For Phule, the greatest hurdle in bringing about the emergence of a modern democratic society here was the Brahminical hegemony that prevailed since ages and misled well-meaning rulers such as Śivājī and now, the British.

His sustained critique of nationalism and his views on education vividly bring out the huge gap between material realities and the falsehood of universal liberalism that seemed to primarily suit the Brahmins. He can be said to have been the first to have exposed the fallacy of Indian nationalism. An extract from *Sārvajanik Satya Dharma Pustak* brings this out very eloquently:

Govindrāo: Why, this *Baḷīsthān* [as against Hindusthān, Phule's word for "the nation of farmers"] has approximately about 200 million population of which .2 million are *Āryabrahmins*. From those then if a few Brahmins in Pune get together some five or twenty-five members of other castes and call it a *Sabhā*, who can call such a *Sabhā* 'Sārvajanik Sabhā'?

Jotirāo: You are entirely right. Have you ever heard of the Brāhman members of this *Sārvaajanik Sabhā* having sat with any *Mahār* members to discuss the problems of the *Mahār* community and having sent any petition to the government regarding those problems?

Govindrāo: But there is someone who keeps boasting from within this small little '*Sārvaajanik*' *Sabhā* that there is not a single petition that the *Sabhā* has sent representing any single individual or class.

Jotirāo: Such people think they are the only wise ones in the whole world. But just imagine what will happen, if one of these days the government circulates an advertisement saying that any *Mahār* or *Māng* who knows Sanskrit, Marāthi and English well and can maintain correspondence in these languages shall get one and a half thousand rupees per month. How many *Mahārs* and *Māngs* can one get for such a job?

Govindrāo: Not a single one.

Jotirāo: Similarly, *Sārvaajanik Sabhā* may have petitioned that we Hindus, like the Europeans, should also be appointed as collectors; but of what use are such petitions to the uneducated *Śudratīśudras*? Because it is only *Brāhman*s who are the beneficiaries in the name of Hindus. [MPSV, pp.493-94, my translation]

The dialogue then further goes on to argue that the Brahmins do not dine with the lower castes, no intermarriages take place here. As a result our society is made up of communities that drastically differ from each other in cultural terms. Such a divided society can never make one nation even if hundred such national congresses are founded by the *Āryans*. Phule says that only when the *Bhils*, *Kolīs* and such other lowest sections of our society get an education and become capable of thinking about their rights that we can have a nation here. The national congress of the Brahmins is illegitimate and merely imitative of the French and American nations that are more united because they follow one religion. (pp. 495-96)

G. Aloysius, among others, has argued this case in detail showing that the Indian nationalism failed to bring together

the diverse sections of the subcontinent under a common agenda and it remained a movement to protect the interests of Hindu upper castes. There never was a serious commitment on the part of this movement towards social equality. Social justice remained a mere phrase in the lip service paid to the other sections.¹¹ The fact of the consolidation of upper-caste interests was not lost on lower castes that had already tasted the fruits of a degree of social mobility made possible by education and government employment, mainly in the army. Increasingly, the comfortable consensus between the colonizers and the colonial elite came to be challenged by thinkers like Phule.

Reacting to the British educational policy that remained unsympathetic to the masses and was based on a dubious Filtration theory, Phule reports to the Hunter Commission: "...the present system of education, which by providing ampler funds for higher education tended to educate Brahmins and the higher classes only and to leave the masses wallowing in ignorance and poverty"¹². At another place Phule says,

The system of Government scholarships at present followed in the government schools is also defective as much as it gives undue encouragement to those classes only, who have already acquired a taste for education to the detriment of the other classes. The system might be so arranged that some of these scholarships should be awarded to such classes amongst whom education has made no progress.¹³

Phule continues that, "the character of instruction given in the Government high schools, is not at all practical, or such as is required for the necessities of ordinary life. It is only good to turn out so many clerks and schoolmasters".¹⁴ Commenting on the disparity between the number of graduates and the number of jobs available in public service employment he avers,

...with regard to the question as to educated natives finding remunerative employment it will be remembered that the educated natives who mostly

belong to the Brahminical and other higher classes are mostly fond of service. But as the public service can afford no field for all the educated natives who came out from schools and colleges and moreover, the course of training they receive being not of a technical or practical nature, they find great difficulty in betaking themselves to other manual or remunerative employments...¹⁵

He was anxious to counter the upper-caste hegemony very strongly at work in all social fields of Maharashtra. He found the mildness of the likes of Justice Rānade very irksome and irresponsible. In his essay *Īśārā* (1885), Phule in no uncertain terms condemns Rgnade for pretending that the condition of the peasants has improved in the previous thirty years. Nothing could be farther from truth, he says and such wish-fulfilment was only a hog-wash to conceal the deep-rooted injustice in society and would only mislead the government.

Gulāmgirī, *Śetkaryāchā Āsūd* are fully devoted to exploding the myth of Brahmin superiority. Phule's suspicion of the double speech of Brāhmaṇs and his belief in the Western liberal education as a possible respite from Brahmin hegemony can also be seen in his comments on Malabāri's report to Lord Rippon in which he avers, "...but the education should not be transmitted through the medium of Brahmin teachers, for, while educating they create in the minds of the pupils wrong religious ideas and lead them astray."¹⁶

At a time when linguistic nationalism was gaining ground, Phule, in his *Akhaṇḍādi Kāvyaṛacanā* advocated multilingualism as a linguistic policy. He advises the reader to use English, Yāvani, i.e. Hindi and Swabhāśā, i.e. Marathi, in order to become virtuous, wealthy and to acquire prestige. At a time when Śivājī was being turned into a 'national' icon, he described Śivājī as an illiterate warrior who was misled by the Brahmins into hounding out the Muslim rulers who otherwise would have rescued the untouchables from the shackles of Brahminism. (p.471)

He also tried to recast Śivājī as a peasant king:

“*kuḷwādībhūṣaṇ*” in his “*Chhatrapatī Śivājī Rājā Bhosle Yāñcā Powādā*” written in 1869, using popular idiom¹⁷. It is significant to note that unlike Kuṇṭe, whose ambiguity about his intended readership has been discussed at length earlier, Phule is able to clearly define his readership and directly address them. In his introduction he mentions his intention of making this poem accessible to the wide audience of the oppressed and uneducated masses by avoiding a sanskritized diction¹⁸.

In a classic case of how history is appropriated by the hegemonic formations in any society, Phule’s *powādā* was not received well on the grounds of being historically incorrect.¹⁹ Prachi Deshpande, in her analysis of the new modes of history writing that came to be explored during the nineteenth century, has argued that Phule had opened the possibility of an autonomous indigenous school of history that could have been an alternative to the Indologist school of history. His attempt to turn the Aryan race theory upside down by describing the Brahmin dominance as illegitimate stood in the way of such a vision of indigenous history becoming “the basis for the Marathi nationalist imagination”²⁰. It was Viṣṇuśāstri Ciplūṅkar’s vision of history that was to “set the stage for the conservative anti-reform turn in nationalist politics under Bal Gaṅgādhār Tilak, starting in the late 1880s.”²¹

For the largely lower-middle class but upper-caste Marathi readership of the *Nibāṇdhamālā*, Ciplūṅkar’s agenda of self-representation squarely tackled the question of political power through Maratha battles and figures like Śivājī and Bājirāo while sidestepping entirely the question of social hierarchy and reform. It was more immediate and attractive than Indological analyses of Sanskrit texts as well as Phule’s radical polemics, which struck at the very roots of Brahmanical power.²²

Phule’s ideological interventions thus were of seminal nature and the history of Marathi literary theory needs to scan his work carefully to take stock of the new insights that he brought to this discourse. Phule’s dispatch to the second

literary conference—‘*Grānthakār Sammelan*’, held in 1885 at the initiative of M.G. Rānade, a letter addressed to Māmā Paramānaṇḍa in 1886 and certain parts of the *Satyadharmapustak* (1889) are some of the representative texts that can help us put together a broad outline of his understanding of literature as an ideological tool.

In the context of the construction of Maratha history and its ideological underpinnings, Phule’s letter of June 2, 1886, to Māmā Paramānaṇḍa (MPSV, pp.405-7), is a telling document. Māmā Paramānaṇḍa who was assisting H.A. Ackworth in his project of collecting the *powādās* sung traditionally by the *gondhaḷīs*, documenting the historical achievements of the *Marāthās* (eventually published in 1891, as *Itihāsprasiddha Puruṣāñce va Striyāñce Pawāde*) had written to Phule, asking if he has any such *powādās* in his private collection. Contemptuously dismissing some prominent *powādās* on Śivājī’s career—of his “treacherous” murder of Afzalkhān, of Tānājī’s victory of the fort Sinhagaḍ with the help of a mountain lizard or of how Śivājī butchered the Muslims in Pune as inauthentic, Phule says, “I have not cared to collect such dubious *powādās* which are now being interpolated by the educated young underlings of *BhaṭBrāhman*s since such *powādās* merely seek to project the importance of the *Bhāgvat* saints, of *Vedāntic* Brahmins and of Śivājī’s Brahmin teacher Dadojī Koṅḍdev, all of whom actually lived off the hard-earned income of the *Śudras*” (p.407, translation by author). Presumably, more than questioning the veracity of such songs, Phule seems to be responding to the ideological undercurrents of the contemporary discourse on Maratha history.

He also observes with great regret that Europeans have written our histories by blindly trusting the versions received from their Brahmin employees and from Brahminical texts. They have never bothered to take an objective look at the condition of the *Śudras* and *Ati-śudras*. In the same letter he offers to send Māmā Paramānaṇḍa a handwritten copy of

his book *Śetkaryācā Asūd* which, he ruefully mentions, has been lying aside since three years because none of the *Śudra* press-owners seem to have the courage to publish it.

In *Sārvajanik Satya Dharma Pustak* (1889), one can perceive a strong awareness of the ideological nature of all discourses. He goes hammer and tongs at the Brahminical discourses in the entire book and consciously aims at deconstructing the holy myths of the Brahmins.

Talking about the medieval history of Muslim invasions, he lauds the efforts of the manly (*jānhāmard*) Muslims to free the *Śudras* from the bondage of the Brahmins and laments that they were not successful. In his historiography, the *Vārkarī* saints such as Mukuṇḍrāj, Dyāneśwar and Rāmdās wrote their crafty tracts such as *Vivekasiṅdhū*, *Dnyāneśwarī*, *Dāsboḍh* etc. at a time when the *Śudratīśudras* could possibly have left the Hindu fold willingly and converted to Islam. How is it that they seem to take pity on the *Śudras* only at this historical juncture, he asks. The saints of the *Vārkarī* tradition and their *Bhaktī* philosophy are manipulative and dishonest. Elsewhere, he also dismisses his contemporary Hindu reformist organizations *Prārthanā Samāj* and *Brāhmo Samāj* for a similar reason. These organisations, Phule argues, are nothing but a conspiracy to mislead and confuse the lower castes and to conceal “the outwardly religious but inwardly a purely political agenda” of Brahmins. He time and again pointed out that historically Brahmins have always got an education literally at the expense of the *Śudratīśudras*, the cost of their education being incurred from the revenue collected from the *Śudras*. (p.492)

With many examples, Phule tries to show that the Brahminical texts and intentions are not to be trusted. In a sustained ‘commentary’ on the twelfth and the thirteenth chapters of *Dnyāneśwarī* and on Rāmdās’s *Dāsboḍh* he develops the theme that the literal truth of the verses in them is not sustainable in the light of new knowledge and rationality or even of sheer common sense, proving Krishna—

whose words Dnyāneśwar is citing from the Gītā, an ignoramus and a man without any moral standards (pp.473-77). The worst problem with the Brāhmanical religion according to Phule is that their texts such as the *Vedas* are carefully guarded secrets, and unlike the noble texts of Islam and Christianity, are not available for an open discussion. He commends the European scholars and writers such as John Wilson and Colonel Le Grand Jacob who have through their translations of the *Vedas* given the people some idea of the dubious contents of such texts. (p.491)

For Phule, the Indian National Congress and other similar associations founded and run by the Ārya Brahmins, are extensions of the same treacherous politics that the original inhabitants of the land of Baḷī have had to face since the time of Aryan invasions and to join the bandwagon of the national congress is only to serve the interests of the treacherous Brahmins. (pp. 493-95)

Radical Aesthetics

Phule's letter to the *Grānthakār Sabhā*, dated June 11, 1885, unambiguously denounces the mainstream literature in Marathi as representative of the interest of the dominant Brahmin castes and hence abhorring to thousands of lower caste people who, he believed, must have their separate literature and their separate literary gatherings. To Phule must go the credit of opening an immensely important line of thinking in Marathi literary theory. Very early on he sensed the dangers of merging with the mainstream and his separatist stand expressed in this letter, has to be seen as a milestone in the history of Marathi literature.

After a lukewarm response to the first Marathi literary conference in 1878, Rānade had organized the second literary conference in 1885 for which Phule was also invited. In his answer to Rānade's invitation, which appeared in the *Dynānoday* on 11th June, 1885 Phule categorically declines

to have anything to do with organizations of men who could not bring themselves to grant the rightful privileges of other human beings and who selfishly perpetuate social injustice. His bitterness is evident in his declaration that the literary and social endeavours of the high castes could not, in any way, be compatible with the problems and aspirations of the downtrodden.

The organizations set up by and books written by men who cannot think objectively about the human rights of all the men and women and who cannot bring themselves to grant them those rights willingly and openly, and judging by their present behaviour, are not likely to do so in future, are incompatible with our organizations and books. We have been reduced to being slaves because of the old, dubious religious books of such crafty, revengeful men and they are too busy making big speeches in *sabhās* and pretending to be the leaders of society, to understand the hardships and misfortunes we have to endure because of their scriptures. The leaders of the *SārvajanikSabhā* are fully aware of this [reality] but are deliberately turning a blind eye to this hopeless situation of ours, in order to protect their own and their children's interests. Is this how these selfish and pretentious Ārya Brahmins are going to lead this doomed nation onto a path of progress? (p. 344, my translation)

The bitter hopelessness of the tone of this letter also resonates in his larger critique of the unholy alliance between the colonizers and the native elites.

In the letter to Rānade, he says, with a tone of finality, “from now on, we will not be misled by the false promises made by the deceptive people who are prospering at our expense. We will have to think for ourselves.” (p. 344)

Phule's polemical writings thus introduce strong counter-discourse to Hindu cultural nationalism. In the literature and literary theory that took shape as a part of this bitter undercurrent was to shake the hegemonic formations in modern India in the twentieth century.

We can conclude that the effort of the first liberal theorists to draw attention to the materiality of literature through their theorization continues in an even more forceful way in Phule's writing. All the texts discussed above markedly

treat literature as a very broad category, literature is never a purely aesthetic category, nor is criticism as practiced by Phule, for purposes of aesthetic appreciation. Phule consistently treats literature as part of a wider cultural discourse. His raw polemics underline the idea that literature is part of cultural politics, even religious literature is. “Outwardly about religion but inwardly, political through and through” (p.492) — that is how he sums up the Hindu Marathi cultural tradition that the new elite were trying to cast into a modern mould. It may appear problematic that Phule is trying to reduce literature to social politics and is blind to its aesthetic, creative potential/ transcendence. Such a charge against Phule can be discounted on two grounds. Firstly, his own persistent investment in using literary forms innovatively and secondly, his summary rejection by the elite literary sphere which doubly proves the urgency with which these interventions were needed in the context of the unhealthy tendencies of nineteenth century colonial process of aestheticisation.

Unfortunately, the logical sting in Phule’s invective, its appeal to the new values of egalitarianism and of human dignity, were entirely lost on the new elite who were turning more and more conservative now. Viṣṇuśāstri Cipluṅkar in an article written in 1877 titled ‘*Satyashodhak Samājācā Report*’ ridicules Phule in the following words: “Just watch how funny our *Śudra* religious founders are. They don’t know any grammar and cannot even write correctly. The suggestion to Mr Phule is this that if he wants to bring about improvement in the condition of his caste-fellows, it is not going to happen by writing books like *Gulāmgīrī* and by defaming those who are his superiors in every which way.” (p.112, my translation)

By exposing the undercurrents of cultural politics, Phule’s thought adds another dimension to the project of shaping an indigenous modernity. Through a sustained invective

against Hindu orthodoxy: both the age-old and the nascent one, Phule seems to have touched a raw nerve for the process of the making of Marathi literary theory. Phule has made an indirect contribution to the making of Marathi literary theory by exploding two very powerful contemporary myths: one of Śivājī and the other of Nationalism and has catapulted the Marathi literary establishment into an alternative modernity. His inherently materialistic approach towards language and literature makes his presence in the field of literary theory a formidable one and to him must go the credit for weaving the issue of caste into Marāthi critical thought.

Throughout the twentieth century the leaders of the *bahujanāsamāj* (the masses)—a term coined and brought into use by Viṭṭhal Rāmji Śinde, the predecessor of B.R. Ambedkar in the early twentieth century—were to challenge the consensus of the upper caste intellectuals and expose their dual standards in applying the principles of freedom and equality. The aspirations and perceptions of the *bahujanāsamāj* were radically different from the upper caste elite and the rift can also be perceived in the literary theory expounded by the representatives of both these sections.

The dissent would grow more pronounced only after 1920 with Āmbedkar and on the literary scene it would be expressed more fully in the form of the first Dalit literary conference held in 1958 and a strong Dalit literary movement emerging only after 1960. However, in Phule's writings one can trace the germination of the Dalit literary movement and hence any literary history of Marathi theory needs to pay close attention to Phule's ideas on literature, irrespective of whether they are explicit or implicit.

Another very important figure, from the third generation of Western-educated elite of western India to take up cudgels against the intellectual-ideological slavery of the Hindu society was Āgarkar. If Phule's diagnosis of the Slavery

of the untouchables at the hands of the Brahmins was one example of the counter-discourse of Nationalism, Āgarkar's essay '*Gulāmānche Rāṣṭra*' is another such example of a counter-discourse of nationalism. On the one hand Phule's deist concept of religion expressed in the *Satyashodhak Dharma* was a solution that sought to leave behind the entire ideological baggage of Hindu theology that threatened to overpower the ideal of a modern democracy and Āgarkar, on the other hand, sought to make religion irrelevant as society moved on into modernity.

Gopāl Gaṇeś Āgarkar (1856-1895)

Āgarkar, an intellectual who was labelled as a Moderate Atheist by his generation worked closely with his contemporary stalwarts such as B.G. Tilak, Viṣṇuśāstri Ciplunṅkar, and G.K. Gokhale. Lauded as '*Sudhāarakāgraṇī*', i.e. the leader of all social reformers, Āgarkar had a lion's share in moulding the Reformist movement in Mahārashtra. As a journalist, he edited the *Kesari* and the *Marāthā* and later, his own journal the *Sudhāarak* and advocated a rationalism that is the hallmark of a Moderate intellectual. Hailing from a poor *Citpāvan* family, Āgarkar had a lifelong commitment to education. One of the founders of the New English School of Poona, and later, the Deccan Education Society, he was appreciated by his students as an effective teacher of languages. H.N. Āpte, the novelist who ushered in the age of realism in Marathi novel, was one among the first batch of pupils who studied under him. He also worked as the principal of Fergusson College for a number of years. In his journalistic style we find ample evidence of a literary sensibility and a sustained interest in literature and the arts.

He translated *Hamlet* while he was in jail at Ḍoṅgrī, serving his term as a convict in the Barve court case. He called his translation *Vikāravilasita* (1883)²³ and in its introduction he

has devoted some attention to discussing the basic issues related to translation, drama and literature in general. Among his essays that address some basic theoretical issues related to literature and the arts ‘*Kāvī, Kāvya, Kāvyaṛatī*’²⁴ and ‘Shakespeare, Kalidās, Bhavabhūti’ are the most prominent.

Āgarkar’s essay ‘*Gulāmāñce Rāṣṭra*’²⁶ is a good example of the kind of freethinking advocated by Āgarkar. Āgarkar’s belief is that the slavery of the people of Hindustan is due to their inability to think openly and intensely. Unless they begin to think for themselves, they will not be able to free themselves from an exploitative colonial State. He argues that all kinds of questions such as is there a God, are the *Vedas* suprahuman, why should not a mother or a sister cohabit with a son or a brother, what will happen if we do away with caste distinctions, why can’t women be given the same political rights as men... etc. have to be discussed without any inhibitions and without any preconceived notions by all in this country. The ability to think rationally should not be hindered by the fear of censure from society, from our elders and from the rulers. Then one can find the courage to speak and act in accordance with one’s thoughts.

In an article advocating equal education for girls and boys and in coeducational institutions Āgarkar’s ability to stretch an idea to its logical conclusion is particularly evident²⁷. Arguing for a society in which the present unequal and unfair distribution of labour between the sexes will not exist, Āgarkar points out that the root cause of our unwillingness to reform in this regard is the power-mongering of men. Men want to retain all social power in their own hands and like the patricians of Rome have reduced women to the status of the plebeians. However, such a state of affairs is not going to last forever and very soon the owner-owned relationship between men and women will come to an end, says Āgarkar.

In an essay titled ‘*Marāṭhit Cāṅgle Graṅtha kā Hot Nāhit?*’²⁸ Āgarkar brings out even more clearly that freedom of thought is crucial for a nation to produce great literature. The absence of freedom is detrimental to the flourishing of great talent. He asks why there was no Plato, Aristotle or Socrates in Greece after it was conquered by the Romans. True independence of the mind, then, is a precondition of great literature according to Āgarkar.

Once again, one notes that like Phule, Kuṅṭe and Dādobā Pāṇḍuraṅga before him, Āgarkar seems to use the term literature in a broad sense – not in the sense of creative writing alone but also of literature of knowledge. His concept of literature is linked to socio-political factors and for him literature seems to be as much a cultural product as being a product of the writer’s imagination.

In the introduction to *Vikāravilasita* Āgarkar’s materialist conception of literature is further evident in the fact that he dwells considerably on the material conditions of the production of literature in a society. He complains for example, that in India, three fourth of the production of books is for sheer entertainment. The reason behind the absence of serious, scientific books is nothing but the easy availability of jobs in the government after the acquisition of standard education. Many like K.B. Marāṭhe and Phule had also commented upon the crippling influence of the Western, Macaulay-propounded education on the creativity and independent thought process on the minds of the native people. As a result, Āgarkar points out, there is no demand for serious books in the market and if there is no demand, from where will the production and supply come? Āgarkar’s relating of the production of high, original literature and the demand for it in the readership, of Western education which encourages only clerical abilities and the threat it spells to the nation’s creativity and genuine progress shows his broadly materialist understanding of literature.

In Āgarkar's ideas about literature one finds an interesting and convincing mesh of ideas drawn from scientific rationalism, Romantic aestheticism, Utilitarianism and from the traditional *rasa* theory. His liberal humanism may be evident in his belief that literature is about a universal human reality but as a rational materialist his arguments deal with the practicalities of the production and distribution of literary works. Even when he talks about the amazing powers of creative imagination, he dwells more on the joy of capturing reality with a 'scientific' objectivity than on the idea divine inspiration. It is interesting to see how Āgarkar fuses a romanticist notion of literature as a product of poetic imagination with an analytical, scientific vocabulary. He compares the mind of a poet to the mechanism of a lens in a camera in his essay '*Kavī, Kāvya, Kāvyaṛatī*'²⁹. A poet can control the intensity of his imaginative perception just like a lens in a camera, the focus of which can be adjusted according to the intensity of the available light. He then catches an identical image of reality on his mind. Poetic pleasure is, in fact, the joy of being one with the object of writing through the power of imagination.

Most fascinatingly, he places as much emphasis on the reader's mental state while being engaged in creative appreciation, as on that of the writer's. Āgarkar identifies this imaginative pleasure as the common feature in the act of writing as well as the act of reading. His theory thus, seeks to bring together psychological, aesthetic and materialist understandings of literature in a unified whole. It is quite consistently logical and shows the minute thought given to the subject by Āgarkar.

'*Kavī, Kāvya, Kāvyaṛatī*' develops a comprehensive and original model of the relationship between literature and the human mind. Starting with general principles, Āgarkar divides human mental activity into three aspects: sensation/experience, desires and knowledge/information. He further

divides the first aspect sensations into two types: the pleasant ones and the unpleasant ones and relates literature to pleasant sensations. The composition which is written to create pleasing sensations in the reader's mind is a literary composition. A piece of writing written with the purpose of giving the reader knowledge or information is not a creative piece.

Āgarkar modifies his statement by immediately clarifying that in actual life no work is created purely for the purpose of giving information or purely to appeal to the senses. There is always an overlap. For example, the imagination, thoughts or experiences of human beings entirely depend on the inner and outer reality and both knowledge and literature basically aim at describing reality—inner and outer—perfectly. Truth is the objective both seek to achieve.

They only differ in their method. Knowledge is also the primary tool of human happiness. Knowledge does become worthy of poetry only after it becomes capable of exciting pleasant sensations. Many forms of knowledge give pleasure only to the philosophers first but after some time they come within the reach of the common people. Mathematics or Philosophy cause excitement of the intellect and the imagination, no doubt, but it differs from the excitement involved in the processes of reading and writing. The essential difference is in that literature seeks to give the Truth regarding subjects which cause happiness and unhappiness in the lives of common people.

Almost as if he is reluctant to endorse the Romanticist bifurcation between reason and imagination Āgarkar does not give any verdict as to which of the two motives behind art: understanding the Truth behind them and creating a pleasant emotional impact on the receiver is primary and which is secondary.

Āgarkar's analytical model of what exactly constitutes artistic pleasure is well worked-out. Both, the writer and the

reader experience pleasure because of their oneness with the object of imitation through their power of imagination. The more activated this power becomes the greater is the joy. Hence the main objective of both of them is to understand reality—more precisely, the happy or unhappy incidents from human life, as truthfully as possible.

However, the nature of these incidents does not contribute to the artistic pleasure. Their nature does create emotions appropriate to them but they are purely extraneous to the business of art. He distinguishes between the creation in Nature and artistic creation. Actual experience does not match the experience of literature but then, one should not look for the same intensity of real life emotions in literature. A writer's skill consists in his ability to create an exact copy of reality and not reality itself. A writer has to be judged for his capacity to be one with his subject. He has to reflect, continuously think about the emotion of his character and he has to get the reflection of reality imprinted onto his mind. This is the writer's reverie, *tañdrī*, *ekatānatā*, *tādātmya* or the state of union/oneness with the object of representation. Whatever be the nature of the incidents described, happy or unhappy, comic or tragic, the writer needs to put in equal amount of efforts to portray both kinds.

The degree of the pleasure received by the writer or the reader depends on the degree of such oneness achieved by them. As a result, immature readers or spectators cannot enjoy the representation of tragic incidents.

Āgarkar dwells considerably on the echo that the writer's vision finds in the reader's mind. Every mind approves of the truth in the writer's composition, he avers. This emphasis on the appeal of a work of art to its recipients balances neatly against the analysis of a writer's genius. Āgarkar's concept of literature comes across as a cultural exchange between writers and readers.

Describing the sovereignty of the writer, Āgarkar says,

there is no incident in the inner and outer world, which the writer cannot describe to you and make an artistic impact on your mind. As a result a writer is the best person to go to if one wants to expand the scope of one's understanding. Literature, thus introduces you to the endless variety in the human universe, it increases your ability to empathize, so much so that it even expands to the non-living objects. The writer uses stylistic ornaments to facilitate this process. While it is true that some of the elements of his model of aesthetic pleasure can be traced back to classical Sanskrit aesthetics, it is an entirely new synthesis and it is certainly not making an uncritical use of either Sanskrit or Western ideas.

In the introduction to *Vikāravilasita* he expresses severe criticism for the *rasa* convention in the native drama. Comparing Shakespeare's endless variety of characters to the stylized creations of the native playwrights, he condemns them saying that our poets are constricted by the limited number of *rasas*. Describing Shakespeare as a *sahasrātmā*, one having a thousand souls, he says our poets can never go beyond the conventions of the ten *rasas*. Commenting on the limitations that the Sanskrit literary conventions impose, Āgarkar deplors the fact that pairs of heroes and heroines such as Cārudatta-Vasāntasenā, Duśyañta-Śakuñtalā, Rām-Sītā, and Mādhav-Mālti are nearly identical to each other. Where is any uniqueness in them, he asks.³⁰ In 'Shakespeare, Kālidās āṇi Bhavabhūti' he grades the three authors on the basis of clearly defined criteria and pronounces that Bhavabhūti is a greater writer than Kālidās and Shakespeare is definitely greater than these two.

The attempt always seems to be to aim beyond a shallow nationalism and beyond a slavish colonialism in Āgarkar's literary judgment and partly it is because he aims at a liberal humanist notion of literature.

Literature removes the narrow-minded, monocultural (*ekadeśiya*) outlook and prejudices from our minds and makes

one broadminded. The whole world appears to be our family to an enlightened reader and it leads to an ethereal, divine joy. If it were not so, the fame of the *mahākavīs* such as Kalidās and Bhavabhūti, would not have spread all over the world. This humanism and universalism is, however, always tempered by a style of thought which is both self-critical and anti-colonial.

Āgarkar turns towards a utilitarian notion of the uses of literature when he argues that when the norms of a society different from ours are presented to us repeatedly, it will help us in getting rid of our monocultural outlook and will make us self-critical. There are many norms in our culture which are worth discarding. Drama thus will pave the way for social reforms. Moreover, why should we be afraid of being exposed to Western social norms? Plays like *Mricchakatīk*, *Mudrārākṣas* or *Śakuntal* for that matter are alien to us too. Exposure to different times, states and thoughts should not be resisted, but welcomed.

Arguing for such openness of mind for readers he also avers that the great poets such as Cornell, Moliere, Dante, Schlegel, Goethe, Milton, Shakespeare, Kalidās, and Bhavabhūti never really confine their imagination to any narrow concept of individual nations or the practices of individual regions. The flight of their imagination spans many nations and continents. Their inspired state of mind seeks to plumb the depths of the complex psychological mysteries of entire humankind. Āgarkar thus comes close to the concept of World Literature. As would be consistent with his belief in liberal humanism, he looks at literature as expressing a universal reality, a universal world of thought.³¹

And yet, as if to counterbalance this idea, Āgarkar also argues that intellects like Shakespeare are products of their times. They haven't dropped from the heavens, he says. It was not any divine inspiration but the socio-political conditions of his times, social forces such as the Renaissance

and Reformation and factors such as the role played by an actor like Garrick in making Shakespeare popular that account for the greatness of Shakespeare.

Āgarkar's understanding of the realism in art is remarkably sophisticated. He allows for a lot of artificiality, constructedness in his concept of a creative work of art. Exaggeration is the soul of the *rasa* in any play. No *rasa* can be produced without exaggeration, he argues.

Commenting on practicalities involved in the work of his contemporary writers, he recommends that plays should be written in standard language, at least when they are to be printed. First of all, it is difficult for a writer to faithfully represent dialects and registers, who more often than not fail in their attempt as the samples available to them are limited. Secondly, if there are sections of society such as women and the *kulwādīs* who do not speak the standard language, very soon they will, now that there are schools being opened for them.³²

One can see thus, that Āgarkar's faith in the high ideals of liberalism and rationalism and his colonized man's painful awareness of the constricting nature of material realities help him articulate a conception of literature that is equally sensitive to the liberating power of humanist imagination and the fettered nature of cultural institutions. He sifts through critical thought, both Western and Indian, with the confidence of a critic with an insight into culture and when the need arises, he can rubbish Macaulay or Doctor Johnson and he can dismiss his contemporary over-patriotic native critics with even-handed boldness.

Early Feminist Discourse

Western feminism succeeded in clearly naming patriarchy as the root cause of women's oppression only from 1949, with Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*. Western feminist

criticism came into its own only in the 1960s with the publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* and Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics*. There would not then seem to be any possibility of there being any feminist literary theory in colonial India. However, liberal feminist thought was accessible to the Western educated elite—*On the Subjection of Women* by John Stuart Mill was read for a long time and G.V. Kāñiṭkar was working on its translation since 1884. The translation was eventually published in 1902.³³ In that light, we may ask how the possibilities of that line of thinking were worked out independently by Indian thinkers in the light of indigenous social realities. It might also be relevant to ask whether we find any evidence of theorization about literature from the feminist point of view in these times.

The influence of Western liberal feminism, especially of the writings of John Stuart Mill, had brought the issue of women's education on the anvil and the idea of the new woman had hit the Indian imagination in a big way all over India in the second half of the nineteenth century. Legal reforms such as the Age of Consent Bill and the much-debated cases like the Rakhmābāi Case of 1883 had forced society to consider the extent to which a Hindu woman could be granted an independent individuality. Progressive men not only educated their wives at home to create models of a companionate wife, but an exceptionally ambitious man like Gopāl Joṣī also sent his wife Ānañdibāi abroad to earn an MD at the first Women's Medical College at Philadelphia in 1883. The public sphere, then, was abuzz with the notion of women's liberation and its implications for the institutions of family and religion.

Theoretically, people like Phule and Āgarkar had unambiguously put forth the idea of the complete equality of the sexes and full citizenship rights to women. Several male novelists such as Bābā Padmanjī and later Harī Nārāyaṇ Āpte portrayed the condition of women with sensitivity.

Several important creative and polemical texts by women writers themselves were also written during this era. While one cannot find any literary theory emerging from this group of writers it is still important to take note of the traces of radical feminist thought that one can find in this work. A critique of patriarchy as a whole, of social institutions enslaving women, is certainly present in this era, though it will be difficult to show inferences being worked out for literature per se.

Tārābāi Śinde's text *Strī-PuruṣTulanā*³⁴ written in 1882, is striking for its understanding of patriarchy as a system. Prostitutes are readily acknowledged in this book as "It is just the way they earn their living, and if they don't do what their customers tell them, next day they go hungry" (p.113). Her insight into the mechanism of power that renders women helpless and gives them a raw deal is remarkable for her times.

Moralizing speeches of men lauding the great *pativrata* women of yore are turned around on them by Tārābāi when she describes Draupadī, Kuṅtī in very realistic terms.

All your big talk – you make it all up on the basis of the shastras. But in fact the people who wrote all these books ought to be ashamed of themselves, shastras, puranas, pothis and so on. You ask me why? Well, when they picked out women from previous ages, some of them had gone wrong too, but there they are now, held up as first class pativratas. That's good is it? Take Draupadi – she was a woman who had five husbands already, but that never stopped her from lusting secretly after maharaja Karna, did it?...Satyawati and Kunti were supposed to be virgins, but they each had a son Vyas, the author of the Vedas, and Karna himself – but their names are still on the list.... Each of them made a secret love marriage, then went off and got hitched to Shantanu and Panduraja! So what else were they doing but marrying a second time? Then their kids Vyas and big-hearted Karna got so holy even the gods fell down at their feet. But when someone has kids like that these days they get called very different names... (*A Comparison between Women and Men*, pp. 81-82)

Her objective is to expose the pretentious moralist discourse of her society. The idealization of the Hindu woman that

was taking place around her is correctly recognized by her as an ideological trap and the remedy was to force out what was real into the public domain. In a welter of discourses about women by men, Tārābāī's book stands out for its bold contestation of patriarchal power.

Her independent spirit is evident throughout the book. She doesn't need any authentication by men. It is as if she is talking back to them and challenging them to open their eyes to reality.

But every day now we have to look at some new and more horrible example of men who are really wicked and their shameless lying tricks. And not a single person says anything about it. Instead people go about pinning the blame on women all the time, as if everything bad was their fault! When I saw this, my whole mind just began churning and shaking out of feeling for the honour of womankind. So I lost all my fear, I just couldn't stop myself writing about it in this very biting language.... All I ask is if you're really someone with an open mind, think about it carefully and see if what I say is true or not.... (p.77)

Her criticism of *Strīcaritra*, a variety of conduct novel-like stories published by various male writers harping on chastity and unfailing virtuosity, of the popular romances *Muktāmālā* and *Manjughoshā* and the play *Manoramā* tries to expose the misogyny and hypocrisy of its male writers. Talking about the grossly unrealistic and therefore false treatment of their characters, that puts women in a bad light, Tārābāī points out that writers like these had no business to preach to women and indeed the guise of people's enlightenment that they use to present their wretched stories wears thin when you see the absurd depictions in their writing. (pp. 113-17)

Of course, it will be a mistake to expect a consistently developed radical feminist argument in a book like this. It is more like a vexed quarrel with men. All kinds of arguments are pressed into service to present women's side of the story. After a number of very impressive insights into the male appropriation of power over women, all of a sudden the book ends with a prayer "I pray women may shine like

lightning by means of their conduct as *pativratas* in their husbands' families and their own. I pray the flag of their happiness may be raised high over the temples of both their homes, that all women and children live happily in the full glory of Lakshmi, that they should be beloved by all and their foreheads filled with the auspicious marks of marriage....” and so on (pp. 123-24).

The vision of life outside patriarchal categories is not what Tārābāī can conceptualize. The figure of woman as homemaker without whom even a palace is “desolate just like a burning ground” (p.122) is always present as a backdrop in Tārābāī's work. *Strī-PuruṣTulanā* falls short of being a theoretical work because of its ambiguity and lack of an overarching vision. However, it must be clear from the preceding discussion that it is indeed noteworthy as a very powerful challenge to contemporary male discourse.

More often than not feminist ideas of this age occur in a compromised form, within the fold of a patriarchal world view, as can be seen in the example of Kāśībāī Kāñiṭkar. Kāśībāī Kāñiṭkar (1861-1948) has been acknowledged as “the first major woman writer in Marathi” and Meera Kosambi has outlined her seminal contribution to Marathi Literature³⁵ by pointing out that she explored a number of literary forms such as the novel *Raṅgrāo* (published serially between 1886 and 1892 in a monthly magazine, until the magazine folded in 1892, and later published as a book in 1903), the biography (*The Life of the Late Dr Mrs Anandibai Joshi* (1889), which was the first Marathi biography written by a woman) the autobiographical narrative which remained unpublished until 1980, the essay (‘My Education’ (ud), ‘The Progress of Women’s Education’ (1911)), the book review (the Review of Pañḍitā Ramābāī's book *The Peoples of the United States* (1889)) and the utopian fiction *Palkhicā Gōṇḍā* (written in 1897, published in parts in 1913, but published as a book only in 1928).

A *Prārthanā Samājist*, Kāśībāī had the good fortune of being encouraged by her illustrious husband Goviṅdrāo Kāñiṭkar in her education and in her career as a woman writer. He taught her to read and write, he also expected her to be able to read John Stuart Mill's *On the Subjection of Women* in English (he had translated it into Marathi). Goviṅdrāo wanted her to model herself on George Eliot and her close friend and admirer the novelist, Harī Nārāyaṇ Āṭṭe had suggested a more modest model of Jane Austen to her when she felt diffident about her abilities (pp.10-11). She enjoyed a presence in the public arena. She was the chief guest at the inauguration of Pañḍitā Ramābāī's *Śāradā Sadan* in 1889 and it was the first instance of a native woman presiding over an important event (p.7).

Meera Kosambi has rightly argued that her use of the word '*Puruśdroha*' translated as 'treason against men' and compared by Kāśībāī herself with high treason, suggests a feminist vision and with her begins the "engendering of Marathi Literature" (preface, p.ix). While it is true that a general liberal feminist sensibility can be found in Kāśībāī's works, one cannot really detect any consistent critique of patriarchy in it. Her novel *Raṅgrāo*, to take an example, portrays weak women characters for whom marriage and being in the eternal service of their husbands is of paramount importance. It is indeed difficult to argue that Kāśībāī's writings show any consistent feminist line of thought.

One could have perhaps expected to find some beginnings of a feminist theory in Kāśībāī's writing. However, it is difficult to argue that case as Kāśībāī's feelings towards patriarchy remain ambiguous at best. A study of her creative writing and her essays does not bring forth any consistent view of women's position within patriarchy and the role of social reforms in that respect. That wide visionary perception of women's subjugation under patriarchy is far too blinding for someone like Kāśībāī, who is ensconced in an upper caste

milieu and whose growth was, in general, sanctioned and monitored by the male members of her society. Her challenge to patriarchy could never be an out and out rejection of it as a viable social order.

Paṇḍitā Ramābāī (1852-1922)

If at all such a challenge comes from a woman in that era, it comes from Paṇḍitā Ramābāī, who was self-made in every sense. “Probably one of the first known women who wrote and lectured for a living in the nineteenth century”³⁶, Ramābāī’s life-story is one of continuous struggle against the establishment. As a young girl she had to lead a peripatetic life with her family travelling towards the north right up to Kashmir, on foot, because her father, with his strange ideas about teaching women Sanskrit had no place in the Hindu establishment. Ramābāī’s education in the traditional Sanskrit texts took place under the guidance of her mother Lakṣmībāī Ḍoṅgre. The book *The High Caste Hindu Woman* is dedicated to her mother.

A history of Marathi literary theory, such as this, I argue, needs to take note of Ramābāī’s work *The High Caste Hindu Woman* although it is a book in English written for an American audience. In times when the identity of Marathi-ness was getting gradually politicized, Ramābāī came along as a Marathi woman who defied all narrow identities, both in the background she inherited and in the choices she made. Her life transcends the categories of region, language, religion and finally, nation itself. Indeed, nothing about her was typical. Although a *Citpāvan* Brahmin, her world had been very different from the world of the new Western-educated Brahmins. As a woman born in an orthodox-reformer’s family she was brought up on traditional Sanskrit education. She had remained unmarried till the age of twenty-two and eventually married a non-Hindu Bengali

lawyer. She was widely travelled and had seen a large part of India, knew Bangla, Kannada and Hindustani apart from Sanskrit and Marathi and later also learnt English. She travelled abroad, to England and America and when she returned to India as a Christian and as a devoted champion of the cause of women, she chose to battle on all three fronts: her disdainful compatriots who were always suspicious of her loyalties, a racist colonial State and the authoritarian Christian religious orders. Everything about her life is atypical. Everything about her life is about an identity that is too broad, and too dynamic to be contained within any narrow identitarian politics. The very ideals of liberal humanism are brought to test in a life such as this.

Moreover, culturally Ramābāi remained so anchored that it will be an error not to classify this work as a text that has great relevance in the formation of critical theory in Marathi.

It may be argued that the inability of the Hindu upper caste elites such as M. G. Rānade to take any decisive radical stand with respect to caste and gender issues was due to the simple fact that they were anxious to remain within the Hindu Brahminical fold. A truly liberalist ideal of envisioning equal human rights to all, including women and members of the low castes and untouchables, eluded thinkers like Rānade. Their humanitarian thinking was not quite enough for them to be able to conceive of equal human rights to all citizens. It is well-known that Rānade, who educated his child-wife, did not think it desirable for women to participate in politics. Women in such a scheme of things were entitled to humane treatment but not full legal rights. The wife of a reformer too was to walk in the path charted out for her by her husband and never to stray from that path. Indeed the most progressive of the upper caste Indian intellectuals of the nineteenth century could never quite give up the idea that women should not have minds of their own. The highest pinnacle to reach for a liberated woman was the position of

a companionate wife for the modern Hindu male.

Ramābāī was feted by the Calcutta reformists in 1878 and given the title of Paṇḍitā Ramābāī Saraswatī in appreciation of her learning, and Chakravarti points out that the euphoric reception Ramābāī received in Calcutta was due to the fact that she appeared to the reformers “as an embodiment of their perception of ancient Indian womanhood. To them Ramābāī represented the recovery of the lost figures of Gārgī and Maitreyī, women who were learned in Sanskrit, at a time when women did not have any learning of any kind and those who wished to learn still had to do so secretly.” (pp. 307-8) Ramābāī rapidly lost her popularity however, when she married a non-Brahmin, became difficult to suffer when she continued to live in the public eye after being widowed and she positively repelled the Hindu society when she finally converted to Christianity.

Ramābāī herself, before her conversion to Christianity, hesitated to accept the idea that a woman could read the *Vedas* and the *Upaniṣads*. Her early work *Stri Dharma Nīti* is also about the role of women as wives and mothers (p.308). But her conversion to Christianity, in one stroke ended her membership of the Hindu Brahminical fold making it easy for her to embrace the idea of a fierce individualism that would not then brook the paternalistic authoritarian structures of even Christianity and imperialism.

Phule, condemning the universal denunciation of Ramābāī’s conversion in 1883 by the press, commented perceptively, that “as a truly educated woman, Ramābāī had seen for herself the bias of the *Śāstras* towards the low castes and women and therefore could not but break with Brahmanic Hinduism.” (p. 320)

Chakravarti, in an incisive analysis of the two contradictory images of India—one projected in Ramābāī’s accounts and the other represented by Vivekānaṇḍa’s discourse of sublime spiritualism in his speeches given in America in 1895—brings

out the significance of Ramābāī's work as an ideological intervention (pp.333-337). Vivekānanda sought to glorify the ideal of Indian womanhood claiming in a characteristically benign manner that no real problems of caste and gender existed in India. India was about spiritualism and Indian widows were far from being exploited and abused, on the contrary, they were most highly regarded for their asceticism and an awakened spirituality (p.335). Chakravarti points out that the cultural nationalism of the late nineteenth century India constructed Ramābāī as unpatriotic as she dared to place gender before nation. "Vivekananda's strong disapproval of Ramabai's conversion to Christianity and [of] her appeal on behalf of Hindu widows were aspects of cultural nationalism that obscured oppressive Hindu social practices and gender contradictions, especially when addressing a Western audience." (p.336)

Through her personal experiences, Ramābāī came to see the problematic nature of patriarchal structures and the importance of claiming and retaining her own agency as an individual and she held on to it with astonishing tenacity throughout her life.

Her *The High Caste Hindu Woman* (1888)³⁷ published in Philadelphia is a methodically mounted attack on Hindu Brahminical hegemony. Clearly argued out, strongly worded, this work does not flinch from bringing out the death-trap that Hindu patriarchy had become for upper caste women in India. A thorough grasp of the Hindu scriptures, a thorough familiarity with the social problems of contemporary India give her writing a clarity of vision, difficult to attain for women reforming under the protective guidance of men at that time.

Discussing the three stages of childhood, married Life and old age or widowhood, the text of *The High caste Hindu Woman* builds a very convincing case of the wretched and miserable condition of Indian women. Ramābāī highlights

infanticide, child-marriages and *Satī* as the worst possibilities of a general culture of neglect and ill-treatment of women in Hinduism. Ramābāi draws on contemporary sources such as newspapers and travellers or writers accounts, letters, memoirs, her own eye-witness accounts and also on her thorough and scholarly knowledge of Hindu scriptures such as *Manusmriti*, *RigVeda*, *ParāsharSmriti*, and *Apastamba*: texts that were either forbidden to be read by women or were simply inaccessible for them as they were never taught Sanskrit. Ramābāi as the first woman to have accessed and read these scriptures and to have shred them to pieces must have been aware of the revolution she was creating. Christianity served for her as a foothold outside of this oppressive system from where she could wage her battle. The book establishes continuity between the inhuman reality faced by women and its endorsement by the Hindu religion. She has successfully demonstrated how the customs of Hinduism derive their sanction from these texts and also, in cases such as *Satī*, from a manipulative interpretation given to these texts by the priests. What emerges through the pages of *The High Caste Hindu Woman* is a horrifying image of the patriarchal Hindu Brahminism as deeply misogynistic.

Yet, strangely, it cannot be read as the work of a Christian missionary. Quotations from the Bible are consistently used as an appeal to the humanitarian feeling in her readers and not for any literal truth or as an alternative to Hinduism. The tone of her criticism is very different from the missionary criticism of Hindu scriptures, as she writes from within the tradition, as an insider. Her tone is of a woman battling the conservative forces in her own society on her own home ground, of someone who is committed to liberal humanist and modern democratic values, and not to any literal truth of Christianity.

Addressed to the American audience in the form of an appeal for financial help to set up a shelter for Brahmin

widows, *The High Caste Hindu Woman* uses a style that is exemplary in its controlled rationalistic arguments that nevertheless leave the reader emotionally shaken. Carefully leaving out her first-hand experience as a widow, Ramābāi presents her thoughts as an objective and rational argument.

While there are several instances of a discussion of classical religious texts, of particular relevance for this study is the chapter, titled ‘Woman’s Place in Religion and Society’ in which Ramābāi methodically examines the sacred and profane literature in Sanskrit from a woman’s point of view. As perhaps the first sustained decoding of the Hindu textual tradition by a woman this chapter can be seen as the fountainhead of Indian feminism and of feminist criticism and theory in India. Starting with a series of quotations that seem to express the highest regard of the Hindu society for women, she goes on to describe the Hindu view of women as evil and sinful and the commandments of Hindu religion to keep women in the custody of men at all stages in her life.

After citing a series of quotations from different religious texts to the effect that women should be honoured and acknowledging that “the honour bestowed upon the mother is without parallel in any other country” (p.51), Ramābāi turns her attention to the other side of the story. Recounting several quotations from the lawgiver Manu, she brings out an attitude towards women completely incompatible with the exhortations to honour them. Women are deemed to be the sources of all kinds of evil and unless closely guarded will bring men to their doom through their treacherous fickle nature. “It is the nature of women to seduce men in this world; for that reason the wise are never unguarded in the company of females” (p.53), quotes she from *Manusmriti* and argues that the seclusion of women in Hindu society is based on this attitude of distrust towards women. “Day and night women must be kept in dependence by the males of

their families, and if they attach themselves to sensual enjoyments, they must be kept under one's control.”(p.54) Ramābāi sums up the tone of *Manusmriti* as follows:

Those who diligently and impartially read Sanscrit literature in the original, cannot fail to recognize the law-giver Manu as one of those hundreds who have done their best to make woman a hateful being in the world's eye. To employ her in housekeeping and kindred occupations is thought to be the only means of keeping her out of mischief, the blessed enjoyment of literary culture being denied her. She is forbidden to read the sacred scriptures, she has no right to pronounce a single syllable out of them....
(p. 55)

Further, Ramābāi laments that profane literature echoes the same sentiments towards the class of women, quoting extensively from proverbs, ethical teachings and catechisms she argues that such a view of women has become a norm among the ordinary Hindus as well. Documenting Manu's diktats for a woman to remain subservient to her male relatives and ultimately to dedicate herself to her husband as a God and also Manu's instructions to men to ensure that they control their wives well are presented by Ramābāi as unjust and unfair to women as individuals. While women are to worship their husbands even though he be “destitute of virtue, and seek pleasure elsewhere, or be devoid of good qualities, addicted to evil passion, fond of spirituous liquors or diseased”, the men are licensed to “ban”, “abandon” deprive a wife “of her property and ornaments”, to “supersede” a wife “by another wife” for a number of reasons.
(p.61)

Quickly she goes on to establish the fact that such complete power over a wife, reducing the wife to the man's property still continues to be the norm of Hindu society as can be seen in the Rakhmābāi case which is “only one of thousands of the same class.” (p.64) Ramābāi hits the nail on the head in her succinct comment on the reaction of the Hindu society to this case and on the final verdict of the Rakhmābāi case. Encapsulating the quintessentially radical

feminist awareness of the interlocking structures of patriarchy and imperialism her argument closes with these words:

Taught by the experience of the past, we are not at all surprised at this decision of the Bombay Court. Our only wonder is that a defenceless woman like Rakhmabai dared to raise her voice in the face of the powerful Hindu law, the mighty British government, the one hundred and thirty million men and three hundred and thirty million gods of the Hindus, all these having conspired together to crush her into nothingness. We cannot blame the English government for not defending a helpless woman; it is only fulfilling its agreement made with the male population of India. How very true are the words of the Saviour, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

Should England serve God by protecting a helpless woman against the powers and principalities of ancient institutions, Mammon would surely be displeased, and British profit and rule in India might be endangered thereby. (p.67)

As a well-argued out deconstruction of Hindu scriptures, *The High Caste Hindu Woman* is comparable to Phule's polemics against Hindu texts. Both these thinkers seem to have made a common cause against the enemy of Hindu nationalism and Brahminical patriarchy.

Their struggle against caste-restrictions, their search for human dignity brought them into a direct opposition with the most oppressive of social organisations in colonial India: the Brahminical Hindu patriarchy. They had rightly felt that more than the colonisers it was this system that had to be taken on first. Nationalism thus was not a discourse that they could identify with, increasingly it became difficult for them to speak in one voice with leading Hindu political nationalists and they found more friends outside of that framework to articulate their love for their compatriots. Their patriotism assumed shapes that their contemporaries failed to comprehend, rendering them 'outsiders' in their own country.

While her own position as a Christian convert discounted Ramābāī's views for the mainstream 'liberal' Indian Hindu

community then, today in any reassessment of Ramābāī's ideological position one would have to appreciate her radical liberalism that remained committed to her people and her land. Refusing to submit to any authoritarian institution within the Christian Church, Ramābāī sought to relate to Christ in her own individualistic way³⁸. Her disillusionment with Hinduism is not replaced by an easy and simplistic belief in Christianity as a solution. Uma Chakravarti has brought to light this aspect of Ramābāī's thought. The intellectual maturity and integrity in *The High Caste Hindu Woman* makes it a seminal work in the history of Marathi feminism and Marathi literary theory.

Nativism as Radical Aesthetics

In Āgarkar, Phule and Paṇḍitā Ramābāī, we find a very rigorous application of liberalism to the concept of literature. Avoiding aestheticisation as an apolitical Universalist exercise, these writers continue to draw attention to the material moorings of literature, its cultural setting as definitive of its aesthetic value. Unlike Cipluṅkar these writers can be justly described as theorists because they have refused to take any culturally inherited or imposed values as givens. It is a conscious rejection of Brahminical aesthetics and value systems and their attempt is to go beyond the parochial without, at the same time, adopting any quick conversion to universality. Āgarkar's rationalism and aestheticism that place the writer and the reader on par, or Phule's anti-Brahminism, or Ramābāī's critique of Hindu patriarchy are instruments of reclaiming agency for the individual and assigning moral responsibility for their actions. Like powerful search-lights they turn their gaze inward, on their own society, without aligning themselves with colonizing ideologies. Drawing on the Western cultural traditions has actually better equipped them to deal with indigenous cultural complexities and to

redeem from those complexities, “modern” notions of individual liberty, social justice and of critical rationalism. Simultaneously, their being rooted in their geographical-political space has given them the strength to withstand a totalizing imperialist variety of liberalism. Their theorization is an attempt to negotiate a politics of modernity that can look beyond both, a sloppy Western universalism as well as a myopic Hindu nationalism.

NOTES

1. See Chakravarti Uma, *Rewriting History: The Life and Times of Pandita Ramabai*, New Delhi: Kali for Women, 1998, pp. 90-93 and also Chapalgaokar, Narendra, *Tin Nyāyamūrti āṇi Tyāncā Kāl*, Mumbai: Mauj Prakashan and Bharateeya Artha Vidyanavardhini, 2010, pp. 62-63.
2. See Malshe, S.G. ‘Ekā Marāthi Punarvivāhāci Śokāntikā’ in *Gataśatak Śodhitānā*, Pune: Pratima Prakashan, 1989.
3. Chakravarti Uma, *Rewriting History*, p. 216.
4. *Ibid*, p. 94.
5. Naregal Veena, *Language Politics, Elites and the Public Sphere: Western India under Colonialism*, New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2001, pp. 251-262.
6. Banahatti, S. N. (ed) *Viṣṇupadī: [writings of] Viṣṇu Kriṣṇa Cipluṅkar*, vol. 1, Pune: Suvichar Prakashan, 1974, pp3-6.
7. Banahatti, S.N. and V.S. Balkundi (eds), *Viṣṇupadī: [writings of] Viṣṇu Kriṣṇa Cipluṅkar*, (1st edition) Nagpur: Suvichar, Pune, 1939 pp. 503-507.
8. Chapalgaokar Narendra, *Tin Nyāyamūrti*, pp. 151-152.
9. O’Hanlon, Rosalind, *Caste, Conflict and Ideology: Mahatma Jotirāo Phule and Low Caste Protest in Nineteenth Century Western India*, New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2010, p.105.
10. Both these works are cited in his writings extensively, mainly in *Gulāmgiri* and *Śetkaryācā Asūd*.
See: *Mahatma Phule Samara Vangmay*, ed. Padre Y.D., [MPSV, henceforth] Maharashtra Raja Sahitya Ani Sanskriti Mandal, [1969], improved 5th ed., 1991 Subsequent references in the text.
11. See Aloysius, G. *Nationalism without a Nation in India*, New Delhi: OUP, 1997.
12. *Ibid*, p. 234.
13. *Ibid*, p.243.
14. *Ibid*, p. 243.
15. *Ibid*, p.244.

16. Phadke, MPSV, p. 337, quoted from ‘Opinion from Jotteerao Govindrao Phulay on note no. I, by B.M. Malabari, on infant marriages in India’ (1886).
17. For a fuller discussion of the poem and its comparison with other texts on Sivaji, see O’Hanlon, Rosalind, ‘Maratha History as Polemic: Low Caste Ideology and Political Debate in Late nineteenth-century Western India’ in *Modern Asian Studies*, 17, 1 (1983), pp.1-33.
18. Deshpande, Prachi, *Creative Pasts: Historical Memory and Identity in Western India 1700-1960*, New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2007, P. 112
19. Ibid., p.112.
20. Ibid., p.112.
21. Ibid., p.113.
22. Ibid., p.113.
23. Āgarkar, G.G., *Vikāravilasita*, Pune: Venus, 1956, pp. 17-45.
24. Pradhan, G.P. *Āgarkar Lekhasaṅgraha*, New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1960, pp. 365-372.
25. Āgarkar, Gopāl Gaṇeś, *Samṅpūrṇa Āgarkar*, Vol.3, Pune: Varada, 1994, pp.184-186.
26. Āgarkar, Gopāl Gaṇeś Āgarkar, *Samṅpūrṇa NibandhaSaṅgraha*, Pune: Āgarkar Prakashan Mandal, 1947, pp. 186-211.
27. “Strī-puruśānā Ekac Śikṣaṅ Dyāve va Tehī Ekatra Dyāve!” in Pradhan, G. P. (ed.) *Āgarkar Lekhasaṅgraha*, pp. 179-185.
28. Āgarkar, Gopāl Gaṇeś, *Samṅpūrṇa Āgarkar*, Vol.1, Pune: Varada, 1994, pp. 476-478.
29. Pradhan, G.P. *Āgarkar Lekhasaṅgraha*, pp. 365-372.
30. Āgarkar, G. G., *Vikāravilasita*, Pune: Venus, 1956, p. 38.
31. Ibid., 22-24.
32. Ibid., 26-28.
33. Vaidya Sarojini, *Śrīmati Kashibāi Kānītkar: Ātmacaritra āṇi Caritra* (1861-1948), Mumbai: Popular Prakashan, 1991, p. 278.
34. O’Hanlon Rosalind, *A Comparison between Women and Men: Tarabai Shinde and the Critique of Gender Relations in Colonial India*, [1994], New Delhi: OUP, 2000.
35. Kosambi, Meera (trans. and ed.), *Feminist Vision or ‘Treason Against Men’?: Kashibai Kanitkar and the Engendering of Marathi Literature*, Ranikhet: Permanent Black, 2008.
36. Chakravarti, Uma, *Rewriting History*, p. 316 (subsequent references within the text)
37. Sarasvati, Pundita Ramabai, *The High Caste Hindu Woman*, New Delhi: Inter-India Publications, 1984. References cited within the text.
38. Chakravarti, Uma, *Rewriting History*, p. 348, (endnote 116).

Conclusion

The luminous quality of the nativist engagement with the concept of literature does not survive into the twentieth century. It seems to die out almost completely. The scene throughout the first half of the twentieth century is dismal. Criticism and theoretical discussions grow exponentially in the twentieth century as various institutions continue to offer newer platforms for literary discussions. *Sāhitya Sammelans*, periodicals such as *Vividha Dnyānavistār*, *Grānthamālā*, *Nibāṇḍha Ratnamālā*, *Māsik Manorañjan*, *Sudhārak*, academic lectures such as the *Wilson Philological lectures*, Mumbai Marathi *Grānthasangrahalay*'s annual functions, public lecture series such as the *Vasānta Vyākhyānmālā* prepare the ground for popular discussions of literary and critical issues. The voluminous and obsessive discussions, however, largely fail to engage with social politics with any urgency and honesty. The consumers of this elite discourse are predominantly upper caste and middle class readers and their conservative, complacent politics is masked by a numbing aesthetics and its utterly vacuous terminology. Among the most prominently debated questions at these fora is: What is the function of literature—entertainment or enlightenment? And all we have for several long decades is a wordy, flowery, meaningless chatter about the mysterious ways in which art functions.

Intellectual clarity seems to grow rare as the India of the twentieth century gets converted into a cultural minefield of nationalism, cultural revivalism and cultural amnesia. Cosmopolitan visionaries sing enchantingly of a universal humanism and go completely mute when they have to deal with issues of social justice, especially the tricky phenomenon of caste.

Except for a few sparks here and there, Marathi theory in its forceful radical avatar remains dormant until well into the post-independence era. Indeed the single most distinguishing quality of the nineteenth century theoretical writings that we have studied so far, is its radicalism and perhaps it is necessary to reinforce this point sufficiently, especially when we see its near complete absence in the era of nationalism.

The Antecedents of Nativism: Literary Theory as a Product of Radical Liberalism

The term ‘radicalism’ comes with a long lineage of political denominations in modern European history and represents a variety of shades of meaning, ranging from the moderate to the extreme and that roughly correspond with the terms ‘liberalist’, ‘anti-royalist’ and ‘republican’. One could also begin with a more general meaning in which it is used today: “resistance to orthodoxy, to the accepted” and “a departure from the norm, from the everyday, from common sense”¹. Except Marāṭhe perhaps, each of the remaining five nativist thinkers described in this work would clearly fit into this description in their own respective ways. Their common ideological anchor was to question the establishment—whether of the colonial government or of the dominant colonial bourgeois Hindu elite, or of upper castes, or of the males and quite often all of these simultaneously.

If one were to take a quick overview of the ideas that they brought to the category of literature one would find a strong radical liberal politics behind those ideas. Tarkhaḍkar’s notion of ‘*abhiruchi*’, that is, of popular taste as a sovereign measure of the merit of a literary work, his projection of the classical Marathi poet Moropaṅt as an egalitarian man who defied boundaries of caste and religion; Kuṅṅe’s projection of an imaginary native audience, “who instinctively admire the true, the just and the beautiful without any learning”

and his conscious attempt to write for them, in their language; Marāthe's wry questioning of the Victorian boundaries between truth and falsehood or fiction and history in his attempt to define the modern genres of the novel and the drama; Phule's almost obsessive insistence on literary institutions and enterprises as being symptomatic of wider ideological cross-currents among social classes, Āgarkar's sophisticated aesthetics that placed the reader's imagination on par with the writer's and his impatience with classical formalist aesthetics; Paṇḍitā Ramābāī's insight into the misogyny of traditional literature and its persistence into modern social structures that render women doubly colonized, all these ideas are like a brilliant collage with a common underlying theme and radicalism is a useful shorthand to describe that theme.

All these early theorists are curiously unanimous in resisting the notion of literature as purely creative literature to be judged by purely aesthetic norms. They return time and again to pre-colonial Marathi literature which, as discourse, belonged more to philosophy, religion, history and reinterpret it for the modern context qua literature, imprinting it simultaneously with radicalism. When they do take up classical Sanskrit and English literature, which certainly could be described as literature in the new sense, they test it against the same radical politics that they would like to advocate in their contemporary world, not against abstract notions of the beautiful or the sublime. Shakespeare's greatness, for Āgarkar, was as '*sahasrātmā*', as someone who could make us empathise with a range of human experiences and thereby broaden our narrow parochial sensibilities. When they take up the task of creating entirely new writing they resolve to write for the common people and about the values of liberty and equality.

Each of these theorists is aware of the material context in which literature emerges, gets circulated and gets evaluated.

Tarkhaḍkar's analysis of the popularity of Moropaṅt in terms of his adoption by Śāhir Rām Joṣī, Āgarkar's interpretation of Shakespeare's popularity in terms of the spread of British imperialism that created a market for his plays; Ramābāī's pitching of her arguments about the despicable state in which the high caste Hindu woman is languishing to an American audience through her appropriation of the English language, Phule's disdain for the Śudra press-owners who did not have the courage to print a radical text such as *Śetkaryācā Āsūḍ...* all these point to a view of creative writing as enmeshed with broader material structures of a society.

Even more interestingly, in their own context, these thinkers are acutely aware of the urgency with which such material structures have to be contested, bypassed and defied to articulate what is beyond common sense. How easily they talk to audiences that have ceased to exist or audiences that exist in another land and another time! How easily they draw on the resources of English to talk of Marathi literature! The amazing versatility of their strategies speaks volumes for their awareness of power-play in society.

One also needs to advance this argument further by saying that all these writers are writing about literature only obliquely. Their literary theory needs to be sifted out deliberately from their writing and is hardly obvious to us *as* literary theory precisely because it is bound up with what they have to say about issues of social reform. Their theory is imprinted with cultural politics. It is not about literature as much as it is about political strife along the axes of race, class, caste and gender.

In retrospect, their achievement can be summed up by saying that they invest the new category of 'literature' with the 'modern'. In dealing with the newly emerging category of literature, the nativist thinkers of Marathi have a clear cultural-political agenda and that is, to counter the process of aestheticisation that would blindfold society into a

Universalist aesthetics and that would stabilize the colonial-patriarchal power structures. Their radicalism, equally at odds with Western colonialism and with a revivalist cultural nationalism takes on this task with shrewd insights into the workings of an ideological battlefield.

Why have we called them “makers” of Marathi literary theory and instead why not accord a less conscious role to them as would any structuralist? I would propose that they need to be recast into a *canon* of nativist literary theorists because their theorizing is not a random process. They seem to be conscious of their role as agents of change, as ushers of modernity. As partisan players on an uneven ideological battlefield they seem to have functioned with a vision. It is a vision, which is neither a blinding dream nor some uncanny clairvoyance. There is something mundane and ordinary about this vision. It is the vision of a technician,—a cultural technician who seems to know that the past doesn’t merely flow into the present. It is to be actively claimed using one’s own agency and it has to be seized from the hands of others who, if left to their own ways, would use it ruthlessly to consolidate power. One has to see them as astute political partisans of their era.

It is a remarkable fact that as modern rational subjects these writers wield the weapon of the clarity of Reason and yet, they are intensely aware of the power of structures in forming any subjectivity. How did they reconcile this paradox? They could not have done that without placing before themselves the notions of social justice and of the dignity of the individual that were enshrined in the notion of modernity. It is to their credit that they could salvage modernity from its Western liberal humanist mould and in that as makers of literary theory they are also makers of a native modernity.

Canonicity becomes a relevant category when we begin re-reading and re-mapping the history of Marathi literature

through a radical political lens. It is time we started trying to see beyond the mist of the era of Indian nationalism to locate the coming of modernity. We soon begin to face the fact that modernity has neither fallen from the imperial heavens and nor is it emerging within nationalist frameworks. The springs of Indian modernity lie elsewhere. They seem to lie in the rugged hands of those men and women from our past who made it their business to reach for the stars without losing hold of ground realities.

NOTES

1. Lucas, John (ed.), *Writing and Radicalism*, New York: Longman, 1996, p. 1.

Appendix

*An Anthology of Marathi Theoretical Texts
from the Nineteenth Century*

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NOTES

The writings collected here have been reproduced from the sources mentioned below. No editorial changes have been made in the textual content. Variations in spellings

and linguistic conventions that are followed in the sources have been maintained. All footnotes are by the respective authors and are converted into endnotes here.

1. Tarkhaḍkar, Dādobā Pāṇḍuraṅga, *Kekāvalī, RāoBahadur Dādobā Pāṇḍuraṅga Yānī Kelelyā Yaśodāpāṇḍuraṅgī Nāvācyā Vistīrṇa Tīkesahit*, Mumbai (?): Sailila Magazine, 1931, pp. 1-39.
2. Kuṅṭe, M.M., *Rājā Śivājī*, (ed.) G.G. Adhikari, Pune: Sarawat Prasarak Mandali, 1924, pp. 1-20.
3. Marāṭhe, K.B., *Nāval va Nāṭak: An Essay on the Nature of a Novel and a Drama*, Pune: Modern Book Depot, 1962.
4. *Mahātmā Phule Samagra Vāṅmay*, (ed.) Y.D. Phadke, Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya Ani Sanskriti Mandal, 1991, p. 344.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 406-07.
6. *Ibid.* pp. 470-76.
7. Āgarkar G. G., *VikāraVilasit*, (ed.) V.S. Apte, Pune: Sarita Prakashan, 1986, pp. 9-31.
8. Pradhan, G.P. (ed.), *Āgarkar Lekhasaṅgraha*, New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1960, pp. 365-372.
9. Āgarkar, G. G., *Sampūrṇa Āgarkar*, Vol.3, Pune: Varada, 1994, pp.184-186.
10. *Ibid.*, Vol.1, pp.476-478.
11. Sarasvati, Pundita Ramabai, *The High Caste Hindu Woman*, New Delhi: Inter-India Publications, 1984, pp. 50-68.

I
दादोबा पांडुरंग तर्खडकर
केकावली

INTRODUCTION

It is a source of great pleasure to me to introduce to the notice of the European Oriental scholars, whose indefatigable labours in laying open the mine of the Learning and the far-famed Wisdom of the East, are worthy of the first nation of the earth, the following little poem of the celebrated Marathi poet Moropant of Baramati, entitled the 'Kekawali' or the 'Cries of the Peacock'¹, which, from its pure and sublime direction, and the music of its rhymes and alliterations, for which our poet is peculiarly distinguished from a host of other poets of the Maharashtra, has obtained nearly the same renown as the "Paradise Lost" and the "Paradise Regained" of the immortal Milton in England.

Moropant is said to have been born in the year 1729 A.D. and to have died in 1794. His father Ramaji Pant was a member of the Karhada subdivision of the Maharashtra Brahman caste, who first served the Raja of Kolhapur at the fort of Panhala, in the humble capacity of a karkun or clerk, and subsequently Pandurang Row, the then Jahagirdar of Baramati in the same capacity. Our poet, who, in his youth had applied himself to the acquisition of the Sanskrit language and literature, especially of the classics, gave early proofs of his genius as a poet of no ordinary merit. Considering the high respect in which the knowledge of the Vedas, and Shastras, and of the Sanskrit language in general, was then held at the court of the Pashwas, the then potentiate Hindu power in Hindustan, and *a priori* the source

of distinction, emoluments, and fame, to the ambition of the Hindu literati throughout India, it redounds no little to his fame, and I should add, to no small liberality of sentiment on the part of our Brahman poet, to have devoted his life to the instruction and enlightenment of the mass of his countrymen, through the medium of their own vernacular tongue by opening to them a part of the treasure, or I may better express it, by serving up to them the intellectual food, already prepared in the Sanskrit language, and thus to have contributed in no small degree to the improvement and cultivation of the Vernacular Literature of his country. Of all the Marathi poets, and it cannot be concealed that poets are the only authors in India, Moropant is perhaps the most voluminous who has left his works behind him in a correct state of preservation. His favourite metre is the *arya*, in which he has rendered nearly the whole of the Mahabharata, and the Bhagavat, as well as given copious Extracts from various other Puranas and Mahatmyas. Besides, he has written short panegyrics on all the modern poets and saints known in the Dakhan. To this mass of writings in the *arya* metre alone, must be added his one hundred and eight Ramayanas, which are said to be more or less enlarged in form, and composed in a variety of metres, with all the poetical skill which an ingenious mind can conceive and accomplish. Add to this a large number of songs in different stanzas.

From the above statement, it can be easily inferred that the following little poem, which I have edited, and on which I have commented, is but an infinitesimal portion of the great mass of the writings which Moropant has left behind. But though small, this poem—the “Cries of the Peacock,” has been selected as one of the best and fairest samples which can testify to the poetical talents of our author. The purity and grandeur of its style, the poetical beauty and music of its rhymes, and above all these the felicity of its theme (being the praise of the deity though in the form of Vishnu and his

reputed incarnations) are among its chief recommendation for its present selection. It can hardly be expected that a poem, written in the vernacular by a Sanskrit pundit of the time of the last Peshwas, in imitation and on the model of the sublimity of the Sanskrit poetry, rich in high words and phrases, will be ever quite intelligible to the populace, and to the generality of students in this country, without a paraphrase and explanation of the original text. Experience has perfectly satisfied me that even among the Sanskrit scholars in this country, few can pretend to the full and easy comprehension of this little poem without mental efforts of no ordinary kind.

I sincerely trust that the work now edited, and copiously commented on, (with numerous annotations and illustrations) will prove a source of such palatable instructions as the people of the old school, who form the bulk of the reading population would, I fancy, heartily relish, and thereby may induce, what is sadly wanted, a taste for reading among them; and that in the hands of the young and aspiring students, it may prove of help also for facilitating the comprehension of the great body of the poetical compositions of Moropant, and other Marathi poets of his standard. A careful study of the work will also, I feel confident, pave the way for the acquisition of the Sanskrit language, a knowledge of which is now rightly deemed to be an essential part of our University education for the Hindus.

In my preliminary observations which preface this work I have endeavoured to give a short account of the life of our poet, such as I could glean in Bombay, with a rapid sketch of all his principal works, embracing a dissertation on his merit as a poet.

The first and original object which actuated me to take up my pen in writing a commentary on this Marathi poem and that also in the verbose form in which it now appears,

was the domestic instruction of my own children, especially that of my most beloved and lamented daughter, Kaveri Bai, the eldest of them all, who had just finished the little course of education available in the Female school established by the liberality of my influential and most worthy native fellow citizen the Honorable Jagannath Shankershet², and who was subsequently placed under the tuition of my kind and revered friends Dr. and Mrs. Wilson to begin with such a course of instruction as might benefit an English girl of her age and station in life. But her who gave early proofs of great promise and who was the source of great comfort and consolation to her parents, it pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from this world before the work, first undertaken for her instruction, was brought to completion. Under the circumstances of this bereavement, which is so closely associated with the preparation of this volume, my parental affection cannot now see a better and more consolatory course for my afflicted feelings than to dedicate the same though now fit more to be read by the learned of my countrymen than by young school-going people, to the memory of her who was the occasion of its production; particularly when it is to be considered, that in my peculiar position as a Hindu, I cannot even erect a homely tomb over her lamented ashes as a poor symbol of my mournful affection.

Should the present volume, for which no pains have been spared to render it acceptable to my native readers, prove instrumental in any way in the advancement of the growth of the indigenous Literature of my country, and thereby give an impetus to the extension and cultivation of a taste for reading among my fellow countrymen, which is still a great desideratum, I shall not consider my labours, however humble, exerted in vain.

DADOBA PANDURANG

NOTES

1. This epithet is not adopted from any reference to the beauty or display of the peacock or from the natural peculiarity of its utterance, but from the popular belief, or rather poetical conception, of the Hindus, that the bird has a natural predilection for the dark rainy clouds, which from their bountiful and refreshing nature (cooling the dry and parched surface of the earth, and making it fertile), are supposed to inspire the bird with raptures of delight as apparent from its continuous responses, joyful dance, and fond display of its rich and beautiful plumage, particularly at the commencement of the rainy season. The clouds again are compared to the bounty and benevolence of the Deity. Now the poet imagining himself to be the peacock, as his own name (*Mayura* in Sanskrit and *Mora* in Marathi, a peacock) suggests, happily calls his prayers and supplications addressed to the Deity, and forming the theme of the present poem as the Cries or responses of that bird, beseeching the cloud-like bountiful Deity to pour down His mercies upon him.
2. It is with deepest regret that I have to record here the death of this great man, which sad event took place on the 31st July 1865 when this sheet was in the press. The public will no doubt do justice to him in commemoration of his very useful career, by the erection of a statue which they voted for him some months ago in the Town Hall. But I cannot avoid paying a humble tribute to his lamented memory by expressing here my deep sense of gratefulness for his particular acts of kindness to me personally ever [since ?] I was a student in the Elphinstone Institution.

**श्रीमद्गमनंदनमयूरकविरचित
केकावलि.**

राव बहादुर, दादोबा पांडुरंग

यांनी केलेल्या यशोदापांडुरंगी या नांवाच्या विस्तीर्ण टीकेसहित.

माझी सुप्रिया आणि सुशीला कन्या कावेरीबाई जिच्या अभ्यासाकरिता म्यां प्रथम या पुढील केकावलि या नांवाच्या स्तोत्रावर टीका करावयास आरंभ केला, परंतु जी त्या ग्रंथाची समाप्ति पाहाण्यास जगदीशाच्या इच्छेने राहिली नाही, तिचे पितृवात्सल्यादिसहस्रसद्गुणस्मारक, आणि परमशोचनीय असून क्षणभर विश्रंतिदायक, असे जें स्मरण त्यास, आतां तोच ग्रंथ म्यां दुहितृवात्सल्याच्या प्रेमानें अर्पण केला असे.

प्रस्तावना

ज्या ज्या देशांत आणि प्रांतांत महाराष्ट्र भाषा चालत आहे, आणि ती लोक समजत आहेत, त्या त्या देशांत मोरोपंतांच्या नांवाप्रमाणे इतर थोड्याच महाराष्ट्र कवींचे नांव प्रसिद्ध असेल. यांस आणखी मयूर कवि असेही म्हणतात. या कवीचा जितका वृत्तांत या काळीं मिळेल तितका सारा मिळवून संग्रहित करावा, अशी माझी फार इच्छा आहे; परंतु त्याविषयीची सामग्री सध्यां मजजवळ नसल्यामुळे तसें आतांच माझ्यानें करवत नाही. सांप्रत इतकेच माझ्या ऐकण्यांत आहे की, कोल्हापूर प्रांतीं पन्हाळा किल्ला प्रसिद्ध आहे, त्या गडावर पूर्वी पेशवाईत कऱ्हाडे ब्राम्हण जातीचे रामाजीपंत पन्हाडकर या नांवाचे कोणी कारकून होते; त्यांचे मोरोपंत हे चिरंजीव. यांच्या घरीं कारकुनीचा पेशा चालत असतांही मोरोपंतांनी लहानपणी काव्यव्युत्पत्ति चांगली संपादन केली. पुढे बारामतींत बाबूजी नायक यांचे पुत्र पांडुरंगराव या नांवाच्या गृहस्थाकडे जहागीर होती. त्यांनीं रामाजीपंतांस आपल्याजवळ बोलाविले, आणि आपल्या खासगीच्या दफतरांत त्यांस कारकुनीची असामी दिली. येथें मोरोपंत हे पन्हाळा किल्ल्यावर आपल्या तीर्थरूपाचें कारकुनीचें काम चालवीत होते. असें असतां एकदां दफतरांत दोन आण्याची चूक पडली होती, तिचा मेळ मिळविण्यांत पंतांस आठ दिवस सतत डोळ्यांत काजळ घालून हिशोब तपासावा लागला. हें त्यांचे अल्प वयांत इतकें अव्यवहित लक्ष पाहून त्यांच्या यजमानानें त्यांना विनोदानें म्हटले- “जर तुम्हीं असें लक्ष ईश्वरभजनीं लाविलें असतें तर दोन आण्याच्या ठिकाणीं तो तुम्हांस मिळाला असता.” हाच विनोद पंतांनी उपदेशस्थानी मानून तेथेंच यजमानापुढें कारकुनीची लेखणी ठेविली; आणि पुढें आपल्या तीर्थरूपापाशीं बारामतीस गेले. तेथें पांडुरंगरावांनी त्यांची काव्यव्युत्पत्ति सुंदर आहे असें पाहून त्यांना प्रथम रामरक्षेचें स्तोत्र अनुष्टुप् छंदांत आहे तें दुसऱ्यां छंदांत वाचावयास सांगितलें. पंतांनी थोडा

अवकाश मागून तें स्तोत्र दुसऱ्या छंदांत वाचून आणखी साऱ्या रामायणाचा अर्थही त्यांत संग्रहित केला हें पाहून पांडुरंगरावांस फार आनंद झाला, आणि त्यांनी त्या दिवसापासून मोरोपंतांस आपल्या घरचे पुराणिक नेमून त्यांचें व त्यांच्या तीर्थरूपाचें पान आपल्याजवळ वाढण्याची वर्दी दिली. याप्रमाणें पांडुरंगराव मेडजकर यांच्या पदरीं असतां मोरोपंतांनीं त्यांच्या पंक्तीस जेवावें, आणि अहोरात्र आर्या व दुसरीं कवनें रचून प्रथम पाटीवर गेरून खरडून ठेवावीं, आणि मग तीं सारीं आपल्या हातानें साफ लिहून ठेवावीं, असा उद्योग आरंभिला. भारतांत पहिल्यानें कर्णपर्व केलें असें सांगतात. याप्रमाणें पुढें हे मोठे कवि झाले. या कवीनें आर्याछंदांत पुष्कळ ग्रंथ लिहिला आहे. सारें अठरा पर्व महाभारत, सारें द्वादशस्कंध भागवत, याशिवाय पुष्कळ लहान लहान स्तोत्रें, माहात्म्यें, आणि संतचरित्रें, हे सर्व ग्रंथ मोरोपंतांनीं आर्याछंदांनं महाराष्ट्र भाषेंत रचिले आहेत. याशिवाय हे कविराज रामोपासक होते; या कारणानें यांची रामचरित्रावर नैसर्गिक भक्ति असल्यानें यांनी आर्येंत व इतर छंदांत मिळून एकशेंआठ रामायणें रचिलीं आहेत, अशी लोकांत प्रसिद्ध वदंता आहे^१. म्यां आपल्या महाराष्ट्र भाषेच्या व्याकरणाच्या प्रस्तावनेंत या कविविषयीं सूचनार्थ असें लिहिलें आहे की, - “अलीकडेस पेशवाईत बारामतीकर पांडुरंगराव यांच्या पदरीं मोरोपंत या नांवाचे कारकून होते, पुढें त्यांची काव्यव्युत्पत्ति सर्वोत्कृष्ट पाहून त्यांस पांडुरंगरावांनीं आपल्या घरचे पुराणिक केलें; त्यांनी तर आपल्या रसभरित काव्यानें या भाषेस केवळ संस्कृत भाषेचीच प्रौढी आणिली. वामन आणि मोरोपंत यांना अनुक्रमें महाराष्ट्र भाषेचे व्यास व श्रीहर्ष म्हटल्यासही साजेल. प्राकृत भाषेविषयीं नाक मुरडणारे जे शास्त्री व पंडित यांना यांनीच लाजविलें. आजपावेतों जें कांहीं भांडार संस्कृतभाषारूप पेटेंत कुलुप घालून ठेविलें होतें, आणि तिची किल्ली ब्राम्हणांच्याच स्वाधीन होती, तें ज्ञानेश्वर, एकनाथ, मध्वनाथ, मुक्तेश्वर, वामन, मोरोपंत आदिकरून जे ब्राम्हण कवि झाले त्यांनी उघडून काढून, त्याचें प्राकृत लेणें करून, सर्व लोकांस अर्पण केलें; म्हणून नुसतें यांचे कौशल्य व चातुर्य वर्णावें इतकेंच नाहीं, परंतु यांची औदार्यपूर्वक जी औपकारिक बुद्धि तिचीहि या प्रसंगी प्रशंसा केली पाहिजे.” यांत म्यां मोरोपंत कवीची श्रीहर्षाशी प्रशंसा केली आहे ती किती समंजस व योग्य आहे हें, या कवीचें सारें काव्य साद्यंत लक्षपूर्वक पर्यालोचनांत आणिलें असतां ध्यानीं येईलच, परंतु माझ्या बुद्धीस असें वाटतें की, हा पुढला त्यांचा लहानसा स्तोत्ररूप ग्रंथ, ज्याच्यावर म्यां बोलबोधार्थ टीका केली आहे, त्याच्या काव्यसरणीचें मनन केलें असतांही ध्यानांत आल्यावांचून राहाणार नाही. कालिदास, भवभूति, माघ आणि श्रीहर्ष, यांची अनुक्रमें रघुवंशकिरतादि जीं प्रसिद्ध महा काव्यें आहेत, त्यांमध्ये शब्दांच्या काठिन्यावरून आणि अर्थान्वयाच्या गूढत्वावरून श्रीहर्षाचें जें शेवटलें नैषध काव्य, त्याचें दुर्बोधत्व बहुधा लोकानुभूत आहे; तसेंच ज्यांना संस्कृत भाषा अवगत नाहीं,

अशा प्राकृतजनांस मोरोपंतांच्या काव्यांत संस्कृत शब्दांचा भरणा पुष्कळ असल्यानें सहाजिक त्या शब्दांच्या अपरिचयामुळे, आणि प्राकृतजनांस अप्रसिद्ध असे संस्कृत शब्द, आणि निव्वळ प्राकृत व ग्राम्य शब्द, यांचें मिश्रण असल्यानें संस्कृतभाषाभिज्ञ अशा पंडितांसही त्यांची निवड करून अर्थयोजना करण्यांत अवघड प्रसंग असण्याच्या दृढ संभवामुळे, तसेंच समयविशेषीं शब्दांचा दूरान्वय असल्यानें अर्थज्ञानाच्या दुःसाध्यत्वामुळे, मोरोपंतांचें काव्यही दुर्बोध आणि कठिण म्हणून बहुधा सर्व जनांस अनुभूत आहे.

ज्या काळीं छापखाने व टपालें यांचें या देशांत नांवही नव्हतें, त्या काळीं मोरोपंत जिवंत असतां त्यांच्या काव्यकर्तृत्वाची प्रसिद्धि काशीपर्यंत लांबली होती, आणि ते निवर्तल्यास अद्यापि शंभर वर्षे झालीं नाहीत इतक्यांत या देशांत जगप्रसिद्ध कवि म्हणून त्यांची कीर्ति पसरून गेली आहे. याचीं कारणें पाहातां या देशांत हरिदासांची कीर्तन करण्याची जी वृत्ति चालत आली आहे ती या कारणांत एक मुख्य कारण होय, असें मला दिसतें. तसें आणखी या वृत्तीस मोरोपंतांच्या कृतीनेंही फार उत्तेजन दिलें; तें असें की, - मराठ्यांचे राज्य स्थापित झाल्यापासून आणि त्यांत विशेषेंकरून पेशवाईच्या कारकीर्दींत त्या राज्याचा अत्युत्कर्ष झाल्यापासून, ब्राम्हण लोकांमध्ये वेदविद्या आणि शास्त्रविद्या यांच्या बलावर ज्या वृत्त्या चालत होत्या त्यांस मोठें उत्तेजन मिळाले; तथापि त्या उत्कर्षापूर्वीं आणि त्या उत्कर्षाच्या वेळीं हरिदासांची जी या देशांत वृत्ति चालत होती, ती बहुधा नामदेव, तुकाराम यांचे अभंग; ज्ञानेश्वर, मुक्तेश्वर आणि श्रीधर यांच्या ओव्या; एकनाथ, मध्वनाथ, आदिकरून साधू कवींची पदे; अमृतरायाचीं पदे आणि कटिबंध; कबीराचे दोहरे व कवितें; आणि वामन पंडिताचे श्लोक; यांचीं बहाडे मुखपाठ करून आणि त्यांत व्युत्पन्न हरिदास असल्यास थोडी काव्युत्पत्ति साध्य करून त्यांच्या साहाय्यानें चालत होती; म्हणून सभेंत विद्वज्जनसमाजांत हे हरिदास कितीही वक्ते आणि सरस कीर्तन करणारे असले, तथापि दक्षणेच्या बहुमानांत या गरीबांची कोटी चौथी असे; म्हणजे प्रथम वैदिक, दुसरे शास्त्री, तिसरे पुराणिक आणि चौथे हरिदास अथवा गोसावी. परंतु ही वृत्ति बहुधा भगवद्भक्तीच्या बलावर आणि प्राकृत कवितांच्या साहाय्यामुळे चालत होती, म्हणून शूद्र अंत्यज यांसही या वृत्तींत शिरण्यास कोणी प्रतिबंध केला नाही. हरिकीर्तन हे मुक्तद्वार समजून कोणत्याही जातीस या वृत्तींत शिरण्याचा प्रतिबंध ब्राम्हणांच्यानेंही करविला नाही. ब्राम्हण, शूद्र, अंत्यज आणि शेवटीं मुसलमानही विठोबाचे भक्त होऊन, कपाळीं बुका आणि गळ्यांत तुळशीच्या माळा घालून, यथेच्छ भजनें आणि कथा करूं लागले, त्यांत जो वक्ता आणि रसिक हरिदास असे, - मग तो शूद्र कां असेना, - तो श्रोते मिळवून त्या काळीं लोकांत प्रशंसेस पात्र होत असे. तथापि या वृत्तीस बहुधा प्राकृत कवितांचें साहित्य आणि शूद्रादि नीच वर्णांचा संसर्ग असे, म्हणून ब्राम्हणसमाजांत ही वृत्ति जशी बहुमानास योग्य

व्हावी तशी झाली नाही. कितीही ब्राम्हणव्यतिरिक्त जातीचा हरिदास रसिक आणि वक्ता असला तथापि त्यास सभेत तर बहुमान नसेच, परंतु उलटं ही वृत्ति धारण करणाऱ्या ब्राम्हणजातीच्या हरिदासासही सभेत खालच्या कोटीत जावे लागे. तथापि वक्तृत्व हा लोकांच्या मनाचें रंजन करणारा आणि तसाच प्रेमळ वक्ता असल्यास तो लोकांच्या मनाचें आकर्षणही करणारा गुण होय, म्हणून सर्व प्रकारच्या लोकांत वक्त्या हरिदासाची वाहवा होऊन त्यास सर्वांकडून जशा बिदाग्या होऊन द्रव्य-प्राप्ति होत असे, तशी वैदिक, याज्ञिक आणि शास्त्री यांना होत नसे. त्यांत पेशवाईत जेव्हा महाराष्ट्र ब्राम्हणजातींत विद्वता वाढत गेली, तेव्हां हरिदासांसही शास्त्री, पंडित अशा विद्वान पुरुषांकडून वाहवा मिळविण्याचें अगत्य पडत गेलें. या कारणास्तव ब्राम्हण जातीच्या हरिदासांस काव्यव्युत्पत्ति व क्वचित् शास्त्रव्युत्पत्ति वाढविण्याचें अगत्य पडत गेलें. नुसत्या प्राकृत ओव्या, अभंग आणि पदें यांजवर कथा करून शास्त्री, पंडित आणि व्युत्पन्न अशा श्रोत्यांचें मनोरंजन करणें कठीण, म्हणून त्यांच्या भरतीस भागवतांतील श्लोक, सुभाषित श्लोक, चंपू, नाटकें आणि काव्यें, यांतील वेंचे पाठ करून चांगली झणझणीत कथा करून दाखविणें प्राप्त होत गेलें. अशा प्रसंगाच्या अवसरीं मोरोपंतांनी बारामतींत संस्कृत काव्यांशीं तोल घेणाऱ्या अशा आपल्या प्राकृत आर्या बाहेर काढिल्या. तेव्हां अर्थात् अशा हरिदासांच्या द्वारानें त्यांचा प्रसार होण्यास विलंब लागला नाही; हेंच मोरोपंतांची कीर्ति ते जिवंत असतांच काशीपर्यंत लांबण्याचें जें कारण म्हणून म्यां सांगितलें ते.

आणखी अशी अटकळ होते कीं, जेव्हां प्रथम मोरोपंतांच्या आर्या बारामतींतून बाहेर निघूं लागल्या, त्या काळींच बारामतीजवळ सोलापुरांत रामजोशी या नांवाचे व्युत्पन्न आणि परम रसिक कवि असून त्यांनीं हरिदासाच्या वृत्तीचें अवलंबन केलें होते; आणि नुकतेच कीर्तीच्या अंगणांत जाण्यास उमऱ्यावरून बाहेर पाऊल टाकीत होते; तों इतक्यांत त्यांस पंतांच्या कृतिकुमारिकेचा आल्हादजनक शकुन भेटला. तिच्या सौंदर्यानें आणि निमंत्रणरूप आनंदजनक अशा प्रेमकटाक्षानें आकर्षितांतःकरण होऊन ही उपवर कन्या आपण वरावी अशी मनांत आवड धरून त्यांनी तिच्या पित्याचा शोध करण्याकरितां तिचेंच अनुसरण केलें. पित्यानींही आपल्या कन्येच्या गुणास हा इतका लुब्ध पाहून तिनें याचें पाणिग्रहण केलें असतां ती लवकरच सुखी होईल म्हणून तसें करण्यास आपलें पूर्ण अनुमोदन दिलें. हा प्रसंग कोणी खालीं लिहिलेल्या आर्यत असाच वर्णिला आहे.

जैशीजनकेंदिधलीसच्चिधनरामजोसितात्याला ।

तैशीमयुरेंदिधलीतीआर्यारामजोसितात्याला ॥

किंबहुना असेंही ऐकण्यांत आहे की, मोरोपंतांच्या आर्यानींच रामजोशाची वृत्ति हरिकीर्तनाकडे वळविली. त्या पूर्वी ते कलगीतुऱ्याच्या नादांत असून, लावण्यांच्या छंदावर कवनें करून

स्वच्छंदानें डफ, तुणतुणें, सारंगी आणि नाचेपोरे हातीं घेऊन चरितार्थ चालवीत होते. ही वेळ बाजीराव रघुनाथ पेशवे यांच्या विलासाच्या आरंभाची असावी अशी अटकळ होते. त्या काळीं रावबाजीच्या उत्तेजनानें पुणें शहरांत व त्या शहराचा वारा लागून जेथें तेथें शिमग्याचें चांदणे वाढत चाललें होतें. दिवसास ब्रम्हभोजनाचा थाट आणि दिव्यांत वात पडली नाही तों मंदिरांत चौघडे सनयांचा मंजूळ घोष; श्रीमंतांच्या व सरदार लोकांच्या वाड्यांत सरकारी तायफांचे मुजरे; रात्रीस रस्त्यांत आणि बोळांत फिरणाऱ्या विलासी लोकांची मनें आपणाकडे ओढून घेणारे नुकतेच चिमणी, साळू, मैना यांच्या मंजूळ कंठांत होनाजी बाळानें घातलेले खडे सूर आणि फौजेकडील शिलेदार, बारगीर, शिपाई आणि शहरांतील सुखवस्तु शिंपी, माळी, सराफ, दुकानदार, यांना रिझविण्याकरितां बहिरू, मल्हारी, धोंडीबापु, सगनभाऊ आणि रामा गोंधळी यांनी सजविलेले डफतुणतुण्याचे तमाशे आणि कलगीतुण्यांचीं भांडणें; हे सर्व थाट रावबाजीच्या उल्लसित मनोवृत्तीच्या प्रेरणेनें पुणे शहरांत जेथें तेथें गाजून राहिले होते. मग “यथा राजा तथा प्रजा” या न्यायानें त्या प्रेरणेचा अंमल सर्व पेशवाईत पसरला नसेल असें संभवत नाही. त्या काळीं सर्व गुणिजनांचे आशेनें भरलेले डोळे पुणे शहराकडे लागले असून, त्या शहरानें जो कित्ता घातला होता, त्याची नक्कल जेथें तेथें होऊन कित्येक ठिकाणीं त्या नकलेवर ताण करणारे उमेदवारही निपजून लागले. रामजोशींसही यद्यपि अशा उमेदवारांमध्ये गणिलें, तथापि त्यांच्या गुणांस न्यूनत्व न येतां उलटी ती त्यांची उमेद प्रशंसेस पात्र होईल; कारण त्यांच्या कवनावरून रामजोशी हे चांगले व्युत्पन्न आणि साहित्यशास्त्रज्ञ असावे असें अनुमान होतें. असें असतां त्यांनीं आपलें लक्ष त्या काळाच्या इतर पंडितांप्रमाणें सभेत शुष्क वादविवाद करून शालजोड्यांची आणि दक्षिणेची प्रतिष्ठा मिळविण्याकडे न लावितां, सर्व लोकांचे मनोरंजन करून त्यांमध्ये वाहवा मिळविण्याकडे लाविलें, हें आश्चर्य होय. त्यांत आणखी ब्राम्हणानें विद्वानाची पूज्य प्रतिष्ठा तुच्छ मानून केवळ लोकरंजनार्थ शूद्रवृत्ति धारण करून तमासगिरांच्या निर्मत्सनेचा अंगिकार केला, येणेंकरून रामजोशी हे मोठे उदार मनाचे पुरुष होते असें दिसतें; तसें असल्यावांचून त्या काळीं इतक्या धैर्याचें कर्म त्यांजकडून घडणें कठीण. म्हणून माझ्या मतें ते मोठे प्रशंसेस योग्य होत. जर राघो धंवशा, मार्तंडा शिंपी, बहिरू, मल्हारी न्हावी, सगनभाऊ मुसलमान, अनंतफंदी ब्राम्हण आणि रामा गोंधळी, यांनीं आपआपले फड तयार करून डफावर थाप मारल्याबरोबर पुणें शहरांत हजारों लोकांचे थवे आपल्या तमाशांत ओढून आणून त्यांस रिझवून त्यांजपासून ओंजळी भरभरून रुपये, जरीचे दुपेटे आणि भरगच्ची शेंले घेतले; तर मग राम-जोशी ब्राम्हणानें आपल्या संस्कृत वाणीच्या बळानें त्यांजपेक्षां अति सरस रीतीनें वरल्या थराच्या लोकांस रिझवून आपला प्रपंचनिर्वाह कां चालवू नये? आणि तसा त्यानें चालवावयास आरंभ केला इतक्यावरून

आतां तो आपल्या प्रशंसेस मुकला असें माझ्यानें अगदीं म्हणवत नाहीं. आणखी माझ्या ऐकण्यांत आहे कीं, या विद्वान पुरुषाची प्रकृति विलासी आणि कांहींशी फक्कड होती. अर्वाचीन स्मृतिकार आणि भट्ट यांच्या पध्दतीवरून अत्यंत संकोचित झालेलीं जीं ब्राम्हण जातीचीं मनें, त्याप्रमाणें यांचें मन संकोचित नव्हतें. सोंवळेओंवळे आणि बाहेरील दांभिक आचार यांची त्या काळीं मोठी दांडगी पुष्टि पाहून यांच्या मनानें कंटाळा घेतला होता; इतकेंच नाही, परंतु अशा दांभिकांनी असें आपलें शोचनीय अज्ञान टाकून सत्याकडे आपलें मन वळवावें, एतदर्थ या सत्पुरुषाचा उपदेशही चालू होता असें यांच्या कृतीवरून दिसतें.

रामजोशांच्या वेळेस लावण्यांच्या छंदावर कवनें करण्याचा चांगला प्रघात पडून गेला होता; आणि तो छंद साहजिक कर्णास मधुर असल्यानें लोकांची त्यावर आवड पाहून जोशीबाबांनेंही आपलीं कवनें बहुधा त्याच मधुर छंदावर रचण्यास आरंभ केला. प्रापंचिक जनाचें मन लुब्ध करण्याकरितां केव्हां केव्हां या रसिक पुरुषानें या छंदांत शृंगाररसही प्रौढ आणि कोमल अशा शब्दांनी संस्कृत भाषेंत तद्रसप्रधान काव्यांत जसा वर्णिला असतो तसा नमुना घेऊन वर्णिला आहे. परंतु त्यांत आणखी इतकी खुबी ठेविली आहे की, जरी शब्दयोजनेंत तो नमुना घेतला आहे, तरी तो आपल्या कालाच्या लोकव्यवहारास अनुसरून घेतला आहे. आणखी रामजोशींच्या कवनांत दुसरी खुबी अशी आढळते कीं, प्रौढ संस्कृत शब्द आणि शुद्ध लौकिक मराठी भाषणांतील केवळ ग्राम्य शब्द, यांची भेळ इतकी बेमालूम केली असते की, त्यांच्या त्या मिश्रणचातुर्यानें तें सर्व एकरंगी दिसून त्यापासून एकजातीचा विशेष आनंद उत्पन्न होतो. कोणा एका स्त्रीचे सौंदर्य पाहा जोशी-बावानें कसें सरस निर्मल वाणीनें वर्णिले आहे:—

कोण्यागसुभगाचीमदनमंजरी सांगसखेसुंदरी ॥ १ ॥
 इच्यासौंदर्याचीसीमा झालीगडेरतिहुनिअत्युत्तमा
 पाहुनियामुखचंद्रमा सखंगडेअमागमति पौर्णिमा
 कायअधराचारक्तिमा लाजवीनवकुंकुमविद्रुमा
 अंगीवसनजिच्याभर्जरी कोण्यागसुभगाची. ॥ १ ॥
 मजवाटलीविद्युन्नटी भलीगस्वरूपाचीउतरलीभटी
 उरीकंचुकीघट्टतटटी टिळकलल्लाटींसुधारसघटी
 देखतांलसतपटकटी कृशाहरिचीकटीलटपटी
 अशीअनंतगुणगुर्जरी कोण्यागसुभगाची. ॥ २ ॥

शिरीसुंदरवनमल्लिका झटतिवरमधुकररसकौतुका
 नयनानन जनरंजिका ? मधुरकंठांतलाजवीपिका
 अशीवर्णालकोणसदलिका ? इतरकवीकविरायाहुनिफिका
 मजवाटतसेनिर्जरी कोण्यागसुभगाची. ॥ ३ ॥

कोठें कोठें या त्यांच्या शृङ्गाररसात बीभत्स रसाचेंही मिश्रण आढळतें; तथापि तें लोकव्यवहारास आणि या देशांतील प्राकृत जनाच्या दांडग्या रुचीस अत्यंत अनुकूल असल्यानें तितकें विगृहीतस पात्र होत नाही. एका लावणींत कृष्णाच्या बाळपणींच्या खोडीचें आपआपलें गाऱ्याणें गोपिकांनीं यशोदेसमोर नेलें, त्यांच्या वर्णनांत बीभत्स रस बराच आढळण्यांत येतो; परंतु त्या काळी व सांप्रतही चांगल्या प्रतिष्ठित जातीच्या बायकांचीं भांडणें लागलीं असतां आणि त्यांत विशेषेंकरून लग्नसमारंभांत दोघी विहिणीकडील बायकांमध्ये परस्पर जो फाल्गुनाच्या भाषणांचा वर्षाव होतो तो ध्यानांत आणिला असतां, जोशीबावानें गोकुळाच्या गौळणींच्या मुखांत अधिक बीभत्स भाषणांचें वैरण घातलें असें मला वाटत नाही. आतां भगवान कृष्णानें आपल्या ठायीं अत्यंत सप्रेम मनोवृत्ति पाहून ज्यांचा उद्धार केला, त्या श्रीमद्भागवतांत शुक मुनीनें वर्णिलेल्या परम भाग्यवती गोपी, यांस नीच बाजारबसव्यांच्या योग्यतेस आणावें आणि परमपुरुष भगवान बालकृष्ण याच्या पदरांत अधम जातींत उत्पन्न झालेल्या एखाद्या कारट्यास योग्य ज्या खोडी त्या बांधाव्या, हें कृत्य सत्कवीस उचित किंवा अत्यंत अनुचित हा पाहाण्याचा प्रकार जो आहे, तो स्वतंत्र आहे. तो अंमळशानें स्वाभिप्रायपूर्वक निवेदन करीन. प्रस्तुत इतकेंच सांगावयाचें की, रामजोशानें आपल्या लावण्यांत शृङ्गाररसाशिवाय आणखी भर्तृहरीप्रमाणें वैराग्यविषयही फार सरस वर्णिला आहे. यावरून असें दिसते की, रामजोशाचे बाह्याचरण जरी विलासी जनाच्या आचरणासारखे होतें, तरी त्याचें अंतःकरण केवळ विषयासक्त नव्हतें. आणखी असें दिसतें की, हे कविराय ज्या ज्या प्रसिद्ध स्थानीं देवदर्शनास गेले त्या त्या स्थानांच्या देवतांचेंही त्यांनी प्रार्थनापूर्वक गुणवर्णन केलें आहे. या सर्व गोष्टींचा विचार केला असतां माझी अशी अटकळ होते की, हे फक्कड कविराय आपल्या पहिल्या भरांत त्या काळच्या लोकांची रुचि पाहून उपजीविकेकरितां जरी तमासगिरांच्या मंडळींत शिरले असले, तथापि पुढें आपले कवि मोरोपंत यांच्या प्रौढ, उद्दाम आणि सरस अशा कृतीचें जेव्हां यांस दर्शन झालें तेव्हां ते तिला मोहित होऊन त्यांनी लोकरंजक डफ टाकून लोकोपदेशक वीणा उचलला असावा; अशी अटकळ करण्यास माझी मनदेवता लवती. पाहा, त्यांनी लोकांच्या बाहेरील दांभिकाचरणावर आणि धर्माच्या नुसत्या सांगावर कसे रेशमी कोरडे लाविले आहेत ते.

भलाजन्महातुलालाधलाखुलासहदयींबुधा
 धरिसितरिहरिचासेवकसुधा ॥१॥
 चराचरींगुरुकरावयासीनराशिरावरिहरी
 जरातरिसमजधरीअंतरी ॥
 हटातटानेंपटारंगतुनिजटाभारकाशिरी
 मठाचीउठाठेवकांतरी ॥
 वनांतअथवाजनांतहोकांमनांतभलतेपरी
 हरीचेंनांवभवाब्धीतरी ॥

॥चाल॥ कायगळ्यांतघालुनितुळशीचींलांकडें ।
 हींकायभवालादुरकरतिलमांकडें ।।
 बाभिरविशिबाहेरआंतहरिशींवांकडे ।
 अशाभक्तिच्यारसारहिततूंकसाम्हाणविशीबुधा ॥भलाजन्म॥११॥
 जाळगळ्यामध्येमाळकशालाव्याळकामकोपला
 आंतउणाबाहेरम्हाणविशीभला ॥
 वित्तपहातांपित्तयेतसेकीर्तिपाहिजेमला
 असेंहरिम्हाणतांनुमजेतुला ॥
 दांभिकवरसभाविकपर्णेअभ्यंतरीनाहीचर्बिबला
 बहिर्मुखनरनरकालाधला ॥

॥चाल॥ तूंपोटासाठीखटपटकरभलतिशी ॥
 परिभक्तिरसाविणहरिभेटेलकायतुशीं ॥
 कायमौन्यधरुनिगोमुखिलाजाळिशी ॥
 स्वार्थसुखेंपरमार्थबुडविलाअनर्थकेलाबुधा ॥
 जाणुनिविषपीशीम्हाणशीसुधा ॥भलाजन्म॥१२॥
 टिळाटोपिवरशिळापडोयाबिळांतकरिशिलजपा
 तथापिनहोयहरिचीकृपा ॥
 दर्भमुष्टिचेगर्भीधरोनिनिर्भयपशुच्यावपा
 कायजाळुनितिळातांदुळातुपा ॥
 दंडकमंडलुबंडमाजविशिमुंडमुंडशीवपा
 नसार्थकलटव्यासाऱ्यागपा ॥

।।चाल।। बारबारतलवारहोइलकायपुन्हा।
 हानरदेहदुर्लभकांठेविशीशुना।।
 भगवंतभुकेलाभक्तीचापाहुणा।
 धर्मघडेनावर्मकळेनायामनालाकदा।।
 सदाहरिकविरायावरिफिदा।।भलाजन्म०।।^३

मग अशा परम रसिक आणि वक्त्या हरिदासाच्या मुखापासून प्रथमतः समंजस लोकांस जेव्हां मोरोपंतांच्या प्रौढ आणि रसभरित आर्यांचे श्रवण होऊं लागलें असेल, तेव्हां त्यांच्या कीर्तिसह त्यांची कृति या देशांत व देशांतरी प्रसृत होण्यास विलंब लागला नसेल, असे सहज अनुमान होतें.

मी अद्यापि मोरोपंतांच्या साद्यंत कृतीविषयीं अनभ्यस्त आहे, तथापि त्यांनी केलेल्या भारताच्या कांहीं पर्वातील व इतर स्फुट आर्या यथे तेषां पाहिल्या आहेत आणि ऐकल्या आहेत; तशींच त्यांनी इतर छंदावर केलेली कवनेंही ऐकिली आहेत; त्यावरून, आणि प्रकृत स्तोत्राचें लक्षपूर्वक पर्यालोचन केल्यावरून, माझ्या मनाचा दृढ निश्चय झाला आहे की, मोरोपंतांची वाणी मोठी प्रौढ आणि कारुण्यवीरादि रसांनी परिप्लुत अशी आहे. त्यांत आणखी रसान्वित यमकें साधण्याची तर हातोटी या कवीप्रमाणें कोणत्याही इतर महाराष्ट्र कवीची आढळत नाही. अशी रसान्वित यमकें साधूनही इतका विपुल ग्रंथ रचणारा महाराष्ट्र भाषेंत हा एकच कवि. मला वाटतें अशीं यमके साधण्याचा कित्ता मोरोपंतांनीं वामनपंडितांकडून घेतला असावा.^४ परंतु वामनापेक्षां मोरोपंतांची वाणी अधिक शुद्ध आणि रसभरित होय असें म्हणण्यास मला भय वाटत नाहीं. तथापि जो वेदांतशास्त्र-विषय वामनानें अंगीकृत केला, तो स्वभावतः परम गंभीर आणि प्रगल्भ असल्यानें, स्वाभिप्रेतार्थाचें यथेच्छ मंथन व्हावें याकडे जसें त्या महापंडिताचें लक्ष होतें, तसें शब्दशुद्धीकडे आणि रसअलंकाराकडे नव्हतें. तथापि धन्य वामन कीं, इतका प्रगल्भ शास्त्र विषय असतां त्यांनी ज्या चातुर्यानें त्याच्या विचाराचें या रंक महाराष्ट्र भाषेंत सूक्ष्म आणि प्रांजल निरूपण केलें आहे, त्याचें जे कोणी लक्षपूर्वक मनन करतील, त्यांच्या दृष्टीसमोर हा उक्त दोष अगदीं वितळून जाईल. मोरोपंतांचा विषय इतिहासकथन आणि स्तवन होय. म्हणून त्यांस आपल्या कवनांत रस, अलंकार, प्रास, आणि यमकें साधण्यास अधिक अवकाश होता; परंतु तितके चारही प्रकार रम्य आणि उत्कृष्ट रीतीनें साधून पुनः शुद्ध शब्दांच्या निवेशाकडे जे त्यांनी अपूर्व लक्ष दिलें, तेणेंकरून तर त्यांनी रसिक आणि भाषाभिज्ञ अशा विद्वज्जनांच्या स्तुतिदानग्रहणाविषयीं पर्वकाळच साधिला. त्यांच्या काव्यांत संस्कृत शब्दांचा भरणा इतका प्रचुर असून त्यांनी तितक्या शब्दांचे वर्ण आणि ऱ्हस्व-दीर्घत्वही अबाधित संभाळिले, येणेंकरून तर त्यांच्या चातुर्यभरित बुद्धीने आपल्या वाणीस पवित्रतेचा

पाटाव नैसविला. आतां त्या काळीं महाराष्ट्र भाषेच्या व्याकरणाचा अभाव होता या कारणास्तव, आणि त्यांचे काव्य छंदाच्या पराधीनतेत होते या कारणास्तव, निवळ प्राकृत आणि प्राकृत भाषेच्या पंक्तीत शिरून भ्रष्ट झालेले असे संस्कृत शब्द, यांच्या प्रक्रियेविषयीची शब्दाची तितकी शुद्धता आणि न्हस्वदीर्घत्व यांचे जोबाळणें परम दुःसाध्य, म्हणून तितक्यापुरताही आपल्या कवीवर दोषारोप करण्यांत विचारच केला पाहिजे. किंबहुना, सांप्रत महाराष्ट्र व्याकरणाचा इतका जागोजाग प्रचार झाला असतांही अद्यापि त्या शास्त्राच्या नियमाप्रमाणें लिहिण्याकडे कोणीं जसें सूक्ष्म लक्ष द्यावें तसें देत नाही; मग ज्या काळीं त्या विषयाचा मुळींच अभाव होता, त्यांत आणखी छंदांत व प्रास साधून ग्रंथ रचण्याचा प्रसंग, त्या काळीं अशी अघटित आशा बाळगणें ही आपल्याच विचारशक्तीची न्यूनता आपण पदरी घेतली पाहिजे. तथापि धन्य मोरोपंत, कीं इतका अपरिहार्य प्रसंग असतां आपल्या परम रसिक काव्यांत संस्कृत शब्दांची शुद्धि राखूनहि, प्राकृत शब्दांच्या योजनेत सानुनासिक निरनुनासिक वर्णापर्यंत जितके त्यांच्यानें त्या काळीं सूक्ष्म लक्ष देवविलें तितके जागोजाग त्यांनी दिलें आहे, हें पाहून तर मला मोठा विस्मय होतो.

आता आपल्या कवींच्या काव्यचातुर्याचे यथास्थित प्रांजल आणि सप्रमाण विवेचन करणें हा स्वतंत्र विषय त्यांच्या संपूर्ण काव्याच्या लक्षपूर्वक अभ्यासाच्या आधीन होय, आणि तसा अभ्यास मजकडून घडल्याचें माझे मन मला साक्ष देत नाही. तथापि त्यांच्या काव्यांचे जें यत्किंचित् अवलोकन मला घडलें आहे, त्या वरून उगीच त्याचें दिग्दर्शन तरी करून दाखविणें प्रकृत विषयास अपेक्षित जाणून तसें करण्यास मी आपल्या वाचकांची आज्ञा मागतों.

साध्वी स्त्रियांनी कोणत्या सदाचरणांनी आपल्या पतीस वश करावें म्हणून भारतांत वनपर्वांत द्रौपदी आणि सत्यभामा यांच्या संवादात सत्यभामेनें द्रौपदीस पुसलें; त्या तिच्या प्रश्नास हें द्रौपदीचें प्रत्युत्तर पंतांनी पाहा कसें सरस ग्रथित केले आहे:—

सत्याकृष्णोसिम्हणे	वदत्येतेतूंखरेंचमानसये ।
लोकम्हणोतपरिपळहि	माझ्याहातींनकांतमानसये ॥५७॥
त्वांहेपांचपतिकसे	वशकेलेभजतिसर्वएकीते ।
थोडेंयाहुनिपाहुनि	नटतीकादंबिनीसकेकीते ॥५८॥
सांगवशीकरणकसें	केलेत्वादेविकोणत्यामंत्रे ।
कींदिव्यौषधिमूळें	किंवावात्स्यायनोदितेयंत्रे ॥५९॥
कृष्णाहांसोनिम्हणे	भामेमोहावयासिपतिलाजे ।
मंत्राद्बुपायकरणें	याश्रवणेंबहुमदीयमतिलाजे ॥६०॥

प्रेमपतिचरणांशिन	देउनिदेहाततायितालाजे ।
तेस्त्रीनरुचेपतिला	कीतीतेआततायितालाजे ॥६१॥
जाणेंवशीकरणहें	करित्येजेंणेंकधीनकोपतितें ।
सखितुंहिअसेंचिकरीं	मदमत्सरदाखवूनकोपतितें ॥६२॥
पतिपरमेश्वरचरणा	जीतत्सेवार्थननवशीकरणें ॥
तीमुग्धाकेशीगे	वळवीलस्वामिमनवशीकरणें ॥६३॥
पतिचेप्रसाददेती	ज्यासदूतितेंनयोगसवतीतें ॥
वाहेपहाशिरींशिव	देहार्थमताशिवास्वसवतीतें ॥६४॥
श्रुतिलाकविधीसीती	मानवलीफारशुद्धवदलीला ॥
नपतीसचिकर्णासहि	सत्यसतीहोतिउद्धवदलीला ॥६५॥

वनपर्व अ. ६

यांत सत्या म्हणजे सत्यभामा (येथें केवळ पंतांनींच छंदार्थ पुढलें भामापद काढून टाकिलें असे कोणीं समजू नये. मूळ भारतांतही तिला सत्या म्हटलें आहे) कृष्णोला म्हणजे द्रौपदीला म्हणते, मीं जें सये तुला सांगतें तें तूं खरेंच मान, (म्हणजे यद्यपि खरें मानण्याजोगें नाहीं, कांकी, मी कृष्णपत्नी असून पुढें सांगतें तशी गोष्ट होणार नाही, तरी तूं क्षणभर उदाहरणाकरितां तरी खरें मानू घे, असा येथें च या अव्ययाने आणि “लोक म्हणोत” या पुढल्या तिच्याच म्हणण्यावरून ध्वनितार्थ निघतो. आणखी सये या संबोधनानें आपला स्नेहभाव दाखवून जें पुसणार त्या प्रश्नाचें गुह्यत्वही इंगित केलें.) तें काय पुसशील तर ऐक — लोक म्हणत असल्यास म्हणोत, परंतु माझ्या हातांत एक पळभरही, कांतमानस म्हणजे नवऱ्याचे मन, नये — येत नाहीं. अर्थात माझ्यानें कृष्णास अगदीं वश करवत नाहीं ॥५७॥

अशी मी सौंदर्यादिगुणयुक्त असतां, आणि कृष्णासारखा माझा पति असतां ही माझी स्थिति, आणि तुझी पाहातें तों — त्वां हे — धर्मभीमादि, — पांच पति, तुला-एकीला-एकलीला, भजतात — म्हणजे तुला अत्यंत वश आहेत, असे-कसे वश केले; (अर्थात् तुझे पांच पति असून स्वभावतः ते परस्परविषयीं साशंक असावे, आणि त्यांतून एकांनेंहि तुजविषयीं प्रेम धरू नये, अशी स्वाभाविक गोष्ट असतां तें पांचही तुला एकलीला अगदीं वश होऊन गेले आहेत; असे कसे वश केले म्हणजे कोणत्या उपायानें त्वां त्यांस वश केलें आहे?) आतां ते कसे वश होऊन गेले आहेत हें कवि पुढल्या सरस दृष्टांतानें सांगतात - केकी^५, म्हणजे मोर कादंबिनीस^६ — म्हणजे मेघांच्या पंक्तीस पाहून नटती — नाचतात, तें याहून थोडें; म्हणजे मेघांच्या पंक्तीस पाहून मोर नाचतात, इतकें मोरांचे तिजवर प्रेम आहे, तेंही या धर्मादिकांचें तुझ्या ठायीं जें प्रेम आहे त्याहून थोडें; इतकें त्वां जें त्यांस

वश केलें तें कसें असा संबंध. (येथें कवीनें या दृष्टांतानें मयूरांस कांत करून कादंबिनी त्यांची कांता असें दाखविलें आहे. आणखी त्या कादंबिनीच्या दर्शनेंकरून जी मयूरांच्या ठायीं नृत्य करण्याची उत्सुकता, तिणेंकरून मयूरांच्या ठायीं कादंबिनीविषयक नुसती पराधीनता दर्शविली इतकेंच नाही, परंतु तिच्या आल्हादजनक गुणांनी मयूरांच्या ठायीं त्या नृत्यानें आल्हादजननही सुचविलें; यावरून द्रौपदीच्या गुणांचें आनंदजनकत्व आणि त्या तिच्या गुणांनी धर्मादिकांचें लुब्धत्वही आधिक्येंकरून इंगित केलें आहे. म्हणून येथें या सरस मयूरनृत्याच्या दृष्टांतानें उत्प्रेक्षा आणि पुढें व्यतिरेक असे दोन अलंकार कवीनें फार सरस साधिले आहेत. ॥५८॥

आतां अशा तुड्या आनंदजनक गुणांनी कोणत्या उपायांनीं तुड्या पांच पतींस वश केलें हा प्रश्न पुसत असतां, प्रथमतः सामान्य स्त्रिया आपल्या पतींस वश करण्याकरितां लोकप्रसिद्ध जे उपाय आचरितात ते सत्यभामा तिला सांगते **देवि-हे देवि-हे द्रौपदे बाई, त्वां कोणत्या मंत्रें कसें वशीकरण केलें ते सांग — कीं** किंवा **दिव्यौषधिमूळें किंवा वात्सायनोदित यंत्रें** वश केलें तें सांग असा येथें संबंध जाणावा. यांत जारण, मारण, उच्चाटण, इत्यादि जे विशेषेंकरून तांत्रिक ग्रंथांत प्रयोग सांगितले आहेत, त्यांत वशीकरण म्हणजे दुसऱ्याचें मन वश करण्याचा एक प्रयोग प्रसिद्ध आहे तो, मंत्र, दिव्यौषधीचें मूळ आणि यंत्र, (म्हणजे वर्तुल त्रिकोन अष्टकोन आदिकरून आकृतिविशेष काढून, त्यांत स्थानें पाडून त्या स्थानांत अकारादि इष्ट वर्ण लिहून पूजनार्थ जें साधन त्या ग्रंथांत त्या त्या मताच्या आचार्यांनीं सांगितलें आहे तें) यांच्या साधनानें सांगितला आहे. ॥५९॥

या प्रश्नाचें उत्तर **द्रौपदी देते — कृष्णा हांसून म्हणते, भामे — हे सत्यभामे, जे पतिला मोहायास मंत्रानुपाय-त्वां** सांगितले. मंत्रादि उपाय करणें, **या श्रवणें-हें** ऐकिल्यानें **मदीय मति-माझें** मन, **बहु लाजे-फारच** लाजतें. (यांत द्रौपदीच्या हांसण्यानें सत्यभामेच्या प्रश्नाचें किंचित् विगर्हितत्व इंगित होते; आणि अशा प्रश्नाच्या श्रवणमात्रेंकरून तिनें आपल्या मनाच्या लज्जेचें कथन केल्यानें तिच्या मनाचा शोरपणा येथें कवीनें इंगित केला आहे) ॥६०॥

आणखी द्रौपदी म्हणते-**जे स्त्री प्रेमें पतिचरणाशीं हात न देउनि ताथिताला दे, ते स्त्री पतिला न रुचे;** — **कीं तीतें आततायिता लाजे;** — म्हणजे जी स्त्री आपला हात प्रीतीनें नवऱ्याच्या पायांस लावावा तो न लावितां ताडताला लाविते, अशी स्त्री नवऱ्याला आवडत नाही; किंबहुना अशा स्त्रीस **आततायिता** म्हणजे धृष्टताहि **लाजे-लाजते**. (सारांश, आपल्या नवऱ्याच्या ठायीं निर्मल प्रीति ठेवावी ती सोडून जी बायको देवऋषीकडे जाऊन त्याजवळून भारलेला ताईत घेते, म्हणजे आपला प्राणवल्लभ जो पति त्यास प्रेमानें आपल्या गळ्यांतला ताईत करावा, तसें न करितां, जी स्त्री त्या नवऱ्याची प्रीति आपल्यावरच राहावी

म्हणून धुतारे लोकांकडून कायणु बायणु घेऊन, त्यानें भारलेला नुसता ताईत आपल्या गळ्यांत बांधिते, अशा स्त्रीवर नवऱ्याची प्रीति कदापि बसणार नाही; उलटें अशी धीट साहस करणारी बायको निघेस मात्र पात्र होईल. (यांत कवीनें अभिप्रेतार्थाचें सरस कथन करून शेवटीं यमकही फार सुंदर साधिलें आहे.) ॥६१॥

हे मूढ बायकांचे वशीकरण तुला सांगितले; आतां माझ्या वशीकरणाचा प्रकार ऐक आणि तसें तूं कर. म्हणून द्रौपदी सत्यभामेस सांगिते — **जेणें न कोपति** — जेणेकरून, पति-कोपणार नाहीत, **तें करित्ये**-अर्थात तें आचरण मी करिते; **हे वशीकरण जाणें**-मी वशीकरण जाणतें तें हे, अर्थात् तें हेंच कीं, ज्या आचरणानें पतीस कदापि कोप येणार नाही; माझ्या वशीकरणाचा उपाय काय तो असें आचरण, म्हणून **सखि तूंहि असेंच करी-** हे सखे, तूं असेंच माझ्या सारखें कर; (येथें सखि या संबोधनानें द्रौपदीनें आपला स्नेहभाव प्रदर्शित केला); आतां पति रागें भरणार नाहीत असें कोणतें आचरण पुसशील तर-**पतितें मदमत्सर दाखवूं नको**-आपल्या नवऱ्याला कदापि मद दाखवूं नको आणि मत्सरहि दाखवूं नको (सर्व स्त्रियांना सर्व प्रकारच्या आपआपल्या नवऱ्यांच्या मनांतून क्रोध घालवून त्यांची प्रीति संपादन करण्याचा हा मोठा अमोघ उपाय येथें द्रौपदीनें सांगितला आहे असें समजलें पाहिजे. जी स्त्री आपला गर्व दाखवीत नाही, आणि जरी तिनें आपल्या नवऱ्यांचे एखादे दुर्वृत्त आचरण ऐकिलें, तरी त्याविषयींचा आपल्या मनांतला मत्सरभाव त्याला न दाखविताना प्रीतीच्या बोधानें तें त्याचें दुराचरण घालविण्याचा प्रयत्न करिते, अशी कुशल साध्वी स्त्री आपल्या नवऱ्यास जिंकिल यांत संशय नाही. मात्र तो नवरा पशूसारखा पाषाणहृदयाचा नसावा; अशा पशुपुढें मात्र स्त्रियांचा उपाय चालत नाही.) येथेही कवीनें सरस अर्थ दाखवून यमकही सुंदर रीतीनें साधिलें आहे. ॥६२॥

आणखी जी — **नवशीकरणें तत्सेवार्थ पतिपरमेश्वरचरणा न** (वळवील) **ती मुग्धा वशीकरणें स्वामिन केशी गे वळवील ?** — जी स्त्री नवस करण्यानें (येथे कवीनें **नवशीकरण** असा शब्द साधून त्याची तृतीया केली आहे) **तत्सेवार्थ** — अर्थात् आपल्या पतीच्या सेवेकरितां, **पतिपरमेश्वरचरणा** — पति हाच आपला परम ईश्वर अथवा मुख्य धनी त्याच्या **पायातें, न वळवील** — वळविणार नाही म्हणजे वश करणार नाही, (येथें पायांस वश करण्यानें पतिव्रतेचा अत्यंत नम्रीभाव प्रदर्शित होतो), **ती मुग्धा** — ती वेडी, वशीकरणानें, आपल्या स्वामीचें मन, कशी गे वश करील? अर्थात् प्रीतीनें नवऱ्याची सेवा सोडून जी बायको त्याचें प्रेम आपल्यावर असावें म्हणून देवांस नवस करित फिरते, ती वेडी पूर्वोक्त वशीकरणाकरितां टाणोटोणे करून आपल्या नवऱ्याची प्रीति कशी संपादन करील? अर्थात् कदापि करणार नाही. ॥६३॥

आतां पतिप्रसन्नतेचें महत्फल द्रौपदी सांगते-पतिचे प्रसाद तीतें ज्या सद्गतितें देती — पतीची प्रसन्नता, तीतें-त्या पतिव्रता स्त्रियेला, जी सद्गति देते — न योग सव — योग नाही, आणि सव म्हणजे यज्ञ^० नाही; अर्थात ती सद्गति तिला योग देणार नाही, आणि यज्ञही देणार नाही. यास दृष्टांत-पहा **शिवदेहार्थमता**-शिवाची अर्धदेहा म्हणून मानलेली जी, **शिवा**-म्हणजे पार्वती, **स्वसवतीतें** — आपल्या सवतीला-अर्थात् गंगेला, आपल्या **शिरीं वाहे** — माथ्यावर वाहते. — (या दृष्टांतानें आपला पति महादेव याची प्रसन्नता संपादण्याकरितां त्यांच्या अर्धांगीं असतां ती पार्वती गंगेविषयी आपला सवतमत्सर टाकून उलटें आपल्या माथ्यावर तिचें वहन करिते; येथें कवीनीं पूर्वी ६२ व्या आर्येंत मत्सर टाक म्हणून जो द्रौपदीनें सत्यभामेस उपदेश केला आहे, त्याच्या समर्थनाकरितां हा दृष्टांत फारच सरस योजिला आहे; आणि प्रकृत पतिप्रसादाच्या फलाच्या इष्टत्वासही हा दृष्टांत फारच अनुकूल आहे, असें येथें समजलें पाहिजे. ॥६४॥

तो द्रौपदीचा उपदेश सत्यभामेस फार रुचला असें सांगत असतां कवि म्हणतात — **श्रुतिला कविधी असी शुद्धवदलीला ती फार मानवली** — **श्रुतिला** — कानाला, **कविधी** — ज्ञात्यांची बुद्धि अशी **शुद्धवदलीला** — शुद्ध रीतीनें अर्थात् सम्यक् रीतीनें जी वदली — वदली गेली^६ तिला — म्हणजे सम्यक् रीतीनें जिला उपदेश केला अशी जी सत्यभामा तिला ती — अर्थात् ती द्रौपदी फार **मानवली** — मान्य झाली — आवडली; म्हणजे कर्णास जशी सूत्र पुरुषाची मति आवडते, तशी त्या सत्यभामेला ती द्रौपदी आवडली; **अर्थात्** तिचा हा पूर्वोक्त उपदेश आवडला. आणखी अर्थांतरन्यासेंकरून कवि सांगतात — **उद्धवद-लीला-पतिसचि न कर्णासहि सत्य सती होति**—कारण-**उद्धव** म्हणजे उत्साह-आनंद त्यातें देणाऱ्या ज्या **लीला**, अथवा-उद्धवद-आनंद देणारी जी पतिव्रता कामिनी तिच्या ज्या **लीला**-चरित्रे केवळ नवऱ्यासच नाहीत तर-**कर्णासहि**-म्हणजे इतर ऐकणारांच्या कानासही **सत्य**-म्हणजे खऱ्या अशा **सती**-अर्थात् साध्वी स्त्रियांप्रमाणें मनोरमा अशा होतात; अथवा **उद्धवलीला**-आनंद देणाऱ्या आहेत लीला ज्यांच्या अशा कामिनी (बहुव्रीहि) केवळ आपल्या पतींसच सती दिसतात असें नाही, तर कानांसहि सती-म्हणजे साध्वी अशा वाटतात; अर्थात् त्यांचें चरित्र त्यांच्या पतींसच आनंद देतें, इतकेंच नाही, परंतु त्यांचे चरित्र ऐकणारे जे इतर जन त्यांच्या कानासही तें त्यांचें चरित्र अत्यंत मधुर लागतें असा अर्थ. ॥६५॥

हा वरील वेंचा म्यां उगीच उदाहरणाकरितां अचानक काढून वाचकांपुढें सार्थ सादर केला आहे; यावरून सहज त्यांच्या ध्यानांत येईल कीं, आपल्या कवीची वाणी प्रौढ, गंभीर आणि गीर्वाण शब्दांनी प्रचुर, अशी असून, त्यांनीं तीत अलंकार, लोकव्यवहार आणि यमक, इतकें सर्व सरस रीतीनें साधण्याचें चातुर्य कसें प्रकट केले आहे. यापेक्षांही दशगुणित त्यांचें

कवनकृतीचें चातुर्य त्यांच्या रचलेल्या साऱ्या भारतांत व रामयणांत जागोजाग जे कोणी त्यांच्या सर्व कृतीचें लक्षपूर्वक पर्यालोचन करितील, त्यांच्या प्रचीतीस आल्यावांचून राहाणार नाहीं, असा माझा दृढ निश्चय आहे. सहज बोलत असतां मोरोपंतांच्या मुखांतून सरस आर्या निघाव्या, आणि मोठेमोठे प्रास आणि यमकें सहज त्यांनीं साधावीं, इतकी परमाश्चर्यकारक कवन करण्याची हातोटी त्यांस साधून गेली होती असें त्यांच्या कृतीच्या अवलोकनावरून सहज माझे अनुमान होतें. हे कवि रामोपासक असल्यानें आपल्या इष्ट देवतेचें चरित्र एक्याचप्रकारें वर्णावें हें कार्य यांच्या विशाल बुद्धीस फारच अल्प असें वाटून तितक्यांत ती तृप्त झाली नाहीं. तिनें आपले वैचित्र्य त्याच चरित्राच्या विचित्र रचनेंत प्रकट केले आहे; त्याचा उगीच नमुना खालीं दाखवितों.

मंत्र रामायण

अजितप्रभुविधिवचनें	त्रिजगत्पीडकदशास्यमाराया ।
होयचतुर्मुर्तिधर	श्रीदशरथपुत्रभक्तताराया ॥१॥
आदिपुरुषदेवधरी	जीतातेंसविधिठेविलीनामें ।
तीरामभरतलक्ष्मण	शत्रुघ्नअशीसुखधिचींधामें ॥२॥
इष्टार्थगाधिसुतने	अस्त्रेशतदेमखघ्नअरिखपवी
पावेस्वपराभवकर	राक्षसनाशेउदंडहरिखपवी ॥३॥
ईश्वरमुनिभार्येंतें	चरणरजेउद्धरीकरीधन्या ।
हरधनुचुरिजनकाच्या	कौशिकचवघांसिदेववीकन्या ॥४॥

यांत अपासून ज्ञपर्यंत सर्व वर्ण अनुक्रमें आर्येच्या आरंभीं आणून आर्या रचिल्या आहेत.

नामांक रामायण

राजीवोद्धवविनवी	विश्वाऽहितदशमुखसिमाराया ।
मधुकैठभारिदशरथ	सुतहोयत्रिभुवनासिताराया ॥१॥
रामप्रभुकौसल्या	सुतकैकेयीकुमारतोभरत ।
महितगुणसुमित्रात्मज	लक्ष्मणशत्रुघ्नकीर्तिलोभरत ॥२॥
राजासिरामलक्ष्मण	गाधिजमागेस्वयागरक्षाय ।
मनुद्रगुजेरुनिदेशें	देप्रियहीप्रणतभद्रदक्षाय ॥३॥

यांत एकएका आर्येच्या पहिल्या आणि तिसऱ्या चरणांच्या आरंभीं रामनामांतील रा आणि म ही अक्षरें अनुक्रमें आणून सर्व आर्या रचिल्या आहेत. याचप्रमाणे उमा-रामायण रचलें आहे.

परंतु रामायण

श्रीरामचरितकरिते	मुक्तसकृत्किमपिसेवितांभावे ।
पारनलागेदशशत-	वदनांहिपरंतुवाटतेंगावे ॥१॥
संकल्पेचिसुरद्विज-	पीडकरक्षःक्षयेस्वभजनरसा ।
देतोपरंतुझाला	दशरथभक्तप्रियार्थअजनरसा ॥२॥
एकेचिमूर्तिनेंप्रभु	करितात्रैलोक्यकामनापूर्ती ।
क्रीडार्थपरंतुधरी	चारत्रिजगन्मनोहरामूर्ति ॥३॥
तेरामभरतलक्ष्मण	शत्रुघ्नकुमारसारसाक्षजना ।
दिसतीबाळपरंतु	स्वगुणांहींहरितिगुरुमुनींद्रमना ॥४॥

यांत अर्थ सरस ठेवून प्रत्येक आर्येत परंतु हा शब्द प्रविष्ट केला आहे. अशा सर्व मिळून २४० आर्या या रामायणांत आहेत.

तीर्थ रामायण

श्रीपतिपुष्करलवशिव	विश्वाद्यायादशाननवधाने
नरहोयतद्यशीअव-	धानेमिळतेनतेअनवधाने ॥१॥
सत्यव्रतदशरथनृप	जोअर्थिद्विजमधूरधनयास ।
स्वगुरुत्वदेजगदगुरु	सुमत्तिसशतमखसखाससनयास ॥२॥
गंभीरकृतसुरतरु	व्रीडमनुजकौतुकीतनुजचार ।
तेरामभरतलक्ष्मण	शत्रुघ्नकुमाररुचिरसुविचार ॥३॥
कौशिकयागोपद्रव	मथुनिपथीताटकाहरीराम ।
तीर्थाधिगौतमाच्या	स्त्रीलावारूनशापदेधाम ॥४॥

यांत श्री पुष्कर, सरयू, मंडकी, गोमती, इत्यादि प्रसिद्ध तीर्थांची नांवे प्रत्येक आर्येत साधतील अशा अक्षरांनी घटित शब्दांची योजना करून सर्व आर्या ६० रचिल्या आहेत. त्याचप्रमाणे प्रसिद्ध ऋषींचीं नामें येतील अशा आणखी ६९ आर्या रचून ऋषि-रामायण केले आहे.

याच प्रमाणे विष्णुसहस्रनामांत जितकीं विष्णूचीं नामें आहेत त्यांतून दर स्तोत्रांत १०० नामें साधून १० स्तोत्रें करून स्तोत्र रामायण रचिले आहे. आपला अर्थ राहून विष्णूचीं सहस्रनामें साधून रामायणाची कथा रचणें हें काम केवढें चातुर्याचे याचा सूझांनीं विचार करावा.

लघु रामायण

दशमुखवधमतिविधिसुर-	नुतपदजगदधिपअजितवरदहरि ।
परमकरुणमहणवुनिदश-	रथनरवरतनुजमनुजपणहिधिरि ॥१॥
कुशिकतनयसवसमवन	करिमुनिवरयुवतिदुरितगिरिसखणि ।
मगपुरहरधनुचुरिवरि	अवनिजनिषसकळसुभटमुकुटमणि ॥२॥
जनकनिजदुहितृपतिकरि	दशरथसुतसकळपरममहकरुनि ।
पुरबहुसुखविपरशुधर	खररुडनळसहितभुजजभयहरुनि ॥३॥

यांत सर्व वर्ण लघु आणून ४९ आर्या रचून रामायणाची कथा साधली आहे. हें किती चातुर्याचें काम आहे तें पहावें.

मंत्रमय रामायण

श्रीमान् राजशिरोमणि	दशरथजोनिजयशेंवरामहित ।
द्विजसेवकचज्ञनिरत	जनभयहर्ताधरानिकामहित ॥१॥
श्रीशहराबहुमततो	त्याच्याप्रांजलयशस्करामहिला ।
जननीयज्ञपायस	पानेंकरिदेसुखाबरामहिला ॥२॥
श्रीरामज्येष्ठतनुज	भरतयशोनिधिखराकुमारमणी ।
लक्ष्मणशत्रुघ्नजया	नखजयरुचिजसिहराउमारमणी ॥३॥

यांत-श्रीरामजयरामजयजयराम हा मंत्र प्रत्येक आर्यातील अक्षरांत साधून सर्व आर्या रचिल्या आहेत. यांत आपल्या कवीनीं तर फारच आपली कवन करण्याची हातोटी दाखविली आहे.

आपल्या कवींनी मोठा ग्रंथ आर्या छंदांत लिहिला आहे. तथापि त्यांनी इतर श्लोकांच्या वृत्तांतही लहान लहान बरेच ग्रंथ रचिले आहेत. यांमध्ये हा पुढला केकावलीचा लहानसा स्तोत्ररूप ग्रंथ पृथ्वी छंदांत रचिला आहे. याशिवाय त्यांची आणखी कवनेही आढळतात.

पद

वरअसाविभोदेंकीवत्सागामल्लीला ॥४०॥
पदवीश्रीचीगोपीकांला ।
दिधलीवैकुंठीचीबल्लवपल्लीला ॥ वराअसा० ॥ ॥१॥
तुड्याकीर्तिमात्रेपुढें ।
नपुसेकोणीधन्वंतरिच्याखल्लीला ॥२॥
भक्तमयूरघनाजावा ।
नसुरदुमयाचकनीचाच्यागल्लीला ॥ वराअसा० ॥३॥

पद

सुखकरामुकुंदारामाकृष्णागोपाला ॥४०॥
 केशवामाधवाहरे ।
 नुरवीभोयाकामालोभाकोपाला ॥सुख०॥१॥
 जगदाकारातुलाभ्यालो ।
 जेविंभुजगमानुनिकनकाच्यागोपाला ॥सुख०॥२॥
 भक्तमयूरसुखघना ।
 हानतजनतवपदितुलसीचाहोपाला ॥सुख०॥३॥

पद

यशभुवनवनवसंताचें	गावेंनवनवसंताचें ॥४०॥
दुहिणम्हणेतुजचक्रापासुनि	रक्षायामीनशकें ।
सशकेंसिंहकसामारावा	कींपक्षीश्ररमशकें ॥यश०॥१॥
विष्णुम्हणेम्यांकायकरावें	एथेंतापसराया ।
तापसरायादांयेकचि	तुजमजतापसराया ॥यश०॥२॥
मृत्युंजयहिम्हणेवाराया	दुर्बलमीयाअरिला ।
याहुनिअन्यावारिनतुड्या	कालाद्युग्राअरिला ॥यश०॥४॥

अभंग

तोखपावेतोकथानें तोकथानेंपावती ॥

आपल्या कवींचें सरस व प्रौढ शब्द ठेवण्यांत आणि प्रास व यमकें साधण्यांत जें अपूर्व चातुर्य दिसतें, त्याविषयींचें वरील थोड्या उदारहणांवरून स्थालीतंदुलन्यायेंकरून योग्य अनुमान वाचकांनी केलें असता व्हावयाजोगें आहे.

सांप्रत प्रस्तुत ग्रंथविषयक कांहीं अभिप्रेतार्थांचें कथन इष्ट जाणून करितों. आपल्या इष्ट देवतांचे अथवा पुण्यश्लोक देवांचें अथवा अवतारी पुरुषांचें स्तवन ज्यांत केलें असतें, त्या लहान ग्रंथास स्तोत्र म्हणतात; हें बहुधा सर्वास ठाऊक आहे. अशीं स्तोत्रें मोरोपंतांनी पुष्कळ केलीं आहेत, त्यांतील केकावलि हा एक ग्रंथ समजला पाहिजे. हा त्यांच्या स्तोत्ररूप ग्रंथांमध्ये मोठा विख्यात ग्रंथ होय. केकावलि शब्दाचा अर्थ असा होतो कीं, केका म्हणजे संस्कृत भाषेंत मोराच्या शब्दास म्हणतात, म्हणजे ज्याला शुद्ध मराठींत मोराचा टाहो असें म्हणतात, त्याची जी आवलि म्हणजे पंक्ति, अर्थात् एकामागें एक मोराचे टाहो, त्यांस केकावलि म्हणावें.

आतां आपल्या कवीनें आपले नाम सार्थक करून आपल्यास मयूरपक्षी कल्पून कृपाघन जो भगवान त्याला उद्देशून आपले जे एकामागे एक प्रार्थनारूप श्लोक त्यास केकावलि म्हटलें आहे; आणि हें अभिधान आपल्या कवीच्या सरस रुचीस अनुरूप आणि शुभदायक होय असें समजलें पाहिजे. यद्यपि मोरोपंत हे रामोपासक होते असें प्रसिद्ध आहे, तथापि त्यांच्या कृतीवरून जी त्यांची अंतःकरणवृत्ति अनुमित होते, तिजवरून मला तर स्पष्ट दिसतें कीं, जरी त्यांचे उपास्यदेवत राम होतें, तरी त्यांची सर्व देवांविषयी पूज्यबुद्धि असून ते परम भाविक आणि श्रद्धालु पुरुष होते यांत मला किमपि संदेह वाटत नाही. नुसती देवतांविषयीच त्यांची पूज्य बुद्धि होती असें नाही; परंतु भाविक वारकऱ्यांसारखी संतसाधूविषयीहि त्यांची अत्यंत प्रेमळ बुद्धि होती, असें त्यांच्या सहाजिक वाणीवरूनही दिसतें. परंतु हा आपला प्रेमळभाव त्यांनीं आपल्या सन्मणिमालेंत विशेषेकरून प्रगट केला आहे. या देशांत विख्यात जे अलीकडचे साधुसंत त्यांची त्या ग्रंथांत त्यांनी नमनपूर्वक थोडक्यांत स्तुति केली आहे. तींत शिंपी, सोनार, वाणी, माळी, कुंभार, चाभार, महार, कसाई आणि मुसलमान इत्यादि ब्राह्मणांनी नीच मानिलेल्या जातीच्या साधूंसही त्यांनी आपल्या नमस्कारानें ब्राह्मणाच्या पंक्तीत आणून बसविलें आहे असें स्पष्ट दिसते; पाहा हे-नामदेव, नरहरि, तुकाराम, सांवता, गोन्हा, रोहिदास, चोखामेळा, सजना, कबीर आणि शेख महम्मद, या साधूविषयीं कसें बोलतात ते :-

भक्तिसुखाधिकमानुनि	मुक्तिसुखकदापियाचिनाम्यातें ।
अत्यद्भुतआयकिलें	सद्वंदींनमुनियाचिनाम्यातें ।।
नरहरिनामापावे	संतनसोनारदासमानकसा ।
तरलाकरुनिभवाचा	अंतनसोनारदासमानकसा ।।
करजोडितोंसुटाया	तनुरूपातापहेतुकारामी ।
कींसतनुमुक्तझाला	योगाचीसिद्धिहेतुकारामी ।
जेसांवताकरुनिदे	उदरश्रीमंदिराभवनमाळी ।
त्यातेंप्रेमेंवसवुनि	मानीश्रीमंदिराभवनमाळी ।।
गोराज्याम्हणतीत्या	स्मरुनिसुखीतूंमनाकुलालाहो ।
घेभक्तीचाजयाची	मतिंसंसारीअनाकुलालाहो ।।
तेनपहावेपाहुनि	तपनपहावाचिधर्मकामानें
बहुमानितीनकोणी	जेरोहीदासचर्मकामानें ।
गावानचमानावा	चोखामेळामहारसामान्य ।
जाच्याकरिसाधूंचा	चोखामेळामहारसामान्य ।।

सजनानामजयाचें	ज्यागातीसाधुजनकसायास ।।
भगवान्पळहिनविसरे	ज्यार्तेविसरेनमीकसायास ।
मायाहेसंसृतिची	जाळुनिसशोकतोकबीरमला ।
रामपदाब्जीअलिसा	बहुमतसुमुदोकतोकबीरमला ।।
तारितिनकीर्तिच्याजो	नलवेत्यामुसलमानवानावा ।
हर्षेशेखमहम्मद	भगवज्जनमुसलमानवानावा ।।

या वरील उदाहणांवरून हे आपले कवि परम साधु आणि अत्यंत प्रेमळ वृत्तीचे पुरुष होते असे स्पष्ट दिसते आणि प्रस्तुत ग्रंथावरूनही बुद्धिवान पुरुषांच्या लक्षांत असे आल्यावांचून राहाणार नाही. या ग्रंथांत त्यांनी विष्णूस उद्देशून स्तवन केले आहे. पहिल्या तीन केकांत शिष्टसांप्रदायानुसार आपल्या आराध्य दैवताच्या चरणाचें माहात्म्य वर्णून त्यांस अभिवंदन केले आहे. हा सांप्रदाय परम स्तुत्य होय. कारण येणेकरून वंदन करणाराचा अत्यंत नम्रीभाव प्रस्फुट होतो. पुढें आपलें पातित्य आणि पतित्याचें उद्धरण करण्याचें भगवंताचें शील यांचे वर्णन केले आहे. प्रार्थना करण्याच्या ओघांत जसजसा बोलण्याचा प्रसंग येत गेला, तसतसें कोठें विनय, कोठें सलगी, कोठें रोष आणि कोठें आपला लडिवाळपणा अशा भिन्न भिन्न भावाचें दर्शन करून ही सर्व ग्रंथरचना केली आहे; परंतु त्या रचनेत कांही विशेष अनुक्रम धरून आपल्या अभिष्ट अर्थाचें निवेदन केले आहे, असें मला दिसत नाही. यांत ग्रंथकाराचें मागणें इतकेंच दिसतें की, भगवंतानें आपल्या अपराधाची क्षमा करावी आणि आपला अंगीकार करावा. ज्ञानी जनांस भगवंतापाशी मागणें हेंच उचित होय.

आतां वाचक जनांनी कोणत्या भावानें वदान्यापाशीं प्रार्थना करावी; त्यांत, अत्यंत अनभिज्ञ पापमालिन्यानें अंतर्दामी आपादमस्तक मलिन आणि प्रतिक्षणीं अपराधी अशा नरदेहधारी पामर जीवानें सर्वज्ञ, अत्यंत पवित्र, न्यायी आणि षड्गुणैश्वर्यसंपन्न, अशा जगदीश्वरापुढें आपल्या अपराधाची क्षमा भाकणें झाल्यास इतर सर्व भाव एकीकडेस टाकून शुद्ध विनयतेच्या भावानें प्रार्थना करणें उचित. असें असतां आपल्या कवीने तर या स्तोत्रांत आपल्या विनयतेच्या भावांत भावांतराचें पुष्कळ विरजण घातलें आहे. तेव्हां ही यांची कृति अशा दृष्टीनें दोष-प्रवण म्हटल्यानें आपणाकडेस धृष्टतेचा आरोप येणार नाही, असें बहुतेक सूज विचारी पुरुषांचे मत पडेल. या गोष्टीचा लक्षपूर्वक विचार केला असतां हें मत उपेक्षणीय आहे असें मला वाटत नाही; पूर्ण अंशी नसलें तथापि पुष्कळ अंशी हें मत ग्रहणीय होय असें माझ्या विचारास येतें. ईश्वराचें महत्त्व आणि पवित्रता, आणि मनुष्याचें क्षुद्रत्व आणि पापमलीनता, यांविषयी विचार केला असतां जें महदंतर दिसतें, त्यावरून पाहातां मनुष्यानें तर ईश्वरापुढें धुळींतच पडून असावें; मान उचलून वर त्याजकडेस पाहाण्याचीही याची योग्यता नाही; असें असतां

त्या ईश्वराला उद्देशून केली जी प्रार्थना तींत प्रार्थकांनं सलगी अथवा लडिवाळपणा, अथवा रोष, यांतून कोणत्याही भावाचें प्रदर्शन करणें, हें तर त्याला केवळ अनुचित होय.

परंतु ज्या लोकांमध्ये जीवात्मा आणि परमात्मा यांच्या ऐक्यभावाचे प्रतिपादक आजपावतों शतावधि आचार्य आणि उपदेशक होऊन गेले; आणि त्यांनीं लिहिलेले सहस्रावधि ग्रंथ चालून अद्वैत मताचा प्रचार फार होऊन गेला आहे; आणि ज्यांमध्ये ज्या श्रुतीच्या पायावर अद्वैतमताचें मंदिर बांधलें होतें, त्या सर्व श्रुती मध्वाचार्यांनीं आपणाकडेस वळवून त्यांच्या योगानें जीवात्मा आणि परमात्मा यांचे तादात्म्य असंभवनीय असा आपला सिद्धांत प्रदर्शित करून, जीव सेवक आणि परमात्मा सेव्य, — सलोकता, समीपता आणि सरूपता, या तीन काय त्या जीवांस मुक्ति; सायुज्यता अथवा कैवल्यमुक्ति जीवांस कदापि होणार नाही असा आपला सिद्धांत स्थापून आपल्या द्वैतमतानें अद्वैत मताच्या खंडनार्थ प्रयत्न केला; आणि अद्यापि त्यांचे अनुयायी माध्व करीतच आहेत: — पुढें त्या मोठ्या कलहांत रामानुजांनीं दोघांची समजूत पाडण्याकरितां मध्ये कावड करून विशिष्टाद्वैत मताची स्थापना केली; तथापि त्यांमध्ये अद्वैत मताची अबाधित सत्ता चालण्यांत कांहीं मोठा प्रतिबंध झाला असें नाही. परंतु जेव्हां अद्वैतवादी घोरोघर चुलीपर्यंत ब्रह्मज्ञान ऐकून आपणच कंटाळले, आणि पापपुण्याचा विचार लोकांमध्ये अत्यंत शिथिल झाल्यानें अनाचाराचा बाजार कडेलोट भरून लागला, असें पाहून जेव्हां तेच भ्याले, — ही लोकांची स्थिती तुकोबानें खालीं सरस वर्णिली आहे:—

घरोघरीं अवघे झालें ब्रह्मज्ञान । परीं मेळवण बहूमाजी ॥१॥
 निरेंकोणापासीं होय एकरज । तरी द्यारे मज दुर्बळासी ॥२॥
 आशातृष्णामनीं कालवृनीदोनी । दंभतोदुरुनीदीसतसे ॥३॥
 कामक्रोधलोभशिंगवी बहुत । मेळवृनी आंत काळकूट ॥४॥
 तुकाम्हाणे तेथें कांहीं हातानये । आयुष्य तें जाये वांयासर्व ॥५॥

यापेक्षां आणखी भयंकर:—

जीवतोची देवभोजनते भक्ती । मरणते मुक्ती पाखंड्याची ॥१॥
 पिंडाच्या पोषणीं नागवले जन । लटीकें पूरण केले वेद ॥२॥
 मना आला तैसा करीती विचार । म्हणती संसार नाही पुन्हा ॥३॥
 आपूले मनीचें करूनी पाखंड । जनामध्ये भांडपोट भरी ॥४॥
 तुकाम्हाणे पाठी उठती यमदंड । पापपुण्य लंडन विचारिती ॥५॥

अशी लोकांची स्थिति पाहून जेव्हां अद्वैतवादी आपल्या मार्गाचें अतिक्रमण झाल्यामुळें आपणच थकले; तेव्हां आजपावेतां विसरून गेलेल्या आपल्या भक्तिमाउलीपुढें त्यांनी साष्टांग दंडवत घातला, आणि म्हणूं लागले; —

नायकावेकानींतयाचेतेबोल । भक्तीवीणफोलज्ञानसांगे ॥१॥
 वाखाणीअद्वैतभक्तीभावेवीण । दुःखपावेंशीणश्रोतावक्ता ॥२॥
 अहंब्रह्मम्हणुनीपाळीतसेपिंड । बोलोंनयेभांडातयासवें ॥३॥
 वेदबाह्यलंडबोलेजोपाखंड । त्याचेकाळेंतोंडसंतांमध्ये ॥४॥
 तुकाम्हाणेखंडीदेवभक्तपण । वरिष्ठत्याहूनश्वपचतो ॥५॥

आणखी म्हणूं लागले:—

गोडनावेंक्षीर । परीसाखरेचाधीर ॥१॥
 तैसेजाणब्रह्मज्ञान । बापुडेंतेंभक्तीवीण ॥२॥

आणि तिच्या पायांशी नाक घांसून, करुणा भाकूं लागले, — माते आम्हीं चुकलों; आज पावेतो आम्हास असें वाटत होतें की, आमच्या अद्वैतब्रह्मज्ञानानें आम्हास मोठमोठे पांख फुटले आहेत, त्यांच्या योगानें आतां आम्हीं कैलास आणि वैकुंठ यांच्याही पलीकडेस वर चिदाकाशांत उडून जाऊं; त्वां आमच्या चंचूत चारा भरवून आमचें संगोपन करावें याचें आतां काहीं अगत्य उरलें नाहीं; तुझ्या चोंचीतला चारा आम्हास नको; आम्हीं स्वतंत्र उड्डाण करून यापेक्षां आपला चांगला चारा मिळवूं; — असा जो आम्हांस गर्व झाला होता तो आतां अगदीं उतरून गेला. आम्ही तुझा विश्रांतीचा घरकुंडा सोडतांच हे आमचे अद्वैतज्ञानाचे पांख आम्हास तोलत नाहींसे होऊन आम्हीं खालीं पडूं लागलों; कित्येक जे गर्वानें कांहींसे वर उडाले त्यांस अधिक धक्का बसून त्यांचा चुराडा झाला. आतां आमच्या अनुभवास पक्कें आलें की, तुझ्या मुखांतल्या चान्याच्या सेवनावांचून इतके मोठे पांख झेपण्याचें सामर्थ्य आम्हास कदापि येणार नाहीं; आणि जरी त्या चान्याने तसे उडण्याचें सामर्थ्य आलें, तथापि तुझें कोटें न सोडितां तूं जेथें आम्हास नेशील तेथें उडून तूं दाखविशील तोच चारा आम्हीं भक्षण करूं, यांतच आमचे सर्व कल्याण आहे; असें म्हणून अद्वैतवादी भक्तिमातेस शरण गेले. परंतु जरी शरण गेले, तरी उनाड मुलें जशीं इकडे तिकडे यथेच्छ उड्या मारून भूक लागली म्हणजे आपल्या आईजवळ खाऊ मागावयास जातात, तसे शरण गेले. अपराधी लोक न्यायाधिशा पुढें उभे राहून कवेळ सभयतेनें आपला अपराध अंगीकृत करून, त्या कृतअपराधविषयीं आपला पश्चात्ताप प्रकट करून मोठ्या विनयतेनें आणि दीनवाणी तोंडानें क्षमा मागावयास जातात तसे गेले नाहींत. मुलें जशीं आपल्या आईबापापाशीं कांहीं वस्तु

मागतांना आपला लडिवाळपणा, सलगी, रोष इत्यादि भाव दाखवितात तसे या देशांत भक्तजन आपल्या इष्ट देवतेपुढे यथारुचि अनर्गल वाक्यटवाने अनेक भाव दाखवून वर मागतात. त्यांमध्ये विनयभाव नसतो असें माझे म्हणणे अगदी नाही; हे तर माझ्या वरील लेखावरून वाचकांच्या लक्षांत पूर्तेपणीं आलेच असेल; परंतु त्या भावाच्या विरजणांत भावांतराचें पुष्कळ मिश्रण असल्यानें त्या भावास बलहीनत्व येऊन प्रार्थनीय परमेश्वराचें महत्त्व आणि गौरव यास फार गौणत्व आल्यासारखें दिसतें असें मला खचित वाटतें. कारण, परमेश्वर आईपेक्षांही दयाळु आहे हें खरें आहे, तथापि तो न्यायी आहे, म्हणून लाडानें आपल्या मुलांस बिघडविणाऱ्या भोळ्या आईसारखी ती आई नाही; परंतु जीं मुलें आपल्या आज्ञेचें उल्लंघन करून उन्मार्गवर्ति होतात, त्यांस छडी मारून समार्गास लावून सुखी करणाऱ्या शहाण्या आईसारखी ती आई आहे. किंबहुना परमेश्वराचें महत्त्व आणि सर्वेश्वर्य जर मनात आणिलें, तर आईच्या सामान्य उपमेपेक्षां त्याच्या महत्त्वास आणि ऐश्वर्यास दयाळु आणि न्यायी अशा प्रभूची उपमा अधिक योग्य दिसती; म्हणून ज्यास स्वापराधाचें ज्ञान होऊन पश्चात्ताप झाला असेल अशा क्षुद्र मानवानें परमेश्वरापुढें शुद्ध विनयभावानेंच प्रार्थना करावी, हेंच त्यास उचित होय असें माझे मत होय. आणि या मतदृष्टीनें पाहिलें असतां हें पुढलें आमच्या कवींचें काव्य दोषारोपणास पात्र होण्यास योग्य आहे खरें; परंतु ज्या लोकांमध्ये लडिवाळपणानें आणि सलगीनें ईश्वराची प्रार्थना आणि स्तुति करण्याचा सांप्रदाय व्यासाच्या वेळेपासून पडला आहे, त्यांमध्ये आपल्या कवीसच निवडून काढून या दोषाचा भार त्यांच्या मस्तकावर ठेवण्यास त्यांस पुढें करणें मला योग्य दिसत नाही. सर्वांच्या पंक्तीत यथायोग्य त्या भाराचे विभाग करून त्यांच्या वांटणीस जो यःकश्चित् विभाग येईल तो निराळा काढून ठेवण्याचें जर कोणाच्या मनांत येईल तर भलें येवो.

आतां आणखी एक दोष प्रस्तुत काव्यांत आढळतो, तो पूर्वोक्त दोषापेक्षांही अधिक शोचनीय होय असें विचारशील पुरुषांच्या बुद्धींत वागल्यावांचून राहाणार नाही; आणि वर जी म्यां दयाळु आणि न्यायी अशा परमेश्वराच्या प्रार्थनेंत विनयातिक्रमणरूप दोषाची सूचना केली, त्याच दोषाचें हें परिपक्व फल होय, असें त्यांच्या ध्यानांत येऊन प्रकृत दोष प्रदर्शनांत पूर्वोक्त दोषकथनाचें समर्थनहि होईल. एकदां विनयभाव सुटला म्हणजे सलगीस आरंभ होतो, आणि ती सलगी विनोदास पोहोचविते; या देशांत, त्यांत विशेषेकरून संस्कृत काव्यांत, शृङ्गाररसाचें प्राधान्य असल्यानें त्या विनोदांत हा रस प्रचुर होऊन शेवटीं बीभत्स रसाचाही प्रादुर्भाव होतो. असें असलें तरी इतर लोकव्यवहारवर्णनपर काव्यांत समयविशेषीं समर्थाद असल्यास शृङ्गार आणि बीभत्स हे रस सुसह्य आणि रुचिपरत्वे आल्हादजनकही व्हावयास शक्य आहेत; परंतु भगवत्स्तुतींत या रसाचें नुसत्या लवणाप्रमाणेही अल्प सेवन दुःसह,

मग या रसाचे द्रोण भरभरून पिणें हें सहास कर्म भरतखंडनिवासी भक्तजनांनींच करावें;
इतरांच्यानें होणार नाही. पाहा:—

हरिरिहमुग्धवधूनिकरे विलासिनिविलसतिकेलिपरे ॥धृ० ॥
पीनपयोधरभारभरेणभहरिपरिरभ्यसरागं
गोपवधूरनुगायतिकाचिदुदंचितपंचमरागं ॥हरिरिह० ॥

रासेहरिमिहविहितविलासं ॥ स्मरतिमनोममकृतपरिहासं ॥धृ॥
गोपकबनितंबवतीमुखचुंबनलंभितलोभं
बंधुजीवमधुराधरपल्लवमुल्लसितस्मितशोभं ॥रासे० ॥

धीरसमीरेयमुनातीरेवसतिवनेवनमाली
गोपीपीनपयोधरमर्दनचंचलकरयुगशाली ॥धृ० ॥
विगलितवसनंपरिहृतरशनंघटयजघनमपिधानं
किसलयशयनेपंकजनयनेनिधिमिवहर्षनिधानं ॥धृ० ॥

– गीतगोविन्द

यांत पाहा हे या शृङ्गाररसानें कसे द्रोण भरले आहेत. यापेक्षांही प्रौढ रीतीनें शृंगाररसान्वित भक्तिप्रेम पाहाणें असल्यास श्रीमद्भागवताचा मोठा ग्रंथ आहेच. आणखी याशिवाय पाहाण्याची इच्छा असल्यास ब्रह्मवैवर्तक पुराणांतील कृष्णजन्म खंड पाहावें. परंतु वेणिसंहार नाटककारानें तर वैष्णवांसही मळमळी सुटे असा रस आपल्या नांदीच्या एका श्लोकांत ओतला आहे. त्या श्लोकांचा येथें उपन्यास करण्यासही मला लज्जेनें संकोच वाटतो. मग असा शृङ्गाररसान्वित भक्तिप्रेम प्रगट करण्याचा जेथे शिष्टसांप्रदाय प्राचीन काळापासून चालत आहे, तेथें आपल्या यःकश्चित् प्राकृत कवीनें पुढल्या स्तोत्रांत कोठें सात आठ श्लोकांत या रसाचे एकदोन थेंब ओतले असल्यास (पहा-केका ७, १३, २४, ३५, ३६, ३७, ८३, १०२) हा त्यांजकडेस मोठा दोष न येतां उलटें मला वाटतें कीं, हें त्या रसाचें अत्यल्पत्व त्यांच्या सदभिरुचीचें ज्ञापक होतें. इतकें वादळ चालत असतां त्यांत त्यांनीं आपल्या होडीस तो वारा फारसा न लागूं देतां संभाळलें, हें त्याचें कृत्य मोठें स्तुत्य होय असें विचारी पुरुषांच्या ध्यानास येईल.

ज्या देशांत व ज्या लोकांत रसभरित म्हणून प्रसिद्ध काव्यें असतात, त्यांच्या गुणांचे यथायोग्य परीक्षण करण्यास, आणि त्याची रुचि घेण्यास त्याच देशाचे डोळे आणि जीभ असली पाहिजे. इतर लोकांच्यानें तसें यथान्याय परीक्षण होणें केवळ अशक्य असें माझें म्हणणें नाहीं; कदाचित् ते विशाल बुद्धीचे परीक्षक असल्यास योग्य परीक्षा करूं शकतील;

परंतु त्यांच्या रुचीनें जो तद्देशीय सुज्ञांस आनंद होईल, त्याच मानाचा आनंद अन्यदेशीय विद्वानांस होणार नाही. याची कारणें बहुत आणि सूक्ष्म आहेत. ज्या लोकांत वंशपरंपरेनें त्यांचा सहवास असतो त्यांचा पूर्वापर व्यवहार रीति-भाती, विद्या, ज्ञान, आचार या सर्व गोष्टींच्या संघट्टनानें त्यांचीं मनें तशीच रंगलेलीं असतात; म्हणून त्यांच्या काव्यानें जे हर्षशोकादि विकार त्यांच्या मनावर होतील, तसे विकार अशा संघट्टनाच्या अभावामुळे ज्यांची मनें तशी रंगलीं नसतात ज्यांजवर होणार नाहीत. अशा विचारानें पाहिलें असता हें पुढील स्तोत्र प्रौढ आणि रसिक काव्यांत गणिलें पाहिजे. आणखी माझी अशी अटकळ होते कीं, हें स्तोत्र पंतांनीं आपल्या वयाच्या उत्तर अवस्थेंत रचिलें असावें; ही अटकळ या काव्याच्या प्रौढ वाणीवरून, आणि त्यांत जो प्रतिपाद्य विषय आहे त्यावरून कोणी केली असतां तिचा संभव आहेच, परंतु या स्तोत्रांतील ४६ व्या केकेवरून तर त्याविषयीं कदाचित् संशय असला तर तोहि दूर होईल असें मला वाटतें.

आतां केकावली हें प्राकृत काव्य असून यावर आणखी प्राकृत टीका करण्याचें प्रयोजन काय, म्हणून इतरांच्या तर नाही, परंतु कदाचित् पंडितजनांच्या मनांत प्रथमतः आशांका उत्पन्न होईल. त्यास हें प्राकृत काव्य खरें, परंतु वामन, मोरांपंत यांसारख्या पंडितांचें काव्य जरी प्राकृत आहे, तरी तें पंडितासच समजावयास शक्य असें प्राकृत काव्य आहे; त्यांत केकावलीसारखा ग्रंथ तर विशेषेंकरून, या माझ्या म्हणण्यास तेही रुकार देतील. आणखी लोकस्थिति पाहिली असतां ब्राह्मण जातीच्या खाणीशिवाय पंडितरत्नांची उत्पत्तिही असंभवनीय; त्या खाणीतही इतर पार्थिव खाणीप्रमाणें गारगोटेच फार, कोट्यावधि गारगोट्यांत एखादें रत्न सापडलें तर नकळे. त्या पंडितांतही स्वाधीतशास्त्रज्ञानाचा अभिमान एकीकडे ठेवून, प्राकृत कवितेंत कशी चमत्कृति आहे अशी जिज्ञासा धरून, गीर्वाण वाणीच्या अभ्यासनाच्या माडीवरून प्राकृत ग्रंथ पाहाण्यास खालीं उतरण्याचें लघुत्व आणि श्रम घेणारा शतपंडितांमध्ये एखादा निघाला तर निघेल. तेव्हां या मानानें पाहिलें असतां वामन, मोरोपंत यांचीं काव्यें पाहाणारा दहा लक्षांत एखादा ब्राह्मण सांपडेल; निदान, लक्षांत तरी सांपडला तर सांपडेल. या माझ्या म्हणण्यांत जरी अतिशयोक्ति असली तरी ती फार आहे असें, याविषयीं यथायोग्य विचार करणारे कोणी म्हणणार नाहीत. मग ब्राम्हणव्यतिरिक्त जो फार मोठा समाज राहिला त्याची तर गोष्टच बोलावयास नको. केवळ या कवीच्या ग्रंथांच्या काठिण्यास्तवच यांच्या ग्रंथांचें दुर्ज्ञेयत्व आहे, असें कोणी माझ्या या म्हणण्यावरून समजू नये; परंतु त्या कारणाशिवाय आणखी बहुधा या देशांतील लोक अनभ्यस्त असून नुसतें वाचण्या-लिहिण्याचेंहि ज्ञान त्यांमध्ये फार कमी असतें. यामुळे हे ग्रंथ इतके दुर्ज्ञेय झाले आहेत असें तर मला खचित् वाटतें. त्यांत मोरोपंतांचे काव्य विशेषेंकरून इतकें दुर्बोध कां याचें कारण या उपोद्घाताच्या आरंभी

सविस्तर कळविलेच आहे. त्यांत आणखी विचार केला पाहिजे की, वामन-मोरोपंत यांसारख्या महापंडितांनी (येथे यांस महापंडित म्हटले याची शास्त्रीपंडित यांनी मला क्षमा करावी.) संस्कृत भाषेत आपले ग्रंथ रचण्याचे तात्कालिक श्लाघ्य कृत्य सोडून प्राकृत ग्रंथ रचण्यांत जे इतके परिश्रम केले, यावरून सद्यःप्राप्त यशाकडेस त्यांनी लक्ष न देतां इतर सर्व प्राकृत लोकांस ज्ञान व्हावे याच औपकारिक बुद्धीने त्यांनी हे ग्रंथ रचले असावे अशी माझी दृढ अटकळ होते. म्हणून हा त्यांचा परम स्तुत्य हेतु सिद्धीस नेण्याच्या मार्गांत ज्या ज्या अडचणी आढळतील, त्या त्या सर्व दूर करणें हा आता आपला धर्म होय, असें मनांत आणून म्यां ही प्रकृत टीका करण्याचा उद्योग प्रथमतः हातीं धरिला. मोरोपंतांच्या साद्यंत कृतीचा अभ्यास करून, त्यांच्या सर्व काव्यावर टीका लिहून, तें सुबोध करण्याच्या अतिमहत्कृत्यास अवकाशाच्या आणि सामर्थ्याच्या अल्पत्वामुळे प्रथम माझे मन धजेना; म्हणून आपल्या कवीच्या सर्व कृतींत अत्यंत प्रख्यात जीं काव्यें त्यामध्ये प्रस्तुत केकावलि स्तोत्र हें एक लहानसें प्रख्यात काव्य जाणून म्यां यावर वानगीप्रमाणें पुढील टीका करण्यास आरंभ केला. त्यांतही या लहानशा ग्रंथाचा विषय निवळ भगवत्स्तुतिपर असल्यानें माझे मन अधिक लोभावलें. त्यांत आणखी पंतांच्या काव्यांत निष्णात म्हणून वाखाणिलेल्या पुरुषांमध्येही बहुतेकांस केकावलि हा ग्रंथ साद्यंत लागत नाही, असाही बोभाट माझ्या ऐकण्यांत होताच; या सर्व कारणांवरून मोरोपंतांच्या ग्रंथावर टीका करण्यास हाच लहानसा ग्रंथ म्यां निवडून काढिला.

त्यांत ज्या विस्तारपद्धतीनें प्रथम ही टीका करण्यास म्यां आरंभ केला, त्या गोष्टीस आज पांच वर्षे झालीं. त्या विस्तारपद्धतीचा मुळारंभी हेतु असा होता की, माझी परम आवडती आणि सुशीला कन्या कावेरीबाई, जीस जगदीशानें आतां दोन वर्षे झालीं आपल्या सन्निध नेलें, तिला ज्या रीतीनें हें काव्य सुबोध होईल अशा रीतीनें पाल्हाळ करून म्यां याजवर टीका लिहिली. ती अशी की, कोणताही कठीण शब्द पर्यायावाचून आणि अर्थावाचून ठेविला नाही; महाराष्ट्र ग्रंथभाषेच्या रूपांचीही पर्यायरूपें लिहून ठेविली; मनांत की, तिला या अशा पद्धतीच्या टीकेवरून हा ग्रंथ लागला तर इतर बालांसही सहज लागेल. ही टीका म्यां शके १७८१ च्या वर्षी ठाण्यांत सरकारी कामावर असतां प्रातःकाळीं मला जो दोनतीन तास वेळ सांपडे, तो या कामाकडेस देऊन आरंभिली, आणि तेथें सुमारे सहा महिन्यांत अर्धा अधिक इतका ग्रंथ संपविला. पुढें सरकारी काम सोडून घरीं मुंबईस आलों, तेव्हां बाकी राहिलेला ग्रंथ लवकरच संपविला. त्यानंतर २३ वी मे सन १८६३ इसवीच्या रात्रीस त्या कन्येस जगदीशानें आपल्या जवळ नेलें. त्या तिच्या वियोगानें अत्यंत दुःखितांतःकरण होत्साता आपल्या मनांत विचार करूं लागलों कीं, तिचें स्मरण राहाण्याकरितां वापी, कूप, तडाग अथवा धर्मशाळा बांधून एखादे पूर्तकर्म करावें तर तितकें द्रव्यसामर्थ्य आपल्यास

नाहीं; तेव्हां जिच्या अभ्यासाकरितां जो ग्रंथ लिहिण्यास प्रथम लेखणी हातीं धरली तोच ग्रंथ आतां तिच्या स्मरणास अर्पण करून प्रसिद्ध करावा, आणि त्यापासून आपल्या स्वदेशीय लोकांस कांही उपयोग घडला तर तसें तरी स्मरणीय पूर्तकर्म करावें, असा मनांत विचार करून ज्या रीतीनें आबालवृद्धांस हा ग्रंथ उपयोगी पडेल अशा रीतीनें पुनः याचें पूर्वापर शोधन करून छापण्याकरितां सिद्ध केला.

मला एका गोष्टीची भीति वाटते कीं, प्रौढ बुद्धीच्या पुरुषांस समजावयास अगदीं अवघड नाहीत अशा शब्दांच्याही पर्यायावर पर्याय लिहून, अर्थविस्तारही लांबवून या पुढील टीकेत फारच पाल्हाळ केला आहे; यावरून कित्येक विद्वज्जन पुढील टीकेस दोष लावितील, त्याचा मी मोठ्या विनयतेनें स्वीकार करितों. परंतु वर जें म्यां कारण सांगितले त्यावरून त्यांच्या ध्यानांत येईल कीं, हें मोरोपंतांचें लहानसें काव्य केवळ प्रौढबुद्धीच्याच पुरुषांस सुबोध व्हावें म्हणून ही त्यावर पुढील टीका केली नाही; तर शाळांत पढणाऱ्या विद्यार्थ्यांस शब्दज्ञान व्हावें, शब्दांचा परस्परान्वय समजावा आणि कोठें कोठें वाक्यांत अलंकाराचेंही ज्ञान व्हावें, असा जो माझा मुळचा हेतु होता तो तसाच अबाधित ठेवून, त्यास विद्वज्जनांच्याहि आदरास पात्रता यावी म्हणून उत्तरोत्तर अर्थाची दाढ्यता आणि अधिकाधिक अनुकूलता दाखविण्याकरितां जे शब्दांचे पर्याय म्हणून अशी—खूण करून लिहिले आहेत, तेही चढत्या पायरीनें प्रविष्ट केले आहेत; आणि वाक्याचे अर्थ आणि आशयही त्यांच्या गांभीर्याच्या आणि गूढत्वाच्या प्रमाणानें वरच्या घडीपासून आंतील घड्या उकलून दाखविले आहेत; आणि आवश्यक स्थळीं त्यांचे इंगितार्थ आणि ध्वन्यर्थही सुचविले आहेत. मूळ शब्दांच्या अर्थाची परिपूर्णता दाखविण्याकरितां जेथें शब्दांतराचें अथवा वाक्यांतराचें अंतर्निवेशन आवश्यक, तेथे—अशा खुणेनें तो त्या खुणेच्या मागला अंतर्लेख दाखविला आहे. आणखी स्थळोस्थळीं अर्थाच्या समर्थनाकरितां आणि स्पष्टीकरणाकरितां त्या त्या पृष्ठाखालीं बारीक अक्षरांनी टीपा करून ग्रंथांतराचीं पुष्कळ संस्कृत आणि प्राकृत प्रमाणेंही दिलीं आहेत. सारांश, हा पुढील मोरोपंतांचा लहान ग्रंथ सर्वास सुबोधित करण्यांत त्यांस जितका योग्य त्यापेक्षांहि कदाचित् अधिक श्रम घेण्यांत म्यां आपलें अंग चोरिलें नाही; म्हणून विद्वज्जन मजवर कृपाच करितील असा मला भरंवसा आहे. आणखी मला दुसरी अशी भीति वाटते कीं, या माझ्या पुढल्या ग्रंथांत प्रमादानें अथवा माझ्या अज्ञानानें अशुद्ध लेख पडले असतील, आणि कोठें कोठें मूळ अर्थाचीही सूक्ष्मता माझ्या लक्षांत आली नसेल आणि कोठें विपरीत अर्थही लिहिण्यांत आला असेल, तर शास्त्रीपंडितांनी आपल्या उदार अंतःकरणांनीं — सांप्रतच्या धर्मशास्त्राप्रमाणें कलियुगात शुद्ध क्षत्रिय आणि शुद्ध वैश्य हे वर्ण नाहीत, म्हणून तेच सांगतात. तेव्हां अर्थात् ब्राह्मणांभावीं अवशिष्ट राहिलेल्या वेदोक्त मंत्रांनी असंस्कृत अशा जातींतच माझा जन्म असल्यानें यथाशास्त्र मजकडून शास्त्राध्ययन

अथवा काव्यव्युत्पत्ति घडणें दुर्घट, आणि वर्णाप्रमाणे वाणीही असंस्कृत, या कारणाकडेस आपली दृष्टी पोहोचविली असतां उक्त दोषांविषयीं त्यांची क्षमा मागण्यास मला मोठा अवकाश आहे. आतां ही पुढील टीका केल्यानें जर या आपल्या महत्कवीचा काव्यसमूह समजण्याच्या मार्गाचें मजकडून उद्घाटन होऊन तेणेंकरून स्वदेश-विद्वांचें ज्ञान प्रसरणाच्या कार्यांत मजकडून कांहीं तरी सुदामाच्या पृथुकुंतुलार्पणाप्रमाणें साहित्यार्पण झालेंच तर या माझ्या श्रमाचें साफल्य झालें असें मानून मी समाधान पावेन.

या केकावलि ग्रंथावर पुढील टीका लिहिण्यास आरंभ करावयाच्या पूर्वी म्यां या ग्रंथाच्या शुद्ध प्रती जितक्या मिळतील तितक्या मिळविण्याचा प्रयत्न केला. त्यांत माझ्या ऐकण्यांत होतें कीं, मोरोपंतांनी आपल्या सर्व कृतींतून बहुतेक ग्रंथ स्वतः आपल्या हातानें लिहून ठेविला आहे. त्यांत ही केकावलीही आहे. ती सारी त्यांची कृती त्यांचे नातू खालीं पंढरपुरी सुखवस्ती करून राहातात. त्यांतून एका कुटुंबाच्या संग्रही आहे; त्यांच्या मुलांची म्हणजे पंतांच्या पणतांची व माझी गाठ पडली तेव्हा म्यां त्यांस त्यांच्या पूर्वजांच्या ग्रंथावर टीका करून त्यांचें उज्वलन करून पंतांची सेवा करण्याचा आपला मनाचा निर्धार सांगितला; आणि या कार्यांत त्यांनीं कृपा करून पंतांच्या हातचा लिहिलेला केकावलीचा ग्रंथ त्यांच्या संग्रही आहे तो शेवटीं दोन दिवस तरी मला पाहाण्यास द्यावा, म्हणजे संशयरहित शुद्ध ग्रंथावर टीका होईल; इतकें साहित्य त्यांनीं आपल्या वडिलांच्या कीर्तीच्या वृद्ध्यर्थ करावें म्हणून म्यां त्यांस फार विनवणी केली; परंतु ह्या वेळेपर्यंत तसें घडून माझी इच्छा सफल झाली नाही. शेवटीं केकावलीचें एक पुस्तक शिलाछापावर छापिलें होतें त्याची एक प्रत माझ्या संग्रही होती, ती आणि पुण्याहून आमचे जुने मित्र राजश्री परशुरामपंत गडबोले यांनीं आपल्या हातानें केकावलीचें पुस्तक शुद्ध लिहिलें होतें तें त्यांजकडून कांहीं दिवस मागून आणविलें तें, अशा दोन प्रतींवरून कोठें शुद्धाशुद्ध पाहून ही पुढील प्रत सिद्ध करून या ग्रंथावर टीका केली आहे. पंतांच्या हातचें लिहिलें पुस्तक जर या कार्यांत पाहाण्यास मिळतें, तर फारच चांगलें होतें; परंतु मला असें वाटतें कीं, या पंतांच्या ग्रंथांचें फारसें पाठांतर झालें नसावें. कोठें मूळचा पाठ बदलला असला तर तो फारच थोडा असेल. शतपंडितांमध्ये एखादा पंडित प्राकृत ग्रंथाचें आस्थापूर्वक अवलोकन करणारा सांपडेल, म्हणून जें म्यां वर सांगितलें, त्याच विरळ कोटींत परशुरामपंत यांची गणना केली पाहिजे. त्यांनीं पंतांच्या काव्यावर फार लक्ष दिलें आहे, आणि त्यांनीं आपलें हातचें लिहिलें केकावलीचें मूळ पुस्तक उपयोगी पडण्याकरितां माझ्या स्वाधीन केलें, ही त्यांची मजवर मोठी स्मरणीय उपकृति आहे असे मी समजतो.

जगत्पिता परमेश्वर यास प्रथम दंडवत प्रणिपात करून, नंतर ज्यांच्या उदरीं त्या जगदीशानें मला जन्म दिला त्या परमवंद्य आणि प्रेमास्पद मातापित्याचें नामयुग्मानें या माझ्या टीकेस अभिधान देऊन, यश देणारें मातृनाम यशोदा आणि त्या यशाची निर्मलता दर्शविणारें पितृनाम पांडुरंग, अशा नामयुग्मास वंदन करून या उपोद्घातासहित आतां मी आपला ग्रंथ संपवितों.

दादोबा पांडुरंग

निवासस्थान मुंबापुरी

चैत्र शु० १० शके १७८७ क्रोधनाम संवत्सरे.

मु।। ५ वी माहे एप्रिल सन १८६५ इसवी.

टीपा

१. अलीकडे सुमारें तीन वर्षांपासून राजश्री माधवराव चंद्रोबा या गृहस्थानी सर्वसंग्रह या नांवानें प्रति महिन्यात एक ९६ पृष्ठांचे लहानसे पुस्तक प्रसिध्द करण्याची योजना केली आहे; त्यांत बहुधा प्रसिध्द महाराष्ट्र कवींनीं, केलेले सर्व उपलब्ध ग्रंथ क्रमशः छापून प्रसिध्द करावे असा परमश्लाघ्य उद्योग चालविला आहे. या सर्वसंग्रहांत आपल्या मोरोपंत कवींच्या सर्व कृतीचा संग्रह होईल असा भरंवसा आहे, त्यांत या कवींचीं आर्याछंदांत रचिलेली महाभारताची आदिपर्वांपासून स्वर्गारोहणपर्वापर्यंत १८ पर्वे छापून बाहेर निघालीं आहेत; या सर्वसंग्रहांत मोरोपंतकृत रामायणेंही छापून प्रसिद्ध करण्याचा उपक्रम चालविला आहे. त्यांत सांप्रत मी ही प्रस्तावना लिहितों त्या काळापर्यंत १५ रामायणें समाप्त होऊन बाहेर निघालीं आहेत; व त्यांत स्तोत्ररामायणाचे १० भेद आहेत ते जर आंत घेतले तर एकंदर सध्या २४ रामायणें छापून बाहेर निघालीं आहेत असें समजलें पाहिजे.

या रामायणांची नांवे:- १ मात्रारामायण, २ मंत्र रा. ३ नामांक रा. ४ परंतु रा. ५ तीर्थ रा. ६ ऋषि रा. ७ स्तोत्र रा. ८ उमा रा. ९ लघु रा. १० विद्युन्माला रा. ११ मंत्रगर्भसाकी रा. १२ घनाक्षरी रा. १३ पृथ्वीछंद रा. १४. राज रा., १५. विबुधप्रिय रामायण

२. महाभक्त रामोपासक कबीर हे मोमीन जातीचे मुसलमान होते, हें तर सर्वास माहीत आहे. तारावाजवर महिपतबाबा यांना आपल्या भक्तिविजयांत शेख महमद या नांवाचे दुसरे मुसलमान हरिभक्त यांचे कांही चरित्र वर्णिलें आहे; त्यांत असा चमत्कार लिहिला आहे की, हे शेख महमद आपल्या गावीं श्रीगोंद्यांत असतां एकदां त्यांनी पुष्कळ मंडळीसमक्ष कथेंत एका हाताच्या तळहाताने दुसऱ्या हाताचें तळहात दगडलें; तेव्हां कित्येकांनी त्यांस पुसलें: आपण हें काय करितां? त्यांनी सांगितलें की, देहंत तुकोबा त्या मंडपांत या समयी कीर्तन करीत आहेत, त्याला अग्नि लागला आहे तो विझवितों; त्यावरून देहून वर्तमान आणवितों तेथें तसें घडून आल्याचें कळले. इसवी सन १८५७ नांत मी हुजूर डेप्युटी मॅजिस्ट्रेटच्या हुद्यावर असतां

प्रजेकडून हत्यारें घेण्याचें सन १८५७ चें २८ वें अॅक्ट बजावण्याकरितां नगर जिल्ह्यांत पारनेर आणि घोडनदी तालुक्यांत फिरत होतों. तेव्हां श्रीगोंदे म्हणजे ज्याला बहुतकरून लोक चाम्हारगोंदे म्हणतात, त्या गावांत गेलों. तेथें शेख महंमद यांच्या मठांत जाऊन त्यांचे शिष्य सांप्रदायी आहेत त्यांस भेटलो. त्यांनी शेख महंमदानी केलेल्या अभंगाची वही मला वाचावयास दिली; ती मी थोडी वाचली, आणि त्या मुसलमान हरिभक्तांनी रचलेला 'एक योगसंग्राम' या नावांचा ग्रंथ होता तोही त्यांनी मला पाहावयास दिला. तो ग्रंथ ज्ञानेश्वरी एवढा बहुधा मोठा होता. त्या साऱ्या ग्रंथांची प्रत करून घेण्यास मला अवकाश नव्हता म्हणून त्याचे दोन तीन अध्याय वाचले, आणि बाकी चाळून पाहिला. हे शेख महंमद मोठे ज्ञानी पुरुष होते असे त्यांनी असल्या मार्गे ठेविलेल्या कृतीवरून दिसतें. लोकांत सत्यज्ञानाचा प्रकाश व्हावा आणि बाहेरील दांभिकाचार मिटावा म्हणून त्यांचे मोठे धोरण होतें. येथें मी वानगीसाठी त्यांचा एक अभंग लिहितो.

ऐसेकेलेंयागोपाळें । नाहीसोवळेंओवळें ॥१॥
 कांटेकेतकीच्या झाडा । आंतजन्मलाकेवडा ॥२॥
 फणसाअंगेकरडकांटे । आंतसाखरेचेगोटे ॥३॥
 ऊंससर्वअंगीकाळा । आंतअमृतजिन्हाळा ॥४॥
 नारळवरितोकठीण । आंतसाठवेजीवन ॥५॥
 काळीकस्तुरीदिसती । आंतसुगंधसुटती ॥६॥
 मधमाशांचीघोंगाणी । आंतअमृतांचीखाणी ॥७॥
 शेखमहंमदविलासी । हरिभक्तीचारहिवासी ॥८॥

३. या जोशी बाबाच्या कवनांचें कोणा जवळ शुद्ध पाठांतर असल्यास पाहून घ्यावें.
४. मोरोपंतांनी आपल्या सन्मणिमालेंत जसें इतर संतांचें तसें वामनाचें स्तवन केलें आहे. परंतु त्याशिवाय त्यांनीं वामनपंडिताचें आणखी स्वतंत्रही स्तवन केलें आहे. त्यांत ते म्हणतात:—
 अन्यत्रनसेकवनी यावेरससर्वहानियमकांहीं ।
 केलीभाषाकविजे त्यांचीतोंगर्वहानियमकांहीं ॥
५. मयूरोबर्हिणोबर्हिनीलकंठोभुजंगभुक् शिखावलःशिखीकेकी - इ.
६. कादंबिनीमेघमाला - अमर
७. यज्ञःसवोऽध्वरोयागः सप्ततंतुर्मखःऋतुः - अमर.
८. येथें कवीनें संस्कृत भाषेच्या व्याकरणाप्रमाणें **बद्धणें** या क्रियेचा कर्मकर्तारिप्रयोग केला आहे. "सराजा ऋषिणा उक्तः" — म्हणजे ऋषीनें ज्यास सांगितलें — ज्या बरोबर ऋषि बोलला तो राजा, अशा वक्त-प्रत्ययान्त धातुसाधिताचा जसा या बाबतींत कर्मकर्तारिप्रयोग तसाच येथें कवीनें वदली म्हणजे वदलेली असा धातुसाधित विशेषणाचा प्रयोग करून त्याच्या चतुर्थीचें रूप केलें आहे असें मला वाटतें.



II
महदेव मोरेश्वर कुंटे

राजा शिवाजी

PREFACE

I make bold to lay the first three books of my poem on Shivaji before the public. It is undoubted that the public is seldom erroneous in its judgment. It is fair, therefore, to abide by the popular opinion. But it is necessary, that the public may come to a correct conclusion, to acquaint it with all the facts and circumstances connected with what is brought before it. This I will proceed to do in a short sketch.

2. The definition of a poem and the circumstances under which it is applied.

Poetry, in the largest sense given to it, is that which charms the feelings without offending the understanding.¹ It is essential for every poem to conform to this definition, and fulfil all the conditions it embodies. But its success depends upon the taste and feelings of its readers. And the feelings or taste may be refined, pure, hypercritical, or vitiated in the case of a nation as well as of an individual. And a work of art of this description may not, therefore, be properly appreciated. Hence, when a book is condemned, it may be either that the book abounds in defects, or that the opinion of critics determined by their education and prejudices, is at fault. I admit that there may be serious defects in my performance; that it may fail to be interesting; that some of the statements it makes, may be unfounded; that the pretensions it advances may deserve rebuke at the hands of the public; and that the author may be deluded. I am prepared to bear the criticism of the public with patience

and fortitude. But with the consciousness of having done all that I am capable of, on my mind – I might be excused for indulging in a few remarks with regard to the taste of my countrymen.

3. *The Taste of the Marathas*

The inhabitants of Maharashtra, including Brahmans, shudras and others, may be divided into three classes in reference to their taste. (1) – the Shastris and those whom they really guide. This class is large. (2) – the educated, that is those who know English. (3) – the uneducated; especially those who are indifferent to the Shastris or the educated, and who follow what their instinct prompts, and delight in what their nature likes. More of each in the sequel. (1) – Our Shastris have doubtless exercised important influence on the literary taste of our countrymen; nor is their education contemptible. There is in Sanskrit a complete system of formal logic in the sense attached to this expression in Europe. They study this with diligence and care, and their power of framing definitions too accurate to be practical, and too concise to be easily intelligible, is astonishing. They read the Ramayana and the Mahabharata; also the poems of Magha, Kirata and Naishadha. The first and the second can successfully vie with Homer's Iliad and Virgil's Aeneid. The others are works of art in which such literary contrivances as alliteration, *slesha* (expressions admitting of two or three meanings), harmonious versification, elegant and apt metaphors, almost predominating over sense and overpowering the understanding – are plentifully used. There is in these enough of excellent Sanskrit literature to enable our Shastris to be acute critics. But their taste is affected. Instead of waiting to see how one large general sentiment is developed; and how general arguments and remarks are brought to bear on the evolution of a particular

feeling, they expect something artistic in every couplet; and they look for excellence and interest in the elementary subordinate ideas rather than in the combined effect. They also draw a broad line of demarcation between the Puranas and poems. The former are the Ramayana and the Mahabharata which are supposed to be above human imitation, the latter are Kirata, Magha, and others of which I have already spoken. I believe the times are altered now. It is too late to attempt to write a poem on the model of Kirata or Naishadha. As masterpieces of art, they are almost unrivaled; but of an art which is not inspired by nature and which does not imitate it but which is opposed to it. The whole is too dazzling and gorgeous to be natural.

(2) Next to the Shastris in numerical strength but far superior to them in intelligence and in such power as intelligence imparts, come our educated countrymen. Their taste is improved; their understanding is enlarged; their judgment is generally correct and formed after consideration; and their minds are free from prejudices. They are, therefore, properly qualified to be judges. But there are certain circumstances which prevent this. They admire what deserves admiration when they read English; but as soon as they take up a Marathi book they are out of humour. Accustomed to read English, thoroughly sensible of what English poetry is, and competent by their education to enter into the feelings of English authors, they find almost no difficulty in discovering beauties and in interesting themselves. But such is not the case with Marathi; though it be their vernacular. Here they find raw materials, uncouth expressions and a versification to which, perhaps, their ears are not accustomed. A Shastri does not consider a poetical line to be tolerable, till it is considerably stuffed with Sanskrit words; for pure Marathi grates upon his ears. Here there are two facts – the fact that the educated do not find Marathi tolerable, and the fact of the Shastris looking down upon it.

Nothing is common to these two classes except that they do not labour at Marathi and cultivate it; but that they look at it either from a Sanskrit or an English point of view. Hence this want of appreciation arises from the want of cultivation. This is not all. Our educated countrymen are too few for the public services and for the professional careers that are open to them now. They cannot afford time, perhaps, to look into Marathi books. It is true that some have written Marathi poetry. Though these gentlemen belong to a new and an original school, founded on the model of English writers, when they write prose; yet as poets they strictly and ambitiously tread in the footsteps of Moropant or Vaman, degenerate Sanskrit-Marathi poets, towards imitating whom all their attempts have been directed.

They are not to blame. Perhaps, they cannot help this. Their *padas* and *sakis* which are well adapted to the lyrical style of poetry are, however, genuine Marathi pieces to a very great extent. But it is when they write *Shlokas* or *Aryas*, metres, I humbly believe, well adapted to the heroic or any similar style of poetry, that their style is crippled; and that Sanskrit words are indiscriminately introduced. The original forms of words are altered and contorted. Lines after lines are so arranged that the meaning is not intelligible even though they be often read over carefully. The writers of such verses have brought into vogue the system of explaining the difficult words used by themselves in foot-notes.² I am not against Sanskrit words because they are Sanskrit words. But a Marathi author is warranted to use Sanskrit words only when there are no Marathi words to express the same sense. On examining the foot-notes of most of the Marathi translations of Sanskrit dramas, it will appear that Sanskrit words are used where appropriate Marathi words can be had. I do not find fault with them, for they are pioneers. As first fruits of a rich harvest yet to be reaped, they deserve attention. Besides, however awkward his gait may be,

however slow his motion, one who walks, is certainly to be preferred to him who sits still, and magniloquently advises others to achieve what he himself cannot.

(3) The uneducated including farmers, labourers, and artisans, are out of the question. Yet the uneducated in Maharashtra are not a herd that can be easily led. Because they have resisted the influence of the Mahomedan civilization and of the Sanskrit civilization and because they have retained amidst political revolutions and religious transitions, their peculiar feelings and taste, they deserve to be considered here. Marked by the peculiarity of using brute force, and the exclusive and systematic devotion to one God, and backed by imperial authority from Delhi, the Mahomedan civilization about the end of the 14th century, began to domineer. In the Punjab, it at once conquered the old Hindu civilization. The system of Sikhism as expounded in the two *Granthas*, is a thorough reflection³ of Mahomedanism. The *Guru* is a substitute for the Prophet; the *Grantha* supplies the place of the Koran. The Thikana or Akalbhunga exactly corresponds with the Mosque. Nor does the Sikh differ much from the Mahomedan. The feeling of reverence for the "sacred cow" and the "inspired Vedas" are totally extinct. So also in the Central Provinces and in the Gangetic plain, the Mahomedan civilization succeeded in subverting the old Hindu civilization. Bengal adopted the Zenana system. The writings of Kabira equally condemn or commend Mahomedanism and Hinduism. Equally long and close as the contact of the Marathas with the Mahomedans was, they escaped⁴ the influence of Mohmedanism. This is a very important circumstance. The lower Maratha is pious in his own way, worldly in his own way, and diligent in his own way. Though he thus appears to be stubborn and conservative, yet he is liable to be moulded by proper influences. Master of that sarcasm which springs from feelings of pious indignation, Tukarama inculcated upon him the

doctrine of "justification by faith and the necessity of the purity of heart for securing salvation."⁵ Gradually the whole lower Maratha population has learnt to follow his tenets. This shows what the susceptibilities of the Marathas are.

4. The school of Science and the school of Literature

Those who cultivate science are imagined to be opposed to those who cultivate literature. It cannot be said that really scientific men are so disposed. But a contest carried on by the advocates of the Classical languages, gives grounds for belief, that the ends of science are different from those of literature. But nothing can be a graver mistake. Civilization, if defined from a utilitarian point of view, would be that state of society which secures for it the maximum of comfort with the minimum of the waste of means. In other words, civilization lessens human sufferings, alleviates human pain, and actually increases the stock of human happiness. But human comfort is an expression which includes a great deal. It means the comfort of the whole man with his animal propensities, his desires, his appetites, his affections, his intellect and his imagination, his natural philosophizing tendencies, his feelings, and his religious aspirations. Science employs the understanding and the reasoning faculties of man, and increases his dominion over nature. It perhaps, enlarges the ideas of man with regard to the earth and skies and through this, acts on his feelings. But this is a limited field. Hence, all that science does is to operate on a small portion of human nature and to benefit it. Classics and literature soothe his feelings, humanize them, elevate the understanding, and purify them all. Both science and literature, therefore, are important agents in conducting to the comforts of man. And the development and growth of both together constitutes civilization. Hence in the state in which we are, an original school of poets is as important as a

school of physicists. As mathematicians, as chemists, and as physicians, we are behind England; but because it is so, there is no reason why we should be daunted. That time may be at hand when we may overtake England. The same holds true of poetry. It is necessary that schools of poetry and sciences should be formed. To talk of all that Buckle writes, and of all that Mr. Mill aspires after, would not do for us.⁶

5. *The great Gulf*

At best the school of scientific men cannot but be esoteric. The scientific men and philosophers in a country cannot but be few. Their influence, unless spread abroad, will be confined to themselves; for, their books cannot be read by the uneducated, for, an ordinary man engaged in the affairs of the world, cannot spare time, and does not possess abilities, for conducting a scientific investigation. Thus in a country where popular literature, easy, energetic and full of thoughts, which deals with the intellectual, moral and animal aspirations of man, does not exist, the lower classes are separated from the upper by a great gulf. Vedantism is a system, learnt and followed in closets, because it wants a popular literature. So long as such a gulf exists, so long as the whole nation is not animated by the same feelings and filled with the same aspirations, social, religious, and political degradation must be the consequence. When Shivaji flourished, the feelings of common sympathy were developed and the national chord of the Marathas was touched. Tukaram, the great representative of the common people, flourished. Hence, apart from importing western science and art, the creation of a school of poets, who can popularize high thoughts and entertain popular feelings,⁷ and encourage the growth of that sympathy, which elevates the lower classes, and humanizes the upper and the richer ones, is essential. This, I humbly believe, is the only way in which the great gulf can be bridged over.

6. *Negative Criticism*

Negative Criticism is indefinite and endless, but transiently injurious to authors. Negative criticism requires to be distinguished from positive criticism. The former arises from ignorance and vanity; the latter, from knowledge and large-mindedness. The one raves and seeks demolition, and the other sticks to the point and encourages construction. The fist can be managed by any body. The last a real critic alone can do.

7. *An epic what?*

Some time ago, I wrote a short poem. It was shown to a body of critics. Its nature was not understood. A metaphysical satire was mistaken for a dramatic poem. Hence, a great deal of criticism, wide of the mark, was passed. To prevent the recurrence of this, I find I must needs enter into detail and show the class to which this poem belongs. It is an epic which differs from a drama, whether a tragedy or a comedy or a mixture of both, a lyric, a descriptive rambling poem which has nothing special about it, or a pastoral. A drama seeks to evolve one particular sentiment. It may be merriment; and it is a comedy. It may be sorrow; and it is a tragedy. Sometimes a tragedy, it is true,⁸ is defined to be the situation of a hero in those artificial circumstances to which he succumbs. On the contrary; a comedy is said to consist in the development of the circumstances over which a hero triumphs. Again a drama is founded on a part or the whole life of an individual. A lyric refers to a particular action. The rest speaks for itself. Now, the most important elements in an epic are:— it applies to the origin,⁹ growth, and end of a whole nation, and includes the development of all sentiments, from the affectionate which is seen in the inner recesses of a home to the marvelous which is unlocalized and indefinite. Its descriptions range over all natural scenes.

In short, it is an embodiment, of all that a nation is. Sometimes the heroic predominates and sometimes all actions described seem to refer to a particular hero, and to revolve around him. But this is just a delusion. In such a case, the heroic or the hero is co-extensive with a nationality and as such includes every thing. It is plain that, if a poem of this description were tried by the rules of a drama, it would fail to be satisfactory. But this would be absurd and preposterous. It would be enforcing the Penal Code in a civil court. How far I have succeeded in developing this epic, is a question which the public is in a position to answer. I intend this, however, to be an epic.

8. The ambition of the author

The ambition of the author is to paint the feelings as they were evolved at the time of Shivaji. Oppressed by the Mahomedans, the Marathas had gone mad. Their temples were demolished. Some of them were forcibly circumcised, their religious feelings were outraged in the Durbar Hall and on public streets. Their leaders were merciless imprisoned or killed. From these circumstances, the feeling of opposition to the Mahomedans had become so strong among them that they were almost instinctively impelled to consider the Mahomedan as a pious Christian considers Satan. But Satan is invisible. His mischiefs are done clandestinely. The Mahomedan could be seen, devising new plans for enslaving the Marathas, looking down upon him with supercilious contempt, often annoying him into abject submission, and as often endeavouring to destroy his nation. Enraged, the whole Maratha¹⁰ population flew to arms spontaneously and simultaneously. They proposed to themselves no political ends; they never thought of establishing a kingdom. Their ambition did not extend beyond wreaking vengeance on their oppressors. Angry with their national gods, who they inferred, had forsaken them,

and disposed from despair almost to think out the philosophy of Tukaram, they considered it their duty, their religion and their existence to expel the Mahomedans from their country. Thus two causes operated:— the religious and political distresses of Maharashtra. But the religion of the Maratha consisted in ennobling feelings of piety and resignation:— a piety which awakened in him feelings of indignation at the sacrileges of the Muslims, and was active in rendering him sensible to his personal and national sufferings; and a resignation which did not make him a Vedantist, a fatalist; but which had all the dignity and sensitiveness which faith in the power of God and hopes beyond the grave impart. This might appear to some a gross exaggeration. But a careful study of the times under consideration amply warrants the language I have used. The history of Shivaji cannot be studied from Elphinstone's History or Murray's British India. It requires to be studied from Ramdasa's writings and Tukaram's utterances. The deeds of Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha Empire, and an embodiment of the genuine Maratha feelings such as had grown up at the time, require to be considered, along with the feelings of his preceptor and of Tukaram, which have since become the religion of the lower Maratha population. The piety of the Maratha, his wordliness, his politics, were generally influenced by his opposition to the Mahomedans, a sentiment which predominated, and which is a key to the historical analysis of the times. I have, therefore, given it such importance in this poem as I have thought necessary. It may be urged with plausibility that a book written under circumstances, such as my poem is, necessarily tends to produce the feelings of enmity between the Mahomedans and Hindus, who form two important sections of the community in Maharashtra, and that this mischievous end is by no means desirable. But such an objection is raised by those who do not understand what human nature is and

how it works. Because Macaulay justifies Cromwell, regicides should be produced in England. Because a history of the Reformation which condemns the Papists, is read in a school, therefore the Protestant boys should rise against their Roman Catholic school-fellows.¹¹ This reasoning is contradicted by facts and the “logic of facts” deserves preference. Feelings of enmity always spring from actions of enmity. If the latter be wanting, the former do not exist. The Mahomedans and Hindus are friendly, because time has taught them to tolerate each other. Let this equilibrium be destroyed and the two, in spite of books advising them to be kind and friendly, and in spite of all inducements, political and social, and in spite of imperial patronage, will soon learn to hate each other.

9. *Style*

The existence of two sorts of style is recognized:— Romantic and Classical. Perhaps, this division has a foundation in nature. Art, when it imitates nature, i.e., is not opposed to it, is true art. But when it seeks to produce a certain effect by intensifying and by exceeding nature, it should cease to be called art. The style derived from this description of art is what I mean by an artificial style, which corresponds with what is called the Classical style. The style which keeps close to nature is natural or Romantic. This division can be distinctly seen in Sanskrit as well as Marathi writings. The Ramayana and Mahabharata, epics of old, and the writing of Kalidas – these belong to the first class. So also the *Abhangas* of Tukarama and the writings of Ramdas. But most of the *Panch Kavyas* and the *Champus* in Sanskrit and the *Aryas* of Moropant belong to the second. I must needs attach great importance to this two-fold division, for the Classical style prevails to the exclusion of every thing else in Maharashtra as far as poetical compositions are concerned. The taste of our people, as I have already observed, is entirely regulated

by our Shastris, and our Shastris condemn whatever does not implicitly follow their *Champus* and *Kavyas*. The taste of our educated countrymen is difficult to be judged of. They live in the atmosphere of Mill, Hallam, and Shakespeare, the highest literary and scientific men of England whose spirit is, perhaps, superinduced upon them. They are, therefore, very great critics. But if one were to judge from the few translations which are attempted by Poona scholars, in spite of himself, he would have to recognize that the Classical style is preferred. So when one writes a poem in natural Marathi – such Marathi as is spoken in our towns and villages – the prose Marathi – the Marathi of the populous Vulgus, he should be prepared to meet opposition and condemnation; for the notion still prevails that because a poetical line composed exclusively of pure Marathi words is extremely unmusical; therefore, poetry should not be written in pure Marathi; but as many Sanskrit words should be introduced as a line can bear. The premises are based on a fact. But they do not warrant the conclusion that is drawn from them. It is not pure Marathi words are at fault but the system of quantification now in force is irregular and unnatural. Marathi words are not written as they are pronounced. For instance no body pronounces उचलून as consisting of four full syllables, but च् is only a consonant and is amalgamated with G, which therefore, becomes long by position. So long as this difference between Marathi written and Marathi spoken is not removed, or at least recognized; so long as some innovation founded on the knowledge of this difference is not introduced; the cause of metrical Marathi composition should suffer. Aware of this, I fearlessly adopted the method of writing words as they are spoken, in my poem. So the reader will find खाल्चा instead of खालचा which is really unmusical. For this alteration, I know, I might be taken to task; but I derived some consolation when, some time ago, I saw that the same question was mooted in one of

the numbers of the “Vividha Dnyana Vistara” and the subject of Marathi quantification was discussed; I then thought that some educated gentlemen would thus be on my side. Again if pure Marathi words were largely introduced into poetical compositions writers would be exposed to the opposite danger of using vulgarisms. This is, to a certain extent, reasonable and vulgarisms should be avoided by all means. I have not put here a mere supposition. An educated critic actually favoured me with a list of what he considered to be vulgarisms. It tried by his standard, the greater portion of the Marathi language would have to be proscribed. But certainly a word, as such, cannot be vulgar or otherwise. It is the sense of a word that requires to be considered. A vulgarism, therefore, may be defined to be a word or an expression which conveys heinous, obscene and nauseating sense. I assure the reader that I have always taken great care to avoid such vulgarisms. If this definition were not recognized, the charge of using vulgarisms could be brought against almost every writer. I ought to be prepared, therefore, to submit to what is the lot of almost all.

10. The fable, the plot, or the story

The fable, the plot, or the story is the first things of importance in a poem; for the essence of true poetry is invention, and also an arrangement, originating in it and resulting in enabling the mind to rise above itself. A poet is not a historiographer; his business is not to give a narrative; what he sees in nature – whether such things as are discovered in human feelings, and aspirations, that is, the inner nature, the world of the mind, or such things as can be observed by the eyes, that is the external nature, the world of mountains, rivers and the stars and the firmament, a poet seeks to combine, and by means of this, to produce new pictures. Hence, the development of the story deserves

consideration. But those critics who are ignorant of this art, quarrel with such things as are decidedly of minor importance. For instance, I have been asked why I have not commenced my poem with the early life of Shivaji, and why I should open it with the description of the Panhalla Fortress. The reason is plain. I believe, that the one would have made my poem a Povada and the other might make it an epic. Of course, this circumstance is nothing in itself, but if what follows in the poem be in keeping with the beginning, the result would be what I have indicated. I have sketched out a complete epic in twelve parts. This book gives three parts only. Hence, all that the reader will find in this book, will be the epic commenced. In the first part the nationality of the Marathas with some of their characteristics is given; and Shivaji is introduced. In the second part, a portion of the private life of Shivaji is described and the way in which the Marathas carried on their politics is hinted at. And in the third part the Marathas surprise the Bijapore Mahomedans at the bottom of Panhalla. For all this, the history of Shivaji is not the basis; but circumstances founded on the national manners are carefully put together. A great deal of the way in which the Marathas planned and acted is still preserved in ballad songs, in traditions, in domestic stories, and in the stories which our *Gadkaris* so fondly relate. This will give something of the external worldly life of the Marathas. The writings of Ramdas and Tukaram will throw considerable light on the inner moral life. These are the materials which I mean to work up. I present the first three parts to the Public, for I want really to know, how far I have succeeded. Some would find fault with certain descriptions of particular actions of Shivaji. I will give an instance. It is generally believed that Shivaji treacherously murdered Afzul khan. The particulars are given, I suspect, as they are found in Mahomedan history. Guided by this evidence and influenced by a particular education, the tribunal of educated public

opinion has pronounced the verdict of guilty against Shivaji. But with this I am not concerned. What are the national feelings of the Marathas on the subject is the question I want to answer. I have got a manuscript copy of a Sanskrit poem written about the time of the Bajirao (as appears to be the case from internal evidence), and therefore by a Brahmin of the old orthodox school. He dwells on the death of Afzul Khan at length, gives particulars and expresses his personal feelings. This conclusively answers the question I have already proposed to myself. And on this I have built.

Conclusion

I beg of the public to treat me with strictness and to pass a just verdict after weighing the evidence I have adduced.

MAHADEO M. KUNTE

PREFACE

My poems are extensively read, for a large number of copies are sold. My poetry belongs to a particular class, and has its peculiar merits and defects. I am conscious of what I am about. I have received encouragement from all places in Maharashtra, and there are representatives of the school of poetry I belong to in Kolapoor, Karad, Satara, Poona, Bombay and Dhulia. Encouraged by the common people who instinctively admire the true, the just, and the beautiful without any learning, and by some of the rising generation, whose taste is really influenced by western culture, I have published the second volume of my epic on Shivaji. One half of the epic, impartial readers! is now before you. I have my opponents. To them I have only to say, "wait, think, compare, and then weigh evidence. Kindly do not be hasty. An author does not seek to please you only. He seeks to paint an ideal, true, beautiful, and just at all times and in all places. Hence a poet is judged by the present generation as well as by posterity."

In publishing this volume Mr. Vishnu Daji Gadre has rendered me much aid, for which I am specially indebted to him.

MAHADEO M. KUNTE

Kolapoor
May 1871

NOTES

1. This definition appears to some to be vague. But it is, I believe, a correct definition of poetry or the poetic.
2. Some Sanskrit authors have written commentaries on their own productions. This strange practice has been, it appears, revived. But it does not bid fair to be successful as the common people, even with the aid of the foot-notes, fail to understand a poem.
3. The Sikhs fought with the Moslems. They originated in opposition to them; yet they imitated the Mahomedans. These two assertions appear to be contradictory. But an examination of their system discovers many points of resemblance and leads to the assertion I have made. The

Grantha of Nanakshah is full of metaphysics and Vedantical disquisitions. That of Govind Singh is practical and contains the germs of the system as it afterwards grew up. The Atmaprakash is philosophical but the Tanakhanama is full of injunctions based on opposition to the Moslems. Thus there are two sects – the Sikhs of Nanak and the Singhs of Guru Govind.

4. The lower Maratha, it is true, revels and is frantic and wild during the Mohorum holidays. But he has thus adopted the form and not the spirit of a Moslem holiday. He possesses a superabundant physical energy, but as it is not applied, he lets it out in ways unreasonably wild but natural enough.
5. Vide. भावें गावें गीत शुद्ध करोनिया चित्त, जरी तुज द्वावा देव तरी हाच सुलभ उपाव.
6. Vide “Native Opinion” of the 28th September 1868. It is all for science and art, and against poetry. Vide also in “The Bombay Educational Record” for October, Sir A. Grant's speech in which he alludes to the discussion between the school of science and the school of poetry.
7. This expression has occurred to me in the writings of Dr Johnson.
8. These definitions, I remember to have read in some Review or Magazine.
9. Aristotle's definition – “that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end.”
10. This might appear to some too strong. But it is borne out by facts in the life of Shahaji, the father of Shivaji, and by the conduct of the Bijapoor Government, towards the old Maratha houses. The Bijapoor Government was not so liberal in its policy as the Imperial Government of Delhi.
11. Protestants, Eurasians, Indo-Britons, and Potuguese Roman Catholics often belong to the same class, and are friends in many of the schools in Bombay.

III

काशिनाथ बाळकृष्ण मराठे

नावल व नाटक यांविषयी निबंध

PREFACE

Numberless writers of stories are at present pushing forward for the fame of authors, and trying to make up one department of Marathi Literature: Novels and Dramas, or *light literature* as they are popularly called. I believe all educated people will agree with me in saying that not even one in a hundred of these writers is acquainted with the principles and rules which guide the pen of a European Novelist or Dramatist in his pictures of real *life*. There is none yet who promises to aspire to the fame of the great Scott or Shakespeare of Great Britain, or the great Kalidasa of India. I regret the absence of any such, not because it is impossible to have such men in India, but because our educated young men do not make an earnest effort to write good novels and dramas. I have every hope that India, after receiving more light from the West, will produce many Scotts and Shakespeares. This land of the immortal Kalidas can bring forth any number of Novelists or Dramatists, provided the circumstances are favourable. At the present day the circumstances are not perfectly favourable although the British Government has given us the most peaceful and quiet time, and the public is gradually learning to appreciate superior literature. One great impediment to the cultivation of literature is the excessive passion for Government service. There are men, even now, who have enough of wit and learning to make them respectable authors. A man like Mr. Vinayak Janardan Kirtane, the author of the drama of "Madhavrao" who has abundant wit and information, should try to labour as a Novelist or Dramatist. But no: the all

engrossing fondness for Government service will not leave our Marathas free for the pure and sublime purposes of extending the literature of their vernacular, and of conferring a blessing on their own people. The existing stock of Novels and Dramas will do no good to the reading public. Some of them are on the contrary very mischievous. How they are mischievous, and what important defects the best of them have, I have shown in the following essay. Some of the fundamental principles of Novel-writing inculcated by me I have borrowed from the essays of Adison, Scott and Macaulay; and some others have been taken from the science of Alankara (good composition) in Sanskrit. All friends of reform are therefore requested to peruse my humble remarks in the following essay and to devote their best energies towards giving pure specimens of Marathi Novels and Dramas so as to reform and displace the various imperfect and unrefined compositions that the Printing Presses of the Maratha country turn out every day, by means of their own superior works.

K.B.M.

1 August 1872
Bombay

प्रस्तावना

पुढील निबंध फेब्रुआरी महिन्यांत ज्ञानप्रसारक सभेपुढे वाचला. त्या विद्वत्समाजाने हा निबंध लिहिण्यास उत्तेजन दिले, व निबंधाचा स्वीकार केला ह्याबद्दल त्यांचे आभार मानले पाहिजेत. हा निबंध छापविण्याचे कारण इतकेच आहे की कैलासवासी रा. ब. विष्णु परशुराम रानडे ह्यांनी एकवार असा अभिप्राय दर्शविला होता की प्रस्तुत^१ नावलें लिहिणारें व नाटकें लिहिणारें फार झालें आहेत; त्यांपैकी पुष्कळांस नावल अथवा नाटक असावे कसें, हें देखील माहित नसतें, त्यामुळे ते हव्या त्या प्रकारची भाषा लिहितात, हव्या तशा कल्पना पुस्तकांतून घालतात, व हवा तितका सत्याचा अपलाप करितात. असें होऊं नये म्हणून कोणी तरी चांगल्या विद्वानांनै नावल व नाटक ह्यांच्या स्वरूपाविषयीं निबंध लिहावा, व तो छापून प्रसिद्ध करावा. रा. ब. विष्णुपंतांनी हा अभिप्राय दोन तीन चांगल्या विद्वानांस कळवला, परंतु कोणाच्याही हातून ती गोष्ट झाली नाही; म्हणून पुढील अल्पविद्वानाचा निबंध छापण्यांत आला. त्यांत न्यूनता पुष्कळ असतील, परंतु कांहीं माहिती इंग्रजी निबंधांतून व संस्कृत ग्रंथांतून घेतली आहे ती ह्यापुढे नावल करणाऱ्यांस अथवा नाटक लिहिणाऱ्यांस उपयोगी पडेल अशी निबंधकर्त्याची आशा आहे.

१ 'नावल' ह्या शब्दाचे कादंबरी अथवा दुसऱ्या कोणत्याहि शब्दाने बरोबर भाषांतर होत नाही म्हणून नावल हाच शब्द ठेविला आहे.

नावल म्हणजे काय ?

नावल म्हणजे चमत्कारीक गोष्ट. ज्यांत आश्चर्य कारक गोष्टी फार, व जो वाचला असतां अवलपासून आखेरपर्यंत वाचणारांस जागोजाग नवल वाटावे, अश्या प्रकारचा जो ग्रंथ, त्यास इंग्रजीत 'नावल' अशी संज्ञा आहे. नावल म्हणजे नवलसमूह अश्या अर्थसाम्यावरून मराठीतही सदरू ग्रंथांचें तेंच नांव राखलें असतां चिंता नाही. संस्कृतामध्ये अश्या प्रकारचे ग्रंथ विरळा. सुबंधु नामक कवीची वासवदत्ता, दंडीचें दशकुमार चरित्र, बाण कवीची कादंबरी अशीं काहीं नावलें संस्कृत भाषेमध्ये आहेत. परंतु नावले गद्यात्मक असावीं, असा नियम केला नाही तर, संस्कृतांत अनेक नावलें सांपडतील. किंबहुना शास्त्रविषयक ग्रंथ वगळले तर सर्वच संस्कृत ग्रंथांस नावल म्हणण्यास काय चिंता आहे? चार वेद, अष्टादश पुराणें व एकंदर काव्यें हीं काय नावलें नव्हेत? नाटक हे एक नावलाचेंच अन्य स्वरूप आहे. त्याचा विचार निबंधाच्या दुसऱ्या प्रकरणांत करूं.

आदि काव्य जे वाल्मिकी-रामायण त्यास आपण काय नांव द्यावें? तें नावल नव्हे काय? रामचंद्रासारख्या शूर पुरुषांचें चरित्र एकवट करून वाल्मिकीनें किती सुरस आख्यायिका रचली आहे! एखादा रसिक पुराणिक रामायण-कथा सांगत असला म्हणजे कशी हजारों मंडळी झुलत राहते! हें काय त्या कथेचें माहात्म्य, कीं कवीची शक्ति? विद्वज्जन हो, असें म्हणण्यास कांहीं एक हरकत नाही कीं रामकथेंतील माधुर्य वाल्मिकीच्या मुखांतले. तसेंच महाभारत तें काय सामान्य नावल आहे? नवलांचा केवळ समुद्र! तशींच अठरापुराणे व श्रीमद्भागवत हीं एका पेक्षां एक सुरस व मनोरंजक नावलें आहेत.

महाभारत, भागवत, रामायण, व इतर पुराणें ह्यांमध्ये मनोरंजकपणाचें बीज एवढेंच आहे कीं त्यामध्ये अद्भुतांचा भरणा फार. प्राचीन काळीं थोर पुरुषांची चरित्रें लोक एकमेकाला गाऊन दाखवीत असत. जसें हल्लीं गोंधळी पवाडे म्हणून मन रिझवतात, तसें पूर्वी भाट, बंदी, बारोठ गांवोगांवीं वीरांची चरित्रें गात फिरत, व त्याजवर चरितार्थ चालवीत. अद्यापि गुजराथेंत बारोठ आहेत त्यापाशीं अनेक मोठमोठ्या लोकांच्या वंशांची माहिती मिळते. ह्या वंशचरित्रांवर आपला निर्वाह, तेव्हां त्यांच्या योगानें लोकांचे मन रिझेल असें त्यांस स्वरूप देणें भाग पडे. अर्थात्, अलौकिक गोष्टींचा व अद्भुतांचा थोडाथोडा प्रवेश झाला असेल. अशीं अद्भुतांनी मिश्रित झालेली चरित्रें व्यासासारख्या महाकवींच्या हातीं लागल्यावर अतिशयोक्ति आदिकरून तिखट मीठ लागून हल्लीं पुराणांत वर्णिलीं आहेत त्या स्वरूपाला आली, ह्यांत आश्चर्य कोणचें? रामायण देखील वाल्मिकीने रचिलें, त्यावेळी शंभर कोटी बत्तीस अक्षरी श्लोक होतील इतका ग्रंथ होता. तो त्यानें रामाचे मुलगे कुश लव ह्यांकडून गावविला. ह्या गोष्टींमध्ये काळाची वा सत्याची किती गडबड असेल ती असो. परंतु इतकें खरें असण्याचा

संभव आहे कीं रामाविषयी असंख्य गोष्टी प्रसिद्ध होत्या, त्या वाल्मीकि ऋषीने एकत्र करून त्यांस सर्व अलंकारांनी युक्त असें कवितारूप दिले व त्यापुढे पुष्कळ लोक गाऊन दाखविण्याकरितां पाठ करीत असत. अश्या प्रकारे अनेक कथा आरंभी सामान्य असतां कांहींच्या बाहींच झाल्या आहेत. एक लहानश्या पराचा कावळा किंबहुना कावळे होतात ही जगप्रसिद्ध म्हण आहे.

परंतु असे रूपांतर झाल्याकारणानेच त्या ग्रंथास थोरवी आहे. वर सांगितल्याप्रमाणे त्यांत अद्भुतांचे मिश्रण नसतें, तर तीं इतकीं लोकप्रिय झाली असतीं काय ? आज सहस्रावधि वर्षे लाखो बायका, मुलें व वृद्ध मनुष्ये ह्यांचें मनोरंजन झालें, व आनंदानें कालक्रमणा झालीं असें काम सामान्य चरित्रांपासून झालें असतें काय ? वानराचें शेंपूट व चापल्य, आणि मनुष्यांची अक्कल, व स्वामिभक्ति, व एक सहस्र हत्तींचें बळ हीं एकत्र करून मारुती उभा केला. त्यामुळे अनेक अद्भुत संकटें उपस्थित करून दूर करितां आली. एका अस्त्राचे अंगीं हजार माणसें मारण्याची शक्ति कल्पून एका शिपायाबद्दल १००० मनुष्यांचा मोबदला केला असतां काय चिंता आहे ? वर्षाऋतूचे आरंभीं आकाशाकडे पहात बसलें असतां काय थोडीं गंधर्वनगरें दृष्टीस पडतात ? मनुष्यमात्रास कल्पनाशक्ति दिली आहे, तिला रिझवणें आसल्यास लोकोत्तर कल्पनाच केल्या पाहिजेत.

तथापि तत्त्वदृष्टे आहेत ते असल्या कल्पनांना भुलत नाहीत. ते असल्या सालंकार वर्णनांतून सार घेऊन बाकीच्या कविकलोत्पन्न भागावर विश्वास ठेवीत नाहीत. पण त्या काल्पनिक भागाचा उपयोग विलक्षण आहे. मोठमोठे सूर्यवंश व चंद्रवंश ह्यांतील राजांच्या कथा आजपावेतों आबालवृद्धांच्या मनामध्ये जागृत आहेत. कर्णाच्या दातृत्वाच्या गोष्टी ऐकून अनेक पुरुषांच्या अंतःकरणांत औदार्य उत्पन्न होतें; तसेच शिबि राजाचें चरित्र ऐकून कित्येकांच्या मनात सहिष्णुता प्राप्त झाली असेल; युधिष्ठिर अथवा धर्मराजाच्या किंवा नळराजाच्या सत्यपणामुळें व सहनशीलपणानें असंख्य लोकांस संकटसमयीं धैर्य येतें तसेच ह्या नवलमिश्रित वर्णनांनीं आज पावेतों,

मान्धाताच भगीरथश्च सगरो मान्यःककुस्थो रघुः

पूरुः सोपि पुरुरवाःसचशिबिःपुण्यश्चरुक्मांगदः।

वैदेहो नहुषश्च हैह्यपतिर्वीरो ययातिर्नलः

पार्थश्चेतिनृपाःप्रशस्तयशसःप्रादुर्बभूवर्नकिम्।।

मान्धाताप्रभृति मोठे पराक्रमी राजे प्रसिद्ध झाले नाहीत काय ? ह्या राजांची चरित्रे इतकीं मनोवेधक झालीं आहेत हा कवींचा उपकार नव्हे काय ?

कालीदास, माघ, भारवि, श्रीहर्ष आदीकरून कवींच्या काव्यामध्ये ही नवल-समूह फार, व कल्पना गौरव फार, म्हणूनच तीं काव्ये वाचण्या विषयी आपण इतके झंटतो. इतिहासरूपाने रघुवंशातील राजांची एक नुसती याद, व प्रत्येकाने काय काय केलें ह्याचें एक टाचण कालिदासादि कवी शिवाय दुसऱ्या मनुष्यानें एकाद्या चोपडींत लिहून ठेविलें असतें तर रघुवंशातले राजे इतके उदयास येते काय ? दिलीपराजा, रघुराजा, अजराजा ह्यांचीं नावे तरी आपल्यास ठाऊक असतीं काय ? असो, महावीरांची व सत्पुरुषांची आठवण राहण्यास असलीं अद्भुत मिश्रित चरित्रे फार चांगली साधनें आहेत. ज्या देशांत असले इतिहास व असली चरित्रे नाहीत, तो देश एक प्रकारच्या सुखास आंचवला असें म्हणण्यास चिंता नाही.

कोरडी नीति शिकवली असतां कोणाच्या मनांस ठसत नाहीं. इतिहासांतली उदाहरणे सांगितलीं म्हणजे पक्की ठसते. म्हणून इतिहास हा उदाहरणांसहित नीतिग्रंथच आहे. परंतु पुण्यश्लोकांची जशी याद आहे —

पुण्यश्लोको नलोराजा, पुण्यश्लोको युधिष्ठिरः

पुण्यश्लोकाचवैदेही, पुण्यश्लोको जनार्दनः ॥

अशी जो जो सद्गुण ज्या ज्या पुरुषामध्ये फार त्यांची त्यांची त्या गुणाच्या संबंधाने एक माळिका करून ठेविल्यापासून सामान्यजनांना काय फायदा आहे ? उदाहरणार्थ, दानशूरत्वाविषयी हरिश्चंद्रराजा व श्रियाळराजा ह्यांची मोठी ख्याति होती; परंतु ज्या रीतीने त्यांची चरित्रे सांगतात, तशीं कवींनीं बनवून ठेविलीं नसतीं, तर त्यांच्या धैर्याचा व औदार्याचा बळकट ठसा आपल्या अंतःकरणावर कसा उठला असता ? ह्या कथा वाचिल्या, ऐकिल्या अथवा नाटकरूपाने रंग-भूमीवर पाहिल्या म्हणजे सहृदयाने अंतःकरण आर्द्र होतेंच. एवढेंच नाही, कधीं कधीं नेत्रांतून अश्रुधारा चालतात. असो. असें अनेक प्रकारे ऐतिहासिक पुरुषांच्या चरित्रांच्या उदाहरणांनी आपले मनोभाव पालटतात. ऐतिहासिक पुरुषांचा 'इति-ह-आस' (असा, असाच झाला) अश्या सत्य रूपाने वृत्तांत लिहिला तर उदाहरणोपयोगी होईल खरा, परंतु असा इतिहास वाचण्यास फार थोडे लोक प्रवृत्त होतील. इतिहासाचें वाचन म्हटलें म्हणजे मरूप्रदेशांतील प्रवासासारखें आहे. अमुक पुरुष अमुक ठिकाणीं अमुक वेळेस जन्मला; तो आपल्या आई बापाचा फार लाडका असे; तो लहानपणीं फार खोडकर असें; अंमळ मोठा झाल्यावर आपल्या गांवच्या जातभाईनां घेऊन त्या देशच्या राजाला त्यानें मारलें, व त्याच्या राज्यावर बसला; त्याला पुष्कळ बायका होत्या; पुष्कळ मुलें झाली; अमुक देशचे राजे त्याचे मित्र होते; त्यांस त्यानें मदत करून त्या करवी त्यांचे शत्रु जिंकविले; दोन लढाया जिंकल्या, तीन लढाया हरला व अमुक स्थळीं अमुक कारणाने अमुक वर्षी मेला. अशीं इतिहासरूपाने चरित्रे लिहिलीं असतां तत्त्वबुभुत्सू वाचणारे फार थोडे निघतील. हल्लींच्या

काळीं सुधारलेल्या देशांत सत्यशोधक विशेष झाले आहेत; म्हणून सत्य इतिहासाची अभिरुचि पुष्कळ लोकांस उत्पन्न झाली आहे. परंतु असत्य अगदीं अप्रिय, असेंही अद्याप झालें नाहीं. आणि अज्ञान लोकांना ते कधींही अप्रिय होणार नाहीं. खऱ्या गोष्टी एकीकडे ठेवून, ज्यापासून मनोरंजन होतें त्या गोष्टी खोट्या, कल्पित, असें जरी पहिल्या पानावर सांगितलें असलें तरी, त्या पसंद पडतात व लोकप्रिय होतात. मराठ्यांच्या बखरीला गिऱ्हाईक मिळत नाहीं, पण *मुक्तामाला*, *मंजुघोषा*, ह्यांच्या निघाल्या दिवसापासून दोन दोन आवृत्ती झाल्या. इतिहासांत वर्णिलेल्या पुरुषांचे वृत्त लिहिणें झाल्यास त्यांत देखील कांहीं कल्पित चमत्कार मिश्र केले असतां तें वृत्त पुष्कळ लोकांस मनोरंजक होतें. पक्की खात्री आहे कीं, शिवाजीसारख्या पुरुषाचें चरित्र, त्यांत कांहीं अलौकिक गोष्टी मिसळल्या असतां फार लोकप्रिय होईल. शिवाजीची सात वेळ भवानीची गाठ पडली; तिनें त्याला एक दिव्य खड्ग दिलें; व अनेक प्रसंगीं त्यास देवीनें महासंकटांतून मुक्त केलें, अशा प्रकारच्या अनेक अद्भुत गोष्टी लोकांनीं शिवाजीच्या चरित्रांत अगोदरच मिश्र केल्या आहेत. त्यांवर एखाद्या कवीची बनावणी झाली म्हणजे आमच्या शिवाजी राजांना महाभारतासारख्या ग्रंथात जागा मिळण्यास काय हरकत आहे?

हरकत नसावीच असें आम्ही म्हणतो. वर सांगितल्याप्रमाणें वीर व शौर पुरुषांच्या चरित्रांपासून वाचणारांस व ऐकणारांस मोठा फायदा होत आहे, तर तीं लोक प्रीतीनें वाचतील असें त्यांस स्वरूप देण्यास काय चिंता आहे? परंतु सत्याच्या बळकट पायावर इमारत रचली तर ती कांहीं दिवस टिकेल व विद्वानांच्या व अविद्वानांच्या मनाला क्षणभर विश्रांति व आनंद ह्यांचे ठिकाण होईल. जीत सत्याचा लेश देखील नाहीं ती गोष्ट केवळ अविद्वानांचे मन कांहीं दिवस रंजवील; परंतु तीपासून दुसरा उपयोग होणार नाहीं. *भारत रामायण* ग्रंथ आज पावेतो मान्य झाले व चिरकाळ मान्य राहतील. ह्याचें कारण त्यांत मनोरंजक गोष्टी आहेत एवढेंच नाहीं, त्यांत श्रद्धा, भक्ति व विश्वास बसण्यासारख्या कांहीं गोष्टी आहेत. भावाबंधाचें वैर, सत्यानें वागण्याचे चांगले परिणाम, परमेश्वर भक्तीचीं फळें, पितापुत्रस्नेह, बंधुप्रीति, बायकोची प्रीति, बायकोचा विरह व उपकार केला असतां स्नेह व सख्य उत्पन्न होतें ह्याचे प्रत्यक्ष दाखले आहेत; म्हणून ते ग्रंथ सर्वांना आवडतात.

सत्याच्या आश्रयानें जसें असत्य शोभतें व उपयुक्त होतें, तसें असत्य स्वतंत्रपणे उपयोगी होत नाहीं. कोणी म्हणतील शुद्ध सत्य निराळें ठेवावें व असत्य निराळें ठेवावें. नावल लिहिण्याच्या कामांत असा निग्रह उपयोगाचा नाहीं. विषयगत व्यक्ति सत्य असून त्यांचें वर्णन अंशतः अद्भुत-मिश्रित पाहिजे ह्यास, इंग्रजींत रोमान्स (romance) म्हणतात. हा प्रकार फारच उत्तम. कारण अशा प्रकारच्या नावलांपासून मोठा उपयोग होतो. अथवा वर्णन समग्र सत्य असून व्यक्ति कल्पित असल्या पाहिजेत. हा दुसरा प्रकार. ह्यास इंग्रजीत नाव्हल (novel)

असें म्हणतात. वर्णन सत्य असावे ह्याचा अर्थ इतकाच कीं प्रत्येक व्यक्तीच्या संबंधाने प्रत्येक गोष्ट कल्पित अथवा खरी, संभवण्या सारिखी असली पाहिजे. मंजुघोषा नावलांतील वसंतमाधवाचें विमान, मंजुघोषेची अप्रतिम पंडितासारिखी पत्र लिहिण्याची शैली, विचित्रपुरीतील कदंबा देवीचा प्रत्यक्ष अवतार, म्हणजे एका मानवी प्राण्यानें भिंत फोडून पुढें येणें, पद्मनयना राजमहालांत असतां एका गैरमाहित म्हाताऱ्या बाईच्या पाठीमागून मुकाट्यानें चालती झाली, ह्या गोष्टी अम्मळ असंभवाच्या आहेत. तसेच रत्नप्रभेमध्ये मदनविलासानें रत्नप्रभेच्या दाराशीं गाडी आणली असतां त्यांत तिची वयस्क मावशी येऊन बसली, व तिलाच रत्नप्रभा म्हणून मदनविलास घेऊन गेला; तशीच क्रव्यादेची दासी तिचे तोंड बांधून एका गड्यानें डोकीवर तीन कोस नेली, व त्याविषयीं कांहीं एक गडबड झाली नाही; पुढे पावसाच्या झपाट्यांत मदन-विलासाची गाडी तीस कोस गेली; ह्या गोष्टी अंमळ चांगल्याशा मनांत भरत नाहीत. मुक्तामालेला भुईमध्ये पुरली असतांहीं तिचें जीवंत राहणें, चार चार दिवस व कधीं कधीं आठवडेच्या आठवडे अन्न-पाण्याविना वांचणें ह्या ही गोष्टी असंभाव्य आहेत. कोणी एका गैर माहितीच्या गोसाव्याबरोबर निबिड अरण्यांत डोंगरावर एका गुहेंत जाणें हेही श्रीमंतांच्या स्त्रियांस अशक्य आहे. अश्या अनेक गोष्टी प्रस्तुतच्या नावलांतून आहेत, त्यांत स्वाभाविकपणा नाही. प्रत्येक नावलामध्ये वर सांगितलेल्या प्रकारच्या गोष्टीशिवाय स्त्रियांच्या पातिव्रत्यावर फार हल्ला केला आहे. जागोजाग अशी संकटें आणलीं आहेत की पातिव्रत्यभंग झालाच पाहिजे. त्या संकटांतून त्या स्त्रियांचे पातिव्रत्य निर्दोष राहिलें, ही संभवा पलीकडची गोष्ट आहे. अशी पातिव्रत्याची परीक्षा देऊन ज्या स्त्रिया शुद्ध राहिल्या त्या इहलोकाच्या नव्हत. सांप्रतच्या स्त्रिया त्यांच्या तुकीस उतरणार नाहीत; व तसें पातिव्रत्य त्यांच्या आटोक्यांतही नाही. आणखी प्रत्येक नावलामध्ये मुख्य स्त्रीवर (नायिकेवर) व मुख्य पुरुषावर (नायकावर) जीं संकटें आणलीं आहेत, त्यांतून ते वांचले तरी कसे? अशी शंका सर्वांनां येते. तेव्हा वर सांगितल्याप्रमाणें नावलाचे दोन प्रकार. एक पुरुष सत्य, पण त्यांच्या हकीकतींत पुष्कळ असंभाव्य, मिथ्या व अद्भुत अशा गोष्टी घालून त्यांचे चरित्र मनोरंजक करावयाचें. दुसरा प्रकार असा कीं पुरुष मिथ्या, पण त्यांच्या संबंधानें ज्या गोष्टी सांगावयाच्या, त्या अगदीं संभाव्य, शक्य, स्वाभाविक असल्या पाहिजेत. दोन्ही मिथ्या असतील तर त्यांपासून सज्ञानास तर काय पण अज्ञानास देखील कांहीं एक उपयोग व्हावयाचा नाही. सांप्रत जीं नावलें पिकत आहेत तीं दुसऱ्या प्रकारची आहेत; पण वर्णनामध्ये जागोजाग दोष आहेत. जेवढे पुरुष तेवढे मदनाचे पुतळे, जेवढ्या स्त्रिया तेवढ्या तिलोत्तमा; प्रत्येक शोकस्थलीं मरणासारिखा शोक, व आनंदस्थळीं स्वर्गासारिखा आनंद, दुसरी उपमाच नाही. नवरा बायकोचें भाषण म्हणजे प्रेमाचा लोट! त्यांत अभिप्राय

गूढ राखणें किंवा गांभीर्यही बिलकुल नाहीत. सुलोचना नावलांत राजा म्हणतो — तारामती, हे साखरलिंबू पाहिलें, हें कश्यासारखें दिसतें? सांग बरें.

तारा : आम्हांस असलें कांहीं समजत नाही.

राजा : बरें मीतरी सांगू? हे तुझ्या — म्हणून पुढे बोलतो.

तारा : पुरें तें, कांहीं तरीच कल्पना पण, दुसरे कांहीं बोलणेंच नाही. कांहीं तरी म्हणून, कोणीकडून तरी, दुसऱ्याची थड्या करावयाची हें मला ठाऊक आहे.

प्रथमतः राजाच्या भाषणांत 'तुझ्यापुढें' — म्हणून 'पुढें बोलतो', असे लिहिलें आहे. तें बरोबर नाही. तुझ्या — 'म्हणून उगीच राहतो', असें असावें. परंतु अशीं भाषणें स्त्री पुरुषांच्या मुखांत घातलीं तर अर्थ गांभीर्य रहात नाही. स्त्रीचा विरह झाला असतां आम्रफळ, नारिंग, साखरलिंबू ह्यांच्यांशी स्त्रीचे स्तन तुळिले तर पोटांतून उकळी येईल; परंतु स्त्री जवळ असतांही प्रतिफलदर्शनीं तिचा विनोद करणें ह्या गोष्टीला तारामतीनें दिलेला चाबूकच योग्य आहे. रति समय वर्णन करित असतां किंवा स्त्री पुरुषांची शृंगारिक भेट वर्णित असतां ती प्रेमानें एकत्र बसलीं; परस्परांच्या मुखाकडे पाहून परस्परांच्या अंतःकरणांत आनंदाच्या उकळ्या फुटल्या व एकमेकांशीं विनोदाच्या गोष्टी बोलूं लागलीं इतक्या अभिप्रायाचे शब्द बस आहेत. ह्यावरून अभिप्राय गूढ राखणें हा नावलांचा मोठाच धर्म आहे. ह्याशिवाय नावलांमध्ये एणेंप्रमाणें धर्म असले पाहिजेत.

१) अ) जसें नाटकांत तसेंच नावलांत काळ, वेळ, पुरुषस्वभाव, व स्थळ हीं एक असलीं पाहिजेत. विचित्रपुरीमध्ये चार पुरुषांचें चरित्र लिहिलें आहे व ते चौघे कलकत्ता युनिव्हर्सिटींतले मोठे विद्वान होते अशी कल्पना केली आहे. त्यांपैकीं एक राजपुत्र होता, व दुसरा प्रधानपुत्र होता. आपल्या देशांत, 'एम.ए.' ची परीक्षा उतरण्या सारखे राजपुत्र व प्रधानपुत्र कोठें असतील ते असोत. त्यांची नावे युनिवर्सिटी - क्वालेंदरांतून नाहीत हें खचित. 'एम.ए.' ची परीक्षा देण्यासारखे राजपुत्र व प्रधानपुत्र विसाव्या शतकांत कदाचित् होतील. परंतु त्यावेळची माणसें आणि पंधराव्या शतकातील मोगलाईतील विचित्रपुरी ह्यांचा मेळ कसा पडेल तो पडो. अश्या वर्णनांपासून गोष्टी स्वभावसिद्ध वाटून त्या वाचणाराच्या हृदयात भिनाव्या तश्या भिन्नत नाहीत. तसें बहुतेक नावलांत हल्लींच्या काळीं ज्या गोष्टींचा विशेष संभव आहे त्या गोष्टी हिंदू राजे कल्पून त्यांच्या काळांत झाल्या असे वर्णिलें आहे, त्यामुळें काळभेद होतो, व त्यामुळें असत्यबुद्धी उत्पन्न होते. मंजुघोषेंत जागोजाग विमानाची योजना केल्यामुळें त्या नावलाचा स्वभावसिद्धपणा अगदीं गेला.

(ब) जे पुरुष नावलांत वर्णिले असतील त्यांचा स्वभावही एकसारखा पाहिजे. रत्नप्रभेची मावशी वर सांगितली, तिला मदनविलासानें झिटकारिलें, त्यानंतर ती त्याशीं विरोधभावानें

वागूं लागली, व तिनें त्यास घरांतूनही काढून दिलें. तिचे घरामध्यें वर्चस्व होतें, व नवऱ्याचीही अनुमति होती, म्हणून मदनविलासाविषयीं यात्किंचितही तिची इच्छा असती, तर ती त्यास काढून देतीना. व मदनविलास आपल्यास तुच्छ मानतो असें ठाऊक असतां मध्यान्ह रात्रीं त्याच्या हस्तगत झालीं, ह्यातहीं कांहीं आशय दिसत नाहीं. तेव्हां तिच्या वर्तणुकींत ह्या स्थळीं अंमळ भिन्नपणा दिसून येतो. तसेच मदनविलासाची लग्नाची बायको चंपकवल्लरी सुंदर असतां, व तिचें ह्याचें हृदय खवळून देण्यासारिखें प्रेम असतां, तो फक्त देश पाहण्याच्या इच्छेनें एकदम घरांतून निघून जातो; व रत्नप्रभेला पाहिल्याबरोबर तिला बायको करावें म्हणून मनांत आणतो; तिला घरांतून पळवून नेतो; ह्या गोष्टी अंमळ विलग दिसतात. कारण पुनर्विवाह करण्याची चाल होती असें जर शेवटीं मानलें आहे तर त्याच काळीं दोन बायकांना एकदम नाडणें हें त्यालोकांस आवडत नव्हतें, अशी कल्पना केली असतां अंमळ बरी दिसेल. मंजुघोषेंत राणीनें बसंतीस पुष्कळ मार दिला असतांही मंजुघोषेने दिलेल्या लखोट्याची आठवण झाली नाही व झाड्यांतही तो सांपडला नाही. तो एक क्षणानें राजासमोर गेल्याबरोबर सांपडला व तिनें पोटकळीचा काढून दिला. असे संविधानकाचे दोष मंजुघोषेंत जागोजाग आहेत.

प्रसंग पाहून लांब अथवा आखूड, कठोर, अथवा मृदु, पांडित्ययुक्त किंवा साधारण भाषण पात्रांच्या तोंडीं घातलें पाहिजे. मंजुघोषेचा बाप आपल्या बायकोवर कधीं रागावयचा नाही, तो रागावला व म्हणतो “माझ्या इष्ट कन्येनें नृपश्रेष्ठ कुमारस शिष्टजनही संतुष्ट होऊन ज्यास मान तुकवतील अशा अष्टविवाहांतील वरिष्ट गांधर्व विवाहें करून वरून यथेष्ट सुखोपभोगानुभव घेणार, तों ह्या दुष्टमति भ्रष्ट स्त्रीनें केवळ एकनिष्ट सापत्न व मत्सर भावानें तिजवर महारिष्ट आणावें असा हेतु धारण करूनच माझे मनांत तिजविषयीं क्लिष्ट कल्पना भरवून रूष्ट अंतःकरणानें तिजला नाना कष्ट भोगावयास लावून नष्ट दशेस लाविलें हें स्पष्ट आहे.”

काय ही ष्ट कारांची गर्दी!! हे खष्ट वाक्य ऐकिल्यावर ज्यास वाद इष्ट आहे तो असें म्हणेल कीं, असल्या रागाच्या अप्लिष्ट प्रसंगीं महिष्ट व गरिष्ट शब्दांचे साधिष्ट काम नाही. त्या संतापलेल्या म्हाताऱ्याला इतके ष्टकारयुक्त शब्द कसे आठवले कोण जाणें.

क) नावलामध्यें स्थलैक्य पाहिजे परंतु सर्व हिंदुस्थान देश एकच आहे असें घेतलें तर प्रस्तुतच्या नावलकारांच्या लिहिण्यास फारसा दोष येत नाहीं.

२. नावलांमध्ये अशा गोष्टी असाव्या कीं त्या वाचल्या असतां वाचणारांमध्ये विशेष दया, माया, स्नेह, प्रीती, शौर्य, धैर्य, औदार्य वगैरे गुण उत्पन्न होतील. पुराणादिकांच्या श्रवणापासून अंशतः हे गुण वृद्धिंगत होतात ह्यांत संशय नाही. परंतु अर्वाचीन नावलांमध्ये जागोजाग शृंगार फार व शोक फार. शृंगाररसाच्या योगानें कांहीं प्रीतीचें बीज पेरलें जात असेल

खरें, परंतु शोक अतिशय, त्यामुळे जगताविषयी औदासिन्य फार उत्पन्न होतें. प्रत्येक प्रस्तुतचें नावल संकटांचा सागर आहे. एकावर एक संकटें येतात व वाचणारांचे अंतःकरण खिन्न होते. जागोजाग संकटांचें वर्णन तर असे हृदयवेधक केले आहे कीं वाचणारांचे हृदय फुटून त्यांतील द्रवाच्या डोळ्यांवाटे धारा चालतात. मुक्तामालेच्या असंख्य संकटांनी कित्ती स्त्रियांच्या व तरुणांच्या सुकुमार हृदयांस घरें पडलीं असतील! मंजुघोषेला कित्ती असह्य दुःखांत घातले आहे! रत्नप्रभेला दुःखांत टाकल्यामुळे कित्ती वाचकांस वाईट वाटत असेल! विचित्रपुरीतील पद्मनयनेला कित्ती संकटाच्या राशी भोगाव्या लागल्या! अशीं संकटें वाचतां वाचतां वाचकांस पुस्तक खालीं ठेवावें लागतें; डोळ्यातले अश्रू पुसावे लागतात; व कधीं कधीं खेद अतिशय झाल्याकारणानें गोष्ट सोडून द्यावी लागते. घरांत सर्व प्रकारची स्वस्थता असतां, सुखासनीं बसलें असतां, ह्या कल्पित संकटांनीं आपला जीव कित्ती अस्वस्थ होतो. कित्येक म्हणतील अश्या अस्वस्थतेमध्येच सुख आहे. 'सुखमध्ये स्थितं दुःखं दुःखमध्ये स्थितं सुख.' खरे सुख म्हणजे दुःखाचा अभाव. जितक्या दुःखाच्या कल्पना करवतील तितक्या कराव्या, कारण दुःखविमोचन झाले म्हणजेच सुख होतें. विक्रमोर्वशी नाटकांत म्हटलें आहे कीं —

यदेवोपनतं दुःखात्सुखं तद्रसवन्तरम्

तप्तस्यहि तरुच्छाया निर्वाणाय विशेषतः

अर्थ — जें सुख दुःखानंतर प्राप्त होतें तें विशेष गोड लागतें; कारण उन्हांत तापला असेल त्यासच झाडाची थंडगार साउली अधिक सुखावह होते. परंतु पोळलेल्यास पोळवू नये. डागावर डाग देऊं नये. एक डाग दिलेल्या जागीं दुसरा डाग दिला असतां व्रण होऊन मांस सडतें. तसें एक दुःख संपलें नाहीं तोंच दुसरें संकट घातलें म्हणजे मनास फार खेद होतो. ईश्वराच्या घरीं असा न्याय नाहीं. मुक्तामाला व मोचनगडातील गंगू ह्यासारख्या साध्वी स्त्रियांना पृथ्वीवर इतकी संकटे कधीही प्राप्त झालीं नाहींत. अहिल्या, द्रौपदी, सीता, तारा व दमयंती ह्यांस अशी विपत्ती कधीं आली होती काय? सीतेस रावणराक्षस घेऊन गेला ह्यां पलीकडे वाल्मिकीनें सीतेचे हाल केले नाहींत. त्या नंतर पुनः एकदां तिला आरण्यांत टाकिली, पण ऋषीच्या आश्रमीं तिला नेऊन ठेविलें. सभेंत आणून द्रौपदीचें केशाकर्षण करून तिला नमन करण्याविषयीं दुःशासनाने प्रयत्न केला परंतु अत्यंत दुःखग्रस्त होऊन तिनें मोठ्याने हंबरडा फोडला:—

'हे कृष्ण द्वारकावासिन् क्वासि यादवनंदन'

'इमामवस्थां संप्राप्तां किं न रक्षसि माधव'

ही आरोळी द्वारकेस ऐकूं जाऊन श्रीकृष्णानें अनंत हस्तांनीं तिला भरजरी शालू, पाटाव, पैठण्या हीं एकावर एक नेसवलीं. ह्या प्रमाणे द्रौपदीवरचे माहान अरिष्ट जुन्या कवींनीं कसें

टाळलें आहे व त्यामुळें त्या कथा वाचणाऱ्या पतिव्रता स्त्रियांस किती आधार येत असेल. परमेश्वर सदा जवळच आहे, व तो अचिंत्य कल्पनेच्या बाहेरच्या उपायांनीं संकटसमयीं आपल्यास सोडवील, असें म्हणण्यापासून अज्ञानांच्या जीवाला मोठा आधार असतो. विद्वानांना तीं विलक्षण संकटें खरीं वाटत नाहीत. असो. कोणावर संकटांच्या राशी आणून वाचणारांस दुःख देणें हे सर्वथैव अश्लाघ्य आहे. अनेक संकटें ऐकवून अंतःकरणें दीन व खिन्न करणें ह्यापेक्षां पुष्कळ उत्साहाच्या शौर्याच्या, धैर्याच्या, प्रौढीच्या, औदार्याच्या गोष्टी सांगून लोकांस जरा उल्हासित करावें हें बरें.

(३) नावलामध्ये ह्या सृष्टीचे नैसर्गिक स्वरूपाचें वर्णन असावें. कांहीं वृत्तान्तभाग कमजास्त असला अथवा पुरुष विशेषांची नांवें खोटीं असलीं किंवा पुरुष कल्पित असलें तरी चिंता नाही. परंतु त्यांच्या संबंधानें जी गोष्ट सांगितली असेल ती खरी कोठें तरी झालेली असावी. झालेली नसेल तर संभाव्य व खऱ्यासारखी भासणारी तरी असावी. केवळ अज्ञान लोकांकरितां असेल तर अद्भुताचें मिश्रण असलें तरी चालेल, असें पूर्वी सुचविलेंच आहे. पण इतःपर जी नावलें होतील त्यांत खऱ्या व संभाव्य गोष्टीच नावलकार घालतील तरच त्यांचीं पुष्कळ बुकें विकून मोठा फायदा होईल. अमुक काळीं अमुक चमत्कारिक गोष्टी झाल्या त्यांचें खरें स्वरूप मनोरंजक रीतीनें वर्णिलें असतां त्याविषयीं चिरकाळ लोकांची अभिरूची राहते. जें सुंदर स्वरूप पृथ्वीवर सांपडण्याचा संभव आहे त्याचेंच वर्णन करावें. जी निष्ठुरता, जें धैर्य, जें साहस, जो मत्सर, जी प्रीति, जी दया मनुष्यांच्या हातून होण्यासारखी आहेत तीचेंच वर्णन करावें. आकाश, डोंगर, पहाड, झाडी, नद्या, गुहा, दरे, मैदाने ह्यांचें जसेंच्या तसेंच वर्णन केलें पाहिजे. मनुष्याच्या वर्णनांत देखील कांहीं एक उणें अधिक असतां कामानये. ज्या काळाच्या व ज्या स्थळाच्या संबंधानें नावल लिहिणें असेल त्या काळीं त्या स्थळां जशीं माणसें असतील, तशींच नावलांत दाखवलीं पाहिजेत. त्यांचा पोषाक, त्यांची चालचलणूक, त्यांच्या कल्पना जशाच्या तश्या उभ्या केल्या पाहिजेत. नावलामध्ये हलक्या जातीचे व मध्यम प्रकारचे लोक जितके जास्त घालावे, तितका वर्णनांत स्वाभाविकपणा जास्त येतो असें डिकेन्स वगैरे आलीकडील विलायती नावलकरांचें मत आहे. ते म्हणतात कीं, श्रीमंत लोकांमध्ये कपटें फार व कृत्रिमाचें वर्तन फार त्यामुळें त्यांच्या खऱ्या भावना लोकांना समजत नाहीत व भलत्याच पुरुषावर भलता गुण स्थापित करण्याचा विशेष संभव असतो. हें विलायती नावलें लिहिणारांचे मत खरें आहे असें आम्हांस वाटत नाही, कारण चोपदारांच्या ललकान्या, भालदारांची बडेज्जाव, थटमाट डामडौल व मोठेपणाचा दिमाक ह्या खालीं सर्व लोक दिपून जातात, व त्यांचें खरें स्वरूप समजत नाही हें खरें; परंतु धैर्य शौर्यादि मोठे मोठे गुण मोठ्या लोकांशिवाय इतरांत विरळा सांपडतात. बडे लोकांचें खरें स्वरूप थटमाटांत लपलेलें

असतें तरी कवींना हृदयात शिरून आंतलें बाहेर काढण्याची विलक्षण शक्ति असते, म्हणून खऱ्या स्वाभाविक स्थितीचें वर्णन अवश्य असेल तर त्यांतून श्रीमंत लोक त्याज्य आहेत असे आम्हांस वाटत नाही. आणखी मध्यम प्रतीचे लोकांचीं व हलकट लोकांचीं वर्णने लिहिली तर तीं हीं हलकटच होतील. त्यांत खरें वीर्य, गांभीर्य ह्यांचा लवलेश सांपडणार नाही. रांडा कळवंतिणींच्या मस्कऱ्या व उखाळ्या पाखाळ्या, चोरांची लुच्चेगिरीचीं भाषणे ह्यांत काय मौज आहे? अशी मौज पहावयाची असली तर मुंबईत एक दिवशीं मध्यान रात्रीं रस्त्यांतून फिरावें म्हणजे हवी तितकी दृष्टीस पडेल.

एवढ्याकरितां हलकट लोकांचे फारसें वर्णन नको; व श्रीमंत लोकांच्या थाटमाटाच्या वर्णना पासूनही नेहमी आनंद होणार नाही. बायको नवऱ्याकडे गेली कीं, हंड्या झुंबरांची गर्दी, पराच्या गाद्या, मखमाली रूजामे त्यावर डाक्याच्या मलमलीचे सरपोष, किनखापी पडदे, खिडक्यांना भरजरी पडदे, त्यांना गोंड्यासगट रेशमी दोऱ्या, जागोजाग सुंदर चित्रें व तस्बिरा, अयऱ्याच्या भिंती, बुटोदार छत, त्याजवर झालरी, जडावाचें विड्याचें तबक, त्यांत चौफुला, अत्तरदाणी, गुलाबदाणी, चतुर्दशगुणी तयार केलेले गोविंदविडे, चित्रविचित्र विंझणवारे, दिव्यांचा थाट, मेवा मिठाईचा लाट व अत्तरांचा घमघमाट, आणि मंद सुगंध शीतल वाऱ्याची लकेर, इतकें साहित्य बरोबर असावयाचेंच, व जितके वेळ भेटीचा प्रसंग येईल तितके वेळ हेंच कांही हेरफेरानें बरोबर जावयाचें. त्याचें वर्णन वारंवार वाचण्यास वाचणाऱ्यांचा कल होत असेल असें आम्हांस वाटत नाही. म्हणून सर्वकाळ श्रीमंती थाटाचें वर्णन असावें असेंही आम्हांस वाटत नाही. तात्पर्य जें खरें स्वरूप असेल तेंच जागोजाग वर्णिले पाहिजे.

(४) नावलामध्ये कामक्रोधादि मनोद्वेगाचे जे वरचेवर मासले दाखवावे लागतात, ते सर्व मनुष्यजातीमध्ये ज्या सामान्य चिन्हांनीं त्यांचें प्रदर्शन होतें त्या सामान्य चिन्हांनीं दाखवावे. कुंदकलीप्रमाणें दांत, चंपाकलीप्रमाणें नाक, दांतांच्या फटीमधून दांतवणीची काळी रेघ अश्या एकदेशीय चिन्हांनीं स्वरूपाची प्रतिमा अंतःकरणांत उभी रहात नाही. लग्नसमारंभांत अथवा दुसऱ्या समारंभांत सांप्रदायिक गोष्टीचा फारसा उल्लेख कामाचा नाही. कारण ज्यांस ते सांप्रदाय माहित नसतात त्यांस त्या गोष्टी समजेनाशा होतात व त्यांपासून त्यांस आनंद होत नाही. तात्पर्य कोणच्याही विशेष गोष्टीचें फारसें वर्णन कामाचें नाही. प्रत्येक देशांत व प्रत्येक लोकांत पैराव निरनिराळे, व चाली रीती निरनिराळ्या असतात; परंतु आत्मा सर्वांचा एकच आहे. म्हणून आकृतीचे वर्णन करितांना आत्म्याकडे विशेष लक्ष दिलें पाहिजे.

वर सांगितलेले चार धर्म नावलामध्ये मुख्यत्वेन असावे व असे धर्म असले म्हणजे नावलें फार उपयोगी ग्रंथ होतील. त्यांतून खऱ्या पुरुषांचा वृत्तांत असला तर फार उत्तम. इतिहासकारांची माहिती व कवींची कल्पना हीं एकत्र होऊन नावल रूपां ग्रंथ केले असतां किती फायदा

होते! वृत्तान्तांमध्ये लांबलचकपणा व कंटाळवाणेपणा असतो त्यांचे कारण ज्या बारीक बारीक गोष्टी, त्या टाकून देऊन मुख्य मुख्य ठळक गोष्टी घेऊन कल्पनेच्या तिखट मिठानें नावलरूपी ग्रंथ किती मिष्ट होतील!

नावलरूपी ग्रंथांना खाली लिहिलेले गुणही अवश्य आहेत.

ज्यापासून वाचकांस उत्तेजन येईल व समाधान वाटेल असा विषय पाहिजे. नावल वाचित असतां वाचक उत्तेजनाची वाटच पाहत असतात. काहीं विजातीय रीतीनें परस्परांची भेट, काहीं अनपेक्षित लाभ, फसणूक, फजीती, घातपात, साहस, शौर्यकृत्य, विघ्न अथवा महा संकट यांपासून वाचकांस एक प्रकारचा आवेश येतो; त्याची त्यांस फार आवड असते. परंतु एकंदर विषय मनोवेधक असला पाहिजे, नाही तर वरील गोष्टींपासून फारसा आवेश येत नाही. अरबी सुरस गोष्टींतील अद्भुत गोष्टींनी विद्वानांचे फारसें समाधान होत नाही; कारण त्यांच्या खरेपणाविषयीं भरवसां नसतो, व त्यामुळे त्यांत आस्ता लागत नाही. गोष्टी नव्या नव्या असाव्यात म्हणजे आनंद होतो म्हणून देशोदेशच्या गोष्टी आणून नावलांत भराव्या असा एकादा समज होईल; परंतु नव्या नव्याच गोष्टी पाहिजेत असें आम्हांस वाटत नाही. कानोकानी शिवाजीच्या गोष्टी ऐकिल्या, लिहिलेल्या बखरी पाहिल्या, मराठ्यांची बखर वाचली, कविताबद्ध शिवाजीची कहाणी वाचली तरी शिवाजी विषयीं कोणी नावल लिहितील, तर तें लोक उड्या टाकून घेतील. कारण, आपल्या देशात जे वीर होऊन गेले त्यांविषयी आपल्या मनात फार बहुमान असतो व प्रीति असते, हें देशाभिमानाचें माहात्म्य. आमची आजी ९० वर्षाची होऊन मेली व तेवढ्या काळांत तिने अठरा वेळा भारत व भागवत ही पुराणें ऐकिलीं तरी नेहमीं पुराण ऐकावयास जात असे. ह्यांचें कारण ग्रंथांची थोरी. इंग्रजीमध्ये सर वॉल्टर स्काटची ऐवेनो, आबट, केनिल्वर्थ नांवाचीं नावलें आहेत त्यांतील विषय असाच उत्तेजक व आनंददायक आहे. इंग्लंडाच्या इतिहासांतील प्रसिद्ध पुरुषांची त्यांत वर्णनें दिली आहेत. नार्मन लोकांचा अतोनात जुलूम, साक्सन लोकांचा स्वतंत्र होण्याविषयीं विलक्षण आवेश, स्त्रियांविषयी अत्यंत बहुमान, मेरी क्वीन अफ स्काटस् हिची संशयोत्पादक वर्तणूक, व तिचीं अनेक दुःखें, एलिजाबेथशीं अर्ल अफ लीस्टर ह्याचा स्नेह हीं प्रत्येक इंग्लंडांतील मनुष्याच्या हृदयाला भिनलीं आहेत. आमच्या देशांत असे विषय काय थोडे आहेत? मुसलमानी राज्यांत अनेक शूर पुरुष होऊन गेले. सातारचे राजे, पुण्याचे पेशवे, पेशव्यांच्या पदरचे सरदार, सावंतवाडीचे सावंत, पवार, गाडकवाड, शिंदे, होळकर, जोधपूर जयपूरचे राजे इत्यादि काय थोडे वर्णनायोग्य लोक आहेत? हे आलीकडचे लोक अल्प वाटत असले तर पुरातन काळचे अनेक वंशांतील अनेक राजे आहेत. त्यांच्या चरित्रांचा शोध करून त्यां विषयीं कां नावलें लिहूं नयेत? सांप्रतची सर्व नावलें विषयांच्या दुर्बळतेमुळे फार लवकर मार्गे पडतील. मोठ्या

जुलमानें तीं एकवार वाचतात परंतु पुनः वाचण्याची इच्छा होत नाही. ह्याचें कारण त्यांतील गोष्टींविषयीं आपल्या मनामध्ये कोणच्याही प्रकारचा सन्मान नाही.

नावलांमध्ये किंवा तत्समान ग्रंथांत फारसे पांडित्य, शब्द लालित्य, अथवा फारशी विद्वत्ता हीं कामाचीं नाहीत. मंजुघोषेंत एके ठिकाणी आहे, “वसंतासही संतत उसंत देणारी व-सं-त-मा-ध-व ही सहा अक्षरे तिचे करण (कर्ण) रंध्रद्वारे शिरून आंतील शुद्धिकंदास जागृत अवस्था देती झालीं.” ह्या वाक्याचा एकाएकी कोणासही अर्थ समजणार नाही. एक स्वनाचे शब्द पाहून एकत्र घातले आहेत. त्यांतून फारसा आशयही निघत नाही. शुद्धिकंद म्हणजे काय ? शुद्धि म्हणजे मूळ अर्थ स्वच्छता, प्राकृतात शुद्धि म्हणजे हुशारी घेतात. स्वच्छतेचा अथवा हुशारीचा कांदा म्हणजे काय ? व त्याला जागृत अवस्था म्हणजे काय ? ह्यांचें सौरस्य आमच्या अंतःकरण ‘कंदात’ येत नाही. अशीं वाक्यें निवडलीं तर अनेक निघतील व विस्तार होईल ह्याकरितां फारसें शब्दलालित्य असूं नये असे आमचें दिग्दर्शन आहे.

गोष्ट फार साधी असावी ; त्यात फार आढेवेढे नसावे. विचित्रपुरी नावलांत व हल्लींच्या बहुतेक नावलांत संविधानकामध्ये गुंतागुंत फार, त्यामुळें त्यातील गोष्ट समजत नाही ; व समजली तर ध्यानांत राहत नाही. सुलोचना व माधव ह्यांतील गोष्ट बरीच सुलभ आहे. इंग्रजींतील उत्तम नावलें एवेनो, आबट, केनिल्वर्थ, क्वेन्टिन डर्वर्ड, ह्यांतील गोष्टी फार साध्या आहेत व सहज लक्षांत राहाण्या योग्या आहेत. ज्या गोष्टी लोकांच्या तोंडीं फार, त्यांच्या संबंधानें नावल लिहिलें तर त्याची गोष्ट वाचकांस समजते व त्यांच्या अंतःकरणांस आल्हाद देते.

ह्याप्रमाणे नावलाचे मुख्यमुख्य गुण जे आमच्या लक्षांत आले ते आम्हीं सांगितलें. त्यांत कांहीं सांगावयाचे राहिले असले तर त्यांची विद्वानांनी पूर्ती करावी. नावलाचें स्वरूप पद्धतवार वर्णिले नाही असें कोणास वाटेल तर त्यांस आमचें इतकेंच सांगणें आहे कीं अवकाश थोडा, व उद्योग फार, त्यापुढें उपाय नाही. काळ, पुरुष-स्वभाव व स्थळ ह्यांचे ऐक्य, वाचकांच्या हृदयांत दया, धैर्य, शौर्य इत्यादि मनोवृत्ती वृद्धिंगत होतील अश्या गोष्टी। सृष्टीतील नैसर्गिक स्वरूपांचें वर्णन, सर्वसामान्य कामक्रोधादिकांचे मासले, उत्तेजन येईल व समाधान होईल असा विषय, सर्वास समजण्याजोगे सुलभ शब्द, साधी सोपी गोष्ट, इत्यादि गुणांनीं युक्त अशीं नावलें जर आमचें विद्वान् बंधू लिहूं लागतील तर जगतावर मोठे उपकार होतील. आतांशीं नावलांची कीड फार झाली आहे. लहान मुलें बाळें देखील नावलें लिहून पैसे मिळवूं लागलीं आहेत. ज्या थोड्या नावलांचा आम्ही आज उल्लेख केला तीं, आहेत त्यामध्ये, फार उत्तम अशीं आम्ही समजतो ; व त्यांचें कर्ते फार विद्वान अशी आमची पक्की खात्री आहे. परंतु नावलाला अद्याप चांगलें स्वरूप आलें नाही असें म्हटल्या वांचून राहवत नाही.

नाटक म्हणजे काय ?

नाटक म्हणजे हावभावांसह रंगभूमीवर म्हणून दाखवण्यायोग्य कांही रसभरित संवादमिश्रित काव्य.

कोणचेहि काव्य हावभावासहित बोलून दाखविणें ह्याची आवड मनुष्यमात्रांस फार पुरातन काळापासून आहे. कितीही अडाणी, रानटी, अज्ञान लोक पाहिले तरी त्यांमध्ये हावभावासहित नक्कल करण्याची कांहीना कांही रीत आढळते. अनुकरण करण्याची आवड अगदीं लहान मुलांत देखील सांपडते. मुली व मुलें संसारखेळ खेळत असतात; त्यावेळेस कोणी आई बनते; कोणी सून, कोणी लेक, कोणी नवरीमुलगी, कोणी नाणहवली, अशीं सर्व प्रकारची सोंगे आणतात. मुलांपैकी कोणी नवरा, कोणी जांवई, कोणी व्याही, कोणी लहान मूल, अशीं सोंगे आणतात. आणि आई आईप्रमाणें, लेक लेकीप्रमाणें, नवरा नवऱ्याप्रमाणें, व मूल मुलाप्रमाणें आचरण करण्याविषयीं आपल्या पोरबुद्धीला सुचतील तितके हावभाव करून होईल तितका प्रयत्न करित असतात. अज्ञान अवस्था असो कीं सज्ञान अवस्था असो, सर्व देशांत नाटकरूपी खेळ कमी जास्त प्रकारें सांपडतात. अज्ञान लोकांमध्ये एकाद्या सणाच्या दिवशीं किंवा उत्सवाच्या दिवशीं नित्याच्या काबाडकष्टांतून मुक्त झालेले गरीब लोक आनंद करितात, व सर्वांना मौज दाखविण्याकरितां देवांचीं अथवा जुन्या वीरांचीं सोंगें घेतात, व तदनरूप नृत्य व हावभाव करितात. शिमग्यांतले वीर पुष्कळांना ठाऊक असतील. उत्तर हिंदुस्थानांत काशीसारख्या शहरांत मोठे मोठे मेळे व मोठमोठ्या यात्रा जमत असतात. त्यांत असंख्य लोक एकत्र मिळून भरतभेट, सीतासंशुद्धि, हे खेळ करित असतात; व ते खेळ तीन तीन दिवस चालतात. फार मोठा उत्सव! हजारों लोक रामाच्या पाठीमागून जातात व हजारों भरताजवळ असतात! भेटीसमयीं लोकांच्या अतःकरणांत प्रेमाचे व आनंदाचे पूर येत असतात. ह्या खेळांतील आनंद व आविर्भाव अनुपम असतो. पाहिलें नाहीं पण काशी मुक्कामीं ऐकिलें आहे कीं मारुतीच्या सोंगाच्या हातून, इतर मनुष्यांच्या हातून होणार नाहींत, असे चमत्कार होतात. असो, असले खेळ करण्याचा मनुष्यांमध्ये मुळापासून कल आहे. व हा कल पुढें ह्या स्वरूपाला येऊन पोचला आहे कीं, हल्ली सर्व लोकांना असल्या खेळांतील संभाषणें एकत्र लिहिली असतां त्याचें उत्तम काव्य होतें असें वाटू लागलें आहे. 'काव्येषु नाटकं काव्यं' ह्या भरतखंडांत कालिदास, भवभूति आदी करून; इंग्लंदांत शेक्सपीयर; फ्रान्स देशांत रासीन, कार्नील; व वाल्तेर, जर्मनींत शिलर; व गीटी, इतलींत आल्फीरी, ग्रीस देशांत साफोक्लीस, युरिपिदीस, व अरिस्टाफेनी अश्या महान महान कवींनीं ह्या खेळांतील भाषणें लिहिण्याकडे आपली अगाध बुद्धि खर्चली. कवींची प्रज्वलित बुद्धि, इतिहासकाराचें इतिहासज्ञान, विजातीय चित्रकाराची

कला, वक्त्याची विलक्षण मनोवेधकता, नावलकाराचें चातुर्य, व तत्त्ववेत्त्याची गहन बुद्धि इतके गुण एकत्र करावे तेव्हां एका नाटककाराची कल्पना पूर्ण होते. फार पुरातन काळीं नाटकें लिहून तीं रंगभूमीवर करून दाखवण्याचा प्रकार ग्रीस देशांत उद्भवला; व युरोपांतील सर्व देशांत ग्रीशन लोकांनी लिहिलेलीं नाटकें जाऊन नाटककला पसरली. आपल्या भरतखंडांत रामाच्या वेळेसच नाटककला ठाऊक होती असें म्हणतात; व रामाचे मुलगे कुश लव व भरताचीं मुलें रामाला नाटक करून दाखवीत असें म्हणतात. कदाचित् तीं रामाच्या कथा साभिनय गाऊन दाखवीत असतील. परंतु हें खचित आहे कीं नाटक कला, व नृत्यमिश्रित नाटककला फार दिवसांपासून आपल्या देशांत प्रसिद्ध आहे. ह्या कलेचा मूळ गुरु भरताचार्य.

भरताचार्याचा नाट्यशास्त्र नांवाचा एक ग्रंथ प्रसिद्ध आहे. त्याचा सारांश ह्या ठिकाणीं झावा तर फार विस्तार होईल. ह्याकरितां त्यांतील मुख्य मुख्य गोष्टी सांगून इंग्रजी रीतीनें नाटकाचें खरें स्वरूप सांगणें अवश्य आहे; कारण हल्ली इंग्रजी नाटकें वाचणारे लोक फार, व तदनु रूप नाटकें लिहिणारे लोक पुढें निघतील, असें आम्हांस वाटतें.

भरताचार्य फार पुरातन काळीं झाला. दशरूपाचा कर्ता धनंजय त्याचा भाऊ धनिक, हे ख्रिस्ताच्या १०व्या शतकांत झाले असावे. ख्रिस्त शकाच्या सुमारे १४ व्या शतकांत काव्यप्रकाश वगैरे ग्रंथ झाले असावे. काव्यप्रकाशकर्ता मम्मट व एक विस्तीर्ण व्याकरण ग्रंथाचा कर्ता कच्यट हे बंधू होते असें म्हणतात. ह्या सुमारास अनेक अलंकारग्रंथ झाले. सुंदरमिश्राचा अभिराममणि, साहित्यदर्पण, नाट्यलोचन, नाट्यप्रदीप, नाट्यदर्पण, रूपचिंतामणि, नाट्यशेखर, नाटकावतार, रायमुकुट, नाटकरत्नकोश, नृत्यसर्वस्व, नृत्यविलास, दंडीचा काव्यादर्श, सरस्वतिकंठाभरण आणि अवलोक असे अनेक अलंकारपर प्राचीन ग्रंथ आहेत. रसगंगाधर, प्रतापरुद्र, कुवलयाचंद असे अर्वाचीन ही ग्रंथ पुष्कळ आहेत. त्या सर्वांच्या अनुमते नाटकाचें जें संस्कृत लक्षण तें एणेंप्रमाणें —

सर्ववृत्तिविनिष्पन्नं । नानावस्थांतराश्रयं

अवस्थानुकृतिर्नाट्यं । रूपं दृश्यतयोच्यते

वाक्यं रसात्मकं काव्यं । काव्यार्थाभिनयो नाट्यं

अर्थः— सर्व प्रकारच्या स्थितीपासून उत्पन्न झालेलें व त्यांतील निरनिराळ्या अवस्थांना अनुलक्षून जें अवस्थेचें अनुकरण म्हणजे लोकांस तसें सोंग आणून दाखविणें त्याला 'रूप' म्हणावें. हीं रूपें दहा प्रकारचीं. व नाटक हें एक त्यांपैकी रूप आहे. परंतु सर्व रूपें नाटक शब्दानेच मोडतात. सामान्यतः नाटक म्हणजे जें वाक्य बोलावयाचें त्याचा अभिनय म्हणजे तदनुकूल हावभाव, हें फारच साधारण लक्षण. ह्यापेक्षां जें इंग्रजींतील लक्षण आम्ही प्रथम सांगितलें, म्हणजे, 'हाव भावासहित करून दाखवलेलें कांहीं रसभरित संवादमिश्रित काव्य

ते नाटक' हे लक्षण बरे आहे. संस्कृतांतील अलंकारग्रंथांत विषय (वस्तु), नायक, व रस ह्या तीन गोष्टी नाटकाला अवश्य आहेत असे म्हटले आहे. विषय (वस्तु) ऐतिहासिक खरा, कल्पित अथवा कांहीं खरा व कांही कल्पित असतो. नाटकामध्ये नायकाचे गुण एणोप्रमाणे असावे. तो विनयसंपन्न; सुस्वभावी; सुस्वरूप; उदार; तत्पर; प्रियभाषी; लोकप्रिय; भक्तिमान; वाक्कुशल; चांगल्या कुलांत झालेला; स्थिर; तरुण; बुद्धि, उत्साह, स्मृति, लवकर आशय समजण्याची शक्ति, कला, व मान इहीं करून युक्त; शूर; दृढ; तेजस्वी; शास्त्रें शिकलेला; व धार्मिक; असा असावा. जी नायिका असावयाची ती नायकाची विवाहित स्त्री असावी, व तिची एकादी सखी अथवा दासी असावी. वेश्या स्त्रीला कधीही नायिका करूं नये. हा नियम फार उत्तम आहे. ह्यावरून आपले पूर्वज किती पापभीरू होते, हे सहज लक्षांत येईल. इंग्रजींत ड्रायडन व कानग्रीव ह्या कवींची नाटके ह्या नियमाला विरुद्ध आहेत म्हणून अगदीं अनुपयुक्त झालीं आहेत. मनोरमा नाटकांत ही वेश्या, व व्यभिचारी स्त्रिया ह्यांस प्राधान्य दिले आहे. स्त्रियांचें सौंदर्य कितपत असावें, व त्यांचे गुण कोणचे असावें हे ही नाटक शास्त्रांत सांगितले आहे. दूती कशा असाव्या, व अन्य पात्रे कशीं असावीं, ह्याविषयीही पुष्कळ सांगितले आहे. परंतु त्यांचा प्रस्तुत विचार करावयास नको.

एक विषय किंवा कथा; दुसरे, नायक, नायिका, व इतर पात्रे; आणि तिसरे, नाटकांमध्ये रस असले पाहिजेत. रस मूळचे नऊ आहेत. शृंगार, वीर, करुण, रौद्र, हास्य, भयानक, बीभत्स, अद्भुत, आणि शांत. नाटकांत आठ रस असावे, नवव्याचें प्रयोजन नाही असा पुरातन नियम आहे. ह्या रसांच्या स्वरूपांविषयीं फार थोड्यांना माहिती असते, म्हणून एकेकाची उदाहरणे खालीं दिलीं आहेत.

शृंगार

शाकुंतल नाटक

इदमुपहितसूक्ष्मग्रंथिना स्कंधदेशे
स्तनयुगपरिणाहाच्छादिना वल्कलेन
वपुरभिनवमस्याः पुष्पति स्वां न शोभां
कुसुममिव पिनद्धं पांडुपत्रोदरेण

अर्थ (स्वकृत साव्या)

वल्कलकांचोळीची स्कंधी सूक्ष्म ग्रंथिका वाहे
विस्तृत स्तनयुग अतिदुखे ती वल्कलपीडा साहे
शरीरनाजुक परि स्वरूपानें वल्कल कैसे लपवी
फिक्कटपानामधें गूठलीं कुसुमें भासति जेवी.

शाकुंतल

सरसिजमनुविद्धं शैवलेनापि रम्यं
मलिनपि हिमांशोर्लक्ष्म लक्ष्मीं तनोति
इयमधिकमनोज्ञा वल्कलेनापि तन्वी
किमिव हि मधुराणां मंडनं नाकृतीनां

अर्थ

शैवलिनं जरि पद्मलिप्त तरिही शोभाच त्याला असें
किंवा रम्यचि चंद्रबिंब दिसते चिन्हें करूनी जसें
तैसी वल्कलयुक्तही अतिशयें रम्या दिसे, भूषण
होतें सर्वहि सुदरांस न दिसे कांहींच त्या दूषण

वीर

एषत्वामभिनवकठशोणितार्थी
शार्दूलः पशुमिव हन्मिचेष्टमानं
आर्तानां भयमपननुमात्तधन्वा
दुष्यन्तः स्तवशरण भवत्विदानीं

श्लोक (स्वकृत)

आलों मी अभिनव कठरक्त प्याया
व्याघ्रांपै लघुपशु मारुनी चिराया ।
आर्तांच्या भयमोचनार्थ घेतलेकीं
दुष्यंतं धनु भीति सोड शत्रुलोकीं ।।

मुद्राराक्षस

निर्मघाकाशतुल्य लखलख करिते मत्करप्राप्तसख्या
युद्धश्रद्धेकरूनी पुलकितचि जणों वीरलोकांप्तसख्या
संग्रामाच्या कसोटीवरि रिपुनि जिची दूढ आहे परीक्षा
मित्रस्नैहं मलाही विवश करुनियां साहसीं देउं दीक्षा

करुण

कुमारसंभव काव्य

अयि जीवितनाथ जीवसी त्वभिवाचोत्थितया तथा पुरः
ददृशे पुरुषाकृतिः क्षितौ हरकोपानलभस्म केवलं

श्लोक (स्वकृत)

अगा प्राणनाथा तुला जीव आहे ।
म्हणूनी असें ऊठली कामजाये ।।
तरीं आपला काम तो भस्मरूपी ।
शिवाच्या क्रुधेनें जळाला विलोकी,

मालतीला उद्देशून माधव म्हणतो

वारंवार निघोनि झांकित असे हें बाष्पनेत्रांप्रति
तीची मूर्ति मनांत घेउन हरी मद्देहभानप्रति
काढावी तरि हस्त धर्मसलिलें हो व्याप्त कंपोद्गमें
बोटें कांपति, काय मी करूं अतां कांही न मातें गमें

हास्य

नानाफडणीसांना सिंहगडावर टाकलें होतें, व सखारामबापू सास्वडामध्ये कामकाज पाहत होते. सखारामबापू बहुधा नानाची मसलत घेत असत. एकदां एक तेलंग भिक्षुक कांहीं दक्षिणा मागावयास बापूंकडे आला. त्याला बापूंनी सांगितलें की 'भटजी तुम्ही नाना फडणिसांकडे जा म्हणजे तुमचें काम होईल.' तो भिक्षुक ब्राह्मण सिंहगडावर नानांकडे गेला. नाना म्हणाले, 'भटजी मला कैदेत टाकलें आहे, मजकडे काय आहे? तुम्ही सखाराम बापूंकडे जा.' तो बिचारा भट पुनः सास्वडास आला, त्याला बापू म्हणतात, 'भटजी तुम्हाला दक्षिणा मिळावी असें नानांच्या मनांत आलें तरच तुमचें काम होईल.' तेलंग भटजी बसून काय करतात? पुनः सिंहगडास चालले व वाटेनें म्हणतात:—

गडाच सास्वडं यामि । सास्वडाच पुनर्गडं
गडसास्वडयोर्मध्ये । द्राविडो लुडबडाम्यहं

गरीबाची अशीच हेटाळणी चालते.

चंद्रगुप्ताला म्हणजे मौर्याला राज्यावर बसवल्यावर नंदाचे मंत्री राक्षस वगैरे ह्यांचा उपहास करून चाणक्य म्हणतो.

उपहास श्लोक

ते मंत्री वक्रनासादिक असुनि महा नीतिमंत प्रतापी ।
त्यांच्याने नंदलक्ष्मी स्थिर न करवली भ्रष्ट होतां कदापि ।
ती आतां चंद्रकान्तीसदृश शशिसमयी चंद्रगुप्तीं मिळाली
तीतें घ्याया समर्थ प्रबल सुत असा कोणती माय व्यालीं

अद्भुत पर्वताचें वर्णन

आलिंगी मेघमाला म्हणुनि अति निळा जो दिसे उंच शृंगें
ज्याचीं भेदोनि गेलीं गगन; शिखिकुलें मत्त हर्षप्रसंगें

भयानक

उल्कामुखांची एथें भूतें । भयासूर असतीं अगणितें ।।
पसरोनियां वक्रदरीतें । इकडे तिकडे धांवती.
ह्यांच्या दाढा अति विक्राळा । जिव्हा हालविती लळालळा ।।
ज्यांच्या मुखांतोनि निघती ज्वाळा । पाहतां वीरांही भयवाटे ।।
केव्हां दिसती केव्हां न दिसती । कितीक अत्यंत शुष्क असती ।।
केश आणि नेत्रपंक्ति । आरक्त यांचा विजेपरि ।

पडला एथें अंधकार । जेणें व्यापिलें दिगंतर ।।

खचून गेलें की हें अंबर ।। कांही एथें दिसेना ।।

आकाशास तमालगुच्छसदृश व्यापी तमःसंमहा ।

पृथ्वी ही दिसती जणों नवजलामाजी बुडाली पहा

प्रारंभीच वनामध्ये करितसे काळोख भारी निशा

वाटे धूरचि वायुनें पसरुनी व्यापूनि गेल्या दिशा

बीभत्स

फाडफाडोनी कातडें । उपसोनियां सारी हाडें ।

ओढोनियां आंतडें । पिशाच मांस भक्षिती ।।

हत्कमलांच्या घालोनि माळा । रक्त कुंकुम लाविती भाळा ।

आतड्याचीं करोनि गळां

रौद्र

भीम हातपाय आपटून म्हणतो.

लाक्षागृहानलविषान्नसभाप्रवेशैः
प्राणेषु वित्तनिचयेषु च नः प्रहृत्य
आकृष्टपांडववधूपरिधानकेशाः
स्वस्था भवंतु मयि जीवति धार्तराष्ट्र्यः

(स्वकृत श्लोक)

लाक्षागृही सकल घालुनि जाळियेले
अन्नांत वीष मिसळूनिच खाववीलें
नेऊन क्षत्रियसभेंत विषादवीलें
प्राणासि फार छळूनी धन हारवीलें
ओढूनि एकवसनाचि सभेंत नेली
दुष्टें सुशील वनिता कचकृष्ट केली
हे हाल होऊनि तिचे कुरु स्वस्थ होती
मारीन त्यांसि तरि प्रज्वलित स्वहेती

चाणक्य म्हणतो

माझ्या बुद्धशिखेस हात अणखी सोडावयां धांवतो
तैसा पायहि हा पुनः पण करायाला पुढें चालतो
नंदप्राणविनाशनं शमित जो क्रोधाग्नि माझा तया
मूर्खा पेटवुनी पुनः यमगृहीं जासी कसा दुर्नया

नववा शांतरस कुठें कुठें अढळतो, परंतु नाटकांत नसावा असें कित्येक लोक म्हणतात.
आमचा समज आहे कीं नाटकांत शांत रसाचाही मासला असावा.

शांत रसाचें उदाहरण

संतांचें पुण्य वाढो आणि सकळही पाप पावों लयातें
पृथ्वी पाळोत राजे सतत धरुनियां राजकीया नयातें
काळीं देवोत वृष्टी जलद जन सदा साधु सच्छास्त्रसंगें
संपत्संतानलाभे अतिमुदित असो सत्कथांच्या प्रसंगें

सद्विषय, उत्तम पात्रें, व रस ही सामग्री असली म्हणजे अलंकारशास्त्राप्रमाणें नाटक पूर्ण
होतें.

जी नाटककला सर्व युरोपांत व अमेरिकेंत पसरली आहे, तिचें मूळ ग्रीस देशांत उत्पन्न झाले. ग्रीस देशांत साफोकलीस, यूरिपिडीस, मिनान्डर, एश्रायलस, अरिस्टाफेनीस असे मोठमोठे नाटककार होऊन गेले. ह्यांनीं जी नाटके रचलीं ती विषयाच्या संबधानें दोन प्रकारचीं आहेत. कामेदी म्हणजे शृंगार, विनोद, व हास्य इहींकरून युक्त नाटक व ट्राजेडी म्हणजे रौद्र, भयानक, करुण, क्रोध व बीभत्स म्हणजे, घातपात, शोक, अरिष्ट, व मृत्यु इहींकरून युक्त असें नाटक. अरिस्टाफेनीस व मिनान्डर ह्यांचीं दुसऱ्या प्रतीचीं नाटके आहेत व एश्रायलीस, साफोकलीस, ह्यांची दुसऱ्या प्रतीचीं नाटके आहेत. ह्यांपासून पुढें रोमन लोकांत नाटकांचा प्रचार पडला. त्या देशांत सेनेकानामें एक मोठा विद्वान झाला. त्यानें मात्र ट्राजिडी म्हणून जो प्रकार सांगितला त्या तऱ्हेचीं नाटके रचलीं आहेत. कामेडी म्हणून जो प्रकार वर सांगितला, त्या प्रकारची नाटके लाटिन भाषेमध्ये फार उत्तम आहेत. प्लातस कवीच्या नाटकांत रीती भातींचीं वर्णनें, थट्टा मस्करी, व दोषाविष्करण हीं उत्तम प्रकारें केलीं आहेत. रोमन लोकांच्या संबधानें हें एक सांगितलें पाहिजे कीं नाटकी लोक, म्हणजे सोंग घेणारे लोक, ह्यांना आपण आपल्या देशांत जसें आज पावेतों तुच्छ मानीत आलो, तसेंच सोंग घेण्याचें काम फार निंद्य, असें रोमन लोक मानीत असत. ह्याचे कारण असें असलें पाहिजे कीं आपल्या लोकांत, तसेंच त्यांच्या लोकांत हलकट तमासगीर जसे नाना प्रकारचे तमाशे करून दाखवितात, तसे नाटकी, अशी त्यांची समजूत झाली असावी. परंतु ग्रीस देशांत सोंग घेणें अगदीं वाईट नाही असें लोक मानीत असले पाहिजेत. कारण अरिस्टाफेनीस स्वतः सोंग घेत असे. व यूरिपिडीस स्वतः बायकोचें सोंग घेत असे. भरतरुंडांत देखील पूर्वी सोंग घेण्याविषयीं फार तिरस्कार होता असें वाटत नाही, कारण रामलक्ष्मणासमोर त्यांच्या मुलांनी नाटके केलीं अशी कथा आहे. शिव स्वतः कुटुंबासुद्धां तांडव नृत्य करितात, व विष्णूंनीं मोहनीचें सोंग घेतलें होतें अशा कथा आहेत. असो, नाटकांत क्षणभर रूपांतर केल्यावरून मानहानि कां व्हावी हें आम्हांस समजत नाही. नटाचा धंदा कदाचित् करूं नये, परंतु मित्रांच्या व सभ्यांच्या मनोरंजनाकरितां घटकाभर वीर पुरुषांचा आविर्भाव आणला असतां हरकत नाही, असें आम्हांस वाटतें.

ग्रीस देशांतील व इटलीमधील नाटकाच्या स्वरूपांमध्ये पुढें पुष्कळ फेरबदल झाला. पूर्वीच्या नाटकांतून वाईट, निंद्य व बीभत्स जेवढें होतें तेवढें सर्व अर्वाचीन नाटकांमधून नाहीसें झालें. ह्याचें कारण ख्रिस्ती धर्म. जुन्या ग्रीशन देवाचीं दुष्कृत्यें, त्यांच्या मारामाऱ्या, देवी म्हणून ज्यांस ग्रीक व रोमन लोक समजत असत, त्यांचे दुराचार, व त्यांबद्दल देवांचे मत्सर व तंटे ख्रिस्तधर्मानुयायी लोकांना आवडेनासे झाले. त्यामुळें नाटकाला अगदीं नवें स्वरूप आलें.

अर्वाचीन नाटक

ह्या प्रकरणाच्या आरंभी सांगितल्याप्रमाणे नाटकाचे जें मूळचें, म्हणजे अडाणी स्थितीतलें जें स्वरूप, त्याविषयीं सर्व युरोपांतील देशांतल्या लोकांस अभिरूचि होती. मूळच्या नाटकांत धर्मसंबंध फार असे, व तसलीं नाटके धर्माचे मुख्य अधिष्ठान जो देश, त्या इटली देशांत प्रथम उत्पन्न झालीं. तीं नाटके, म्हणजे खिस्ताला शुलावर चढवला वगैरे गोष्टी, नाटक रूपानें करून दाखवून मूर्तिपूजकांचें मन खिस्तधर्माकडे वळवण्याविषयीं धार्मिक लोकांची इच्छा असे. फ्रान्स देशांत तेराव्या शतकापासून नाटके होत आहेत असें कित्येक म्हणतात. असेल, पण ब्रिटन देशांत बऱ्याच जुन्या काळापासून नाटके तयार होत आहेत. तेराव्या शतकांत एक संवादरूपी काव्य झालें. ते रंगभूमीवर म्हणून दाखवीत असत. पण पुढें १६व्या शतकांत नाटकरूपी ग्रंथ बरेच उदयास आले. त्यावेळेस नाटके होत, त्यांत कांही राजकीय हेतु असे; व बडे लोक तसल्या नाटकांना फार मान देत. राज्यांत अंधाधुंदी व लांच खाणें कितपत आहे, हें उघडकीस आणण्याकरितां ५व्या जेम्साच्या राज्यांत एक खेळ तयार झाला होता. तो पाहण्याकरितां राजा व राणी हीं स्वतः तीनदां गेली होतीं. अश्या प्रकारचीं नाटके करण्याची हल्लीं परवानगी असती तर राज्यांतली अंधाधुंदी मोडण्याचा पुष्कळ संभव रहात असे, त्या काळीं अशीं विनोदपर व हास्यपर नाटके पुष्कळ होत. परंतु १५व्या व १६व्या शतकांमध्ये एक 'कामेडी' व 'ट्राजिडी' याहून तिसऱ्या प्रकारचे नाटक उत्पन्न झालें. त्याला 'हिस्टारिकल' म्हणजे ऐतिहासिक असे नांव दिलें आहे. ह्या प्रकारचें नाटक प्रथम चार्लस विरार्डो ह्यानें ग्रानडामध्ये मूर लोकांचा अपजय ह्या विषयावर रचिलें. हीं ऐतिहासिक नाटके इतिहासाला फारशीं धरून असत, असें नाही. त्यांत कवीच्या पदरचे कांहीं तिखटमीठ पडलें आहे हें स्पष्टच आहे. हीं जशीं खऱ्या इतिहासांतल्या गोष्टींची नाटके, तशीं खोट्या गोष्टी कल्पून व खोटा इतिहास बनवून त्या विषयींची नाटके पुढें होऊं लागलीं. ह्या गोष्टींच्या नाटकांपासून लोकांस फार मौज वाटूं लागली. जागोजाग आश्चर्यस्थळे, उत्साह, व खऱ्या सृष्टीची प्रतिमा लोकांच्या डोळ्यापुढें उभी राही. इंग्लंडात व इतर युरोपांतील सुधारलेल्या देशांत स्त्रिया म्हणजे देव, त्यांचा मान सर्वांनी राखला पाहिजे, कोणी मानहानि केली असतां त्याचा तत्काळ प्राण घ्यावा, असें फार दिवस एक वेड मातलें होतें; व त्याच्या खुणा अद्याप युरोपीयन लोकांत दिसून येतात. ह्या स्वभावामुळे त्यांच्यामध्ये शौर्य व धारिष्ट, हे गुण उत्पन्न झाले होते; व अशा सौंदर्यसंपन्न खऱ्या किंवा कल्पित नायकाच्या संबंधाने जीं नाटके लिहिलीं आहेत तीं फार आनंददायक आहेत. कारण, शृंगार, वीर, करुण इत्यादि नवरसांचे मासले त्या शूर पुरुषांच्या चरित्रांत दाखवितां आले. जुन्या नाटकांतून, स्त्रीपुरुषांची प्रीति दाखवायाची असली तर ती केवळ विषयोपभोगाच्या संबंधानें दाखवीत; व स्त्रियांच्या सुंदर देहांवरून

त्यांची किंमत करीत असें समजतें. स्त्रीच्या अंतःकरणांतले संकल्प विकल्प, इच्छा, प्रीति, ममता व स्नेह ह्यांचा ते फारसा विचार करीत नसत, आणि त्यामुळे स्त्रियांविषयीं फारसा मान प्राचीन लोकांमध्ये नसे. पण हल्लीं पुरुषांच्या मनोवृत्तीमध्ये फेरफार झाल्यामुळे स्त्रियांची योग्यता उत्तरोत्तर वाढत चालली आहे; व पुष्कळ अंशी स्त्रियांचें अबलात्व जाऊन सबलत्व येण्याची चिन्हें दिसत आहेत, ही आनंदाची गोष्ट आहे.

फ्रान्स देशांत पुढे कार्नील कवीनें नाटकांची पुष्कळ सुधारणा केली. इंग्लंडांत ऐतिहासिक नाटकांची फार आवड उत्पन्न झाली व त्यांनी स्पेन देशांतील पुष्कळ रीति भाती, व गोष्टी आपल्या नाटकांत घेतल्या. इलिजाबेथ राणीच्या राज्यांत स्पेनच्या फिलीपाशीं पुष्कळ लढाया झाल्या त्यामुळे, व मेरी, इलिजाबेथची वडील बहिण, हिच्या वेळेस दोन्ही देशांचा निकट संबंध झाला ह्यामुळे, इंग्लिश लोकांना स्पानिश लोकांपासून पुष्कळ गोष्टी घेतां आल्या; व त्यांवरून इंग्रजी नाटकांत सुधारणा करतां आली. इतली देश सर्व नवीन प्रकारच्या नाटकांचें जन्मस्थान, असें कित्येक लोक म्हणतात. इतलीमध्ये नाटकांचा एक चवथा प्रकार उत्पन्न झाला त्याला 'आपेरा' असें म्हणतात. 'आपेरा' म्हणजे नृत्य व गायन हींच ज्यांत प्रधान आहेत अशी नाटके. आपल्या देशांतील तमाशांची बरीच सुधारण केली तर त्यांस आपेराची योग्यता येईल असें आम्हांस वाटतें. अशा जातीच्या आपेऱ्यानें मनाचें रंजन होतें. एवढेंच नाही; पण पोषाकांनी व गायनांमग अगदी लुब्ध होऊन जातें. हिंदुस्थानांतील अथवा भरतखंडांतील नाटकाचा इतिहास फार थोडा आहे. संवादरूपानें लिहिलेलीं अशीं पुराणें पुष्कळ, आदि काव्य रामायण हें एक नाटकासारखेंच आहे. निबंधाच्या पहिल्या प्रकरणांत रामायण-भारतांना नावलें असें नांव दिलें. नाटक म्हणजे नावलाचें अन्य स्वरूप आहे असेंही आम्हीं पूर्वी म्हटलें ह्याचें कारण, जसें नाटकांत तसें नावलांत, विषय, नायक, व रस ह्यांची आपेक्षा आहेच. भेद इतकाच कीं, नावलांमध्ये पुष्कळ दिवस चालणाऱ्या वृत्तांताची लांबलचक गद्यात्मक हकीकत असते; व नाटकामध्ये मोठ्या इतिहासांतून निवडून घेतलेली थोड्या दिवसांची हकीकत असते. त्यांत चमत्कार तेवढे वर्णिलेले असतात, व बाकीचा कंटाळवाणा वृत्तांत वगळलेला असतो. सर्व भारतापैकीं नारायण भट्टानें १०-१५ दिवसांचा वृत्तांत वेणीसंहार नाटकांत घेतला आहे. मुद्राराक्षस नाटकांत सर्व मौर्यवंशाच्या वृत्तांतापैकीं व नंदाच्या वृत्तांतापैकीं चाणक्य व राक्षस ह्या मंत्र्यांच्या संबंधानें जेवढीं कपटें झालीं, तेवढ्यांची हकीकत घेतली आहे. उत्तररामचरित्रांत शेवटीं सीता अरण्यांत घालविली तेव्हां काय झालें, तेवढ्याचें वर्णन आहे. शाकुंतल नाटकांत शाकुंतलेची व दुष्यंताची भेट व त्या नंतर दुष्यंतानें शाकुंतलेचें निर्भर्त्सन केलें ह्याचेंच मुख्यत्वे वर्णन आहे. विक्रमोर्वशींत, सगळ्या पुरुरवसचरित्रापैकी त्याची व उर्वशीची गाठ, व तदनंतर तिचें अदृश्य होणें ह्याविषयीं वर्णन आहे. असें प्रत्येक नाटकांत काही अल्प कालांत झालेल्या

चमत्कारांचे वर्णन असते. प्रथम पुराणासारिखे कोणी तरी लांब चरित्र लिहितो. त्यांतून एकादा चमत्कारिक भाग घेऊन नाटककार त्याचे नाटक बनवितो. भाषणे जणू प्रत्यक्ष व स्वाभाविकपणे होत आहेत असे दाखविण्याकरिता कांही पद्ये घालतो; त्या ग्रंथास नाटकसंज्ञा प्राप्त होते. ह्या करिता नाटक नावलांपासून उत्पन्न झाले असे म्हणण्यास काय हरकत आहे? डाक्टर भाऊ म्हणतात की कालिदास अथवा मंत्रिगुप्त ख्रिस्ताच्या ६व्या शतकांत झाला. त्या पूर्वी कोणी नाटककार झाले की नाही हे माहित नाही. पुढे ८०० पासून ११व्या शतका पर्यंतच्या अवकाशांत भवभूति, श्रीहर्ष वगैरे पुष्कळ मोठमोठे कवी व नाटककार होऊन गेले. त्यांच्या नाटकांचा 'कामेडी' व 'ट्राजेडी' असा भेद करता येत नाही, तरी त्यांचीं नाटके बहुतेक 'कामेडीच' आहेत. संस्कृत नाटकांचे उलट असे नियम आहेत की, रंगभूमीवर घात, पात, मृत्यु, मैथुन, शिव्याशाप, तुंबल युद्ध, आणि सामान्य गोष्टीपैकीं चावणे, ओरखडणे, मुका घेणे, खाणे, निजणे, नाहणे, व लग्नसोहाळे, ह्या गोष्टी होऊ नयेत. ह्यामुळे सर्व नाटकांना कामेडीचें रूप आले आहे, त्यांत वृत्तांतभाग आहेत म्हणून त्यांस 'हिस्टारिकल कामेडी' म्हणजे 'ऐतिहासिक शृंगारपर नाटक' असे म्हटले असतां चालेल; परंतु ह्यापैकी बहुतेक नाटके अत्यंत मनोवेधक व चिन्ताला आल्हाद देणारी आहेत. इंग्रजीमध्ये शेक्सपीयर कवीची जी शोरी, तीच आपले कालिदास व भवभूती ह्यांची योग्यता. शेक्सपीयर कवीमध्ये एवढे जास्त आहे की त्याने अनेक गोष्टी विषयी नाटके लिहिलीं. एकंदर ३६ नाटके लिहिलीं, त्यामुळे नाना प्राकरचे विषय त्याच्या हातून गेले, व त्याला अनेक चमत्कार करतां आले. त्याच्या नाटकांत 'ट्राजिडी' जातीचीं जी आहेत, त्यामध्ये फार गंभीर कल्पना, थोर आवेश, लोकोत्तर धैर्य, शौर्य, व औदार्य, व जे गुण जितके ह्या सृष्टींत दृष्टीस पडण्याचा संभव आहे, तितके मोठ्या चतुराईने त्याने वर्णिले आहेत; आणि प्रत्यक्ष सृष्टि मनोरुपी मुशींत घालून तिच्या हव्यातण्या प्रतिमा ओतून काढल्या आहेत. अशा कवींचे अवतार फार थोडे. कोणी नवीन विद्वान नाटक लिहू म्हणेल तर त्याने प्रथम इंग्रजींत शेक्सपीयर व तत्समान कवि ह्यांची, व संस्कृतांत कालिदासप्रभृति कवींचीं काव्ये वाचून मोठमोठ्या कल्पना प्रसवण्याची मनाला शक्ति आणली पाहिजे. व खाली लिहिलेले थोडे नियम ही लक्षांत ठेविले पाहिजेत.

१. नाटकामध्ये अनेक गोष्टी घालून उपयोग नाही कारण तितक्या गोष्टीकडे लक्ष ठेविले असतां ते वाटले जाते व मुख्य नायकाला किंवा नायिकेला गौणता येते. मुख्य पात्राच्या गोष्टीला साधनीभूत दुसऱ्या गोष्टी घातल्या असतां चिंता नाही. अथेलो नाटकांत बायकांची गोष्ट व एमिलियाची गोष्ट डेस्डिमोनाच्या गोष्टीला साधनी भूत आहेत. मर्चेट अन् वेनीसमध्ये अन्तोनिओची गोष्ट पोर्शियेच्या गोष्टीला अंगभूत आहे. किंगलियराच्या तिन्ही मुलींचे वृत्तांत बापाच्या वृत्तांताला अंगभूत आहेत. त्यांचे निरनिराळे इतिहास नाहीत. एकाचाच इतिहास

स्पष्ट होण्यासाठी जेथे जेथे दुसऱ्या पात्रांचा इतिहास अवश्य असेल, तेथे तो थोडक्यांत योग्य रीतीने दिला पाहिजे. उत्तररामचरितांत कुशलवांचे वृत्तांत किती थोडक्यांत आले आहेत, व ते देखील अखेरीस राम व सीता ह्यांच्या भेटीकरितां आणले आहेत. शाकुंतलांत सर्वदमनाचा वृत्तांत दुष्यंताच्या व शकुंतलेच्या भेटीकरितां कसा साधनीभूत केला आहे. कोणच्याही नाटकांत मुख्य पात्र एकीकडे ठेऊन दुसऱ्या गौण पात्रांच्या वृत्तांताचा धागा फार लांब ओढीत नेतां कामां नये. आलीकडे झालेल्या मनोरमा नाटकांत, कुशी, गंगू, ठकू, गोदी, अशा चार मुली व आणखीही कांहीं मुली आहेत. त्यांत कुशीचें मनोरमा नांव ठेऊन तिला मुख्य नायिका केली आहे. परंतु दुसऱ्या तीन मुलींचें ही वृत्त अव्वलपासून आखेर पावेतो ओढीत नेलें आहे, व जागोजाग त्यांचें इतकें वर्णन केलें आहे कीं, नाटकांत मुख्य नायिका कोण, व उद्देश काय, हें शेवटचें दोन प्रवेश वाचीपर्यंत लक्षांत येत नाहीं. पुनर्विवाह अवश्य आहे असें दाखविणें होतें तर, मुख्य पात्रावरचा तो प्रसंग फार चमत्कारिक रीतीनें टाळला आहे! मुख्य पात्रावर तो प्रसंग आणून पुनर्विवाह करविला असता तर उद्देश विशेष सफळ झाला असता. व्यभिचारी स्त्रियांना पुनर्विवाह पाहिजे असें दाखविण्यात फारसें पुनर्विवाहाचें महत्त्व राहत नाहीं. स्वैरसकेशा नाटकांत असाच गोंधळ आहे. मुख्य पात्र किंवा नायक कोण, हें कांहींच लक्षांत येत नाहीं. नाटकाचें नांवही विचित्र! नवरा मेल्यावर जितक्या स्त्रिया आपल्या खुशीनें केंस राखतात तितक्यांचा त्यांत वृत्तांत, असें नांवावरून कोणास वाटेल. कोणी म्हणेल कीं एक मुख्य पात्राच्या संबंधानेंच नाटक लिहिलें असतां कंटाळवाणें होईल, ह्या करिता पांच चार भिन्न गोष्टी पाहिजेत. परंतु नाटक करून दाखविण्यामध्ये सदाचरणाची प्रौढी, दुराचाऱ्यांस शिक्षा, द्रव्य लोभापासून परिणाम, व्यभिचाराचें फळ, दुखितांचें दुःख निवारण, जुलुम करण्याबद्दल शासन, किंवा नायकाची नायिकेवर विलक्षण प्रीति, असा कांहीं तरी एक उद्देश पाहिजे, नाहीं तर चित्त व्यग्र होऊन जाते. सर्व प्रकारचें वैचित्र्य ह्या जगतांत आहेच, त्यांतून एक गोष्टीला प्राधान्य देऊन ती नाटककाराने नाटकांत वर्णावी, व नाटकसमयी सर्वांच्या मनोवृत्तींत फेरफार होऊ देऊं नये. कथेकऱ्यानें शोकरसपरिपूर्ण अनुसंधान लावलें व मध्येंच अजागळासारखें कांहीं भाषण केलें तर कसा रसभंग होईल! तसें अनेकविध गोष्टी एकत्र केल्यानें रसभंग होतो.

२. नाटकाचा विषय फार प्रौढ असावा. थोर पुरुषाचें आचरण, पतिव्रता स्त्रियांचा दृढ निश्चय, शूर पुरुषांचीं साहसें, साधूंचीं चरित्रें, उदार पुरुषाचें वर्तन, एकाद्या थोर मनुष्याचा वध, सुंदर स्त्रीपुरुषांची परस्पर प्रीति व त्यांचा बिघाड, ह्या प्रकारचे विषय नाटकाला फार उत्तम. परंतु विषय कसाही असला तरी त्याचें स्वरूप पात्रांच्या कृतीवरून स्पष्ट झालें पाहिजे. ग्रंथकर्त्यानें त्याचें वर्णन देउन उपयोग नाहीं. पात्रांच्या तोंडानें त्याचें फारसें वर्णन देववूनही

उपयोग नाही. पात्रांनी आपण आपल्याशी बोलूनही आपल्या स्वभावाविषयी किंवा मनोरथाविषयी व्याख्यान देणं शोभत नाही. मनोरमा व स्वैरसकेशा ह्या नाटकांत पात्रांचे 'सलिलोकी' म्हणजे स्वतःशी भाषण फार ठिकाणी दिले आहे, त्यामुळे त्यांतला नाटकपणा कांहीं अंशी कमी झाला आहे. संस्कृत नाटकांत व इंग्रजी नाटकांत हे आत्मगत भाषण फार थोडे ठिकाणी आढळते. उत्तररामचरितांत जरा फार आहे. परंतु आमचें मत असें आहे कीं कृति करून दाखविल्यानें जशी कोणचीही गोष्ट ठसते, तशी पोकळ ब्रह्मज्ञानानें ठसत नाही. तसेंच नाटकांतही पात्राच्या तोंडांनं कोणची गोष्ट वदवल्यापेक्षां त्याचे हातून घडवण्याचा प्रसंग आणावा. आणखी,

३. जे विषय नाटकांत वर्णावयाचे ते असे असावे कीं त्या पासून मनाची सुधारणा होईल. शोर पुरुषांचीं चरित्रे वाचल्यापासून मन शोर होतें. शूर व धीर पुरुषांचें चरित्र ऐकिल्यापासून अंतःकरणास शौर्य व धैर्य येतें, साधूंच्या चरित्रांपासून वाचकांच्या अंगीं साधुत्व निपजतें, सुनीति व सद्गुण ह्यांचें वर्णन करणें असल्यास सुनीतीचीं व सद्गुणांचीं उदाहरणें दिलीं पाहिजेत. दुराचारी म्हणजे चोर, दगलबाज, लबाड व व्यभिचारी ह्या लोकांच्या वर्णनापासून सदाचाराची शोरी काय समजणार आहे? आणखी, ज्या लोकांना दुराचाराचा गंधही नाही त्यांच्यापुढें दुराचारी लोकांच्या प्रतिमा उभ्या केल्या असतां त्यांस तिरस्कार येतो, व वर्णनांचाही ते तिरस्कार करितात. आणखी, दुराचाऱ्यांस शासन करण्यापेक्षां सदाचारापासून चांगले परिणाम होतात ते वर्णिले असतां, व सदाचारी लोकांची वाखाणणी केली असतां, चांगुलपणाचें विशेष प्राबल्य होतें. शाळेमध्ये दुष्ट, आळशी, व खोडकर मुलांस शासन करण्यापेक्षां, सुस्वभावी उद्योगी व विनयसंपन्न अशा मुलांस बक्षीस दिल्यापासून विशेष कार्य होतें. ह्याकरितां दुष्ट व हलकट लोकांचा नाटकामध्ये फारसा उल्लेख असूं नये. त्यांपासून अज्ञान वाचणारांचें मन बिघडतें, व सज्ञान वाचणारांस वीट येतो. मनोरमा व स्वैरसकेशा ह्या नाटकांत हलकटपणाचा व दुष्टवर्तनाचा कडेलोट केला आहे. नीच, कपटी, व्यभिचारी लोकांची एक मालिकाच लावली आहे. चांगल्या कुळांतली गंगी सोद्याच्या हातीं कराचीस काढून नेऊन, तिला कस्बीण करून, तिचे करवीं फार निंद्य कर्म करवून, मद्यपानाच्या योगानें तिचा सर्वस्वी नाश केला आहे. व त्या तिच्या नीच अवस्थेचें मोठ्या रसिकपणानें वर्णन केलें आहे. तसेंच गोदीचा नाव्याशीं समागम सांगून तिच्याहातीं गर्भपात करविला आहे. ठकीची तीच अवस्था. सरस्वतीबाई कुटणीचे किती रसिकतेनें वर्णन केलें आहे! स्त्रियांचीं अशीं वर्णनें ऐकून पुरुषांच्या मनाला देखील खेद होतो. बायकांना तिटकारा येईल ह्यांत नवल काय? साध्वी स्त्रिया तर असलीं पुस्तकें फाडून चुलींत टाकतील. स्वैरसकेशा नाटकांतिल कालकशास्त्री काय सद्गुणी मनुष्य!! सर्व दुर्गुणांनीं संपन्न!! हवें तें निंद्य व नीच कर्म करितो, व त्याला नाटकांतलें एक मुख्य पात्र केलें आहे. व त्याच मासल्याचीं सर्व पात्रे आणलेलीं आहेत. तोंडातून काढूं नयेत असे अर्वाच्य शब्द ह्या नाटकांत,

आणि तसल्या नाटकाची दुसरी आवृत्ति लवकरच निघणार आहे असें आम्हीं ऐकितों!! सुनीतीचा व सद्गुणांचा उत्तरोत्तर लोप होत चालला आहे असें एक म्हटलें पाहिजे; अथवा सर्व तमास्वीरांनी त्या पुस्तकाच्या प्रती घेतल्या असें म्हटलें पाहिजे. सारांश सभ्य लोकांनी वाचण्याजोगीं हीं नाटके बिलकुल नाहीत, व आमचे विद्वान बंधू असलीं नाटके रचण्याकडे आपला अमूल्य वेळ खर्च करणार नाहीत अशी आशा आहे.

४. नाटकांमध्ये स्थलाचें ऐक्य असलें पाहिजे; व काळाचें ऐक्य असलें पाहिजे. स्थलाचें ऐक्य म्हटलें म्हणजे, एक गोष्ट एकच ठिकाणीं झालेली पाहिजे, ती चार ठिकाणीं वाटतां कामा नये. एकवेळीं दोन गृहस्थ पुण्यास बोलताहेत व दोन लोणावळ्यास किंवा कल्याणास बोलत आहेत असें दाखवितां कामा नये. कारण वाचणारास किंवा पाहणारास एकदम दुसऱ्या ठिकाणीं नेतों असें सांगणें अम्मळ शोभत नाही, परंतु असें करण्यास फारशी हरकत आहे असें आम्हांस वाटत नाही. कारण रंगभूमीवरचा पडदा खालीं सोडला, किंवा वाचकांनीं अम्मळ थांबलें, म्हणजे हवें तितकें लांब गेल्याची कल्पना करतां येईल.

काळाच्या संबंधानें आमचें हेंच म्हणणें आहे. रंगभूमीवर तीन अथवा चार तास खेळ व्हावयाचा, तेवढ्या वेळांतच झालेली गोष्ट दाखवायला पाहिजे असें नाही. पांच चार वर्षांतली किंवा पंचवीस वर्षांतली गोष्ट असली म्हणजे झालें. त्यांतील मुख्य मुख्य व चमत्कारिक भाग मात्र रंगभूमीवर दाखविले पाहिजे. बारिकसारिक सामान्य गोष्टींनीं पाहणारांस आनंद होत नाही. एवढेंच आहे कीं पुष्कळ दिवस चाललेली गोष्ट तीन चार तासांत करून दाखविली तर विशेषित्त दिसेल म्हणून परिमित काळ पाहिजे. कृतयुगांत आरंभलेली व कलियुगांत संपलेली गोष्ट नाटकांत आणीन म्हटलें तर तें नाटक हास्यास्पद होईल. फार काय १०० वर्षे चाललेली गोष्ट एका नाटकांत आणली तर विलग दिसेल. अति झालें तर एक मनुष्याच्या जन्मापासून मरणापर्यंत झालेला वृत्तांत एका नाटकांत घातला असतां चालेल असें आमचें मत आहे.

वर सांगितलेल्या गुणांनीं युक्त नाटक असेल तर ते जगमान्य होईल ह्यांत संशय नाही. मराठीमध्ये नवीन झालेल्या नाटकांपैकी 'माधवराव', 'नारायणराव', 'जयपाळ', 'झांशीची राणी', ह्यांमधून वर सांगितल्यापैकी कांही गुण आहेत; व तेवढ्यापुरतें तीं मनोरंजन करितात. ह्यापैकी 'माधवराव' नाटकांत रसाविर्भाव, सुंदर भाषा, विषयाची प्रौढी वगैरे गुण फार उत्तम साधले आहेत. परंतु संस्कृत नाटकाच्या भाषांतरांची गणना केली नाही, तर एकही उत्तम नाटक मराठीमध्ये अद्याप झालें नाही. असें कां? विद्वान उत्तरोत्तर होत चालले आहेत, परंतु कोणी मोठे विद्वान याविषयीं फारशी खटपट करित नाहीत. असें नसावें. सर्व प्रकारच्या सुधारणांमध्ये विद्वानांचा पुढें पाय आहे तर ही नाटककला व नावल लिहिण्याची शैली सुधारण्याकडेही

त्यांनीं लक्ष द्यावें असें आम्हांस वाटतें. कोणी विचारील कीं नावलें व नाटकें चांगलीं लिहितां येऊन काय उपयोग आहे? नावलें व नाटकें लिहून मन रिझवणें ह्यापासून देशाची काय सुधारणा होणार आहे? त्या लोकांस आमचा असा प्रतिप्रश्न आहे की तुमचीं बायका मुलें, केवळ लिहितां वाचता येणारे चाकरचुकर, व तुमचे अल्पज्ञानी देशबांधव ह्यांनीं आपला काळ कसा घालवावा? तीं तुमच्याबरोबर नाणीं, ताम्रपट, जुनीं लेणीं, जुन्या चाली रीति, जुनीं माणसें, व जुने लेख ह्यांचा शोध करित बसतील काय? ती तुमच्याप्रमाणे मन म्हणजे अमुक, बुद्धि म्हणजे अमुक, आत्मा म्हणजे अमुक, ब्रह्म म्हणजे तमुक, असा विचार करित बसतील काय? तीं तुमच्याप्रमाणें मनुष्याच्या शरीरांत काय आहे, व इतर प्राण्यांच्या शरीरांत काय आहे, रक्ताभिसरण, श्वासोच्छसन, अन्नपचन ही कशी होतात, प्राणवायूचे धर्म काय, धातूंचे धर्म काय, एकंदर मूल धर्म किती, अमुक वनस्पती किंवा प्राणी ही कोणच्या वर्गातलीं, अमुक खनिजाचे धर्म काय, पृथ्वीच्या पृष्ठभागाखालीं किती निरनिराळे थर आहेत, ह्या गोष्टींची चवकशी करित बसतील काय? कदाचित ताऱ्यांची नांवे माहित करून घेण्याची इच्छा होईल, पण त्यांचीं अंतरे, व त्यांचे विशिष्ट गुरुत्व घोकण्यास त्यांचा कल होईल काय? क्ष, य, काटकोन चौकोन, पराबोला हायपरबोला ह्यांपासून त्यांस काय मौज वाटणार आहे? असे अनेक प्रकारचे जे गूढ व क्लिष्ट उद्योग तुम्ही करितां, त्यांपासून त्यांस आनंद होणार आहे काय? कधी नाही. त्यांचा काळ जाणवला चमत्कारिक गोष्टीच पाहिजेत, आणि त्यांपासून त्यांचें हित व मनोरंजन ही दोन्ही व्हावीं अशी तुमची इच्छा असली तर स्वतः आपण कांहीं सुबोध गोष्टी व नाटकें रचावी अशी आमची विनंति आहे.



जोतीराव फुले

मराठी ग्रंथकारसभेस पत्र

वि. वि. आपलें ता. १३ माहे मजकूरचें कृपापत्रासोबतचें विनंतिपत्र पावलें. त्यावरून मोठा परमानंद झाला. परंतु माझ्या घालमोठ्या दादा, ज्या गृहस्थाकडून एकंदर सर्व मनुष्यांच्या मानवी हक्काविषयीं वास्तविक विचार केला जाऊन ज्यांचे त्यांस ते हक्क त्यांच्यानें खुषीनें व उघडपणें देववत नाहीत, व चालू वर्तनावरून अनुमान केलें असतां पुढेही देववणार नाहीत, तसल्या लोकांनीं उपस्थित केलेल्या सभांनीं व त्यांनीं केलेल्या पुस्तकांतील भावार्थांशीं आमच्या सभांचा व पुस्तकांचा मेळ मिळत नाही. कारण त्यांच्या पूर्वजांनीं आम्हांवर सूड उगविण्याच्या झराद्यानें, आम्हांस दास केल्याचें प्रकर्ण त्यांनीं आपल्या बनावट धर्मपुस्तकांत कृत्रिमानें दडपलें. याविषयीं त्यांच्यातील जुनाट खल्लड ग्रंथ साक्ष देत आहेत. यावरून आम्हां शूद्रादि अतिशूद्रांस काय काय विपत्ति व त्रास सोसावे लागतात, हें त्यांच्यांतील ऊंटावरून शेळ्या वळणाऱ्या ग्रंथकारांस व मोठमोठ्या सभास्थानीं आगांतूक भाषण करणारांस कोटून कळणार ? हें सर्व त्यांच्या सार्वजनिक सभेच्या उत्पादकांस जरी पक्कें माहीत होतें, तरी त्यांनीं फक्त त्यांच्या व आपल्या मुलाबाळांच्या क्षणिक हिताकरितां डोळ्यावर कातडें ओढून त्याला इंग्रज सरकारांतून पेनशन मिळतांच तो पुनः अट्टल जात्याभिमाना, अट्टल मूर्तिपूजक, अट्टल सोवळा बनून आपल्या शूद्रादि अतिशूद्रांस नीच मानूं लागला; व आपल्या पेनशनदात्या सरकारनें बनविलेल्या कागदाच्या नोटीससुद्धा सोवळ्यानें बोट लावण्याचा विटाळ मानूं लागला! अशीच कां शेवटीं ते सर्व आर्य ब्राह्मण या हतभाग्य देशाची उन्नति करणार! असो, आता यापुढें आम्ही शूद्र लोक, आम्हांस फसवून खाणाऱ्या लोकांच्या थापांवर भुलणार नाहीत. सारांश, यांच्यांत मिसळल्यानें आम्हा शूद्रादि अतिशूद्रांचा कांहीं एक फायदा होणें नाही, याबद्दल आमचा आम्हीच विचार केला पाहिजे. अहो, त्या दादांना जर सर्वांची एकी करणें असेल, तर त्यांनीं एकंदर सर्व मानवी प्राण्यांत परस्पर अक्षय बंधूप्रीति काय केल्यानें वाढेल, त्याचें बीज शोधून काढावें व तें पुस्तकद्वारे प्रसिद्ध करावें. अशा वेळीं डोळे झांकणें उपयोगाचें नाही. या उपर त्या सर्वांची मर्जी. हें माझे अभिप्रायादाखल छोटेश्यानी पत्र त्या मंडळीच्या विचाराकरितां तिजकडे पाठविण्याची मेहेरबानी करावी. साधे होके बुद्धेका येह पहिला सलाम लेव.

आपला दोस्त

जोतीराव गो. फुले

(ज्ञानोदय, दि. ११ जून १८८५)

मामा परमानंद यांस पत्र

मुक्काम पुणें त।। २ माहे जून १८८६ ई।।

राजमान्य राजेश्री नारायणराव माधवराव परमानंद मु।। आंबेर

साष्टांग नमस्कार वि. वि. आपलें त।। ३० माहे गुदस्तचे कृपापत्र पावलें. त्याचप्रे।। पुण्याचे हायस्कुलांतील भागवतमास्तर यांनीं शंकर तुकाराम यांनीं छापलेलें पवाड्याचे पुस्तकांतील कांहीं शाहीरांची एक याद मजला आपून दिली, यावरून मी त्यास येक वेळीं कळविलें कीं, सदरचे पवाड्याची प्रत मजजवळ नाहीं आणि ती पाहिल्याशिवाय मला याविषयीं कांहीं कळवितां येत नाहीं. नंतर त्यांनीं तें पुस्तक मला आपून देण्याचें कबूल केलें. परंतु त्यांनीं कबूल केल्याप्रे।। पवाड्याचें पुस्तक आपून दिलें नाहीं. सबब त्याविषयीं मला कांहीं आपल्यास लिहून कळवितां आलें नाहीं.

फितुरी गोपीनाथपंताचे साह्यानें शिवाजीनें दगा करून अफझलखानाचा [वध?] केला तान्हाजी मालुसऱ्यानें घोरपडीचे साह्यानें सिंहगड किल्ला काबीज केला व शिवाजीनें पुण्यांत दरोडा घालून मुसलमान लोकांस कापून काढलें. या सर्वांच्या कच्च्या हकीकतीचे खरे पवाडे माझे पहाण्यांत आले नाहींत. आज दिनपावेतों युरोपियन लोकांनीं जे कांहीं इतिहास तयार केले आहेत, ते सर्व शुद्र आणि अतिशूद्रांची वास्तविक स्थिति ताडून न पहातां [डोळे?] झांकून आर्य भटब्राह्मणांचे ग्रंथावर व भटकामगारांचे सांगण्यावर भरंवसा ठेवून इतिहास तयार केले आहेत. व अलीकडे भटब्राह्मणांची विद्वान पोरेंसोरें नवीन पवाडे करून हळूच मैदानांत आणीत आहेत. त्यापैकीं माझे पहाण्यांतही बरेच आले आहेत आणि त्यांतील शूद्रांनीं कमविलेल्या मोत्यापोंवळ्यांचा चारा चरणारे भागवती, गोब्राह्मणासह दादोजी कोंडदेवास फाजील आगांतुकी करावयास लावल्यामुळें तसल्या बनावट पवाड्यांचा मी संचय केला नाहीं.

आठ वर्षांपूर्वीं जेव्हां मी मुंबईत आपले घरीं भेटावयास आलों होतों, तेव्हां पांचगणीचे पाटील रामपासमक्ष आपल्यास शुद्र शेतकऱ्याचे दैण्यवाण्या स्थितीचा कांहीं देखावा जगापुढें आणणार, म्हणून कबूल केलें होतें. तें त्या देखाव्याचें असूड या नावाचें तीन वर्षांपूर्वीं येक पुस्तक तयार केलें व त्याची येकेक प्रत आपले कलकत्याचे हरभास व अष्टपैलू गवरनर जनरल [साहेब व?] श्रीमान महाराज बडोद्याचे गायकवाड सरकारास पाठविल्या आहेत. आमच्या शूद्रांत भेकडबाहुले छापखानेवाले असल्यामुळें तें पुस्तक छापून काढण्याचे काम तूर्त येके बाजूला ठेविलें आहे. असूडाची प्रत आपल्यास पहाण्याकरितां पाहिजे असल्यास त्याप्रमाणें लिहून आल्याबरोबर त्याची नकल करण्यास लेखक बसवितों. नकल होण्यास सुमारें एकदोन महिने लागतील असा अदमास आहे. कळावें लोभ असावा ही विनंती.

आपला

जोतीराव गोविंदराव फुले

सार्वजनिक सत्य धर्म पुस्तक

यशवंत. प्र. – एकंदर सर्व मुसलमान लोकांनी तर कित्येक मूर्तीपूजक लोकांच्या जुलमानें सुंता करून त्यांस बाटिवलें म्हणूनच धूर्त आर्य भट्टांच्या हेवेखोर ग्रंथांत लेख सांपडतो, तो येणेप्रमाणें “न नीचो यवनात्परः” व मुसलमान लोकांचें कुराण समजूं नये म्हणून त्यांनीं एक शास्त्र मानून नियम करून टाकिला तो असा - “न वदेद्यावनी भाषा कष्टे प्राणगते अपि.”

जोतीराव. उ. – कृत्रिमी आर्य भूदेव नटांच्या अपमत्तलबी बनावट धर्माच्या पाशांत सांपडलेल्या बहुतेक अज्ञानी मूर्तीपूजकांचें कल्याण होण्यासाठीं कित्येक धार्मीक जाहामर्द मुसलमानांनी आपल्या हातावर शिरें घेऊन तलवारीच्या जोरानें त्यांनीं आपल्यासारख्या त्यांच्या सुंता करून त्यांस “बिसमिल्ला हिर रहिमान् निर्हिम” असा महापवित्र कलमा पढवितात व त्यास आपल्या सर्वांच्या सरळ सत्य धर्ममार्गावर नेतात. कारण महंमदी लोकांच्या पवित्र कुराणांत एकंदर सर्व प्राणीमात्रांचा निर्माणकर्ता खुद्द खासा एक आहे आणि याच कारणामुळें त्यास खुदा म्हणतात व त्या खुदानें निर्माण केलेल्या मानवांस एकमेव भावंडांप्रमाणें मानितात. त्याचप्रमाणे एकंदर सर्व मानवांस त्यांचे पवित्र कुराण वाचून पाहण्याची व त्याचप्रमाणें आचरण करण्याची मोकळीक आहे, तसेंच ते सर्वास आपल्या बरोबरीचे हक्क देऊन त्याजबरोबर रोटी व बेटी व्यवहार सुरू करण्याची मोकळीक देतात आणि अखेरीस त्या सर्वास आपल्या सर्वांच्या खुद्द निर्मीकाचे आभार मानण्याकरितां महिझीतींत आपल्याबरोबर घेऊन बसतात.

यशवंत प्र. – एकंदर सर्व मानवांनीं एकमेकांस भावंडांसारखे मानून त्याप्रमाणें आचरण करावें म्हणून त्यांच्या पवित्र कुराणांत जर लेख आहे, तर त्याचप्रमाणें आर्यांचे अथर्व वेदांतसुद्धा तसल्या प्रकारचा श्लोक आहे, तो पुढें देतो.

श्लोक

सहृदयं संमनस्य अविद्वेष कृणोमिवः
 अन्योन्यं अभिहृतं वत्सजातं इवाध्या ।
 अनुव्रतः पितुः पुत्रो मात्रा भवतु सम्मनः
 जायापत्ये मधुमतिं वाचं वदतु शांतिवान् ।
 मा भ्राता भ्रातारं द्विषद् मास्वसारं उतस्वसा
 संम्यंचः सन्नतः भूत्वा वाचं वदत भद्रया ।

अर्थ - एक मनानें व एक अंतःकरणानें तुम्हीं राहावें, कोणी कोणाचा द्वेष करूं नये. नुक्तेंच जन्मलेलें आपलें वत्स पाहून ज्याप्रमाणें गार्डस आनंद होतो, त्याप्रमाणें तुम्हीं

परस्परान्वर प्रेम करा. पुत्रानें पित्याची आज्ञा पालन करावी. मातेशीं एक मनानें वागावें. पत्नीनें पतीशीं ऐक्यानें राहून त्याजशीं सर्वदा मधूर भाषण बोलावें. बंधुभगिनीमध्ये कोणत्याही प्रकारचा द्वेषभाव नसावा. अशाप्रकारें गोड बोलून ऐक्य रक्षण करावें.

जोतीराव. प्र. - त्यांनीं या वेळेस पुढें आणलेला तशाप्रकारचा अथर्व वेदांत जर श्लोक होता, तर निर्दय आर्यांच्या कारकीर्दीत शूद्रादि अतिशूद्रांसह म्लेंच्छ वगैरे लोकांस निराळे भिन्न जातीचे समजून तुच्छ मानून त्यांचा छळ करण्याची वहिवाट आपले आपण पडली असावी काय ?

यशवंत. उ. - पूर्वीपासून आजतागायित धूर्त आर्य भट्टांनी आपल्या अपवित्र सोवळ्यात वेदांस छपवून ठेविलें होतें म्हणून असा अनर्थ घडून आला.

जोतीराव. उ. - पूर्वी धूर्त आर्य भट्ट ब्राह्मणांच्या कारकीर्दीत दासानुदास केलेल्या शूद्रादि अतिशूद्रांस त्यांच्या वेदांतील एक शब्दसुद्धां ऐकू देत नसत आणि या निःपक्षपाति इंग्रज बहादुरांच्या राज्यांत वेदांतील वाक्यें बापुड्या लोटन खबुत्रासारखी तुच्छ मानलेल्या शूद्रादि अतिशूद्रांचे चरणाजवळ गडबडा लोळावयास धूर्त आर्यांनीं लावलीं आहेत, आतां त्यांची वेदरूपी काळी चिंधी आम्हां शूद्रादि अतिशूद्रामध्यें नको.

यशवंत. प्र. - तें कसें कां होईना, परंतु आपल्या धर्मशील जाहांमर्द मुसलमानांनी, शूद्रादि अतिशूद्रांस धूर्त आर्य भट्टांच्या कृत्रिमी दासत्वांतून कां मुक्त केलें नाहीं ?

जोतीराव. उ. - धूर्त आर्य भट्टांनी आपल्या सोवळ्यांत लपवून ठेवलेल्या त्यांच्या वेदाचा तपास काढून त्यांतील एकंदर सर्व खोटसाळपणा तपासून शूद्रादि अतिशूद्रांस मुसलमान करून त्या सर्वास आपल्यासारखा पवित्र मानवी अधिकाराचा उपभोग घेण्यास लावले नाहीं म्हणून असा अनर्थ घडून आला, ही सर्व बेफाम मुसलमानांची चूक आहे म्हणून मी कबूल करितों.

यशवंत. प्र. - धूर्त आर्य भट्ट केवळ मूठभर असतां त्यांचे वेद तपासून पाहाण्यास तुमचे जाहांमर्द मुसलमान लोक आर्य धर्मातील अति कोपीष्ट ऋषी मंडळाचे शापास भ्याले असावे.

जोतीराव. उ. - मुसलमान लोक जर त्यांच्या धूर्त आर्य ऋषींच्या शापास भिणारे असते, तर त्यांनीं त्यांच्या सोरटी सोमनाथाच्या मूर्तीचे तुकडे तुकडे केले नसते. परंतु ते थोडेसे ऐश्वर्याच्या मदांत बेफाम झाले असतां अति पटाईत मुकुंदराज, ज्ञानेबा, रामदास वगैरे ब्रह्मवृंदांतील महाधूर्त साधूंनी कल्पित भागवतांतील कावेबाज अष्टपैलू काळ्या कृष्णानें कुतर्कभरीत गीतेंत पार्थास उपदेश केलेला मात्र उचलून त्यांनीं प्राकृत भाषेंत विवेकसिंधु, ज्ञानेश्वरी, दासबोध वगैरे अनेक प्रकारचे थोतांडी ग्रंथ रचून त्या सर्वांचे कपटजालांत अक्षरशून्य शिवाजीसारख्या महावीरास फसवून त्यास मुसलमान लोकांचे पाठलाग करावयास लाविलें. यामुळें मुसलमान

लोकांस एकंदर सर्व महाधूर्त आर्यांचें कूट बाहेर पाडण्यास फुरसतच झाली नाही. असें जर नाही म्हणावें, तर मुसलमान लोक या देशांत येण्याच्या संधीस धूर्त आर्य मुकुंदराजास शूद्रादि अतिशूद्रांची दया येऊन त्यानें त्याजकरितां प्राकृत विवेकसिंधु त्याचवेळीं कां केला ? यांतील कावेबाजी अशी आहे कीं, अज्ञानी शूद्रादि अतिशूद्रांनीं मुसलमान होऊन धूर्त आर्य भट्टांच्या मतलबी धर्माची फटफजीती करूं नये. सारांश - मुसलमान लोकांस ह्या महाधूर्त आर्य ब्राह्मणांचें कूट बाहेर पाडण्यास जर फुरसत झाली असती, तर त्यांनीं त्यांच्या वेदांसह एकंदर सर्व पुस्तकांच्या पिंजाऱ्यासारख्या फुसड्या फुसड्या करून उधडून त्यांची धुळधाणी केली असती.

यशवंत. प्र. - मुसलमानासारखे धूर्त आर्य भट्ट ब्राह्मण त्यांचे पवित्र वेद बाहेर काढून एकंदर सर्व मानवी प्राण्यांस वाचून पाहाण्याची मनाई कां करितात ? यांतील इंगीत काय आहे हे आम्हांस कळवाल, तर बरें होईल.

जोतीराव. उ. - धूर्त आर्य भट्ट ब्राह्मणांनीं आजपावेतों मोठी कावेबाजी करून त्यांनीं आपले खल्लड जुनाट वेद बाहेर काढले नाहीत, म्हणून त्यांस शूद्रादि अतिशूद्रांबरोबर मोठ्या शेखीनें पोकळ पत्राज करितां येती. धूर्त आर्यांनीं जर वेदांचीं भाषांतरें करून सर्व लोकांत प्रसिद्ध केलीं असतीं, तर एकंदर सर्व शूद्रादि अतिशूद्रांसह म्लेंच्छ वगैरे लोकांनी धूर्त ब्राह्मणांची हुऱ्याहुऱ्या करून त्यांस मांगामहारांचीं कामें हौसेनं करावयास लावलीं असतीं. कारण धूर्त आर्य ब्राह्मणांनीं या बलिस्थानांत जेव्हां जेव्हां स्वाऱ्या केल्या, तेव्हां तेव्हां आर्यांनीं येथील मूळच्या क्षत्रियांस कसकसे रसातळीं घालून त्या सर्वांस कसकसा त्रास दिला, याविषयीं त्यांच्या वेदांत कोठे कोठे मागमूस लागतो; व यावरून एकंदर सर्व शूद्रादि अतिशूद्रांस आर्यांचें कपट समजल्याबरोबर ते त्यांच्याबरोबर चोरून छपून रोटीव्यवहार न करितां त्यांची सावलीसुद्धां आपल्या अंगावर पडूं देणार नाहीत असें मी खात्रीनं भविष्य करितों. पाण्यांत वेदरूपी म्हैस आणि तिचें मोल धूर्त आर्यभट्ट कसें करितात, ही कोणत्या गांवची नीति म्हणावी ?

यशवंत प्र. - सारांश वरून तुमच्या मते नीति तरी कशास म्हणावी ?

जोतीराव. उ. - आपल्या सर्वांच्या निर्मीकास संतोष देण्यासाठीं सार्वजनीक सत्याचें भय मनीं धरून जो कोणी इतर मानव बांधवांबरोबर आचरण करील, त्यास नीति म्हणावी, मग तो खिस्ती असो, महमदी असो, सत्यशोधक समाजीयन असो अथवा एखादा गावंढेकरी अज्ञानी असो.

तर्क

गुंडीराम धोंडीराम प्रवाशी. प्र. – तर्क या शब्दाचे किती अर्थ होतात ?

जोतीराव गोविंदराव फुले. उ. – तर्क या शब्दाचे तीन प्रकारचे अर्थ होतात. पहिला प्रकार – प्रत्यक्ष कर्त्यावरून कर्माचें आणि कर्मावरून कर्त्याचे ज्ञान होतें. दुसरा प्रकार – पदार्थाच्या लक्षण दर्शनांवरून कर्माचें जे ज्ञान होतें तें. तिसरा प्रकार – अनेक गोष्टींविषयी अनेक प्रकारचे मात्र अंतः करणाचें आकार म्हणजे तरंग होतात, ज्यामध्ये निश्चयरूपता असत नाही.

गुंडीराम. प्र. – पहिला प्रकार – कर्त्यावरून कर्माचे आणि कर्मावरून कर्त्याचें ज्ञान होतें तें कसें ?

जोतीराव. उ. – कातणीनें जाळें केले, पाकोळीनें कोठें बांधिलें आणि मनुष्यानें शस्त्र केले या वाक्यांत जाळें, कोठें आणि शस्त्र यांचे कर्ते कातन, पाकोळी आणि मनुष्य व त्याचप्रमाणें कातन, पाकोळी आणि मनुष्य यांचें कर्म जाळें, कोठें आणि शस्त्र होत, असें ज्ञान होतें.

गुंडीराम. प्र. – दुसरा प्रकार – पदार्थाच्या लक्षण दर्शनावरून कर्माचें जे ज्ञान होतें तें कसें ?

जोतीराव. उ. – आपणांस कर्त्याच्या लक्षणावरून कर्माचें ज्ञान होतें. यावरून त्यांचे कर्ते अदृश्य असावेत असें अनुमान होतें. जसें वायूनें जहाज बुडालें, विजेनें मनुष्य मेली आणि मनानें कुतर्क घेतले या वाक्यांत जहाज, मनुष्य आणि कुतर्क यांचे कर्ते वायु, वीज आणि मन होत व त्याचप्रमाणें वायु, वीज आणि मन ह्यांचें कर्म जहाज, मनुष्य आणि कुतर्क होत. असें ज्ञान होतें.

गुंडीराम. प्र. – तिसरा प्रकार – अनेक गोष्टींविषयी अनेक प्रकारचे जे अंतःकरणाचे आकार म्हणजे तरंग होतात, ज्यामध्ये निश्चयरूपता असत नाही, त्याविषयी कसें ?

जोतीराव उ. – ज्यामध्ये कर्त्यावाचून कर्म असतें व त्याच्या साक्षात्काराविषयी अथवा लक्षणाविषयी कांहींच ज्ञान होत नाही. जे पहावें तें सर्व अनुमानानें वाटेल तसें भंगडासारखें स्वकपोलकल्पित केलेलें असतें, त्याविषयी महाभारतांतील धूर्त आर्यभट्टांनीं अज्ञानी जनांपासून आपला मतलब साधून हित होण्यासाठी आपल्या सर्वांच्या निर्माणकर्त्याच्या जागीं लटकेच अष्टपैलू बाळबोध काळ्या कृष्णास कल्पून त्यानें लोभी अर्जुनास बोध केला होता, ज्यास गीता म्हणतात व पुढें कांही काळानें जेव्हां जाहांमर्द मुसलमान लोकांचें या देशांत राज्य झालें तेव्हां अज्ञानी शूद्रादि अतिशूद्र पवित्र कुराणांतील सार्वजनीक सत्य पाहून मुसलमान होऊं लागतील, या भयास्तव धूर्त देशस्थ आळंदीकर ज्ञानोबानें तो गीतेतील बोध उचलून

त्याच्यावर ज्ञानेश्वरी नांवाचा ग्रंथ केला. तो सर्व अक्षरशः वाचून पाहिल्याबरोबर धूर्त आर्य धर्माचें पाचपेचीं आंधळें भारुड सर्व लोकांच्या ध्यानांत सहज येईल ?

गुंडीराम. प्र. – त्याविषयीं येथें थोडक्यांत विवेचन करण्याची कृपा कराल तर बरें होईल.

ज्ञानेश्वरी, बारावा अध्याय

जोतीराव. उ. – ज्ञानेश्वरी अध्याय १२ वा ॥ जो सर्व भूतांचे ठायीं ॥ द्वेषातें नेणेचि कांहीं ॥ आप-परू जया नाहीं ॥ चैतन्या जसें ॥ १ ॥ असा खरोखरच समज जर बाळबोध कृष्णाजीचा होता, तर त्यानें पांडवांस मदत करून त्यांच्या हातून कौरवांचा मोड करवून त्यांचा सत्यानास करविला नसता हें जें त्याचें करणें आपल्या सर्वांच्या निर्मीकास तर शोभणार नाहीच; परंतु त्यानें निर्माण केलेल्या जंगली रानवट मानवांससुद्धां तसें करणें आवडणार नाहीं ॥ उत्तमातें धरिजे ॥ अधमातें अद्धेरिजे ॥ हें कांहींच नेणीजे ॥ वसुधा जेवी ॥ २ ॥ असा खरोखर समज जर बाळबोध कृष्णाजीचा होता, तर त्यानें धर्मराजास मान देऊन त्याचा सर्वोपरी सत्कार केला नसता. हें त्याचें पक्षपाती आचरण जंगली मानवांससुद्धां आवडणार नाहीं ॥ गाईची तृषा हरूं ॥ व्याघ्रा विष होऊन मारूं ॥ ऐसे नेणेचिगा करूं ॥ तोय जैसे ॥ असा खरोखर समज जर बाळबोध कृष्णाजीचा होता, तर त्यानें काळीयाचें मर्दन केलें नसतें ॥ तैसी अवधिया भूतमात्री ॥ एकपणें जगा मैत्री ॥ कृपेसी धात्री ॥ आपण जो ॥ ५ ॥ असा खरोखर समज जर बाळबोध कृष्णाजीचा होता, तर त्यानें शिशुपालाशीं लग्न होणाऱ्या रुक्मीणीस चोरून नेऊन तिजबरोबर राक्षसविवाह लाविला नसता ॥ आणि मी हें भाष नेणे ॥ माझें कांहीचि न म्हणे ॥ सुख दुःख जाणणे ॥ नाहीं जया ॥ ६ ॥ असा जर खरोखर समज बाळबोध कृष्णाजीचा होता, तर त्यानें द्रौपदीवस्त्रहरणाच्या वेळीं बहुरुष्यासारखें कपटानें द्रौपदीस साह्य केलें नसतें ॥ वर्षीयेवीण सागरू ॥ जैसा जळें निर्भरू ॥ तैसा निरुपचारू ॥ संतोषी जो ॥ ७ ॥ असा खरोखर समज जर बाळबोध कृष्णाजीचा होता, तर त्यानें कालयवनाचा कपटानें वध करविला नसता. हें त्याचें कृत्य जंगली रानवट मानवाससुद्धां सुचलें नसतें ॥ व्यापक आणि उदास ॥ जैसें कां आकाश ॥ तैसें जयाचें मानस ॥ सर्वत्रगा ॥ ९ ॥ खरोखर व्यापक जर बाळबोध कृष्णाजीचें मन होतें, तर त्याचा प्रद्युम्न नामक पुत्र जेव्हां शंबर नामक दैत्यानें चोरून नेला तेव्हां त्याचें व्यापकत्व झोपी गेलें होते काय ? व त्यानें नरकासुराच्या सात हजार पुत्रांसह त्यास मारिलें हें कसें ? संसार व्यथें फिटला ॥ जो नैराश्यें विनटला ॥ व्याधा हातोनी सुटला ॥ विहंगम जैसा ॥ १० ॥ अशी जर बाळबोध कृष्णाजीची आर्य संन्याशासारखी वृत्ति होती, तर त्यानें सोळा सहस्र एकशत अष्ट नारींबरोबर मजा मारून यादवकुळांत संतती वाढवून त्या सर्वांची यादवी करून आपसांत नाश करविला नसता ॥ जो आत्मलाभासारिखें ॥ गोमटें कांहींचि

न देखे ॥ म्हणोनि भोग विशेखें ॥ हरीखेना जो ॥ ११ ॥ पहिल्या ओवीपासून सातव्या ओवीपर्यंत विचार केला असतां, केवळ पोकळ आत्मज्ञान करून घेतल्यानें आत्म्याचा उद्धार होऊन त्याची सद्गती होते, परंतु त्याच्या आत्म्यास उदयास आणणाऱ्या देहास काय लाभ प्राप्त होणार? याविषयीं कृष्णाजींनीं गीतेत कांहींच म्हटलें नाहीं हें कसें? कारण, देहच जर नसता तर आत्मा बिचारा कोठून आला असता? ॥ कां घरीचिया उजेड करावा ॥ परखिया अंधार पाडावा ॥ हें नेणेचि गा पांडवा ॥ दीप जैसा ॥ १७ ॥ परंतु दिव्याच्या बुडाखालीं अंधार असतो हें बाळबोध कृष्णाजीस कसें माहीत नव्हतें; कारण त्या वेळीं पारदर्शक बिल्होरी हंड्या नव्हत्या ॥ जो खांडावया घाव घाली ॥ का लावणी जयानें केली ॥ दोघा एकचि साउली ॥ वृक्ष दे जैसा ॥ १८ ॥ या जगांत कित्येक विषारी झाडें आहेत आणि त्यांच्या योगानें तळें वगैऱ्यांतील पाणी बिघडतें व तें विषारी पाणी प्यालाबरोबर निरपराधी जनांस विकार करून त्यांचा प्राण घेतें, हें कसें? ॥ नातरी इक्षुदंडु ॥ पाळि तया गोडु ॥ गाळी तया कडु ॥ नोहेचि जेवीं ॥ १९ ॥ माळीं उसाच्या लावण्या करून त्यास जेव्हां पाणी देतात, तेव्हां ते माळ्यांच्या डोळ्यांस पानाचे सपके मारून त्यांचे डोळे विनाकारण घायाळ करितात हें कसें? ॥ तिही ऋतु समान ॥ जैसे का गगन ॥ तैसा एकचि मान ॥ शितोष्णी जया ॥ २१ ॥ आकाशांत जसजसें उंच जावें, तसतसें जास्ती शीत अनुभवास येतें. याविषयीं बाळबोध कृष्णाजीस अनुभव नव्हता काय? ॥ माधुर्ये चंद्रिका ॥ सरिसी रायारंका ॥ तैसा जो सकळिका ॥ भूता समू ॥ २३ ॥ चंद्राच्या संबंधानें जेव्हां समुद्रास भरत्या व ओहोट्या येतात तेव्हां नित्य किती किटकांचा नाश होतो, ह्याविषयी बाळबोध कृष्णाजीस माहिती नसावी काय? ॥ अघविया जगा एक ॥ सेव्य जैसे उदक ॥ तैसे जयाचे तीन्ही लोक ॥ आकाक्षिती ॥ २४ ॥ पृथ्वीतील ज्यास उदक रॉक आईल म्हणतात त्याचे तिन्ही लोक सेवन करण्यास इच्छित नाहींत, हें कसें? ॥ जो यथालाभें संतोखे ॥ अलाभे न पारुखे ॥ पाऊसेवीण न सुके ॥ समुद्र जैसा ॥ २७ ॥ पर्जन्याची अनावृष्टि झाल्यामुळें समुद्र कांहीं सुकत नाही त्याचप्रमाणे पर्जन्याची अतिवृष्टी झाल्यामुळें समुद्र कांहीं वाढत नाहीं, तो दोन्ही वेळेस सारखा समान असतो, हें कसें? ॥ आणि वायुसि एके ठायीं ॥ बिदार जैसे नाहीं ॥ तैसा न धरीच कांहीं ॥ आश्रम जो ॥ २८ ॥ वायू भरीव वस्तूंच्या ठिकाणीं रहात नाहीं; परंतु तो एकंदर सर्व पोकळींत आश्रम करून राहतो, हें निर्वीवाद आहे ॥ हें विश्वचि माझें घर ॥ ऐशी मती जयाचि स्थीर ॥ किंबहुना चराचर ॥ आपण जहाला ॥ २९ ॥ मग यावरिहि पार्था ॥ माझ्या भजनीं आस्था ॥ तरी तयाते मी माथां ॥ मुकूट करी ॥ ३० ॥ स्थीर मतीनें विश्व हें आपलें घर मानून, किंबहुना जो कोणी मानवप्राणी चराचर जर झाला, तर त्यानें पोकळ कृष्णाच्या भजनाची आस्था तरी कशासाठीं करावी? कारण त्याचें ह्याच अध्यायांतील

पहिल्या ओवीपासून सातव्या ओवीपर्यंत आचरण जर सतत कायम रहातें, तर त्यांत पाप अथवा पुण्य आचरल्यानें कांहींच कमज्यास्ती होत नाहीं.

ज्ञानेश्वरी, तेरावा अध्याय

तेराव्या अध्यायांतील सातव्या व आठव्या ओवींतला अभिप्राय ज्या कोणास सर्वज्ञता आल्याबरोबर त्याचा महिमा वाढेल, या भयास्तव त्यानें वेड्याचें सोंग घेणें व त्यानें आपला चतुरपणा आवडीनें लपविण्यासाठी पिसा होणें, हें बाराव्या अध्यायांतील दुसऱ्या ओवीस अगदीं विरुद्ध आहे. तेराव्या अध्यायांतील विसावी ओवी ॥ तरी अहिंवासा बहुतापरी ॥ बोलीली असें अवधारी ॥ आपुल्या मतांतरी ॥ निरूपिली ॥ २० ॥ असे शब्द वापरले नसते व यावरून जगांतील इतर धर्माविषयीं बाळबोध कृष्णाजीस कांहींच माहीत नव्हतें, असें सिद्ध होतें. कारण तसें असतें तर कृष्णाजीनें “आपुल्या मतांतरी निरूपिली ॥” असें शब्द वापरले नसते व त्याचप्रमाणें धूर्त आर्यांचे मीमांसा ग्रंथांतील आधार त्यानें पुढें केला नसता. बाराव्या अध्यायांतील ॥ हें विश्वची माझे घर ॥ ऐशी मती जयाचि स्थीर ॥ किंबहुना चराचर ॥ आपण जहाला ॥ २१ ॥ असें असतां तेराव्या अध्यायांत ॥ अहो वसती धवळारे ॥ मोडूनी केली देऊळी देव्हारे ॥ नागुनि व्यहारे ॥ गवादी घातली ॥ ३१ ॥ यावरून अष्टपैलू कृष्णाजी निवळ मूर्तीपूजक होता, असें सिद्ध होतें. बाराव्या अध्यायांतील पहिल्या ओवीपासून सातव्या ओवीपर्यंत आर्यांच्या देवाचें आचरण जर ठाम आहे, तर काळाच्या मुखांत जाणत्या धूर्त आर्य मानवांस गुरू करण्याचें काय प्रयोजन? तेराव्या अध्यायांतील ॥ स्वशिखराचा भारू ॥ नेणें जैसा मेरू ॥ कीं धरा यज्ञ सुकरू ॥ वोझे न म्हणे ॥ ७९ ॥ सूकर यानें आपल्या दातांवर पृथ्वी धरली त्यावेळीं त्यास कांहीं ओझे झालें नाहीं व त्याचप्रमाणें सूकराचा धाकटा भाऊ कृष्णाजी यानें गोवर्धन पर्वत उचलून त्यास आपल्या करंगळीवर धरला तेव्हां त्यास ओझे झालें नाहीं. यांत नवल तें कोणतें? ॥ उदयिजतां बोधार्का ॥ बुद्धीची डाळ सात्विका ॥ भरोनिया त्र्यंबका ॥ लाखोली वाहे ॥ ११० ॥ ही बाराव्या अध्यायांतील साहाय्या ओवीस अगदीं विरुद्ध आहे ॥ मृत जैसा शृंगारिला ॥ गाढव तीर्थी न्हाणिला ॥ कडु दुधीया माखिला गुळें जैसा ॥ १४४ ॥ गाढवानें जर तीर्थी स्नान केलें, तर त्यास कांहीं पवित्रता येत नाहीं. यावरून धूर्त आर्यांतील तिर्थाचा बडीवार तो काय? सारांश-सुज्ञ जनांस माहिती होण्याकरितां नमुन्यासाठी आर्य ज्ञानोबाचे ज्ञानेश्वरींतील निराधार तर्कांचे फारच थोडे वेंचे घेऊन त्यांचें कामापुरतें खंडण करून हा विषय येथें तूर्त संपवितों.



गोपाळ गणेश आगरकर

विकारविलसित

प्रस्तावना

अलीकडे लोकांस वाचनाची अभिरुची लागल्यामुळे नवीन नवीन पुस्तके तयार होऊ लागली आहेत व नवीन पुस्तके तयार होऊ लागल्यामुळे वाचनाची अभिरुची वाढत चालली आहे. वाचनाची अभिरुची लागणे आणि पुस्तके तयार होणे, या दोहोंचा अन्योन्य कार्यकारणसंबंध आहे. पहिले दुसऱ्यास आणि दुसरे पहिल्यास नेहमी सहायभूत असते. आता अमुक एक प्रकारचीच पुस्तके तयार व्हावी व दुसऱ्या प्रकारची होऊ नयेत, हे लोकांच्या आवडीनावडीवर व गरजेवर अवलंबून असते. बाजारात ज्या मालाचा विशेष खप तो माल उत्पन्न करण्याकडे लोकांचे विशेष लक्ष; ज्याला गिऱ्हाडक नाही तो उत्पन्न करण्याची कोणी पर्वा करित नाही हे स्वाभाविक आहे. कोणी झाला तरी त्याला आपल्या श्रमाचे फळ हे पाहिजेच; म्हणून ज्या पुस्तकापासून पुस्तककर्त्यास अर्थप्राप्ती होण्याचा संभव नाही अशी पुस्तके जन्मास येत नाहीत यात नवल ते कोणते? प्रस्तुत काली मोठमोठ्या हुद्द्याच्या नोकऱ्या व मोठमोठे किताब हे राजविद्या शिकल्यानेच प्राप्त होणारे असल्यामुळे महाराष्ट्र भाषेत कठीण कठीण शास्त्रीय विषयांवर नवीन पुस्तके करण्याकडे किंवा झालेली वाचण्याकडे पुष्कळांचे पूर्ण दुर्लक्ष असते. आता वास्तविक रीतीने पाहिले तर यात काही वावगे नाही; कारण, ज्याला ज्या गोष्टीपासून फायदा नाही त्याने ती कशासाठी करावी? अर्थात् करू नये व कोणी करितही नाही; आणि म्हणूनच सध्या जी पुस्तके बाहेर येतात त्यांपैकी फारच थोड्यांत राजकीय किंवा शास्त्रीय विषयांचे विवरण असते. शेकडा निदान पाऊणशेतरी केवळ मनोरंजनासाठी लिहिलेली असतात. त्यातही कादंबऱ्यांना आणि नाटकाला विशेष दर! निदान इतरांपेक्षा तरी अधिक! तशात **आर्योद्धारकवाल्यांनी** आणि **संगीतवाल्यांनी** नाटकप्रयोग पाहण्याची चटक लावून दिल्यामुळे म्हणता म्हणता दोन-चार नाटके छापून प्रसिद्ध झाली व आणखीही होतील! असो; हे सर्व सांगण्याचे कारण एवढेच की गतवर्षी कोल्हापूरप्रकरणास सुरवात होऊन पैशाची चणचण झाली, त्या वेळेस आपले आपल्यास काही साहाय्य करता आले तर पहावे व ते करण्यास एखादे नाटक लिहिण्याखेरीज सुलभतर उपाय दिसेना, म्हणून १८८२ च्या एप्रिल महिन्यात प्रस्तुत पुस्तकास मी आरंभ केला, व ऑगस्ट महिन्यात डोंगरीवर असता ते तडीस नेले. पुस्तककर्त्याच्या मनाला जी शांतता असावी ती गेल्या वर्षाच्या पहिल्या

नऊ महिन्यांत आमच्या मनाला न मिळाल्यामुळे हे पुस्तक माझ्या हातून जितके वटेल असे मला वाटत होते तितके वटले नाही हे माझे मीच कबूल करतो. शिवाय, हे भाषांतर अशा अडचणीत करण्यात असा हेतू नव्हता की ते ताबडतोब छापून त्यापासून पैसा उत्पन्न करावा; तर **आर्योद्धारक** मंडळीकडून त्याचे चार-दोन प्रयोग करवून त्याचे उत्पन्न होईल ते **केसरी** फंडाकडे लावावे असा होता. त्यामुळे भाषांतर करण्यास हवा तितका वेळ मिळाला नाही, इतकेच नाही, तर परक्या भाषेतील नाटकांची भाषांतरे कोणत्या रीतीने करावीत याविषयी माझी जी मते आहेत, व ज्यांच्या संबंधाने मी पुढे लिहिणार आहे, ती माझी मला हवी तशी अमलात आणता आली नाहीत. या कारणाने व भाषांतर करित असता ज्या पुस्तकांची मदत पाहिजे होती ती न मिळाल्याने फार त्रास पडला. कोणतेही पुस्तक लिहीत असता जी साधने पाहिजेत जी अनुकूल असल्याने ते जसे उतरते तसे ते मागून काही केले तरी उतरत नाही हे सर्वास विश्रुत आहेच; तथापि ते छापू लागण्यापूर्वी माझ्याने जितके दुरुस्त करवले तितके मी केले आहे. या कामात आमचे मित्र रा. रा. नारायण गोपाळ फाटक, बी.ए.एल्.एल्.बी. यांनी मला अंतःकरणपूर्वक पुष्कळ साहाय्य दिले, त्याबद्दल मी त्यांचा अत्यंत आभारी आहे. तसेच रा. म. शि. गोळे, बी. ए., रा. वा. शि. आपटे, एम. ए., रा. वा. बा. केळकर, बी. ए., व रा. बा. गं. टिळक, बी. ए. एल्. एल्. बी., यांनी वेळोवेळी ज्या सूचना केल्या त्याबद्दल मी त्यांचाही आभारी आहे.

मराठी भाषेच्या शुद्ध लेखनाचे नियम अद्यापि व्हावे तसे कायमचे झाले नसल्यामुळे व या पुस्तकाची शेवटची प्रुफे वेळोवेळी निरनिराळ्या हातून गेली असल्यामुळे यांतील शुद्ध लेखनास काही धरबंद नाही असे वाचकांस वाटण्याचा संभव आहे. पण याबद्दल ते मला दोष न देता भाषेच्या अपूर्ण व्याकरणाला जबाबदार धरतील अशी आशा आहे. 'कांही', 'वस्त्रें', 'मी पराक्रम केला' अशा ठिकाणी अनुस्वार देण्यास कोणी चुकतो असे नाही; पण 'वेडावांकडां', 'धांवला' 'ठोंकणें', 'तुड्यावांचून', अशा ठिकाणच्या अनुस्वारांविषयी पुष्कळ मतभेद आहे व त्यामुळे या पुस्तकात निरनिराळ्या वादग्रस्त ठिकाणी निरनिराळे शुद्ध लेखन आढळण्यात येईल. सगळी प्रुफे माझ्याच हातून जाती तर कदाचित त्यास असे वैचित्र्य आले नसते; पण अनेक नडीमुळे ती मला पाहता आली नाहीत याबद्दल मी फार दिलगीर आहे. तसेच कित्येक ठिकाणी अक्षरशः भाषांतर करण्याचा प्रयत्न केला असल्यामुळे दूरान्वय झाला असेल व वाक्ये इंग्रजी वाक्यांच्या डौलावर गेली असतील; तथापि त्यांना दुर्बोधत्व न येऊ देण्याविषयी माझ्याकडून होईल तितकी खटपट केली आहे. शेक्सपीअरसारख्याच्या अत्यंत कठीण नाटकाचे भाषांतर करणे किती दुरापास्त आहे हे ज्यांना स्वानुभवावरून ठाऊक असेल ते असल्या क्षुल्लक प्रमादांबद्दल फारसा दोष लावणार नाहीत अशी उमेद आहे.

याशिवाय आणखी एक किरकोळ गोष्ट सांगणे जरूर आहे ती ही की, आपली महाराष्ट्र भाषा अद्यापि बाल्यावस्थेत असल्यामुळे तीत नाना तऱ्हेचे मनोधर्म, मनोव्यापार, व तदनुरोधी बाह्य क्रिया व्यक्त करण्याजोगे शब्द नसल्यामुळे कित्येक ठिकाणी साधारण शब्दास विशिष्ट अर्थ द्यावा लागला आहे व कित्येक ठिकाणी त्याचा अर्थ विस्तृत करावा लागला आहे. सारांश, ज्यांना या संबंधाने या पुस्तकाचे निःपक्षपाती गुणदोष-विवेचन करायचे असेल त्यांनी 'जावे त्याच्या वंशा तेव्हा कळे' ही गोष्ट लक्षात ठेवून व शेक्सपीअरच्या या किंवा दुसऱ्या एखाद्या नाटकातील कठिणशा पाना-दोन पानांचे भाषांतर करून पाहावे, व ते करिताना किती अडचणी येतात याचा प्रत्यक्ष अनुभव घेऊन मग माझ्या पुस्तकास जो दोष देणे असेल तो द्यावा, इतकेच माझे सांगणे आहे.

आता यापेक्षा अधिक महत्त्वाच्या विषयाकडे वळू. माझ्या मते शेक्सपीअरसारख्याच्या नाटकाचे भाषांतर करणाराने होता होईल तो ते मूळाला धरून करावे. शेक्सपीअरचे अनुपमेय बुद्धिवैचित्र्य, शेक्सपीअरची असामान्य कल्पनाशक्ती, शेक्सपीअरचे अद्वितीय वर्णनचातुर्य, शेक्सपीअरचे अवर्णनीय अनेकप्रकृतिज्ञान यांविषयी ज्याला आपल्या वाचकांस परिचय करून द्यावयाचा असेल त्याने त्याच्या नाटकांची हवी तशी फाडाफाड केल्याने त्याचा हेतु कसा तडीस जाईल? तारा नाटकावर कै. विष्णुशास्त्री यांनी जो अभिप्राय दिला आहे. त्यातील दोन-तीन मुद्दे प्रत्येक भाषांतरकर्त्याने विशेष ध्यानात ठेवण्याजोगे आहेत. त्यात त्यांनी असे म्हटले आहे की, ज्याने देशकालमानानुरोधास्तव किंवा मराठी रीतरिवाजास्तव शेक्सपीअरच्या नाटकात सढळ हाताने फेरफार करून आपले पुस्तक केले आहे त्याचे पुस्तक सामान्य वाचकांस कळण्यास अवघड पडणार नाही हे खरे, पण तसल्या पुस्तकापासून मराठीतून इंग्रजी भाषांतर करू इच्छिणारास किंवा शेक्सपीअरच्या अलौकिक कवित्वगुणांचे ज्ञान करून घेऊ इच्छिणारास काहीएक फायदा नाही. माझे असे म्हणणे आहे की ज्यांना शेक्सपीअरच्या नाटकांतर्गत पाश्चिमात्य लोकांचे विलक्षण रीतरिवाज आपल्या ग्रंथात आणणे अप्रशस्त वाटत असेल, किंवा आणले असता ते वाचकांस नापसंत होऊन पुस्तके अंगावर पडण्याची भीती असेल त्यांनी परस्परविरोधी असे इंग्रजी-मराठी विचार एकत्र करून 'गंगाजम्नी' पुस्तक त्यांच्या गळ्यात बांधण्यापेक्षा धमक असल्यास शेक्सपीअरच्या नाटकातील फक्त कथानक मात्र घेऊन आरंभापासून शेवटपर्यंत नवीन नाटक लिहून सादर करावे हे बरे. कितीही खबरदारी ठेविली तरी गोळकी भाषांतरात केवढी असंबद्धता होऊन जाते हे शास्त्रीबुवांनी 'तारा' नाटकावरील आपल्या अभिप्रायात स्पष्टपणे दाखविले आहे म्हणून ते येथे फिरून सांगत बसत नाही. (निबंधमाला अंक ६०, पृष्ठ २२-२४ पहा.) मूळास धरून भाषांतर न करण्यास कदाचित ही दोन कारणे असतील. पहिले, इंग्रजी शब्दास मराठी शब्द शोधून काढण्याची मारामार

व तसे करण्यापासून होणारा त्रास; दुसरे, अश्रुतपूर्व आणि म्हणून लोकांस अप्रिय होणाऱ्या परकीय रीतीचे वर्णन केल्याने येणारे दूषण. 'शेक्सपीअरच्या अमुक नाटकावरून मराठी पद्धतीस जुळेल अशा रीतीने हे भाषांतर केले आहे.' असा शोरा एकदा प्रस्तावनेत ठोकून दिला की मग मूळ ग्रंथात हवा तसा गोंधळ घालावा! कोठे काही लागेना, मराठी रीतीस जुळत नाही, द्या सोडून! वाक्याचा अर्थ लागेना; मराठी रीतीस जुळत नाही. द्या सोडून! चांगला मराठी शब्द मिळत नाही; मराठी रीतीस जुळत नाही, द्या सोडून! याप्रमाणे मराठी रूढीशी परकीय भाषेतील ग्रंथाची गाठ घालावयाची असे ठरवून टाकले म्हणजे अर्थाबिर्थाच्या तावडीतून सुटण्यास पुष्कळ पळवाटा ठेवता येतात पण ज्याला असल्या वाटा ठेवल्याशिवाय गत्यंतर नाही त्याने तसली पुस्तके भाषांतरास घेऊच नयेत असे मला वाटते. दुसऱ्या कारणाच्या संबंधाने आता विशेष लिहिण्याची गरजच राहिली नाही. 'आथेल्लो' नाटकाचे भाषांतर मूळास धरून केलेले आहे, व आर्योद्धारक मंडळीने नुसती नावे फिरवून ते अनेकदा पुण्याच्या चवचाल प्रेक्षकांपुढे करून दाखवून शाबासकी मिळविली आहे. तेव्हा पाश्चिमात्य रीतरिवाज आपल्या रंगभूमीवर आणल्याने ते लोकांस अप्रिय होतील, किंवा त्यांना त्यांची किळस येईल, या मतास इतउत्तर हट्टवादी लोकांच्या मेंदूशिवाय दुसरा थारा राहिला नाही, 'आथेल्लो' नाटकाप्रमाणे 'टॅपेस्ट' नाटक नावे बदलून रंगभूमीवर आणिले तर त्याचा प्रयोगही लोकप्रिय होईल अशी माझी खात्री आहे. हेही असो. या प्रश्नाला दुसरी दिशा आहे तो अशी. आम्ही ज्या त्या नाटक संबंधाने 'आपले रीतरिवाज,' 'मराठी रूढी,' 'मराठी रीती,' व 'देशकालमानानुरोध' घेऊन बसलो तर दुसऱ्यांची रीती, व दुसरे देशकालमानानुरोध हे आम्हास कसे समजणार? शेक्सपीअर जर वेडेपणाने या रीतीने 'आपलेपणा' चा हट्ट धरून बसता तर आज त्याचा जो लौकिक आहे तो कधीच न होता त्याच्या विश्वव्यापी प्रचंड कल्पनाशक्तीला इंग्लंडचेच काय, पण युरोपांतील अर्वाचीन व प्राचीन राष्ट्रांतील रीतरिवाज आणि मनुष्यप्रकृती पुरे होईनात, तेव्हा त्याने नवीन कल्पनासृष्टी निर्माण केली, याबद्दल त्याची कृती ढळढळीत साक्ष देत आहे.^१ आपल्याच्याने नानातऱ्हेच्या मनुष्यांच्या अंतःकरणांतील मनोविकाराचे आविष्करण करवत नाही ते नाहीच; पण या आंग्लभौम सकलकविकुलशिरोमणीने जे अमूल्य आविष्करण केले आहे, त्याचे भाषांतर द्वारा होईल तितके खरे स्वरूप होऊ न देणे म्हणजे –

तातस्य कूपोयमिति बुवाणाः

क्षारं जलं कापुरुषाः पिबन्ति ।।

असला मूर्खपणा करणे होय.^२ शेक्सपीअरचे लिहिणे एकदेशीय बिलकुल नाही. ते तसे असते तर त्याला 'अनंतबुद्धी,' 'जगत्कवी' 'सर्वकालीन कवी' 'सहस्रात्मा' अशी विशेषणे कधीच मिळती ना; ते तसे असते तर गेटी, श्लेजेल, जरव्हायनस, कोलरिज, डौडन, गिझो

इत्यादी जगद्विख्यात जर्मन, इंग्लिश व फ्रेंच कवींच्या, तत्त्ववेत्त्यांच्या, आणि इतिहासकारांच्या प्रीतीस पात्र होता ना; ते तसे असते तर त्याचे ग्रंथ लावण्यात आपले समग्र आयुष्य घालविणारा कोणीच निघता ना; आणि ते तसे असते तर त्या पाश्चिमात्य सूर्याचा प्रकाश सृष्टिनियमाचे अतिक्रमण करून पूर्व दिशेकडे कधीच येता ना! आजपर्यंत आमचे जे नुकसान झाले आहे ते हरएक प्रकरणात हट्टाने 'आपलेपणा' स चिकटून राहिल्याने झाले आहे. धर्मसंबंधी, राज्यासंबंधी, व्यवहारसंबंधी इतर लोकांचे काय विचार आहेत याचा विचार केल्याशिवाय आपले दुराग्रह कसे जाणार? आमच्या राष्ट्राची उन्नती व्हावी म्हणून आम्ही रात्रदिवस धडपडतो आहो; पण उन्नती होण्याची जी खरी साधने आहेत त्यांचा कंटाळा केल्याने आमचा इष्ट हेतू कधी तरी पूर्ण होईल काय? विशेषतः व्यवहारसंबंधी दुराग्रहांचा लवकर लय व्हावा असा हेतू असल्यास तो शेवटास नेण्यास शेक्सपीअरसारख्याच्या नानाविध नाट्यकृतींचा लोकांस परिचय करून देणे, व त्यांच्यापुढे तिचे प्रयोग करून दाखविणे यापेक्षा सुगमतर साधने ते कोणते? आपल्याहून भिन्न आचारांचे चित्र नाटकरूपाने वारंवार आपल्या डोळ्यांपुढे आल्याने आपल्या विचारांतील एकदेशीयता काढून टाकून सर्वांस सुखकर असा आचार स्थापण्यास किती सुलभ जाईल हे थोडा विचार केल्याने ध्यानांत येणार आहे. शिवाय, ज्यांना आम्ही आपले रीतरिवाज म्हणून म्हणतो ते कोणते समजायचे! आठ-दहा वर्षांच्या पोराना लग्नशृंखला घालणे, तरुण गतभर्तृका ऋतुमती झाल्याबरोबर त्यांना विकेशा करून चातुर्थाश्रम देणे, कोकीदार किंवा कंगणीदार पगडी घालणे, मुकटा किंवा पीतांबर नेसून जेवायास बसणे, पोटरीला आणि मांडीला खोल करकोचा पडेल असा चोळणा घालणे, कागद लावून चोळ्या आणि आंगरखे चढविणे, नवऱ्याने बायकोचे नाव न घेणे—हे आणि अशा प्रकारचे जे रीतरिवाज तेच आपले रीतरिवाज असे ज्यांना वाटत असेल, व यातल्या यात जो गुरफटून राहिला तोच भला, असा ज्यांचा समज असेल ते 'आथेल्लो,' 'लीअर,' 'रोमिओ आणि जुलियट' या नाटकांच्या वाच्यास उभे न राहतील तर न राहोत, पण ज्या नाटकगृहांत 'मृच्छकटिक,' 'मुद्राराक्षस,' 'मालतीमाधव' किंवा 'शाकुंतल' यापैकी एखाद्याचा प्रयोग चालला आहे त्यातही त्यांनी पाय घालता कामा नये! आम्ही आपले रीतरिवाज सोडीत नाही असे म्हणणाऱ्यांपैकी शेकडा नव्याणव शुद्ध ढोंगी असतात, व बाकीचे विचारशून्य असतात. ज्यांना आमचे रीतरिवाज सुटले नाहीत असे वाटत असेल त्यांनी आपल्या देशाची शेदोनशे वर्षापूर्वीची स्थिती आणि आताची स्थिती यांची तुलना करून पहावी म्हणजे ताबडतोब त्यांचे डोळे उघडतील, व आपले बोलणे हट्टाचे आणि चुकीचे आहे हे त्यांस कळून येईल. कालांतराने स्थित्यंतर होते, व स्थित्यंतराबरोबर आचारविचारांतर झालेच पाहिजे. तेव्हा जी गोष्ट आपणास नकोशी वाटत असली तरी आपल्या नकळत होऊन जाते तिला विरोध करणे म्हणजे आपल्या मनाला आणि शरीराला विनाकारण

त्रास करून घेणे होय. यासाठी ज्या नाटकांत किंवा कादंबऱ्यांत आमच्या रीतरिवाजांचे किंवा रीतीभीतीचे जर वर्णन केले असेल त्याच चांगल्या असा ज्यांचा दुराग्रह झाला असेल त्यांनी आपली दुराग्रहबुद्धी टाकण्याचा होईल तितका प्रयत्न करावा हे योग्य आहे. विचाराने क्षुद्र बुद्धी निरस्त होऊन मन विस्तृत झाले, आणि 'वसुधैव कुटुंबकम्' अशी वृत्ती त्यात उत्पन्न झाली म्हणजे जो आनंद होतो तो काही अनिर्वाच्य असतो. असे नसते तर कालिदासभवभूत्यादि महाकवींचा लौकिक सगळ्या जगभर पसरता काय? असे नसते तर सतरा-अठरा भाषांत 'अभिज्ञान शाकुंतला' चे भाषांतर होते काय? असे नसते तर 'हिंदुस्थानचा शेक्सपीअर' या पदवीस कालिदास चढता काय? असे नसते तर जगत्प्रसिद्ध शार्मण्यकवी गेटी 'आलक्ष्यदंतमुकुलान्' हा श्लोक वाचून आनंदात डुलत राहता काय? असे नसते तर वुड्लसन्सारखा सहृदय रसिक "या नाटकात (उत्तररामचरितात) कित्येक अशा कल्पना आहेत की तसल्या मी पृथ्वीवरील दुसऱ्या कोणत्याही राष्ट्राच्या ग्रंथांत पाहिल्या नाहीत" असे म्हणता काय? सारांश हाच की कारनेल, मोलीअर, डान्टी, श्लेजेल, गेटी, मिल्टन्, शेक्सपीअर, कालिदास व भवभूती यांसारखे जे महाकवी आहेत त्यांचा प्रतिभाविहंग उंच उड्डाण करून अव्याहत गतीने आकाशपंथी हव्या तेवढ्या भराऱ्या मारू लागला म्हणजे त्याच्या खालून राष्ट्राच्या राष्ट्रे आणि खंडेच्या खंडे निघून जातात! असले कवी विवक्षित देशाकडे किंवा देशाचारांकडे लक्ष न देता मनुष्यजातीच्या ज्या अगाध मनोवृत्ती आहेत त्यांत वस्ताद पाणबुड्याप्रमाणे बुडी मारून तळी काय आहे ते पाहण्यासाठी झटत असतात! म्हणून कोणत्याही महाकवीच्या कृतीचे भाषांतर करताना होईल तेवढ्या श्रमाने तीत ढवळाढवळ न करण्याचा प्रयत्न करावा.

आता आणखी एका महत्त्वाच्या प्रश्नाचा विचार करावयाचा आहे. तो हा की, कादंबऱ्यांत किंवा नाटकांत जी भाषा घालावयाची ती सर्वत्र शुद्ध असावी, की पात्रानुरोधाने शुद्धाशुद्ध असावी? पहिल्या प्रश्नापेक्षा या संबंधाने विशेष मतभेद असण्याचा संभव आहे. पुष्कळांचे असे म्हणणे आहे की, ज्या अर्थी नाटक हे संसाराचे हुबेहुब चित्र आहे त्याअर्थी त्यात जी पात्रे येतात त्यांच्या योग्यतेनुरूप त्यांची भाषा असावी. एखाद्या लंगोट्याच्या तोंडी शुद्ध भाषण घालणे म्हणजे गाढवावर भरजरी खोगीर चढविण्यासारखे होय. या म्हणण्यात थोडेबहुत तथ्य आहे, नाही असे माझे म्हणणे नाही. पण पात्रानुरोधाने चांगली वाईट भाषा घालण्याने एकंदरीत नफ्यापेक्षा नुकसान फार होते. एक तर ज्या कुळवाड्यांचे वेडेवाकडे भाषण आपण घालतो ते मुळी अशिक्षितच असल्यामुळे त्यांस तुम्ही कोणत्याही रीतीने बोलविले तरी ते त्याबद्दल अत्यंत उदासीन असणार. तुम्ही त्यांच्या तोंडात एखाद्या शास्त्र्याची प्रौढ भाषा घातली तरी ते तुमच्याशी भांडायला येतील असे नाही. दुसरे, महाराष्ट्र देश बराच विस्तीर्ण असल्यामुळे

त्यात एकाच प्रकारची कुळवाडी बोली आहे असे नाही. कोकणपट्टी, नागपूरप्रांत, वऱ्हाडप्रांत, खानदेश आणि पुणेप्रांत यापैकी प्रत्येकातील कुळवाड्यांची किंवा स्त्रियांची बोली दुसऱ्याहून भिन्न आहे. तेव्हा पुस्तकात जी कुळवाडी बोली घालावयाची ती कोणत्या कुळवाड्याची ? पुणे प्रांतातील कुळवाडी विशेष सुधारलेले आहेत म्हणून त्यांची घालावयाची की काय ? किंवा पुणे हे महाराष्ट्र भाषेचे माहेरघर, म्हणून येथील पुस्तककर्त्यास जी रुचेल ती घालावयाची ? बरे, पुण्याच्या ग्रंथकारांनी अमुक एक म्हणून पसंत केली, पण बाकीच्या ठिकाणच्या लोकांनी त्यांचा हुकूम तोडून दुसरीच घातली तर त्यांना पुण्याचे ग्रंथकार काय शासन करणार ? मनोरंजन हाच जर नाटकाचा मूळ उद्देश असेल, व ते करणे त्यात घातलेल्या भाषेवर बहुतेक अंशी अवलंबून असेल तर जो ज्या प्रांतात राहणारा असेल तो त्या प्रांतातील बायकांचे आणि शूद्र लोकांचे बोलणे आपल्या पुस्तकात घालील, किंवा पुण्याकडे वाचणारांची संख्या विशेष आहे असे त्याच्या नजरेस आल्यास आपल्या फायद्यासाठी इकडील शूद्र लोकांच्या भाषेचे अध्ययन करून ती घालील ! आता प्रश्न असा आहे की, बायकांचे आणि शूद्रांचे वेडेवाकडे बोलणे घातल्याने आनंद होतो की विरस होतो, आणि नाटक हे संसाराचे किंवा मनुष्यकृतीचे हुबेहुब चित्र आहे की काय ? पुण्याकडील शूद्र लोक कितीही सुधारलेले असले तरी त्यांचे बोलणे इतर ठिकाणच्या अडाणी लोकांच्या बोलण्याप्रमाणेच स्थलपरत्वे आणि कालपरत्वे फिरणारे आहे. त्याला अद्यापि कोणत्याही प्रकारचे स्थैर्य आले नसल्यामुळे ते अमुक तऱ्हेनेच लिहावे आणि अमुक तऱ्हेने लिहू नये याबद्दल नियम करता येत नाहीत, आणि यद्यपि एखाद्याने ते केले तरी ते कोणीही पाळणार नाही. पुण्याच्या बायकांचे बोलणे चांगले असे कल्पून 'मौजेच्या चार घटका' कर्त्याने ते आपल्या पुस्तकात घातले आहे; रा. शंकर मोरो, व रा. नारायण बापूजी कानिटकर यांना त्यांच्या मनाप्रमाणे जे बरे दिसले ते त्यांनी घातले आहे. सारांश, असल्या प्रकारची वेडीवाकडी बोलणी ज्या पुस्तकातून घातली आहेत त्यांपैकी एकाचा, दुसऱ्याशी मेळ म्हणून पटायाचा नाही ! आणि असे होते यात काही आश्चर्य नाही. कारण, एक तर वर सांगितल्याप्रमाणे या अज्ञान लोकांच्या बोलीला म्हणण्यासारखी स्थिरता आलेली नाही, व ती कशी बोलतात हे समजून घेण्याचा पुस्तककर्ते प्रयत्न करीत नाहीत. टेबलापुढे खुर्ची मांडून बसावे आणि हव्या त्या बायकोला आणि कुळवाड्याला हवे तसे बोलवावे ! गावात इकडे तिकडे फिरताना कुळवाड्यांचे जे चार शब्द कानावर पडतात त्यावरून हे आपल्या पुस्तकातील बोली रचणार ! बायकांच्या बोलण्याच्या संबंधानेही बहुतेक बराच आनंद असतो ! आमच्या समाजात निरनिराळी स्त्रीपुरुषे वारंवार एकत्र होत नसल्यामुळे स्त्रियांची बोली शिकण्याची मुख्य शाळा म्हणजे घर. हे तरी सामान्यतः ज्याचे त्यालाच उपयोगी. यातील हेडमास्त्रीण आई किंवा बायको ! नाही म्हणायला लग्नमुंजीत स्त्रियांचा

मेळा एकत्र झाल्यावर आणखी एका तऱ्हेची व्याख्याने श्रवण करण्याचा प्रसंग असतो खरा! या रीतीने पढून तयार झालेला पंडित बायकोचे बोलणे हुबेहुब उठवून देत असेल यात काही संशय नाही! कित्येक तर या कामात आपणास मोठे निष्णात म्हणवितात. पण ज्यांना त्यांच्या तुटपुंज्या ज्ञानाची परीक्षा करावयाची असेल त्यांनी असल्या प्रकारचे एखादे पुस्तक घ्यावे आणि ते दोनतीन बायका जमवून त्यांच्यापुढे वाचून दाखवावे आणि 'तुम्ही असेच बोलता ना' असा प्रश्न त्यांना केल्यावर त्या काय उत्तर देतात ते ऐकावे म्हणजे झाले! विशेषेकरून कुळवाडी बोली लिहिणाराची फार फजिती होते. 'छू' व 'कू' हे शब्द लावून ज्याप्रमाणे कित्येकांना गुजराथी किंवा हिंदुस्थानी भाषा बोलण्याची सोपी हिकमत सापडलेली असते त्याप्रमाणे यांनाही पाहिजे तो शुद्ध ब्राह्मणी शब्द घेऊन अपभ्रंशाने त्याला कुळवाडी कसे बनवावे याची किल्ली सापडलेली असते! हे भाषाकर्ते अशी भाषा लिहितात की साधारण वाचकांस ती लवकर वाचता येत नाही, व समजत नाही! मला असे वाटते की भाषेच्या संबंधाने असले हेद्वे बागडणे बिलकूल कामाचे नाही. आपण जे लिहितो त्याचा हेतू असा असतो की, ते अनेकांनी वाचून त्यांना आनंद व्हावा. जे लिहिणे वाचता वाचता समजत नाही किंवा जे सर्व ठिकाणच्या लोकांस सारखे समजण्याजोगे नसते ते एकदेशीय होते व ते तसे नसते तर त्यापासून जितक्या लोकांना जेवढा आनंद होण्याचा संभव असतो, तितक्यांना तेवढा होत नाही व असे झाल्याने पुस्तककर्त्याचा मूळ हेतू पूर्ण होत नाही. ज्यांना आपली पुस्तके फार लोकांनी वाचावीत, व ती फार दिवस टिकावी असे वाटत असेल त्यांनी कोणत्याही पात्रांसाठी वेडीवाकडी भाषा घालण्याच्या भरीस पडू नये. ज्याप्रमाणे ओबडधोबड हत्यारांनी नक्षीदार काम करता येत नाही, त्याप्रमाणे चांगले विचार वाईट भाषेत व्यक्त करता येत नाहीत. रानवट आणि व गांवढळ बोलणे पुस्तकात वारंवार घालणे म्हणजे व्याकरण आणि भाषाशुद्धी याच्या सुधारणेला दृढ व्यत्यय आणण्यासारखे होय. स्त्रिया आणि शूद्र आज तारखेला शुद्ध मराठी बोलत नाहीत हे खरे; पण त्यांना सुशिक्षण मिळून त्यांनी पुढे मागे शुद्ध बोलू लागावे अशी आपली इच्छा आहे. व ती पूर्ण होण्यासाठी शहरांतून आणि खेड्यापाड्यांतून मुलींसाठी आणि हरएक जातीच्या मुलांसाठी शाळा घालण्याचा क्रम सुरू आहे. या सर्व खटपटीचा अर्थ असा आहे की कालांतराने सर्वास सुशिक्षण मिळून विद्यासंपादनापासून होणारे फायदे तर व्हावेच, पण त्यांच्याबरोबर सर्वांची लिहिण्याची आणि बोलण्याची भाषा ही एक व्हावी. पृथ्वीवरील सर्व सुधारलेल्या राष्ट्रांत एक भाषा होईल तर फार हित होईल असा विचार मनात घेऊन ही गोष्ट सिद्धीस जाण्यास काय उपाय करावेत, या विषयाकडे अनेक तत्त्ववेत्त्यांचे लक्ष लागले आहे हे पुष्कळांच्या ऐकण्यात आलेच असेल. ही बहुतेक अंशी अशक्य गोष्ट शक्य नाही अशी वाटू लागल्यास देखील हजार पाचशे वर्षे लागतील, मग

ती प्रत्यक्ष घडून येण्यास किती वर्षे लागतील याचा आज मुळीच तर्क करता येत नाही. म्हणून तसल्या अवाढव्य फंदात आज आपणास पडण्याची गरज नाही. तथापि हिंदुस्थानासाठी, निदान आपल्या महाराष्ट्र देशासाठी एक भाषा करणे इष्ट आहे आणि साध्य आहे, व ही इष्ट आणि साध्य गोष्ट लवकर तडीस जाण्यासाठी सर्व छापील पुस्तकांत व्याकरणशुद्ध अशी सर्वांनी एकप्रकारची भाषा लिहिण्याचा प्रघात पाडिला पाहिजे. आता कोणी असे म्हणतील की रंगभूमीवर एखादा कुळवाडी व्याकरणशुद्ध मराठी भाषा बोलू लागला तर रसभंग होणार आहे; तर या आक्षेपावर माझे असे उत्तर आहे की, पुस्तकात व्याकरणशुद्ध भाषा असली म्हणून नाटकगृहात हलक्या पात्रांनी ती तशीच उठविली पाहिजे असे नाही. पुस्तकात शुद्ध भाषा असूनही बोलताना श्रोत्यांस ती कर्णकटु न होण्यापुरते फेरफार पाहिजे त्या पात्रास, निदान नाटकाध्यापकास तरी करता येणार आहेत. कित्येक इंग्रजी कादंबऱ्यांत व नाटकांत हलकी भाषणे घालण्याचा प्रचार आहे, नाहीसा नाही. पण इंग्लिश ग्रंथकारांच्या चांगल्या गुणांबरोबर वाईट गुणांचेही अनुकरण आपण कशासाठी करावे? शिवाय, शेक्सपीअरसारख्या ज्या मोठ्या ग्रंथकारांना आपले ग्रंथ चिरकाळ टिकावे अशी इच्छा असते, ते तरी निदान आपल्या ग्रंथांत असली हलकी भाषणे घातलीच तर फारच थोड्या ठिकाणी घालतात, हे त्यांच्या ग्रंथावलोकनावरून प्रत्ययास येणार आहे. तसेच नाटक हे सृष्टीचे किंवा मनुष्याच्या आचरणाचे हुबेहुब चित्र आहे हे म्हणणेही खोटे आहे. सर्वत्र महाकवींनी नाटकात गद्यपद्यात्मक भाषणे लिहिली आहेत. पण मनुष्या-मनुष्यांचा व्यवहार गात चालत नाही हे आपण प्रतिदिवशी पाहतो. तेव्हा नाटकादर्शात मनुष्याच्या आचरणाचे हुबेहुब प्रतिबिंब पडलेले असते या म्हणण्याचे निरर्थकत्व या एका मुद्द्यावरूनच बरेच सिद्ध होते. तसेच नाटकात मनोवृत्तीचे जे वर्णन असते ते नेहमी सत्याहून अधिक असते. अतिशयोक्ती ही नाटकातील रसाचा आत्मा आहे. थोडीबहुत अतिशयोक्ती केल्याखेरीज नाटकात अलंकार घालता येणार नाहीत किंवा कोणताही रस उत्पन्न करता येणार नाही. म्हणून, नाटक हे सृष्टीचे आणि मनुष्याच्या आचरणाचे यथार्थ चित्र आहे असे समजून वेडीवाकडी भाषा लिहिण्यास प्रवृत्त होणे म्हणजे फारच मोठा प्रमाद करणे होय. या आणि अशा अनेक कारणांवरून व्यवहारात मनुष्ये बोलतात तशी भाषा पुस्तकात घालणे हे अगदी अप्रशस्त आहे अशी माझी समजूत आहे.

प्रस्तुत भाषांतर अगदी वरील नियमांवर हुकूम उतरले आहे असे नाही. हे नियम सुटल्याची त्यात काही स्थळे सापडतील. हे पुस्तक करण्याचा मुख्य हेतू पूर्वी सांगितल्याप्रमाणे त्याचा प्रयोग करण्याचा असल्यामुळे नावे फिरवूनच भाषांतर करण्यास आरंभ केला. पुढे, मी प्रथम दिलेली नावे कित्येक मित्रांस बरी न वाटल्यामुळे त्यांनी दुसरी सुचवली, व ती घालताना मोठी खबरदारी ठेविली होती तरी एक दोन ठिकाणी पहिलीच राहली आहेत. कित्येकांचे

असे म्हणणे पडले की ज्या ठिकाणी मुळात गाण्याजोगी पद्ये आहेत त्या ठिकाणी भाषांतरांतही तसली पद्ये करून घालावीत. ही सूचना मला बरी वाटली; परंतु कवितादेवीचा वरदकर तर राहिलाच, पण करांगुलीसुद्धा मस्तकावर नसल्यामुळे ज्यांस ती अत्यंत प्रसन्न असे आमचे मित्र रा. शंकर मोरो रानडे, बी. ए. यांची आराधना केली. त्यांच्याकडे त्यांबद्दल पत्र पाठविताच त्यांनी ती मेहेरबानीने करून दिली याबद्दल मी त्यांचा आभारी आहे. या पद्यात ग्रीक व रोमन पुराणांतील देवादिकांची नावे न घालता आपल्या इकडील पुराणांतील नावे घातली आहेत. काही ठिकाणी शब्दश्लेषांचे किंवा अर्थश्लेषांचे भाषांतर नीट होईना म्हणून वाक्य दोन वाक्ये सोडली आहेत. हे आणि यासारखे दुसरे किरकोळ फरक केले आहेत, नाहीत असे नाही. तरी कोणत्याही महत्त्वाच्या ठिकाणी शेक्सपीअरला काडीएवढे सुद्धा दुखवलेले नाही. मुळातल्याप्रमाणेच भाषांतरातही भुजंगाने राजास ठार मारून चंद्रसेनाच्या आईशी म्हणजे आपल्या भावजयीशी लग्न लाविले आहे; तसेच राजाच्या प्रेताबरोबर राणीला स्मशानात नेण्यास किंवा चंद्रसेनाचे आणि तीव्रजवाचे द्वंद्व चालले असता शेक्सपीअरच्या जीवावर तिला दारू पाजण्यास मला काही एक भीती वाटली नाही.

येथपर्यंत भाषांतरासंबंधाने ठोकळ विचार झाला. आता खुद्द शेक्सपीअर आणि त्याचे प्रस्तुत नाटक यांविषयी दोन शब्द लिहावयाचे आहेत. शेक्सपीअर मोठाच कवी खरा, कदाचित् त्याच्या तोडीचा दुसरा नाटककार नसेलही; पण येवढ्यावरून त्याची कृती अमानुष आहे, किंवा तीत दोषाचा लेश म्हणून कोठेही नाही असे आमच्याने म्हणवत नाही. शेक्सपीअरचे काही निस्सीम भक्त आहेत त्यांना त्याच्या नाटकांत दुष्यस्थळ म्हणून दिसत नाही. त्याची पद्यरचना, त्याचे शब्दलालित्य, त्याचे कथानक आणि संविधानक, त्याचे स्वभाववर्णन ही सारी त्यांच्या मते निर्दोष आहेत इतकेच नाही, तर अद्वितीय आहेत. आम्हांस असे वाटते की शेक्सपीअर हा काही ईश्वरांश नव्हता; व इतर ग्रंथकारांप्रमाणे त्याच्या ग्रंथांतही पुष्कळ प्रमादस्थले आहेत. चंद्रांच्या भव्य तेजामुळे त्यांतील शशांक लोपून जातो, म्हणून त्यावर तो नाही हे म्हणणे जसे प्रशस्त होणार नाही, त्याप्रमाणेच शेक्सपीअरच्या गुणांपुढे दोष दिवून जातात, म्हणून ते त्यात मुळीच नाहीत हे म्हणणेही बरोबर होणार नाही. त्याच्या गुणानुरूप त्याची स्तुती आणि त्याच्या दोषानुरूप त्याची निंदाही करण्यास निदान पराकाष्ठेचा खाष्ट व स्पष्टवक्ता म्हातारा जान्सन् तरी, भ्याला नाही. शेक्सपीअरची नाटके इतकी सरस खरी, व त्याला त्यांपासून बरीच द्रव्यप्राप्तीही झाली, पण त्याचा अलीकडे जो येवढा लौकिक झाला आहे त्याला मुख्य कारण ग्यारिक. ग्यारिक म्हणून जान्सन्च्या वेळेस अतिप्रसिद्ध नट होऊन गेला. त्याच्या अननुकरणीय अभिनयामुळे शेक्सपीअरचे बुद्धिवैचित्र्य लोकांच्या दृष्टीतून आले, व शेदीडशे वर्षे हा कोहिनूर आपल्या हेळसांडपणामुळे किंवा मूर्खपणामुळे

उकिरड्यात पडून राहिला होता असे त्यास वाटले. मग मागल्या उपेक्षेबद्दल जणो काय प्रायश्चित घेण्यासाठीच त्यांनी असला जबरदस्त स्तुतिपाठ करण्यास आरंभ केला की, तेव्हापासून आतापर्यंत त्याचा ओघ एकसारखा वाढत चालला आहे, व त्याच्या तीव्र धारेपुढे प्रतिकूल टीकाकारांचे काही चालत नाही. आम्हा पूर्वात्यांस दूरत्वामुळे तिच्या सपाट्यात सापडण्याची फारशी भीती नाही. आणि म्हणून आमच्या हातून त्याच्या नाटकांचे विशेष निष्पक्षपाती गुणदोषविवेचन होण्याचा संभव आहे. अगोदर शेक्सपीअर हा कोणी प्रासादिक किंवा दैवी पुरुष होता असे आम्हांस वाटत नाही. त्याची नाटके त्याच्या पूर्वीच्या आणि त्याच्या मागाहून झालेल्या नाटककारांपेक्षा चांगली होण्यास जी कारणे झाली ती त्या वेळचा इंग्लंडचा इतिहास वाचला असता तेव्हाच ध्यानात येणार आहेत. इंग्लंडात आन्डन नदीच्या काठी 'स्ट्राटफर्ड,' म्हणून एक गाव आहे, त्याठिकाणी १५६४ त वुडलियम् शेक्सपीअर याचा जन्म झाला. त्याच्या लहानपणाच्या सांगण्यासारख्या गोष्टी प्रसिद्ध नसल्यामुळे त्या येथे देता येत नाहीत. इतके मात्र खात्रीने ठाऊक आहे की त्याच्या गरीब आईबापांनी त्याला त्या खेड्याच्या शाळेत घालून त्याच्याकडून तेथे होण्यासारखी दोन अक्षरे करविली होती. स्ट्राटफर्ड ज्या तालुक्यात किंवा कौंटीत आहे, त्यातच 'बरबेज' म्हणून कोणी त्या वेळचा वाखाणलेला नट होता. त्याच्याबरोबर विसावे वर्षी शेक्सपीअर हा लंडनास गेला, आणि तेथे 'ब्लॉकफ्रायर,' नावाचे एक नाटकगृह होते त्याच्या भागीदारांपैकी बारावा भागीदार झाला. पुढे याच भागीदार मंडळीने 'ग्लोब' नावाचे नाटकगृह विकत घेतले, व त्यात ती उन्हाळ्यात खेळ करीत असे. शेक्सपीअर हा स्वतः नटाचे काम करी, व आपल्या आणि दुसऱ्या नाटककारमंडळीस नाटके लिहून देई. त्यावेळेस नाटककारमंडळ्या चांगल्या नाटककारांपासून त्यांची नाटके विकत घेत, व रंगभूमीवर त्यांचे प्रयोग करून दाखवून त्यांवर पैसा कमावीत. शेक्सपीअर याला यामुळे दोन तऱ्हेने पैसे मिळत. एक, तो स्वतःच नाटकात सोंग घेई म्हणून, व दुसरी, तो नाटके लिही म्हणून. सगळा जन्म नाटकांत घालवावा असा शेक्सपीअरचा हेतू नव्हता; तर तरुणपणात दहा-पंधरा वर्षे हरहुन्नर करून चार पैसे कमवावेत, व मग आपल्या गावी परत जाऊन तेथे जमीनजुमला विकत घ्यावा, व घरदार करून वृद्धापकाळ सुखात आणि प्रतिष्ठेत घालवावा असा होता त्याप्रमाणे त्याने केले. थोड्या वर्षांत त्याला पुष्कळ पैसे मिळाले, व पूर्वीच्या संकेताप्रमाणे त्याने त्या पैशावर स्ट्राटफर्ड येथे जमिनी आणि घरे खरेदी केली आणि मरायच्या अगोदर तेथे तो स्वस्थपणे काही वर्षे जाऊन राहिला. निःसंशयपणे शेक्सपीअरची अशी पस्तीस नाटके आहेत; चौदा आनंदपर्यवसायी, अकरा शोकपर्यवसायी, व दहा ऐतिहासिक. शेक्सपीअरच्या आनंदपर्यवसायी नाटकात शेवट गोड असतो येवढ्यावरून त्यांना ते नाव द्यावयाचे; बाकी, यांपैकी पुष्कळ नाटकांत करुणा उत्पन्न करणारे प्रवेश आहेत, व कित्येकांची

संविधानके तर अशी आहेत की त्यांवरून ही नाटके शोकपरिणामी असतील असे वाटते. शेक्सपीअर येवढा बुद्धिवान खरा, व त्याने एकट्याने ३५ नाटके लिहिली ही तारीफ करण्याजोगी गोष्ट खरी; पण या ३५ पैकी चौतिसांच्या मूळ गोष्टी त्याने दुसऱ्या पुस्तकांतून घेतल्या आहेत, हा एक मुद्दा ध्यानात ठेवण्यासारखा आहे. त्याने असे केले म्हणून आम्ही त्याची योग्यता कमी समजतो असे नाही; कारण दुसऱ्या पुस्तकांतून मूळ गोष्ट घेतली तरी तीत हवे तसे फेरफार करून ती चित्तवेधक करण्यास लहानसहान बुद्धी लागते असे नाही; तथापि पहिल्यापासूनच नवा पाया रचून त्यावर इमारत चढविणे; व दुसऱ्या कोणी घातलेल्या पायाची डागडुजी करून घेऊन त्यावर इमारत चढविणे, यात थोडे अंतर आहे. असो; शेक्सपीअरने पसतीस नाटके लिहिली, व त्यांवर त्याला पुष्कळ द्रव्य संपादिता आले, यावरून त्यावेळेस नाटके लिहिण्यास अनुकूल अशी देशस्थिती आली होती, व लोकांस नाटके वाचण्याची आणि त्यांचे प्रयोग पाहण्याची अभिरूची लागली होती, या दोन गोष्टी सिद्ध होतात. कोणत्याही देशात मोठा मनुष्य जन्मास येतो तो एकाएकी आकाशातून पडतो असे नाही. तो आणि त्यासारखे दुसरे मोठे मनुष्य उत्पन्न होण्याचा त्या देशाला काळच आलेला असतो. इल्लिझाबेथच्या कारकीर्दीत शेक्सपीअरशिवाय दुसरे अनेक मोठे लोक जन्मास आले. स्पेनसर, राले, जानसन, बेकन, बरले व हूकर ही समकालीन नावे ध्यानात ठेवली असता शेक्सपीअरच्या विलक्षण कल्पनाशक्तीविषयी इतका अचंबा वाटणार नाही. नुसत्या बुद्धिसामर्थ्याचीच तुलना करायची असेल तर बेकनची बुद्धी शेक्सपीअरपेक्षा काकणभर अधिक येईल असे आम्हास वाटते. पण असल्या तुलनेत पडण्यात काही अर्थ नाही, म्हणून ती दिशाच आम्ही अजिबात सोडून देतो. आमचे इतकेच म्हणणे आहे की ज्या जमिनीत शेक्सपीअर जन्मास आला, त्या जमिनीत त्या वेळेस त्यासारखे मोठे पुरुष निपजण्याजोगी उत्पत्तितत्त्वे एकत्र झाली होती. असे नसते तर वर सांगितलेली विद्वन्मणिपरंपरा उदयास आली नसती. पंधराव्या शतकात सर्व युरोपभर जी धर्मक्रांती झाली तिच्या योगाने यूरोपातील सर्व राष्ट्रांची स्थिती अगदी बदलून गेली असे म्हणण्यास हरकत नाही. इंग्लंडात धर्मक्रांती होऊन राज्यक्रांतीही झाली. इंग्लंडच्या इतिहासात ज्यांना 'गुलाबांच्या लढाया' असे म्हणतात, त्यात इंग्लंडातील मोठमोठ्या घराण्यांचा फडशा होऊन पंधराव्या शतकाच्या अखेरीस अनियंत्रित राजघराणे स्थापित झाले. या घराण्यातील बहुतेक राजे फार प्रबल होऊन गेले. प्रबल राजांच्या कारकीर्दीत बुद्धिवान पुरुष उदयाला येतात हे सर्वास ठाऊक आहे. इल्लिझाबेथ इ.च्या अमदानीत इंग्लंडचा दरारा सर्व युरोपात ठाम बसून गेला होता. स्पेनच्या 'अजिंक्य' आरमाराचा फडशा उडवून दिल्याने त्या वेळच्या इंग्लिश लोकांस केवढे स्फुरण आणि केवढी वीरश्री आली असेल, याची खरी कल्पना इतिहास-ज्ञास मात्र करता येणार आहे. युरोपात प्राटेस्टंट लोकांचा कोठे छळ झाल्याची बातमी

लागली की त्यांचा कैवार घेऊन लढाई करण्यास इलिझाबेथ राणी सदा तयार असे, यामुळे युरोपातील कॅथॉलिक राष्ट्रे तिला चळचळा कापत, व आपल्या राज्यातील प्रॉटेस्टंट प्रजेला न्यायाने आणि दयेने वागवीत ! मेरीच्या राज्यात पोपचे फार प्रस्थ माजले होते; इलिझाबेथ सिंहासनारूढ होताच तिने पोपचा संबंध तोडून टाकला, व इंग्लंडच्या धर्म प्रकरणात तो कधीही हात घालणार नाही असा बंदोबस्त केला ! स्कॉटलंडच्या राणीने काही गडबड केल्यावरून तिला सतरा-अठरा वर्षे कैदेत ठेवून अखेरीस तिचा शिरच्छेद केला ! पृथ्वीप्रदक्षणा करण्यासाठी शूर खलाशांच्या हाती मोठमोठी जहाजे देऊन त्यांना निरनिराळ्या दिशेस पाठविले, व हिंदुस्थानाशी व्यापार करण्याकरिता पहिली ईस्ट इंडिया कंपनी स्थापली. या आणि अशा अनेक गोष्टींवरून वाचकांच्या हे लक्षात येईल की, इंग्लंडच्या इतिहासाचा हा काळ पराकाष्ठेच्या चंचलतेचा असल्यामुळे नाटककारास आपल्या नाटकात गुंफिता येण्याजोग्या पुष्कळ गोष्टी त्याच्या डोळ्यांपुढे घडत असतील यात काही संशय नाही. व मोठमोठ्या गोष्टी नित्यशः कानावर येत असल्या किंवा डोळ्यांपुढे घडत असल्या म्हणजे त्यांचे मनोवेधक वर्णन हातून सहज होऊन जाते हे कोणीही कबूल करील. शेक्सपीअरच्या पूर्वी इंग्लंडात मोठे लोक झाले नाहीत यात काही आश्चर्य नाही; कारण, तसले लोक होण्यास जी स्थिती लागते ती स्थिती इंग्लंडला किंवा युरोपातील दुसऱ्या कोणत्याही देशाला आली नव्हती. यूरोपखंडाच्या इतिहासात ज्यांना 'मध्ययुगे' असे म्हणतात त्या युगात युरोपातील सगळ्या समाजाची स्थिती अत्यंत शोच्य होती. अज्ञान, पापाचरण; धर्मभोळेपणा, धर्माधिकार्यांची लूट, विषयसुखाविषयी अत्यंत उदासीनता वगैरे गोष्टींमुळे सगळे यूरोपखंड एका प्रकारच्या झोपेत घोरत पडले होते, असे म्हणण्यास हरकत नाही. स्वर्गाच्या दाराच्या किल्ल्या धर्माधिकार्यांपाशी; त्यांच्या मध्यस्थीखेरीज ईश्वरप्राप्ती किंवा मुक्ती नाही; पापांचे क्षालन होण्यासाठी भटजीबोवांच्या हातावर दक्षणा सोडली म्हणजे पुरे आहे; प्रपंचात मन घालणे म्हणजे मोक्षपदाचा अव्हेर करून नरकवास प्राप्त होण्याची तयारी करणे; विषयसुखाचा अभिलाष हा साऱ्या पापांचे आणि दुःखांचे मूल; प्रखर शरीरदंडनाशिवाय आत्म्याची शुद्धी होणे नाही; आपली ऐहिक वसती क्षणभंगुर व यातनामय आहे, व ऐहिक सुखापासून सुखाचा भास मात्र होतो; खरे सुख व खरी शांती स्वर्गात; संसार-सुखाचा तिटकारा करून गुरुपासनेत किंवा ईश्वरभजनात कालक्रम करणे हा आयुष्य घालविण्याचा उत्तम मार्ग; मित्रत्व, बंधुत्व, पिता पुत्रत्व वगैरे मिथ्या मायापाश होत; यात सापडलेला मनुष्य परलोकास मुक्तो, व त्याला दुर्गती प्राप्त होते; 'पदार्थशास्त्र' म्हणतात ते काही नाही, सगळा किमयांचा आणि जादूगिरीचा खेळ आहे; सूर्य-चंद्राच्या गतीचा निर्णय कोणास करता येणार नाही. किंवा ताऱ्यांचे अंतर कोणाच्याने निघणार नाही; हे विषय मनुष्याच्या बुद्धीच्यापलीकडे आहेत; सारांश, वैराग्यासारखी दुसरी चीज नाही अशी त्यावेळच्या लोकांची पक्की समजूत होती, व त्यामुळे

त्यांच्या हातून काही एक होत नसे. ल्युथरकृत धर्मक्रांतीमुळे जे मन्वंतर झाले त्यात या वेडेपणाच्या कल्पना अगदी राहिल्या नाहीत. ईश्वरापाशी वशिला लावण्यास मध्यस्थांची किंवा प्रतिनिधींची आवश्यकता नाही; संसारसुखाची इच्छा केल्याने किंवा ते प्राप्त होण्याचा उद्योग केल्याने परमेश्वराला राग येण्याचा संभव नाही; विषयवासना तृप्त करणे हे पाप नाही; शरीर आणि मन ही मनुष्याच्या अस्तित्वाची दोन अवश्य अंगे होत, यासाठी या दोहोंपैकी कोणाचीच उपेक्षा करणे हितावह नाही; आचार आणि विचार यांची पारडी समतोल असली पाहिजेत; यांमधील काटा कोणत्याही एकाकडे जरी विशेष कलला तरी त्यापासून मनुष्याचे नुकसान होते; अनेकगुणात्मक बाह्यसृष्टी परमेश्वराने मनुष्याच्या उपभोगासाठी केली आहे, यासाठी तिचा कंटाळा करणे म्हणजे त्याचा अपमान करणे होय; जड सृष्टीच्या किंवा मनःसृष्टीच्या अस्तित्वाची गूढ कारणे मनुष्याच्या आकलनशक्तीच्या बाहेर आहेत, यासाठी त्याने त्यांचा शोध लावण्याचा व्यर्थ श्रम करू नये; परमेश्वराच्या अतर्क्य गुणांचा आणि करणीचा स्पष्ट बोध कोणत्याही जीवाला कधीच व्हायचा नाही, तथापि त्याच्या अगाध कर्तृत्वाची चिन्हे हर घडीस दृष्टिगोचर आहेत येवढ्यावरच समाधान मानून त्याचे चिंतन करावे, त्याला शरण जावे, व त्याने आपल्या सुखासाठी जी अनेक साधने निर्माण करून ठेविली आहेत, त्यासाठी कृतज्ञतापूर्वक त्याचे भजन करावे; क्रोध, अहंकार, ममता, विषयवासना इत्यादी मनोविकार विचाराधीन असले म्हणजे मनुष्यांचे त्यांपासून कल्याणच होते; शत्रुद्वेष, बंधुप्रीती, आप्तप्रेम, पितृवात्सल्य इत्यादी गुणांनी इहलोकी मनुष्याला सुखप्राप्ती होते; आपले व दुसऱ्याचे ऐहिक आणि पारमार्थिक कल्याण चिंतणे आणि करणे हाच मनुष्याचा सनातन धर्म; सद्बिचार आणि नीती यांचे अवलंबन करून वर्तन ठेविले असता इहलोकीच परलोकीच्या सुखाचा अनुभव होऊ लागतो; दुर्लौकिकासारखे दुष्ट मरण नाही; सुलौकिकासारखे अमरत्व नाही; आत्मोन्नतीहून श्रेष्ठ असे मनुष्यास दुसरे कर्तव्यकर्म नाही; — या आणि अशा अनेक विचारांचा प्रसार झाल्यामुळे ज्या त्या राष्ट्रांत उद्योग, संपत्ती, विद्या, देशाभिमान ही तत्काल उत्कर्षास पावली. मुख्यत्वेकरून इंग्लंडात असल्या विचारांच्या प्रसारामुळे लोकांचे फार हित झाले. एकवेळ बाह्य सुखाचे सरसत्व अनुभवास आल्यावर मग काय विचारता? शेक्सपीअरने एक दिशा धरली तर बेकनने दुसरी, हुकरने तिसरी, रालेने चौथी, आणि बरलेने पाचवी. याप्रमाणे चारचौघांनी चोहोकडून उचल केल्याबरोबर सुधारणेचे काम झपाट्याने चालू लागले, व थोड्या वेळात मनुष्याच्या ज्ञानवृक्षाच्या अनेक शाखा पुष्पांनी आणि फलांनी ओथंबून गेल्या. एका ग्रंथकाराने तर असे लिहिले आहे की, रात्रीचा तिमिर निघून जाऊन पृथ्वीवर सूर्याचे कल्याणप्रद रश्मी येऊन पोहोचले म्हणजे ती जशी रमणीय, प्रफुल्लित, आणि सुखी दिसते, त्याप्रमाणे 'मध्य युगातील' अज्ञानतिमिर निरस्त झाल्याबरोबर अर्वाचीन विचारप्रकाशात युरोपातील सर्व राष्ट्रे उद्योगी आणि आनंदी

दिसू लागली. हे सर्व येथे सांगण्याचे प्रयोजन इतकेच की, शेक्सपीअर हा जरी महाकवी खरा, तरी तो केवळ स्वर्गातून मृत्युलोकावर उतरला, व त्याने जे केले आहे ते अमानुष आहे, असे मानायचे नाही. शेक्सपीअरने आपल्या विलक्षण बुद्धिसामर्थ्याने व अचाट कल्पनाशक्तीने मनुष्यमात्रावर जे उपकार करून ठेविले आहेत, त्यांबद्दल त्याला कोणी हवा तितका करभार देवो, त्यासाठी आमचे काहीएक म्हणणे नाही; आमचे इतकेच म्हणणे आहे की, शेक्सपीअरबरोबर नाट्यकलेची परमावधी होऊन गेली असे समजून आता तिची अधिक उन्नती करण्याचे काम सोडता कामा नये. 'कालोह्वयं निरवधिर्विपुलाच पृथ्वी' अशी स्थिती असल्यामुळे शेक्सपीअरच्या तोडीचेचसे काय, पण त्याहून श्रेष्ठ कवी उत्पन्न होण्याचा संभव आहे. यासाठी ज्याच्या नशिबी असेल त्याने त्याच्या अलौकिक नाट्यरसाचे बुद्धिविकासक आणि शांतिप्रद पान तर यथेच्छ करावेच, पण जमल्यास त्याच्या गुणदोषांचे विवेचनही करावे; कारण, त्यापासून अनेक फायदे आहेत. मागल्या कवींचे दोष दृष्टोत्पत्तीस आल्याने पुढल्या कवींना ते टाळणे सुलभ होते हा तर गुणदोष विवेचनापासून होणारा एक फायदा आहेच; पण याहीपेक्षा विशेष महत्त्वाचा फायदा कोणता म्हणाल तर असल्या विवेचनाने कवीचे खरे हृद्गत सर्वास कळू लागते. कवीचे हृद्गत यथास्थित कळून क्षणभर वाचकाचे आणि त्याचे तादात्म्य झाल्याखेरीज कवितेपासून होणारा अत्यानंद त्याच्या अंतःकरणास होणार नाही. नाटकाचा प्रयोग चांगला वठत असला तर तो पाहण्याने नाटकाचे पुस्तक वाचण्यापेक्षा एक प्रकारे अधिक समाधान होते खरे; पण एक प्रकारे मोठे नुकसानही होते. नाटक वाचताना विचार करण्यास फुरसत सापडते, यामुळे अनेक पात्रांच्या भाषणाचा परस्परसंबंध लावता येतो, व ज्या ठिकाणी कवीने विशेष बहार केली असेल त्याठिकाणी थोडा वेळ थंबवून राहून त्याच कल्पनेवर पुनः पुन्हा विचार करून सुखानुभव द्विगुणित किंवा त्रिगुणित करता येतो. प्रयोग पाहण्यास बसल्यावर अशा प्रकारचा सुखानुभव घेण्यास अवकाश कोठला? एक पात्र डोळ्यांआड झाले नाही तो दुसरे येऊन पुढे उभे राहते, व मनावर एक प्रकारचे संस्कार स्पष्ट उमटताहेत नाहीत तो दुसरे येऊन ठेपतात. यामुळे एकच गर्दी होऊन जाऊन कोणत्याच रसाचा पूर्ण अनुभव होत नाही. शिवाय, एखादेवेळेस कवीची खाशी तंद्री लागली म्हणजे पहिल्यापासूनच तो अशा वेगाच्या भरान्या मारू लागतो की, पुढे पुढे त्याचा वेग त्यालाच आवरेनासा होतो. मनाच्या अशा स्थितीत लिहिलेल्या नाटकाचा हवातसा प्रयोग कोणत्याही नाट्याच्या हातून वठायचा नाही! 'उत्तररामचरित', 'किंग लीअर', 'हॅम्लेट' या नाटकांत कवींनी पहिल्या अंकातच प्रधानरसाची पंचमापासून सुरुवात केल्यामुळे पुढे पुढे त्यांच्या बरोबर वर वर चढण्यास मन मात्र टिकते! 'किंग लीअर' सारख्या नाटकात 'लीअर' होणाऱ्या मनुष्याचा गळा पहिल्या दुसऱ्या अंकातच फुटून गेल्यावर तो पुढे काय रडणार? व शेवटच्या तीन अंकांत कवीने जी कमाल करून

सोडिली आहे तिचे अनुकरण कसे करणार ? ज्या नाटकात कवींनी पात्रांच्या मनोवृत्तींना पहिल्यापासूनच उच्छृंखल सोडून दिले आहे, ती नाटके बाह्य रंगभूमीवर आणण्यासाठी नव्हेत, व तेथे ती आणल्याने त्यांचा विरस मात्र होतो. असल्या नाटकांचे प्रयोग मानसिक रंगभूमीवर व्हावयाचे. या रंगभूमीवर जी पात्रे येतात-जातात ती कोणत्याही काळची, कोणत्याही देशाची, कोणत्याही पंथाची किंवा रीतरिवाजाची असली तरी त्यापासून काडीयेवढा रसभंग न होता त्यांच्याशी तादात्म्य करून घेण्यास मनाला पुरेसा अवकाश सापडतो, व अशा रीतीने ते तदाकार होऊन गेल्यावर त्यास ज्या अवर्णनीय सुखाचा अनुभव होत असतो त्याचे शब्दांनी कोण वर्णन करू शकणार आहे ?

याप्रमाणे महाकवींच्या कृती वाचल्यापासून आनंद होतो हे सर्व सहृदयांस अवगत आहेच. अशा प्रकारच्या आनंदाचा अंशमात्र तरी भाषांतरद्वारा मराठी वाचकांस द्यावा अशा हेतूने हे पुस्तक मी प्रसिद्ध केले आहे. आजपर्यंत शेक्सपीअरच्या नाटकांची जी भाषांतरे झाली आहेत त्यांपैकी कोणत्याही भाषांतरात मूळ नाटकांतील संविधानक, कथानक, किंवा पात्रे यांवर विशेष टीका केली आहे असे आढळत नाही. अशा टीकेने अपरिचित वाचकांस परक्या भाषेतील नाटकांचे रहस्य समजण्यास बरेच साहाय्य होण्याचा संभव असतो. म्हणून मी 'विकारविलसिता' वर दोन शब्द लिहिण्याची परवानगी घेतो. या नाटकावर मोठमोठ्या इंग्लिश, फ्रेंच व जर्मन टीकाकारांनी भली भली लढु व्हाल्ये लिहून सोडिली आहेत; त्यामुळे माझ्या सारख्याला एखादे नवीन मत काढण्यास सवड राहिली आहे असे नाही. पण वारंवार होते काय की एका टीकाकाराचे एक मत आपणास ग्राह्य झाले तर दुसरे होत नाही. यामुळे ज्याला त्याला आपापल्या समजुतीप्रमाणे आरंभापासून शेवटपर्यंत संबंध निराळी टीका करावी लागते. असो; 'विकारविलसित' शेक्सपीअरने लिहिले त्यावेळेस त्याची बुद्धी परिपक्व झाली असावी असे स्पष्ट दिसते. या नाटकात कवीचे विशेष लक्ष त्याच्या बाह्य स्वरूपाकडे नाही. यमके आणि प्रास बरोबर जुळले आहेत की नाहीत, संविधानकाचा पूर्वापार संबंध यथास्थित बसला आहे की नाही, पात्रांची भाषणे प्रसंगानुरूप आणि जेथल्या तेथे आहेत की नाहीत, प्रवेशांची व अंकांची जुळणी बरोबर झाली आहे की नाही वगैरे नाटकाच्या बाह्य अंगाविषयी यावेळेस कवी बेफिकर झाल्यासारखा दिसतो. 'विकारविलसिता' त तो आपल्या कल्पनाशक्तीच्या दोऱ्या अगदी ढिल्या सोडून तिला भरधाव टाकीत आहे, व मधून मधून तिजवर प्रतोदाचे तीक्ष्ण प्रहार करीत आहे असे दिसते. माझ्यामते शेक्सपीअरचे विशेष तारीफ करण्याजोगे दोन गुण आहेत, त्याने जी प्रकृती हाती धरली तिच्या अंतःकरणातील अत्यंत गूढ विचार सगळेच्या सगळे बाहेर यायचे; एक देखील चुकून माकून राहायचा नाही, असे विलक्षण अंतःकरणाहातिय त्याच्या अंगी होते. तसेच, 'सहस्रात्मा' हे नाव त्यालाच योग्य आहे. कारण,

त्याच्यावेवढे अनेकप्रकृतिज्ञान दुसऱ्या कोणत्याही कवींत आजपर्यंत दिसून आलेले नाही. रोमिओ, लीअर, आथेल्लो, सीझर, आणि हॅम्लेट हे नायक एकाच कवीने निर्माण केले असावेत, किंवा जुलियट, रीगन, कार्डीलिया, डेस्टेमोना आणि आफीलिया या तरुणांगना एकाच कल्पनेतून निघाल्या असाव्यात ही परम आश्चर्याची गोष्ट नव्हे का ? आमच्या इकडील कवी दश रसांच्या पाशात अगदी जखडून गेल्यामुळे स्वभाववैचित्र्यवर्णन हा गुण त्यांच्यात दुर्मिळ झाला आहे, असे म्हणण्यास हरकत नाही. चारुदत्त व वसंतसेना, दुष्यन्त व शकुंतला, राम व सीता, माधव व मालती, या नायकनायिकांच्या युगुलांत म्हणण्यासारखे प्रकृतिवैचित्र्य काय आहे ? शेक्सपीअरला या गुणात अजिंक्यपत्र देण्यास काही हरकत नाही असे वाटते. 'विकारविलसिता' तील नायक जो चंद्रसेन त्याच्या मुखात घातलेल्या भाषणावरून विषय-सुखासक्ती, विचारमाहात्म्य, नीत्यवलंबन, कर्तव्याकर्तव्य, यमयातना, पिशाचयोनी, पुनर्जन्म, यांसारख्या मोठमोठ्या विषयांवर कवीचे काय विचार असावेत, यांचे अनुमान करता येणार आहे. या नाटकाचे संविधानक केवळ निर्दोष आहे, किंवा यातील पात्रांची एकूण एक भाषणे मुख्य नाटकीय वस्तूला आवश्यक आहेत असे माझ्याने म्हणवत नाही. तीव्रजवाने चंद्रसेनाच्या प्रेमावर मल्लिकेला दिलेले व्याख्यान, शालेयाचा तीव्रजवास उपदेश, चंद्रसेनाची मद्यप्राशनावर आणि नाटकप्रयोगांवर लांबलचक व्याख्याने, खेळातील राजाचे निश्चयाच्या दृढतेवरचे चव्हाट, व भुजंगाची बुद्धिचांचल्यावरची कंटाळवाणी लांबण मुळीच नसती, किंवा थोडी आखुड असती तर नाटक फिकके पडले असते असे नाही. कवींची काय आणि इतरांची काय, अनेकदा अशी स्थिती होते की, लिहू लागले म्हणजे कल्पनेमागे कल्पना सुचत जाऊन म्हणता म्हणता हातच्या कामास अनावश्यक असे लांबच्या लांब चव्हाट वळले जाते, आणि मग त्याचा लोभ सुटेनासा झाल्यामुळे ते ते घुसडून देण्यास मागे पुढे पाहत नाहीत. असली लांबलचक भाषणे वाचताना काही वाटत नाही, पण प्रयोग पाहताना ती निरुपयोगी व कित्येक वेळा रसनाशक आहेत असे तेव्हाच दिसून येते. ज्यांना शेक्सपीअरचा एक शब्द देखील वावगा दिसत नाही असे काही भगत आहेत, त्यांच्या तोंडाला लागून काही फायदा नाही. पण एका समंजस टीकाकाराचे देखील असे म्हणणे आहे की, चंद्रसेनाचे वय निदान तीस वर्षांचे असावे. हे कशावरून तर खेळातील राजाने आपल्या राणीस असे म्हटले आहे की, आपला विवाह होऊन तीस वर्षे झाली. या एका वाक्यावर दोन-तीन जर्मन व काही इंग्लिश टीकाकारांनी जो व्यूह रचून दिला आहे तो काही पुसूच नये. चंद्रसेन तीस वर्षांचा होईपर्यंत अविवाहित कसा राहिला ? त्यावेळेस कॉलेजात जाणारे विद्यार्थी तीस वर्षांचे असत की काय ? चंद्रसेन तीस वर्षांचा असल्यास त्याची आई निदान पंचेचाळीस किंवा पन्नास वर्षांची असेल असे मानिलेच पाहिजे. पंचेचाळीस वर्षांच्या म्हातारीने कामातुर होऊन आपल्या दिराशी लग्न लावावे,

किंवा त्याला तरी या वयात सौंदर्याचा मोह पडून ती त्याचा जीव की प्राण होऊन जावी, हे कितपत शक्य आहे? शालेय, तीव्रजव, राजा, राणी, प्रियाल, जुंग व भृंग वारंवार त्याला 'तरुण' म्हणतात हे कसे? वगैरे अडचणींची शंका देखील वरील टीकाकारांस कशी आली नाही कोण जाणे? शेक्सपीअरच्या वेळी इंग्लंडात लग्ने फार लवकर होत. त्याचे स्वतःचे लग्न अठरावे वर्षी होऊन एकविसावे वर्षी एक मुलगा आणि दोन मुली अशी त्याला तीन अपत्ये होती! तसेच, शेक्सपीअरच्या दुसऱ्या नाटकांवरून हे स्पष्ट दिसून येते की, लग्ने लहानपणी झाल्यामुळे स्त्री-पुरुषांना चाळिशी उलटली न उलटली तो वार्धक्य येई. अशा अनेक कारणांवरून मला असे वाटते की, चंद्रसेनाचे वय फार झाले तर १८-२० पर्यंत असेल. तो या वयाचा असावा असे मानिले म्हणजे सगळ्या नाटकाचा मेळ कसा तेव्हाच बसतो. मंगलापूरच्या विद्यालयात ज्याने पाच चार वर्षे घालविली आहेत; न्याय, अन्याय, नीती, अनीती, सत्य, असत्य वगैरे विषयांवरील व्याख्याने आणि वादविवाद ही ज्याच्या डोक्यात अद्यापि घोळत आहेत; विद्यालयाकडील ज्याचा ओढा अजून सुटला नाही; ज्याला जगातील लबाड्यांचा, दुष्टपणाचा, कृतघ्नपणाचा, आणि क्रूरपणाचा अनुभव मुळीच आला नाही; ज्याला पुरुष म्हणून तेवढे आपल्या बापासारखे सद्गुणी, व स्त्रिया म्हणून तेवढ्या आपल्या आईसारख्या पतिव्रता वाटत आहेत; जुंग व भृंग यांसारखे बाहेरून मैत्री दाखवून आतून गळा कापणारे मनुष्य ज्याच्या पाहण्यात आले नाहीत; तीव्रजवासारख्या शाब्दिक व फक्कड शुराशी, किंवा शालेयासारख्या प्रतिष्ठेखोर, अक्कलशून्य, वाचाल, व लुडबुड्या म्हातान्याशी ज्याची गाठ कधीही पडली नाही; मल्लिकेसारख्या रूपसंपन्न सुशील मुली कपटी व भेकड असतील अशी ज्याला कल्पनासुद्धा नाही; ज्याला मनुष्याची सुंदर आकृती व बुद्धी, आणि रमणीय बाह्य सृष्टी पाहून अत्यंत कौतुक व आनंद होत आहे अशाविषयी मल्लिकेने —

“दृष्टी राजपुरुषाची, वाणी पंडिताची, छाती शिपायाची — या सुंदर राष्ट्राचा सगळा जीव आणि सगळी शोभा — व्यवहार आणि आचार यांत अनुकरण करण्यासाठी ज्याने त्याने आपल्यापुढे ठेविलेला कित्ता, व सर्वांचे चित्त आकर्षणारा लोहचुंबक—”

असे उद्गार काढावेत हे किती योग्य आहे! व अशा तरुण, सद्गुणी, विद्वान, शूर, आनंदी व विचारशील राजपुत्राला चुलत्याची आणि आईची राक्षसी कृत्ये समजल्याबरोबर—

“हे कठोर मांस आपोआप झडून जाईल, किंवा याचे पाणी पाणी होईल तर किती बरे होईल! अथवा शास्त्रकर्त्यांनी आत्महत्या सदोष मानिली नसती तरी फार बरे झाले असते! नको नको हा जीव, परमेश्वरा! या जगातल्या वस्तून्वस्तूचा मला वीट आला आहे व काहीएक नकोसे झाले आहे! धिक्कार असो, धिक्कार असो या जगाला!”

असे वाटावे, हे किती स्वाभाविक आहे! समंधाच्या सांगण्यावरून, व नाटकातल्या नाटकावरून आपल्या चुलत्यानेच आपल्या बापाचा खून केला अशी चंद्रसेनाची पक्की खात्री झाली असता त्याच्याने आपल्या चुलत्याचा वध करवेना, यावरून गेटीचे असे म्हणणे आहे की, चंद्रसेन याच्या बुद्धीत अनिश्चय फार होता. व भिन्न्या आणि अनिश्चयी मनुष्यावर मनुष्यवध करून सूड घेण्यासारख्या प्रचंड व अघोर कृत्याचा भार पडला असता त्याची स्थिती कशी होते, हे या नाटकात शेक्सपीअरच्या मनात दाखवायचे होते, असे ध्यानात ठेविल्यास सगळे संविधानक कसे तेव्हाच जुळलेले दिसते. लहान कुंडीत मोठे झाड लाविले असता त्याचा विस्तार तीत न राहून जशी ती दुभंगते, त्याप्रमाणे चंद्रसेनाच्या मनाची स्थिती झाली.^३

कोलरीज याचे असे म्हणणे आहे की विचार आणि विकार यांपैकी चंद्रसेनाच्या मनावर विचाराचे विशेष प्राबल्य असल्यामुळे त्याच्या हातून योजलेले काम होत नसे.^४ अतिशय विचारासक्तीमुळे चंद्रसेनाच्या हातून काम वठत नसे असे म्हणावे तर त्याने खोटा खलिता कसा केला, चाच्यांशी लढण्यासाठी तो सगळ्यात पुढे कसा सरसावला, प्रियाल नको नको म्हणत असता तीव्रजवाशी ढालतलवार खेळण्यास तयार कसा झाला वगैरे शंकांचा चांगलासा खुलासा होत नाही. मला असे वाटते की चंद्रसेन यास सुशिक्षण मिळाले असल्यामुळे, व ज्या त्या कृत्यापासून चांगले परिणाम कोणते होतील व वाईट कोणते होतील, याचा विचार करण्याची त्याला पराकाष्ठेची स्वाभाविक हौस असल्यामुळे, कोणतेही काम अगदी निकरावर येऊन ठेपल्याशिवाय त्याच्याने उरकत नसे हेच त्याच्या वर्तनाचे मुख्य बीज होय.^५ आईचे जारकर्म आणि बापाचा खून पाहून ज्याला जगाचा इतका वीट आला की त्यासरशी आत्महत्या करून घेऊन त्यातून निघून जावे असे वाटले, त्याच्या हातून चुलत्याचा खून होईना हे काही नवल नाही. ज्याला ज्या पापाचा अतिशय तिटकारा त्याच्या हातून ते सहसा घडत नाही, हे सर्वास ठाऊक आहे. यामुळे राजा प्रार्थना करीत असता त्याचा खून केल्याचा दोष चंद्रसेनाच्या डोक्यावर न लादता जेव्हा तीव्रजव आणि राजा या दोघांनी कपटाने त्याचाच जीव घेण्याचा बेत केला तेव्हा त्यांचे कपट त्यांच्यावर उलटून पाडून ऐन आणीबाणीच्या प्रसंगी नायकाच्या हातून त्यांचा शेवट करविला यात कवीचे अद्भुत संविधानघटनाचातुर्य दिसते, येवढेच नाही तर निरनिराळ्या मनुष्यस्वभावाचे त्याला किती सूक्ष्म आणि यथार्थ ज्ञान होते हेही दिसून येते.

दुसऱ्या एका मुद्यासंबंधाने टीकाकारांत अनेक वर्षे असा वाद चालला होता की चंद्रसेनाने वेडाचे मिष केले होते किंवा तो खरोखरीच वेडा झाला होता. अशा प्रकारचा मतभेद कशामुळे झाला असेल ते ईश्वर जाणे. मला तर असे वाटते की चंद्रसेन खरोखरी वेडा असेल असा

संशय येण्यास या नाटकात तिळमात्रसुद्धा आधार नाही. आता कोणी असे म्हणतील की केसरीकर्त्याला राजेलोकांच्या वेडेपणाची काडीयेवढीदेखील पारख नाही! माझे त्यावर येवढेच उत्तर आहे की चंद्रसेनाच्या वेडेपणाची चौकशी करण्याची जिम्मा तिकडील काही प्रसिद्ध डॉक्टरांनी आपल्या अंगावर घेतली होती, पण अखेरीस त्यांनीदेखील हात टेकले! कारण, चंद्रसेनाला त्याच्या आईबापापासून काढून एखाद्या सुस्थळी चांगल्या डॉक्टरलोकांच्या नजरेखाली ठेवले तर तो बरा होईल असे जरी त्यांना वाटले तरी शेवटपर्यंत 'वेड' म्हणजे काय हे त्यांना सांगवेना, तेव्हा ते त्या अजागळ कारभाऱ्याप्रमाणे —

“खऱ्या वेडेपणाची व्याख्या करणे म्हणजे वेड्याला वेडा म्हणणे.”

असे भकू लागले! कदाचित् इकडील एक दोन रथी-महारथी 'वेड' डॉक्टर तिकडे नेले असते तर त्यांनी चंद्रसेनाच्या वेडाचा पत्ता लावून दिला असता! निदान नगरासारख्या एखाद्या शुष्क ठिकाणी त्याला ठेवावे येवढे तरी सुचविले असते! असो; असल्या विनोदात काही हाशील नाही. पहिल्या अंकाच्या पाचव्या प्रवेशात चंद्रसेन प्रियालास असे म्हणतो —

“येथून पुढे काही कारणास्तव मला वेड्याचे सोंग घ्यावे लागणार आहे, तेव्हा मी जाणून बुजून पाहिजे तसा भकेन, पाहिजे ते बोलून, हवा तसा बडबडेन किंवा वागेन. अशा प्रसंगी तुम्हाला फार खबरदारीने वागले पाहिजे.”

पुढे, अंक तीन, प्रवेश ४, यात तो राणीस असे म्हणतो —

“भ्रम! तुझ्या माझ्यात तू काय भेद पाहिलास? तुझ्याप्रमाणे माझी नाडी शांत आहे, व तुझ्याइतकेच तिचेही ठोके पडत आहेत. मी बोललो ते सारे बरळणे असे समजू नकोस. पाहिजे असले तर प्रतीतीसाठी मला सांग म्हणजे झालेले सगळे बोलणे पुनः बोलून दाखवितो; वेड्याच्याने तसे होईल काय? कधी नाही. आई तुला माझी येवढी प्रार्थना आहे की आपले दुष्ट अपराध लपविण्यासाठी माझे सारे बोलणे भ्रान्तिष्टपणाचे असे समजू नकोस.”

याहून आणखी पुरावा तो काय पाहिजे? चंद्रसेनाने हे वेडेपणाचे ढोंग इतक्यासाठीच केले होते की एखादे वेळेस रागाच्या झपाट्यात आपल्या तोंडून जे शब्द बाहेर पडतील त्यांपासून आपल्या शत्रूस आपल्या विचारांचा मागमूस लागू नये, व आपल्याला तर जिकडे तिकडे फिरण्यास सापडून कोणाचे काय बेत चालतात ते ऐकण्यास सापडावे! एकदा महाशंख शालेयाला देखील असे वाटले की या वेडेपणात काही 'शिस्त आहे'. पुढे पुढे राजालासुद्धा हे ढोंग आहे असा बळकट संशय आल्यावरून त्याने चंद्रसेनाला श्वेतद्वीपाला पाठविले. चंद्रसेन वेडा नव्हता हे सिद्ध करणे म्हणजे प्रत्येक भाषण घेऊन ते शहाणपणाचे आहे असे दाखविणे होय. स्थलसंकोचास्तव तसे येथे करिता येत नाही, त्याला माझा नाइलाज आहे. वाचकांनी हे पुस्तक वाचल्यावर आपल्याशीच असा विचार करावा की ज्याने आपल्या मर्मभेदी वाक्शल्यांनी

राजा, राणी, जुंग, भुंग, श्वपती, मल्लिका, व शालेय यांस रडकुंडीस आणले तो वेडा असता तर त्याच्याने असे झाले असते काय? पहिल्या अंकापासून शेवटपर्यंत चंद्रसेनाच्या तोंडात जी भाषणे घातली आहेत त्यांवरून, व प्रियालापाशी त्याच्या अंतःकरणातील जे उद्गार निघाले आहेत त्यांवरून तो वेडा होता, किंवा त्याच्या बुद्धीला अणुमात्र भ्रम झाला होता, अशी कल्पना देखील माझ्याने करवत नाही. या सर्वांपेक्षा एक महत्त्वाचा विचार आहे तो हा की ज्या नाटकांत शेक्सपीअरने इतक्या परिश्रमाने मनुष्याच्या नानाविध मनोविकारांचे अत्युत्कृष्ट चित्र काढले आहे त्याचा नायक त्याने एक वेडा राजपुत्र केला असावा असे मुळीच संभवत नाही.

मूळ गोष्टीत तीव्रजव आणि मल्लिका ही पात्रे नाहीत. तर मग ही कवीने कशासाठी निर्माण केली असावीत? अर्थात आपल्या नायकाचे तेज विशेष पडावे म्हणून ज्याप्रमाणे हीण धातूचे कोंदण करून त्यात हिरा बसविला म्हणजे त्याची विशेष शोभा दिसते त्याप्रमाणे चंद्रसेनाच्या गुणांचे महत्त्व ठळठळीत रीतीने वाचकांच्या लक्षात येण्यासाठी त्याहून अगदी भिन्न अशी ही दोन पात्रे त्याने कल्पिली. तीव्रजवाच्या शूरपणाच्या आणि ममतेच्या वलगना मात्र ऐकून घ्याव्यात. मल्लिकेचे वेड पाहून, किंवा तिच्या मरणाची वार्ता ऐकून त्याने शाब्दिक आक्रोशापलीकडे काही केले नाही. शालेयाला मारल्याबद्दल चंद्रसेनाचा सूड घेण्यात तरी त्याने थोडा खरा पराक्रम दाखवायचा होता! पण ज्याच्या अंगात तो मुळीच नाही तो तो दाखविले कोठून! तेव्हा त्याने आणि राजाने चंद्रसेनाला विष घालून मारण्याची मसलत केली ती ठीकच केली. चंद्रसेनाचा कृत्रिम भ्रम, त्याचे सौजन्य, त्याची उदारता, आणि निष्कपटपणा, यांपुढे मल्लिकेचे गुण कसे दिपून जातात, न अवगुण किती निंद्य दिसतात हे वाचकांच्या सहज लक्षात येणार आहे. अक्कलशून्य, प्रतिष्ठेखोर, व वाचाल शालेयाच्या सांगण्याप्रमाणे हेरपणा न पत्करिता ती चंद्रसेनास दृढ आश्वासन देती व त्याच्यावरील आपले प्रेम ढळू न देती तर 'स्त्रीजात तेवढी बेहराम' असे निर्वाणीचे शब्द त्याच्या तोंडून येतेना व आईच्या दुर्वर्तनामुळे भडकलेला त्याचा संतापानी त्याच्या मनाचा आणि शरीराचा इतका दाह करताना! प्रियालाचे खरे प्रेम चंद्रसेनावर होते; पण रात्रंदिवस 'स्वामीसेवक' हा भाव त्याच्या अंतःकरणात असल्यामुळे चंद्रसेनाला दटावण्यास किंवा अमुक गोष्ट तुम्ही करूच नका, असे निक्षून सांगण्यास त्याचे धैर्य होत नसे. यावरून एवढे स्पष्ट दिसून येईल की दुय्यम प्रतीच्या पात्रांच्या कोणत्याही गुणाचे तेज चंद्रसेनाच्या गुणापुढे पडू नये याविषयी शेक्सपीअरने फार काळजी घेतली आहे. एकंदरीने हे नाटक या कवीच्या उत्तम नाटकांपैकी एक आहे किंवा सर्वांत उत्तम आहे याचा निर्णय करणे कठीण आहे. तो निर्णय होईपर्यंत पुढे दिलेले जरव्हायनसचे मत सर्वांनी स्वीकारण्याजोगे आहे.^६

“शेक्सपीअरच्या इतर नाटकांपेक्षा या नाटकाची मूळ गोष्ट फारच वेडीवित्री असून त्याने तिच्या आधारावर असले शोकपर्यवसायी नाटक निर्माण केले की जेथे जेथे या कवीचे नाव निघते तेथे तेथे या नाटकाचे प्रथम स्मरण होते. या नाटकात शेक्सपीअरच्या नाट्यकलेच्या आणि बुद्धीच्या परस्परविरोधी गुणांचा एकत्र संनिवेश झाल्यासारखा दिसतो, व या नाटकाइतके दुसऱ्या कोणत्याही नाटकात शेक्सपीअरचे ‘स्वत्व’ (कृतिवैशिष्ट्य) दृष्ट होत नसूनही ते अत्यंत लोकप्रिय आणि अकृत्रिम झाले आहे. प्रत्यही घडणाऱ्या गोष्टी याला आधारभूत असल्यामुळे हे (सांसारिक) गहन ज्ञानाचे आणि नैपुण्याचे भांडार होऊन बसले आहे, व चवथ्या हेन्नीच्या खालोखाल याच नाटकात शेक्सपीअरचे वर्तन आणि स्वभाव याविषयी अतिशय स्पष्ट माहिती मिळते.”

तीव्रजव, शालेय, मल्लिका व प्रियाल यांच्या संबंधाने माझ्या मनात पुष्कळ लिहावयाचे होते. पण बोलता बोलता ही प्रस्तावना फार वाढत चालल्यामुळे, व दमा अधिक होऊन तो शरीराला व मनाला पीडा करू लागल्यामुळे, येथेच थांबणे भाग पडत आहे. नाटकासारख्या विषयाकडे माझ्या मनाची स्वाभाविक प्रवृत्ती नाही, व ते तिकडे लाविल्याने त्याच्यापासून मला व दुसऱ्यांना विशेष फायदा होईलसे वाटत नाही, तथापि प्रसंगविशेषी या मनोरंजक विषयाकडे मी थोडा वेळ आनंदाने वळन.

गो. ग. आगरकर

पुणे ता. २९ जून
सन १८८३ इ०

NOTES

१. Each change of many-coloured life he drew,
Exhausted worlds, and then imagined new
– Johnson.
२. “What other anatomist of the human heart has reached his hidden core, and laid bare all the strength and weakness of our mysterious nature as he has done?”
– Prof. Craik’s English Literature and Language.
३. “To me,” wrote Goethe, “it is clear that Shakspeare meant... to represent the effects of a great action laid upon a soul unfit

for the performance of it. In this view the whole piece seems to be composed. There is an oak tree planted in a costly jar, which should have borne pleasant flowers in its bosom; the roots expand the jar is shivered.”

४. In Hamlet we see “a great, an almost enormous intellectual activity, and a proportionate aversion to real action consequent upon it.”
५. “The whole,” wrote Schlegel, “is intended to show that a calculating consideration, which exhausts all the relations and possible consequences of a deed, must cripple the power of acting.”
६. “To no other play of Shakspeare’s is a source of such rude deformity assigned, and from this source he has formed a Tragedy which, wherever the poet’s name is mentioned, is the first that comes to remembrance; which appears to unite the most contradictory points of his art and genius, which surpasses in originality every other of his dramas, and is yet so popular and so free from all artifice. It is the text from true life, and therefore a mine of the profoundest wisdom, a play which, next to Henry IV, contains perhaps the most express information of Shakspeare’s character and nature.”

केसरीतील निबंध

कवि, काव्य, काव्यरति

अहोरात्र मोठमोठ्या राजकीय प्रकरणांनी ज्यांचे मन व्यग्र केले आहे, अवाढव्य व्यापारविस्ताराची व्यवस्था पाहतां पाहतां ज्यांना जेवणाससुद्धां पुरेशी फुरसत सांपडत नाही, शास्त्राभ्यासांत गढून गेल्यामुळे प्रपंचसुखांविषयी ज्यांना वैराग्य उत्पन्न झाले आहे, अथवा प्रपंचाच्या काळजींत जे अगदीं चूर होऊन गेले आहेत — अशांपैकी प्रत्येकास केव्हां केव्हां सवडींत सवड करून घटकाभर एखादे नाटक किंवा काव्य हातांत घ्यावे, असें कां वाटते? आपल्या आयुष्याची पूर्ण पन्नास वर्षे ज्याने इंग्लंडच्या राजकीय घडामोडींत घालविली, त्या ग्लाडस्टनला अजूनहि एखादे दिवशी “होमर” वाचण्याची इच्छा कां होते? लढाईच्या सामानाबरोबर सफॉप्लीज वगैरेची नाटके अलेक्झांडर कां बाळगी? तास दोन तास कथाश्रवण करण्यासाठी शिवाजी आपला जीव वारंवार धोक्यांत कां घाली? उत्तरामचरिताच्या कर्त्यांचे नाव संस्कृतज्ञ अद्यापि प्रेमाने कां स्मरतात? किलोस्करकृत “सौभद्रा” ला झुंडीच्या झुंडी कां लोटतात? ‘नाटके करावी’ असा अभिप्राय कै. विष्णुशास्त्र्यांनी कां दिला? पाश्चिमात्य पाठशालांत व इंग्रजांनी या देशांत स्थापिलेल्या शाळांत प्राचीन व अर्वाचीन कवींची काव्ये विद्यार्थांकडून वाचविण्याचा परिपाठ कां पडला आहे?

वरील प्रश्नांचे समाधान होण्यासारखे उत्तर ज्यांस देतां येईल, त्यांस काव्यरसांचे हृद्गत समजले आहे, असें म्हणण्यास हरकत नाही.

कोणी असें म्हणतात कीं, काव्यांत जी पद्यरचना असते, ती कर्णमनोहर असते, म्हणून काव्यवाचनापासून मनुष्यास आनंद होतो. यावर कित्येकांचा असा आक्षेप आहे की, ‘अमरा’ सारख्या ग्रंथांत पद्यरचना असताहि, त्यास कोणी काव्य म्हणत नाही. तेव्हां पद्यरचनेत काव्यात्मा नाही. कोणी असें म्हणतात कीं, काव्य हे मनुष्यस्वभावाचे आणि सृष्टीचे हुबेहुब चित्र आहे, म्हणून त्याचे वाचन मनुष्यास आल्हाद देते. यावर कित्येकांचा असा आक्षेप आहे कीं, वैद्यकादि ग्रंथांत वनस्पत्यादिकांच्या गुणांची व धर्मांची जी हुबेहुब वर्णने आहेत, त्यांस कोणी काव्य म्हणत नाही, त्याअर्थी मनुष्याच्या किंवा सृष्टीच्या यथार्थ वर्णनांत काव्यात्मा आहे असें म्हणतां येत नाही. शिवाय काव्य हे मनुष्याच्या स्वभावाचे यथार्थ वर्णन असेल तर त्यांत पद्यरचना कधीच उपयोगाची नाही. कारण सुखदुःखादि कोणत्याही मनोविकारांचा कितीहि अतिरेक झाला तरी, तत्संबंधी उद्गार वृत्तबद्ध निघत नाहीत. आणि काव्यांत तर गद्यापेक्षां पद्यरचनाच विशेष आढळते. तेव्हां काव्य हे आहे तरी काय? कवींना इतके मोठेपण येण्याचे कारण काय? चांगल्या काव्यांच्या वाचनाने आनंद कां होतो? हे प्रश्न पुनः निरुत्तर राहिल्यासारखे दिसतात.

आमच्या मते जो कोणी क्षणभर अंतर्दृष्टी करून या प्रश्नांचा शांतपणे विचार करील, त्याला त्यांचे बरोबर उत्तर तेव्हाच देता येईल. काव्यांना बहुशः पद्यरचना असते, तथापि कांहीं प्रकारच्या गद्यांतहि काव्यगुण असतात. तसेच 'काव्य' हे मनुष्याच्या स्वभावाचे आणि सृष्टीचे यथार्थ वर्णन आहे, — वगैरे 'काव्य' शब्दाच्या अर्थनिर्णायक प्रत्येक प्रयत्नांत थोडेथोडे सत्य आहे. त्यांत समग्र सत्य नाही, म्हणून ते समाधानकारक होत नाहीत. त्यांत कांहीतरी न्यूनता आहे असे वाटते; पण ती कोठे आहे हे समजत नाही. काव्यवाचनापासून आनंद होतो हे निर्विवाद आहे. तो ज्या कारणांनी होतो, त्यांची मीमांसा मात्र संशयाकुल आहे.

काव्याचे खरे स्वरूप लक्षांत येण्यासाठी मनुष्याच्या मनोधर्माचा थोडासा विचार करणे जरूर आहे. जागृतावस्थेत मन चंचल असता त्यांत जे व्यापार चालतात, त्यांचे 'संवेदना', 'इच्छा', व 'ज्ञान' असे तीन वर्ग करता येतील. या तीन अनुभवांस 'मन' ही संज्ञा आहे. या तिहींपैकी पहिल्याशी काव्याचा विशेष संबंध आहे. संवेदना दोन प्रकारची आहे, प्रतिकूल व अनुकूल. प्रतिकूल संवेदनेस आपण दुःख म्हणतो व अनुकूल संवेदनेस सुख म्हणतो. ज्यापासून प्रतिकूल संवेदना उत्पन्न होतात, ते आपणास आवडत नाही, ज्याच्यापासून अनुकूल संवेदना होतात, ते आपणांस प्रिय होत. कारण दुःखाचा कंटाळा आणि सुखाचा अभिलाष, या मनुष्याच्या मनाच्या स्वाभाविक वृत्ति आहेत. इतर सुखद वस्तूप्रमाणे काव्यापासून आपणांस अनुकूल संवेदना होतात म्हणून ते आपणांस आवडते. ज्या लेखरचनेपासून वाचकांस ज्ञान करून देण्याचा हेतु असतो, तीत काव्य नसते. जी रचना वाचकांच्या अंतःकरणांत अनुकूल संवेदना उत्पन्न करण्याकरिता केलेली असते, ती काव्य होय. वास्तविक पाहता कोणतीही लेखरचना केवळ अनुकूल संवेदना उत्पन्न करण्यासाठी किंवा केवळ ज्ञान करून देण्यासाठी केलेली असत नाही. ज्ञान करून देण्यासाठी लिहिलेली पुस्तके मनोरंजक करण्याचा प्रयत्न केलेला असतो; मनोरंजक पुस्तकांत जातां जातां थोडेसे ज्ञान देण्याचा प्रयत्न असतो. मृदुता किंवा रमणीयता हा काव्याचा प्रधान गुण; काठिण्य किंवा कर्कशता हा शास्त्रीय ग्रंथांचा प्रधान गुण. शास्त्रीय ग्रंथांस थोडी मृदुता आणल्याने त्यांचे अध्ययन कष्टावह होत नाही. काव्यांत कोठे काठिण्य येऊ दिलेले असते, ते वाचकांस आनंदाबरोबर थोडे ज्ञानहि करून देण्याच्या हेतूने येऊ दिलेले असते.

पुढे जे सांगावयाचे आहे, त्यासंबंधाने गैरसमज होऊ नये म्हणून येथे इतके स्पष्ट करणे जरूर आहे की, 'काव्य' शब्दांत आम्ही नाटकादि सर्व सुखोत्पादक लेखांचा समावेश केला आहे, व 'कवि' शब्दांत असलेले लेख लिहिणाऱ्या नाटककारादि सर्व लोकांचा समावेश केला आहे. मनुष्यांच्या विचारांत, प्रत्यक्ष अनुभवांत किंवा लेखांत बाह्यसृष्टि किंवा अंतःसृष्टि याशिवाय दुसरा कोणता विषय असू शकणं शक्य नाही. कारण, या दोन सृष्टि सांगितल्या

म्हणजे कल्पनीय वस्तूची परमावधि झाली. या दोन सृष्टीबाहेर आम्ही जाणार कोठें? व विचार कशाचा करणार? मनांतील अनंत व्यापार, यांपैकी एक किंवा अनेक, हेच आमच्या सुखानुभवाचे आणि ज्ञानाचे विषय असले पाहिजेत. तसेंच, ज्याप्रमाणें ज्ञान म्हणजे अंतर्बाह्य सृष्टीतील वस्तूंचा यथार्थ निर्णय, त्याप्रमाणें काव्यहि अंतर्बाह्य सृष्टीतील वस्तूंचा यथार्थ निर्णयच आहे. शास्त्रीय ग्रंथातल्याप्रमाणें काव्यांतहि वस्तूंचें हुबेहुबच वर्णन केले पाहिजे. ज्याप्रमाणें शास्त्रीय ग्रंथाला, त्याप्रमाणेंच काव्यालाहि याच गुणानें माहात्म्य, सारता, व महर्हता येते. ज्यांत सत्यनिरूपण नाही, तो शास्त्रीय ग्रंथ जसा कवडीच्या मोलाचा, त्याप्रमाणें ज्यांत सत्यनिरूपण नाही, असा काव्यग्रंथहि कवडीच्या मोलाचा. दोघांचाहि सत्यकथनावर, यथार्थ वर्णनावर, किंवा हुबेहुब चित्र काढण्यावर सारा कटाक्ष आहे. भेद इतकाच आहे कीं, शास्त्रीय ग्रंथांतील विषय आणि त्यासंबंधानें सत्य सांगण्याची पद्धत, ही काव्यांतील विषय आणि त्यासंबंधानें सत्य सांगण्याची पद्धत, यांहून निराळी असतात.

मनुष्यांच्या दुःखांचा परिहार व सुखांची वृद्धि करण्याचें सामर्थ्य ज्ञानाच्या अंगी आहे, म्हणूनच मनुष्यें त्याच्या पाठीमागें लागलीं आहेत. तसें नसतें तर त्याचा नाद त्यांना कधींच न लागता. ज्ञान हें मनुष्यांच्या सुखाचें प्रधान साधन आहे. तथापि तें झाल्याबरोबर त्यापासून सर्वास सुख होऊं लागेल असें नाही. सुखावह होण्यास त्यास अनुकूल संवेदनोत्पादक व्हावें लागतें. जोपर्यंत त्याला हें नूतन स्वरूप आलें नाही तोपर्यंत तें काव्यविषय होऊं शकत नाही; कारण अनुकूल संवेदनोत्पादक असणें हा काव्याचा प्रधान गुण आहे. आज ज्या कित्येक गोष्टींचे ज्ञान फक्त तत्त्ववेत्त्यांसच आनंद देत आहे, तें कालांतरानें सर्व जनांस आनंददायक होईल. परंतु ते तसें होऊं लागण्यापूर्वी बराच अवधि लोटला पाहिजे. तो लोटला कीं तें सुखोत्पादक होऊन कवींच्या मान्यांत सांपडणार! यावरून काय सिद्ध झालें कीं, आज ज्या गोष्टी शास्त्रीय ग्रंथांत कोडून राहिल्या आहेत त्या, व तेथून पुढें ज्यांचा शोध शास्त्रवेत्ते करतील त्या, अवश्य काळ गेला म्हणजे काव्यविषय होऊं शकतील. आजपर्यंत असेंच होत आलें आहे. आंग्लभौम राजकवि लॉर्ड टेनिसन याचें 'प्रिन्सेस' नामक काव्य (ज्याचें डॉ. कीर्तीकर यांनीं मराठींत भाषांतर करून ते 'इंदिरा' या नांवानें प्रसिद्ध केलें आहे,) या नियमाचें उदाहरण आहे. हा नियम खरा असेल तर, ज्ञानप्रसार होऊं लागला म्हणजे कवित्वशक्तीस मांड्य येतें असा जो कित्येकांनीं साहसाचा अभिप्राय दिला आहे तो खोटा ठरतो. इंग्लंडांतील प्रसिद्ध ग्रंथकार डॉक्टर जॉन्सन यानें एके ठिकाणीं असें म्हटलें आहे कीं, काव्य करण्याजोगे नामी नामी विषय जगांतील जुने कवि लाटून बसल्यामुळें, अर्वाचीन कवींस मनोरंजक काव्यें लिहिण्यासारखे विषयच राहिले नाहीत! शास्त्रप्रसार काव्यरचनेस घातक आहे, हें विलक्षण मत मेकॉलेनं कोठेंसें ठोकून दिलें आहे! काव्यास अलीकडे जें थोडेंसें मांड्य आल्यासारखें

दिसते, त्याचें कारण अर्वाचीन ज्ञानप्रसार नव्हे, तर अर्वाचीन ज्ञानप्रसारामुळे काव्यवस्तु करण्याजोगे जे नवीन विषय उत्पन्न झाले आहेत, त्यांचा अर्वाचीन कवि काव्यरचनेत उपयोग न करता प्राचीन कवींच्या काव्यविषयांवर फिरून फिरून लिहितात, व त्यांच्या भाषेचें अनुकरण करतात, हें आहे. ज्यांनीं असें केलेलें नाहीं, त्यांचीं काव्यें वाचकांस प्रिय झालीं आहेत, व पुढें जें असें करणार नाहीत त्यांचींही काव्यें वाचकांस प्रिय होतील, याबद्दल आम्हांस मुळींच संशय नाही. शिवाय, प्रत्येक शतकांत महातत्त्ववेत्ता निघणें जसें संभवत नाहीं, त्याप्रमाणें महाकवि निघणें हेंही संभवत नाहीं. जसा इंग्लंडांत आजपर्यंत एकच शेक्सपियर होऊन गेला, त्याप्रमाणें बेकनही एकच होऊन गेला ! हिंदुस्थानांतही अद्यापपावेतों भास्कराचार्यास किंवा कालिदासास प्रतिस्पर्धी भेटला नाही ! हाताचीं बोटेंच घालून महाकवींची संख्या मोजू लागलों तर भरतरखंडांत अनामिकेपुढें, व इतर देशांत तर करांगुलीपुढें जातां येणार नाहीं असें वाटतें !

वर जें सांगितलें आहे, त्यावरून शास्त्रीय ग्रंथांप्रमाणें काव्यांतही सत्यकथन असतें, हें वाचकांच्या ध्यानांत येईल, अशी आशा आहे. कवि जें सत्य सांगतो, तें शास्त्रीय सत्याप्रमाणें गूढ नसतें. शास्त्रीय सत्यांपैकी कांहीं सत्यें इतकीं गूढ असतात कीं, तीं समजण्यास तपांच्या अध्ययनाची आवश्यकता असते. तसेंच शास्त्रांत कधीं कधीं विशेष कारणासाठीं अगदी क्षुल्लक सत्यें सांगितलेलीं असतात. या दोन्हीही सत्यांचा काव्यांत उपयोग होत नाहीं. 'उष्णता, प्रकाश, व विद्युत् हीं गतीचीं निरनिराळीं रूपें होत', हें सत्य काव्यविषय होण्यास आणखी शेंकडों वर्षे लोटली पाहिजेत. तसेंच 'बाभळीला कांटे असतात', 'मासे समुद्रांत राहतात', 'पावट्याची उसळ फार खाल्ल्यानें अपचन होऊन वायु सरतो' असलीं सत्येंही काव्याच्या कामाचीं नाहीत. काव्यांत जीं सत्यें गोवावयाचीं, त्यांची योग्य निवड करण्यास कवीस पराकाष्ठेचे श्रम पडतात. जीं समजण्यास मुळींच श्रम पडत नाहीत, अशींही पण उपयोगी नाहीत; जीं समजण्यास फार श्रम पडतात अशींही पण उपयोगी नाहीत. तीं या दोहोंच्या दरम्यान असून, अनुकूल संवेदनोत्पादक असलीं पाहिजेत. यावर कोणी अशी शंका घेतील कीं, काव्यांत वर्णिलेलीं सत्यें नेहमीं अनुकूल संवेदनोत्पादक असलीं पाहिजेत, हें मत खरें असेल, तर काव्यांत दुःखपर्यवसायी नाटकांचा किंवा अवर्षणादि अरिष्टांच्या वर्णनांचा समावेश कधींच करतां येणार नाहीं. कारण दुःखपर्यवसायी नाटके पाहिल्यानें व अरिष्टांचीं वर्णनें वाचल्यानें मनास आनंद न होतां उलट दुःख होतें. कांहीं अशी ही शंका बरोबर आहे; पण थोड्या विचारांतीं तिचें निरसन होण्यासारखें आहे. दुष्काळांत अन्न न मिळाल्यामुळे होणाऱ्या यातनांचा प्रत्यक्ष अनुभव आणि त्या यातनांच्या वर्णनाचें वाचन किंवा श्रवण, कामीजनांस होणाऱ्या क्लेशांचा प्रत्यक्ष अनुभव आणि त्यांच्या क्लेशांच्या वर्णनाचें वाचन किंवा श्रवण, या आणि याप्रमाणें इतर सर्व गोष्टींपासून होणाऱ्या सुखदुःखांचा प्रत्यक्ष अनुभव आणि त्यांच्या वर्णनांचें वाचन किंवा श्रवण — यांत फार

अंतर आहे. प्रत्यक्षांनुभवाची तीव्रता वाचनांत किंवा श्रवणांत कधींहि येऊं शकणार नाही; आणि तसें होऊं लागलें तर प्रतिकूल संवेदनोत्पादक काव्यें कोणी हातीं धरणार नाही. उतार वयांत नवानवसांनीं झालेलें अपत्य मरण पावलें असतां मातापितरांस जें दुःख होतें, तेंच दुःख जर त्याच्या वर्णनापासून किंवा अभिनयापासून होऊं लागलें, तर तें वर्णन कोण हातांत घेईल? किंवा तो अभिनय पाहण्यास कोण जाईल? एखाद्या दुर्गम आणि निर्भय अशा उंच ठिकाणी बसून खालीं चाललेली लढाई पाहण्यानें मनावर ज्या प्रकारचे विकार होण्याचा संभव आहे, त्या प्रकारचे विकार दुःखपर्यवसायी कथेच्या वाचनापासून होतात. सर्व मनुष्यांच्या मनोवृत्ति एकाच तऱ्हेच्या असल्यामुळें एकास झालेलें दुःख किंवा सुख त्याच्या बाह्य चिन्हांवरून, वर्णनावरून, किंवा अभिनयावरून दुसऱ्यास समजून येतें, हें खरें आहे. पण या समजून घेण्यांत आणि प्रत्यक्षांनुभवांत फार अंतर आहे. तलवारीसारख्या शस्त्राचें मर्मापर्यंत चरचर कांपीत जाणें आणि फक्त अंगाला चाटणें, यांत जो फरक आहे, तो प्रत्यक्ष सुखदुःखात आणि त्यांच्या चित्रांत आहे. कवीची सारी करामत हुबेहुब चित्र काढण्यांत आहे; मूळ उत्पन्न करण्यांत नाही. ते मूळ उत्पन्न करूं लागतील तर त्यांच्या दुःखोत्पादक कृतींकडे कोणी दुकूनहि पाहणार नाही. असो; पण हा सगळा वाचकांच्या किंवा प्रेक्षकांच्या सुखदुःखाविषयीं विचार झाला. दुःखपर्यवसायी काव्य लिहितांना खुद्द कवीच्या मनाची काय स्थिति होते, हा प्रश्न अजून राहिलाच आहे. कोणत्याहि प्रकारचें काव्य रचतांना किंवा त्यांतील विषयांचा विचार करतांना कवीस जे आयास होतात, ते प्रत्यक्ष आयासांहून बरेच क्षीण असतात. सुखदुःखाचा प्रत्यक्ष अनुभव आणि सुखदुःखावर पुनःपुनः विचार करून तीं आपणांसच होत आहेत असा भास करून घेण्याचा प्रयत्न, यांत पुष्कळ अंतर आहे. धनलोभ्याचें धन एकाएकीं नाहीसें झालें असतां त्याला ज्या यातना होतात, त्या प्रत्यक्ष यातना कवि आपणास धनलोभी समजून व आपलें सारें वित्त एकाएकीं नष्ट झालें आहे असें समजून, द्रव्यनाशानें खऱ्या धनलोभ्याला होणाऱ्या दुःखाचें प्रतिबिंब आपल्या मनावर उठवून घेण्यासाठीं त्या दुःखाचें एकसारखें चिंतन करतो, व त्यामुळें कांहीं वेळानें त्याच्या मनाची वृत्ति धनलोभ्याच्या वृत्तीसारखी होऊन धनलोभ्याला होणाऱ्या यातनांची बरीच छाया त्याच्या मनावरहि पडूं लागते. अशा प्रकारें उत्पन्न केलेल्या दुःखाच्या छायेस अप्रत्यक्ष दुःख असें म्हणतां येईल. ज्याला ही छाया हवी तितकी दाट पाडून घेतां येत असेल, त्याच्या अंगीं कवित्वगुणांपैकीं श्रेष्ठ गुण आहे, असें म्हणतां येईल. विचारानें प्रत्यक्ष सुखदुःखाच्या तीव्रतेचें पूर्ण प्रतिबिंब आपल्यावर उठवून घेणें याचेंच नांव तादात्म्य; तंद्री किंवा एकतानता. ज्याला सुखदुःखाचा प्रत्यक्ष अनुभव होत आहे, त्याच्या मनाप्रमाणें कवीच्या मनाची स्थिति झाल्याशिवाय त्याच्या काव्यांत तो रस पूर्णपणें उतरणार नाही. रसाची परिपक्वता अगोदर कवीच्या मनांत झाली पाहिजे. ती

तशी झाली तरच त्याला ती काव्यांत आणण्याचा प्रयत्न करतां येईल; कारण जर आडांतच पाणी नसलें तर तें पोहऱ्यांत कोठून येणार? कवीला ज्या विषयाशी आपल्या मनाची तंद्री लावून घ्यावयाची असते, तो विषय अनुकूल संवेदनोत्पादक असो, की प्रतिकूल संवेदनोत्पादक असो, त्याला जे कष्ट पडतात ते उभयपक्षीं सारखेच असतात. कवीचें मन फोटोग्राफ घेण्यासाठी तयार केलेल्या भिंगाप्रमाणें असतें. ज्याप्रमाणें हवा तेवढा प्रकाश अनुकूल असला म्हणजे पाहिजे त्या पदार्थाचें हुबेहुब प्रतिबिंब त्या भिंगावर पाडतां येतें, त्याप्रमाणें ज्या कवीला आपली कल्पना हवी तितकी प्रज्वलित करतां येते, त्याला तिच्या रश्मीनीं आपल्या मनावर पाहिजे त्या विषयाची मुळाबरहुकूम छाया पाडतां येते. कल्पना प्रज्वलित होऊन कल्पनाविषयांशीं तादात्म्य होणें — यांतच कवींचा आणि काव्यवाचकांचा आनंद आहे. बीजगणितांतील किंवा भूमितींतील एखाद्या कूट प्रश्नांत बुद्धि व्यग्र होऊन गेली असतां तीत जें चांचल्य उत्पन्न होतें तें तत्त्वशोधकांस जसें अत्यंत आनंददायक असतें, त्याप्रमाणेंच सुखदुःखोत्पादक विषयांचें हुबेहुब आकलन करण्यासाठीं भरधांव सोडलेल्या कल्पनेच्या चांचल्यापासून कवींना व काव्यवाचकांना अत्यानंद होतो. असें जर नसतें, तर दुःखपर्यवसायीकाव्यें कवि मुळींच न लिहिते, व वाचक तीं मुळींच न वाचते. तेव्हां सिद्ध काय झालें कीं, काव्य दुःखपर्यवसायी असो कीं सुखपर्यवसायी असो, त्यांतील रसापासून उत्पन्न होणारा आनंद सारखाच असतो; आणि याच कारणामुळें कॉमेडी ऑफ एर्स (भ्रांतिकृत चमत्कार) इतकींच आथेल्लो वाचण्याला, किंवा त्याचा प्रयोग पाहण्याला, आमचीं मनें उत्सुक असतात. तर मग दुःखपर्यवसायी आणि सुखपर्यवसायी काव्यांच्या वाचनांत किंवा प्रयोगदर्शनांत मुळींच भेद नाही कीं काय, असा प्रश्न सहज उत्पन्न होतो. त्यास इतकेंच उत्तर आहे की, भेद आहे; मुळींच नाही असें नाही; पण तो फार थोडा आहे. काव्यवाचनांत किंवा त्यांचा प्रयोग पाहण्यांत एकमेकांपासून अगदीं भिन्न असे दोन मानसिक व्यापार चाललेले असतात. एक कल्पनाशक्ति प्रज्वलित होऊन ती मनाचें काव्यवस्तूशीं तादात्म्य करण्यासाठीं झटत असते; दुसरा, इंद्रियांपुढें प्रत्यक्ष असणाऱ्या, किंवा कल्पनेनें निर्माण केलेल्या काव्यवस्तु आपापल्या स्वभावाप्रमाणें वाचकांच्या व प्रेक्षकांच्या अनुकूल व प्रतिकूल संवेदनांस अंशतः कारण होत असतात. यामुळें दुःखपर्यवसायी काव्य वाचीत असतां किंवा त्याचा प्रयोग पाहात असतां वृत्तीला थोडीशी खिन्नता उत्पन्न होते, आणि सुखपर्यवसायी काव्य वाचीत असतां वृत्तीला थोडासा आनंद होतो. अप्रबुद्ध लोकांना पहिल्या व्यापारापासून होणाऱ्या आनंदाची मुळींच कल्पना नसते यामुळें दुःखपर्यवसायी नाटक पाहणें त्यांना आवडत नाही.

आतापर्यंत जें सांगितलें आहे त्यावरून तत्त्वशोधकाप्रमाणें कवीचेंहि, एका प्रकारच्या सत्यांचा निर्णय करणें, आणि ती सांगणे, हें काम आहे. हें काम बजावण्यासाठी कवीस

आपली कल्पना प्रज्वलित करून काव्यवस्तूशी आपल्या मनाचें तादात्म्य करून घ्यावें लागतें. काव्यवस्तु कोणत्याही प्रकारची असो, या तादात्म्यापासून होणारा आनंद सारखाच असतो. कवींच्या यथार्थ वर्णनांनी काव्यवस्तूशी वाचकांच्या आणि प्रेक्षकांच्या मनाचें तादात्म्य झालें तर त्यांनाहि कवींसारखाच आनंद होईल. काव्यवस्तु कोणत्याहि प्रकारची असो, तिच्या चिंतनांत व्यग्र झालेल्या कवींच्या किंवा वाचकांच्या कल्पनेस जें चांचल्य येतें तें आनंदमय आहे. काव्य वाचीत असतां किंवा त्याचा प्रयोग पाहात असतां वृत्तीत कधीं कधीं जी खिन्नता उत्पन्न होते ती, वृत्ति एकीकडे एकतानतानंदांत गढली असतां इंद्रियांपुढें प्रत्यक्ष असणाऱ्या किंवा कल्पनेनें निर्माण केलेल्या, भयंकर काव्यवस्तु दुसरीकडून तीत प्रतिकूल संवेदना उत्पन्न करीत असतात, म्हणून होते. सारांश, काव्य दुःख पर्यवसायी असो किंवा सुखपर्यवसायी असतो, तें रचण्यांत कवीला, आणि तें वाचण्यांत वाचकाला आनंदच आहे. या आनंदात, काव्यवस्तूचे बाह्य स्वरूप रमणीय असल्यास थोडीशी भर पडते व तें भयंकर असल्यास त्याला किंचित् छोट बसतो—इत्यादि गोष्टी वाचकांच्या ध्यानांत येतील अशी आशा आहे.

काव्याच्या वाचनापासून राजापासून रंकांस, तत्त्ववेत्त्यापासून अत्यंत अल्पशिक्षित मनुष्यास, सर्व स्थितींत आनंद होण्यास अनेक कारणें आहेत. एक तर कवींच्या वाणींतून जे बोल निघत असतात, त्यांच्या सत्यतेविषयी प्रत्येक अंतःकरण साक्ष देत असतें. जीं सत्यें देशकालादिकांनी मर्यादित, किंवा जीं सत्यें बहुश्रुतांस मात्र समजणार, अशीं सत्यें कवि कधींच सांगत बसत नाही. ज्या मनुष्याची रानटी अवस्था सुटली आहे, ज्याला मानवी स्वभावाचें किंचित् ज्ञान प्राप्त झालें आहे, ज्याच्या मनावर बाह्य सृष्टीच्या सौंदर्याचा परिणाम होऊं लागला आहे, असा मनुष्य कोणत्याहि देशांत राहात असो, किंवा कोणत्याहि शतकांत जन्मास आला असो, महाकवींच्या सत्यमय रसाळ उद्गाराभृताचें सेवन करण्यास तो योग्य असतो. काव्यापासून आनंद होण्याचें दुसरें कारण असें आहे की, साधारण मनुष्यास ज्या गोष्टी अव्यक्त असतात, त्या कवि त्यास व्यक्त करून देतो. 'जितक्या मूर्ति तितक्या प्रकृति' अशी आपल्या लोकांत म्हण आहे. या म्हणीचा अर्थ इतकाच की, प्रत्येक मनुष्याचा स्वभाव निराळा असल्यामुळें सर्वांच्या स्वभावांचें ज्ञान होणें अशक्य आहे. तथापि ज्याअर्थीं सर्व मनुष्यांस आपण 'मनुष्य' या एका वर्गाखाली मोडतों त्याअर्थीं त्या सर्वांत साधारण असें कांही गुण असलेच पाहिजेत. या साधारण गुणांचें अति स्वल्प ज्ञान बहुतेकांस असतें; व तें असतें म्हणून काव्यवाचनापासून त्यांस आनंद होतो. कित्येक मनुष्य पराकाष्ठेचे रागीट असतात, कित्येक शान्त असतात, कित्येक मायाळू असतात, कित्येक लोभी असतात, कित्येक क्रूर असतात, कित्येक कामातुर असतात. तथापि राग, शान्ति, ममता, लोभ, क्रौर्य व काम इत्यादि सर्व मनोवृत्तींची प्रत्येकास थोडीबहुत ओळख असते. विशिष्ट व्यक्तींत एखादा गुण फार असला म्हणून बाकीच्या गुणांविषयीं

तो अगदीं अज्ञान असतो असें नाही. प्रत्येक मनुष्य सर्व मनुष्यतेचें सूक्ष्म प्रतिबिंब आहे असें मानण्यास हरकत नाही. असें नसतें तर एकाचे मनोविकार दुसऱ्याला न समजते. साधारण मनुष्यांत आणि कवींत भेद इतकाच आहे कीं, साधारण मनुष्यास ज्या प्रकृतिवैचित्र्याचें आणि विकारवैचित्र्याचें ज्ञान अगदीं मंद असतें, तें कवीस कल्पनासामर्थ्यानें स्वतःसच स्पष्ट करून घेतां येतें इतकेंच नाही, तर काव्यद्वारां तें दुसऱ्यांसहि स्पष्ट करून देतां येतें. कवि हा कामरूपधारी पटाईत बहुरूपी आहे! तो क्षणांत राजा बनून सिंहासनस्थ पुरुषांच्या अंतःकरणांतील विचार बोलूं लागतो; राजवेश घेऊन अर्धघटिका झाली नाही तो, तो वेष टाकून देऊन काळा पोषाख करतो, तोंडाला काजळ फासतो, वस्त्राखाली पाजळलेलीं शस्त्रे लपवून घेतो, आणि मध्यरात्रीच्या निबिड काळोखांत जिकडेतिकडे सामसूम झालें असतां द्रव्यासाठी कोणाचा तरी जीव घेण्याचा बेत करित मारेकरी होउन बाहेर पडतो! या स्थितीत पांच पन्नास पळें गेली न गेली तो ती टाकून देऊन अभिसारिका बनतो व अभिसारिकेस योग्य असा पेहराव चढवून मेघांच्या गडगडाटांची, विजांच्या लखलखाटांची, किंवा तुफान वाऱ्याच्या सोसाट्याची पर्वा न करितां, पावसाच्या मुसळधारेंतून एका चेटासह विहारोद्यानांतील नेमलेल्या लतामंडपांत प्रियाची भेट घेण्यास जातो! आतां तो पर्वताच्या शिखरावर किंवा समुद्राच्या किनाऱ्यावर असला तर क्षणभराने धनगराच्या परसापाशीं शेकत बसलेला किंवा न्यायासनारूढ होऊन न्याय करित असलेला दृष्टीस पडेल! वायूप्रमाणें तो सर्वगामी आहे; मनाप्रमाणें तो चंचल आहे; हवी ती वस्तु उत्पन्न करणारा तो वस्ताद जादूगार आहे; कल्पनाशंकूच्या जिवावर कालोदधींत पाहिजे ज्या दिशेस सुकाणूं लावण्यास न डगणारा तो जरठ झालेला तांडेल आहे; विश्वबीजांप्रमाणें त्याचे उद्गार अनंत व नित्य आहेत. कोणती वस्तु कितीहि दूर असो किंवा कितीही सूक्ष्म असो, त्यानें तिच्यावर आपली दुर्बीण किंवा सूक्ष्मदर्शक यंत्र लाविलें की त्याला ती सन्निध आणि स्थूल होऊन हवी तशी पाहतां येते, व दुसऱ्यांना तिचें यथातथ्य आकलन होईल अशा तऱ्हेचें तिचें चित्र काढतां येतें. जर तुम्हांला पातालांतील किंवा स्वर्गातील वस्तुस्थिती पाहावयाची इच्छा असेल तर मिल्टनचा किंवा कालिदासाचा हात घट्ट धरून ते नेतील तिकडे जाण्यास तयार व्हा! अनंत प्रकृतीच्या हृदयडोहांत बुड्या मारून त्यांच्या तळाशीं काय आहे, हें जर तुम्हांला पाहावयाचें असेल तर मोलिअर, शेक्सपिअर, गेटी किंवा भवभूति अशा जगत्प्रसिद्ध पाणबुड्यांच्या कमरेला मिठी मारा! सारांश, अंतर्बाह्य सृष्टींत अनुकूल किंवा प्रतिकूल संवेदना उत्पन्न करणारी अशी कोणतीहि चीज नाही, की जिच्या सत्यस्वरूपाचें ज्ञान आनंद होईल अशा रीतीनें कवीस तुम्हांला करून देतां येणार नाही. समजातीयांस हें ज्ञान करून देणें हा कवीचा व्यवसाय होय. या व्यवसायांतच त्यांचा आनंद आहे. या व्यवसायामुळें त्यांचें अंतःकरण अतिशय कोमल व दयार्द्र झालेलें असतें. या व्यवसायामुळें यांची अनुकंपा

इतकी वाढते की, तिच्या व्याप्तीस सकल मनुष्यवर्ग किंवा जीवकोटीसुद्धां पुरेशी न होऊन ती अखेरीस अचेतनसृष्टी व्यापू लागते; व हा व्यवसाय वाचकांस सुखावह व्हावा म्हणून पद्य रचना, प्रास, वृत्त, अलंकार इत्यादि उपकरणांचा उपयोग कवि आपल्या काव्यरचनेत करतात.

शेक्सपिअर, भवभूति, कालिदास

प्रथम ही गोष्ट लक्षांत ठेविली पाहिजे कीं, शेक्सपिअर, कालिदास आणि भवभूति यांची तुलना आम्ही जी करीत आहों, ती त्यांच्या उपलब्ध ग्रंथांवरून. कालिदासाची बुद्धि कदाचित् शेक्सपिअरच्या पेक्षाही विशाल असेल, पण त्यानें लिहिलेल्या तीन नाटकांत तिचा प्रभाव जितका दृष्टीस पडत आहे, तेवढाच मात्र आमच्या कामाचा. कारण असें न मानिलें तर वाद कधींच संपावयाचा नाही. दरवर्षी कोट्यावधि प्राणी जन्मास येताहेत, व मरण पावताहेत; यांच्यांत कित्येक कालिदास आणि शेक्सपिअर होऊन जात असतील, पण ते आम्हांस काय होत ? एखाद्याच्या गुणांची पारख त्याच्या कृतींवरून करावयाची. पुनः कालिदास शेक्सपिअरच्या पूर्वी किती वर्षे होऊन गेला, तो, शेक्सपिअरच्या वेळेस असता तर त्यानें त्यास हटविलेंच असतें, वगैरे सांकेतिक “जरतरां”चीही आम्हांस गरज नाही. या तिन्ही कवींचे आहेत तसे ग्रंथ घेऊन व त्यांचें चित्त देऊन मनन करून त्यांवर मत दिलें पाहिजे.

नाटकगुणांत कालिदासापेक्षां भवभूति श्रेष्ठ आणि भवभूतीपेक्षां शेक्सपिअर वरच, हें ठरविण्यास वास्तविक म्हटलें म्हणजे अगोदर उत्तम नाटक म्हणजे काय व त्याला कोणत्या गोष्टींची आवश्यकता आहे, हें सांगणें जरूर दिसतें. कारण दोनही पक्षांचें म्हणणें येथेंच भिन्न पडल्यास कधींच तंटा तुटण्याचा संभव नाही. असें जरी आहे तरी वर्तमानपत्रांत अशा वादग्रस्त विषयाचा यथास्थितपणें उहापोह करितां येत नाही, यास पहिलें कारण स्थलसंकोच; व दुसरें कारण बहुतेक वाचकांस या वादापासून आनंद न होण्याचा बळकट संभव. या वादाचें स्वरूप व मर्म कळण्यास इंग्रजी व संस्कृत या दोन भाषांची चांगली माहिती असून त्यांनी वरील कवींचे ग्रंथ वाचलेले पाहिजेत; नाही तर असल्या लेखापासून कंटाळा मात्र यावयाचा. तथापि ज्याअर्थी प्रश्न निघाला आहे, त्याअर्थी त्या संबंधानें थोडेंबहुत लिहिल्याशिवाय आमच्यानें राहवत नाही.

या जगांत नानातऱ्हेचे लोक आहेत. कोणी स्वार्थासाठीं दुसऱ्याच्या माना कापितात. कोणी परोपकारासाठीं तनमनधन यांचा व्यय करण्यास निरंतर सिद्ध असतात. कित्येक कामुक होऊन झुरत असतात. कित्येकांवर द्रव्याभिलाषाचें मोठें प्राबल्य असतें. कोणाचा रागच फार अनिवार असतो. दुसऱ्यांचा घात, विपत्ति, दुःख—यांतच कोणाला संतोष वाटतो. कोणी अभिमानाचीं माहेरघरें असतात. अशा निरनिराळ्या स्वभावांच्या लोकांनी भरलेली आपली

पृथ्वी आहे. जो तो आपापले हेतु सिद्धीस नेण्याच्या कामांत गुंतलेला असतो. यामुळे कित्येकदां विलक्षण प्रसंग घेऊन येतात. ही बाह्य सृष्टि जशी बहुविध आहे, तशीच आमची अन्तःसृष्टि किंवा स्वभावसृष्टिही बहुविध आहे. या दोनही सृष्टींची यथास्थित माहिती करून घेऊन सांगितल्याप्रमाणे घडलेल्या एकाद्या प्रसंगाचे कवीने आपण आड राहून केलेले जें गद्यात्मक, पद्यात्मक, किंवा गद्यपद्यात्मक हुबेहुब वर्णन त्याला नाटक म्हणावयाचे. नाटकीय कवींची खरी करामत निरनिराळ्या प्रकृतींची हुबेहुब तसबीर काढण्यांत आहे. पुनः, या तसबीरींची सांगड लावण्यासही मोठे चातुर्य लागते. हें बहुतकरून प्रासादिक असते. हें ज्यास असेल तोच नांव घेण्यासारखा कवि होतो. येणेप्रमाणे “नाटक” शब्दाची व्याख्या आम्ही करितों; व या व्याख्येस जो कवि उतरेल त्यास आम्ही चांगला कवि असे म्हणतो. ही व्याख्या ज्यांस समत असेल त्यांना शेक्सपियरच्या बरोबरीचा कालिदास होतां, असें कधीही म्हणतां येणार नाही. नाटक हें खरोखर होणाऱ्या गोष्टींचें अनुकरण होय; आणि त्या जशा अनेकविध आहेत, त्याप्रमाणे नाटकांतील पात्रेही अनेक स्वभावांची पाहिजेत. कालिदासानें अनेक प्रकृतींचें वर्णन केलेच नाही. त्याची सारी ऐट शृंगार रसांत; कोठें कोठें करुणा रसाची झांक त्याच्या ग्रंथांत दृष्टीस पडते; पण तिच्यापुढे मागे शृंगाराचें लपेटणें असावयाचेंच! कालिदासाची कल्पनाशक्ति ही फार आकुंचित असावीसें वाटते. मालविकाग्निमित्र, विक्रमोर्वशीय आणि शकुंतला या तीन नाटकांत विचारवैचित्र्य कितीसें आहे? त्याप्रमाणेच रघुवंश आणि कुमारसंभव यांत इतकें विचारसाम्य आहे कीं, यापैकी एक ग्रंथ वाचून दुसरा हातीं घेतला तर तो वाचण्याचा कंटाळा येतो. लिहिण्याचीं साधनें, इतिहासाचा अभाव, अन्य राष्ट्रांशी व्यवहार चालू नसणें वगैरे अनेक कारणांनी कालिदासाचीं नाटके शेक्सपियरच्यापेक्षां कमी प्रतीचीं उतरलीं असावीं. पण कसें झालें तरी ती तशीं आहेत हें कबूल केलेच पाहिजे. भवभूतीचा तर थाटच निराळा! त्याचें शब्दांभीर्य, त्याचें कल्पनागाढत्व, बाह्यसृष्टीचें जसेंच्या तसें चित्र काढण्याची त्याची शैली वगैरे गोष्टीत कालिदासाच्या नाटकांत साधल्या नाहीत. शिवाय कालिदास शृंगाराचा आद्यगुरु असें जरी म्हणतात, तरी मालतीविषयीं माधवाचें जें विलक्षण प्रेम भवभूतीनें वर्णिलें आहे, त्यापुढें दुष्यन्ताच्या प्रेमाचें आम्हांस कांहींच वाटत नाही. भवभूतीनें “उत्तररामचरितांत” करुणारसाचा जो पूर उत्पन्न केला आहे, यापुढें रघुवंशांतील अजाच्या शोकाचा ओघ बिलकूल टिकाव धरीत नाही. शृंगार आणि करुणा या दोन रसांत कालिदासावर ताण करून शिवाय कालिदासांत न सांपडणारेही अद्भुतभयानकादि रस भवभूतीनें फार उत्तम रीतीने साधले आहेत. दुसरा एक भवभूतींत विशेष गुण असा आहे कीं अर्थानुषंगानें त्याची शब्दरचना फिरते. इंग्रजी पोप कवीनें एके ठिकाणीं असें म्हटलें आहे कीं, कवितेचा ध्वनि कवितेच्या अर्थाचा प्रतिध्वनि भासावा, म्हणजे अर्थाप्रमाणे भाषा चढत उतरत जावी. मालतीसाठीं वेडा होऊन

गेलेला माधव किती कोमल, मधूर आणि कर्णामनोहर शब्दांनी आपले कामोद्गार व्यक्त करितो? सीतेच्या विरहाने रामाची झालेली दुर्दशा व तिच्यासाठी रामाने केलेला शोक ही अवर्णनीय आणि अप्रतिम आहेत, असें आम्हांस वाटते. आतां शेक्सपिअरच्या संबंधाने येथे आम्ही किती लिहिणार? ज्या बहादराने एक नाही, दोन नाही, छत्तीस नाटकें लिहिलीं, व त्यांत अनेक स्वभावांच्या पात्रांची योजना करून शृंगारवीरादि नवही रसांची जागोजाग रेलचेल करून दिली, व ज्याच्या कवितामृतपानाने सगळें युरोपखण्ड झुलत राहिलें आहे, त्या शेक्सपिअरची काय गोष्ट सांगावी? शेक्सपिअरमध्ये दोष नाहीत असें नाही, व ते कोणी काढले नाहीत असेंही नाही. परंतु चंद्रावरील लक्ष्य जसें त्याच्या प्रकाशांत लपून जाते, त्याप्रमाणें शेक्सपिअरच्या गुणांपुढें त्याच्या दोषाबद्दल कांहींएक वाटेनासें होतें. “कालिदास हिंदुस्थानचा शेक्सपिअर” म्हणजे हिंदुस्थानच्या कवीपैकीं शेक्सपिअरशीं तुलना करण्याजोगा कालिदास होय. यावरून शेक्सपिअरचे सगळे गुण कालिदासांत आहेत असा अर्थ मुळींच निघत नाही.

वर्ष १, अंक १०.

मराठीत चांगले ग्रंथ कां होत नाहीत?

“मराठीत चांगले ग्रंथ कां होत नाहीत?” असा प्रश्न विचारण्यापेक्षा “देशी भाषांत चांगले ग्रंथ कां होत नाहीत?” असा व्यापक प्रश्न विचारण्यास देखील कांहीं हरकत नाही! कारण ग्रंथसंबंधाने जशी मराठी भाषेची तशीच बहुतेक इतर देशी भाषांची स्थिति आहे असें म्हणतां येईल. तथापि झांकली मूठ सव्वा लाखाची या न्यायाने गुजराथी, मारवाडी, कानडी, तेलगू वगैरे भाषांची ज्यांना माहिती नसेल त्यांना त्या भाषांत कदाचित् महत्त्वाचा ग्रंथविस्तार असेल असें वाटत असेल; आणि खरोखरीच तसें कोणास वाटत असेल तर त्याचा तो भ्रम दूर करून ग्रंथदुर्भिक्ष्यानें साऱ्या देशी भाषांस सारखें व्यापलें आहे अशी त्याची खातरी करून देणें, व त्याचा मानीव आनंद नाहीसा करणें यांत मोठासा पुरुषार्थ नाही! ज्या गोष्टींत अज्ञानापासून सुख होतें त्यांत ज्ञान संपादण्याचा प्रयत्न करणें हे केवळ मूर्खपण होय. पण वारंवार काय होतें कीं, आपण आपल्या अज्ञानानंदांत आपलें आयुष्य सुखानें कंठीत असतां, आपणास ग्रहदशा येते म्हणून म्हणा, किंवा या सृष्टींत कोणत्याही प्राण्यानें निरंतर सुखी असूं नये असा तिचा नियमच आहे म्हणून म्हणा, कोणी तरी दिसण्यांत कांहींएक कारण नसतां शुद्ध हेव्यानें आमच्या डोक्यापाशीं आपल्या शहाणपणाची रड गाऊन आमची समाधानवृत्ति नाहीशी करून टाकतो! रिपोर्टर ऑफ धी नेटिव प्रेस हा एक अशा प्रकारचा अधिकारी आहे. रा. साठे यांना आपलें कर्तव्य मुळींच करतां येत नाही असें आम्हांस वाटते! रयतेनें मोठ्या

कष्टानें दिलेले सरकारच्या पदरचे अडीचशें-तीनशें रुपये दरमहिना घेत बसून वर्षाच्या अखेरीस “या भाषेत म्हणण्यासारखा ग्रंथ झाला नाही; त्या भाषेत नांव घेण्यासारखा ग्रंथ निपजला नाही; धर्म, काम, व कवन याहून नेटिव लोकांस तिसरा विषय हातीं धरतांच येत नाही; आणि तिहीं तरी मोठें वाखाणण्यासारखें कांहीं स्वकपोलकल्पित असेल असें म्हणाल तर तसेंही नाही. जे ग्रंथ अथवा पुस्तकें होतात, तीं बहुधा या विषयांवर; त्यांचा मगदूर कितपत असतो या गोष्टीची परिस्फुटता करण्यापेक्षा ती मुग्धच ठेवावी हें बरें! वरिष्ठ गणित, रसायन, यंत्रकला, चित्रविद्या, तारा-यंत्र, व्यापार वगैरे उपयुक्त किंवा गहन विषयांवर पुस्तकें लिहिण्याची हौस अथवा आवश्यकता नेटिव लोकांस वाटत नाही; आणि ती वाटली नाही तोपर्यंत देशी भाषांत चांगले ग्रंथ निपजण्याचा संभव नाही; इतिहास, थोर पुरुषांचीं चरित्रें, असल्या विषयांचें माहात्म्यसुद्धां नेटिव ग्रंथकारांस कळूं नये हें मोठें आश्चर्य आहे.” — असले अभिप्राय देण्यासाठीं आपणांस प्रतिमासीं तीनशें रुपये मिळत नसतात, हें राजश्री साठे यांस कळत नाही याचेंच आम्हांस मोठें आश्चर्य वाटतें! ज्यांच्याकडून साक्षात् किंवा परंपरेनें आपला पगार आपणांस मिळतो त्यांचा दिल खुष होईल अशा रीतीचा रपोट करणें हें खऱ्या नोकराचें कर्तव्य, कीं त्यांना हळहळ वाटेल अशा प्रकारचें लिहिणें हें आपलें वाजवी कर्तव्य, याचीच मीमांसा राजश्री साठे यांस अद्यापि करतां आली नसावी असा आम्हांस संशय येतो. अपकारी, जंगल वगैरे खात्यांचे रिपोर्ट्स् रा. साठे यांच्या अवलोकनांत कधींच आले नाहीत काय? लष्करी खात्याचा अवाढव्य खर्च छापविण्यासाठीं, नवीन मुलूख काबीज करण्यांत होणारा खर्च लोकांच्या डोळ्यांत सलूं न देण्यासाठीं, साहेब लोकांचे मोठमोठे पगार अखंड चालवून त्यांच्यासाठी नवीन खातीं काढण्यांत होणारा खर्च लोकांच्या नजरेतून चुकविण्यासाठी, नवीन करांचा बोजा ‘त्राहि त्राहि’ होऊन गेलेल्या प्रजेनें आनंदांनं सहावा यासाठीं गुलजार रिपोर्ट्स् लिहिण्याची जी कला पादशाही अंमलाची सतत वृद्धि चिंतणाऱ्या यच्चावत इंग्रजी अधिकाऱ्यांस साधली आहे तिचें अनुकरण तर सामान्य नेटिवाला कधींच करतां येणार नाही; पण अपकारी, फॉरेस्ट वगैरे खात्याकडील लुंगेसुंगे अधिकारी देखील ज्या रीतीनें आपले रपोट सजवून देतात ती रीती रा. साठ्यांसारख्या गृहस्थांस अवगत नसावी, हें त्यांच्या हपीशिलपणास बिलकुल शोभत नाही! शिवाय, युनिव्हर्सिटींत देशी भाषांचा पुनः प्रवेश झाल्याखेरीज त्यांना सुदशा येणार नाही असें मत देणें म्हणजे तर आपल्या अधिकाराचा अतिक्रम करून अराजनिष्ठेच्या अपवित्र प्रदेशांत पाऊल टाकण्यासारखें खचित होय!

पण आमची समाधानवृत्ति ढळवण्याचें पाप हे साठेच करणारे आहेत असें नाही. घरच्या भाकरी खाऊन नसत्या उठाठेवी करणारे या रिपोर्ट्सासारखे दुसरेही पुष्कळ गृहस्थ आहेत. हेही खुद्द स्वतःला व दुसऱ्याला हाच प्रश्न — म्हणजे मराठी भाषेत चांगले ग्रंथ कां होत

नाहीत — हा प्रश्न घालून त्याचें उत्तर स्वतः देण्याचा किंवा तें लोकांकडून काढण्याचा प्रयत्न करीत असतात ! पण मौल्यवान् वस्तूविषयीं प्रश्न केला म्हणजे तो गूढ होतो आणि सामान्य वस्तूविषयीं तो केला म्हणजे उत्तर देण्यास सोपा जातो असें आम्हांस वाटत नाहीं. तथापि मौज अशी आहे कीं ज्या वस्तूचा नित्य सहवास आपणांस घडत असतो तिचें कार्यकारण आपणांस ठाऊक नसून ठाऊक असल्यासारखें उगीच वाटतें. ढग कां येतात, पाऊस कसा पडतो, मडक्यांतलें किंवा फडकें लावलेलें पाणी गार कां होतें, उलट टांगून ठेवलेलें पाणी कापडांतून कां गळत नाहीं, पतंग वर कसा चढतो वगैरे गोष्टींची खरी कारणें आपणांपैकी शेकडा नव्वदांस ठाऊक नसतील अशी आमची पक्की खातरी आहे. तथापि कागदाचा पतंग शेंपटासकट हवेंत चढतो कसा, असा प्रश्न एखाद्या पोराला केला तर तो देखील असा प्रश्न करणाऱ्यास खुळा ठरवील ! पण या प्रश्नाचें उत्तर बऱ्याच मोठ्या गणित्याला बरोबर देतां आलें नाहीं ही आमच्या अनुभवांतली गोष्ट आहे. तात्पर्य काय कीं, मराठी भाषेंत चांगले ग्रंथ कां होत नाहीत याचा खुलासा करण्यासाठीं आम्ही जर कांहीं सोपे प्रश्न केले तर हे लोक असे म्हणतील कीं “यांत हो काय ? यांचीं उत्तरें अगदीं सोपीं आहेत. तीं आम्हीं फाड्दिशीं देऊन टाकूं.” यांनीं असें म्हटलें म्हणजे आमच्या लिहिण्याची आणि कष्टाची काय प्रतिष्ठा राहिली ? तथापि त्यांना तीं उत्तरें फाड्दिशीं देण्यांत येतात किंवा नाहीं, आणि आल्यास तींच या प्रश्नांस देतां येतील किंवा नाहीं हें ताडून पाहण्याची संधी त्यांस देण्यासाठीं, आम्ही त्यांना असें विचारतो कीं, “कां हो, पुण्यास अद्यापि मुंबईप्रमाणें रस्तोरस्तीं सोडावॉटरच्या बाटल्या कां खपूं लागल्या नाहीत ? इंग्लंडाप्रमाणें येथेंही बर्फ किंवा थंडी कां पडत नाही ? हरिपंत फडक्यांसारखें, मानाजी फांकड्यांसारखे, मोल्टकीसारखे किंवा लॉर्ड रॉबर्ट्ससारखे लढवय्ये सध्या या देशांत पैदा कां होत नाहीत ? इलिझाबेथ राणीनंतर इंग्लंडात जसा ग्रंथविस्तार झाला तसा पूर्वी कां झाला नाहीं - अथवा लॉर्ड बेकन याला ल्याटिन ग्रंथ वाचण्याची आणि ल्याटिन भाषेंत लिहिण्याची चटक कां लागली ? रोमन लोकांनी ग्रीक लोकांस पादाक्रांत केल्यावर सॉक्रेटीस, प्लेटो, अॅरिस्टॉटल यांसारखे पुरुष त्यांमध्ये निर्माण कां झाले नाहीत ? आमचें वैद्यक कां मार्गें पडत चाललें व ज्याच्या त्याच्या हातीं बाटली का येऊं लागली ? स्वतंत्र राष्ट्रांचीं चिन्हें काय व महाराष्ट्र देशांत तीं आहेत किंवा नाहीत ?” जो या प्रश्नांचीं उत्तरें बरोबर देऊं शकेल त्याला महाराष्ट्र देशांत चांगले ग्रंथ कां होत नाहीत हें सहज समजणार आहे.



पंडिता रमाबाई सरस्वती

The High Caste Hindu Woman

WOMAN'S PLACE IN RELIGION AND SOCIETY

The Hindu religion commands;

“Women must be honored and adorned by their fathers, brothers, husbands, and brothers-in-law, who desire their own welfare.”

“Where women are honored, there the gods are pleased; but where they are not honored, no sacred rite yields rewards.”

“Where the female relations live in grief, the family soon wholly perishes; but that family where they are not unhappy ever prospers.”

“The houses on which female relations, not being duly honored, pronounce a curse, perish completely, as if destroyed by magic.”

“Hence men who seek their own welfare, should always honor women on holidays and festivals with (gifts of) ornaments, clothes and dainty food.”

“In that family where the husband is pleased with this wife, and the wife with her husband, happiness will assuredly be lasting.”

“For if the wife is not radiant with beauty, she will not attract her husband; but if she has no attractions for him, no children will be born.”

“If the wife is radiant with beauty, the whole house is bright; but if she is destitute of beauty, all will appear dismal.”

– *Manu*, iii., 55-62.

These commandments are very significant. Our Aryan Hindus did, and still do honor woman to a certain extent. The honor bestowed upon the *mother* is without parallel in any other country. Although the woman is looked upon as an inferior being, the mother is nevertheless the chief person and worthy to receive all honor from the son. One of the great commandments of the Hindu Scriptures is, "Let thy mother be to thee like unto a god."¹

The mother is the queen of the son's household. She wields great power there, and is generally obeyed as the head of the family by her sons and by her daughters-in-law.

But there is a reverse side to the shield that should not be left unobserved. This is best studied in the laws of Manu, as all Hindus, with a few exceptions believe implicitly what that law-giver says about women:

"It is the nature of women to seduce men in this world; for that reason the wise are never unguarded in the company of females."

"For women are able to lead astray in this world not only a fool, but even a learned man, and to make him a slave of desire and anger."

– *Manu*, ii, 213-214.

"Women do not care for beauty, nor is their attention fixed on age; thinking 'it is enough that he is a man,' they give themselves to the handsome and to the ugly."

"Through their passion for men, through their mutable temper, through their natural heartlessness, they become disloyal towards their husbands, however carefully they may be guarded in this world."

"Knowing their disposition, which the Lord of creatures laid in them at the creation, to be such, every man should most strenuously exert himself to guard them."

"When creating them, Manu allotted to women a love of their bed, of their seat and of ornament, impure

desires, wrath, dishonesty, malice and bad conduct.”

“For women no sacramental rite is performed with sacred texts, thus, the law is settled; women who are destitute of strength and destitute of the knowledge of Vedic texts, are as impure as falsehood itself, that is a fixed rule.”

– *Manu* ix, 14-18.

Such is the opinion of Manu concerning all women; and all men with more or less faith in the law regard women, even though they be their own mothers, “as impure as false-hood itself.”

“And to this effect many sacred texts are chanted also in the Vedas, in order to make fully known the true disposition of women; hear now those texts which refer to the expiation of their sins.”

“If my mother, going astray and unfaithful, conceived illicit desires, may my father keep that seed from me, that is the scriptural text .”

– *Manu* ix., 19, 20.

Such distrust and such low estimate of woman’s nature and character in general, is at the root of the custom of seclusion of women in India. This mischievous custom has greatly increased and has become intensely tyrannical since the Mahomedan invasion; but that it existed from about the sixth century, B.C., cannot be denied. All male relatives are commanded by the law to deprive the women of the household of all their freedom:–

“Day and night women must be kept in dependence by the males of their families, and if they attach themselves to sensual enjoyments, they must be kept under one’s control.”

“Her father protects her in childhood, her husband protects her in youth, and her sons protect her in old age; a woman is never fit for independence.”

– *Menu* ix, 2, 3.

“Women must particularly be guarded against evil inclinations, however trifling they may appear; for if they are not guarded, they will bring sorrow on two families.”

“Considering that the highest duty of all castes, even weak husbands must strive to guard their wives.”

– *Manu* ix., 5, 6.

“No man can completely guard women by force; but they can be guarded by the employment of the following expedients:”

“Let the husband employ his wife in the collection and expenditure of his wealth, in keeping everything clean, in the fulfilment of religious duties, in the preparation of his food, and in looking after the household utensils.”

– *Manu* ix., 10, 11.

Those who diligently and impartially read Sansrit literature in the original, cannot fail to recognize the law-giver Manu as one of those hundreds who have done their best to make woman a hateful being in the world’s eye. To employ her in housekeeping and kindred occupations is thought to be the only means of keeping her out of mischief, the blessed enjoyment of literary culture being denied her. She is forbidden to read the sacred scriptures, she has no right to pronounce a single syllable out of them. To appease her uncultivated, low kind of desire by giving her ornaments to adorn her person, and by giving her dainty food together with an occasional bow which costs nothing, are the highest honors to which a Hindu

woman is entitled. She, the loving mother of the nation, the devoted wife, the tender sister and affectionate daughter is never fit for independence, and is “as impure as falsehood itself.” She is never to be trusted; matters of importance are never to be committed to her.

I can say honestly and truthfully, that I have never read any sacred book in Sanscrit literature without meeting this kind of hateful sentiment about women. True, they contain here and there a kind word about them, but such words seem to me a heartless mockery after having charged them, as a class, with crime and evil deeds.

Profane literature is by no means less severe or more respectful towards women. I quote from the ethical teachings, parts of a catechism and also a few proverbs:-

- Q. What is cruel?
 A. The heart of viper.
 Q. What is more cruel than that?
 A. The heart of a woman.
 Q. What is the cruelest of all?
 A. The heart of a sonless, penniless widow.

A catechism on moral subjects written by a Hindu gentleman of high literary reputation says:-

- Q. What is the chief gate to hell?
 A. A woman.
 Q. What bewitches like wine?
 A. A woman.
 Q. Who is the wisest of the wise?
 A. He who has not been deceived by women who may be compared to malignant fiends.
 Q. What are fetters to men?
 A. Women.

Q. What is that which cannot be trusted?

A. Women

Q. What poison is that which appears like nectar?

A. Women.

PROVERBS

“Never put your trust in women.”

“Women’s counsel leads to destruction.”

“Woman is a great whirlpool of suspicion, a dwelling-place of vices, full of disease, a hindrance in the way of heaven, the gate of hell.”

Having fairly illustrated the popular belief about woman’s nature, I now proceed to state woman’s religion. Virtues such as truthfulness, forbearance, fortitude, purity of heart and uprightness, are common to men and women, but religion, as the word is commonly understood, has two distinct natures in the Hindu law; the masculine and the feminine. The masculine religion has its own peculiar duties, privileges and honors. The feminine religion also has its peculiarities.

The sum and substance of the latter may be given in a few words:— To look upon her husband a god, to hope for salvation only through him, to be obedient to him in all things, never to covet independence, never to do anything but that which is approved by law and custom.

“Hear now the duties of women,” says the law-giver, Manu:—

“By a girl, by a young woman, or even by an aged one, nothing must be done independently, even in her own house.”

“In childhood, a female must be subject to her father, in youth, to her husband, when her lord is dead, to her sons; a woman must never be independent.”

“She must not seek to separate herself from her father, husband, or sons; by leaving them she would make both her own and her husband’s families contemptible.”

“She must always be cheerful, clever in the management of her household affairs, careful in cleaning her utensils, and economical in expenditure.”

“Him to whom her father may give her, or her brother with the father’s permission, she shall obey as long as he lives, and when he is dead, she must not insult his memory.”

“For the sake of procuring good fortune to brides, the recitation of benedictory texts, and the sacrifice to the Lord of creatures are used at weddings; but the betrothal by the father or guardian is the cause of the husband’s dominion over this wife.”

“The husband who wedded her with sacred texts, always gives happiness to his wife, both in season and out of season, in this world and in the next.”

“Though, destitute of virtue, or seeking pleasure elsewhere, or devoid of good qualities, yet a husband must be constantly worshipped as a god by a faithful wife.”

“No sacrifice, no vow, no fast must be performed by women apart from their husbands; if a wife obeys her husband, she will for that reason alone, be exalted in heaven.”

“A faithful wife, who desires to dwell after death with her husband, must never to anything that might displease him who took her hand whether he be alive or dead.”

– *Manu* v., 147-156.

“By violating her duty towards her husband, a wife is disgraced in this world, after death she enters, the womb of a jackal, and is tormented by diseases, the punishment of her sin.”

“She who, controlling her thoughts, words and deeds, never slights her lord, resides after death with her husband in heaven, and is called a virtuous wife.”

“In reward of such conduct, a female who controls her thoughts, speech and actions, gains in this life highest renown, and in the next world a place near her husband.”

– *Manu* v., 164-166.

MARITAL RIGHTS

“He only is a perfect man who consists of three persons united, his wife, himself and his offspring; thus says the Veda, and learned Brahmanas propound this maxim likewise, ‘The husband is declared to be one with the wife’.

– *Manu* ix., 45.

The wife is declared to be the “marital property” of her husband, and is classed with “cows, mares, female camels, slave-girls, buffalo-cows, she-goats and ewes.” – (See *Manu* ix., 48-51.)

The wife is punishable for treating her husband with aversion:–

“For one year let a husband bear with a wife who hates him; but after a lapse of a year, let him deprive her of her property and cease to live with her.”

“She who shows disrespect to a husband who is addicted to some evil passion, is a drunkard, or diseased, shall be deserted for three months, and be deprived of her ornaments and furniture.”

– *Manu* ix., 77, 78.

“She who drinks spirituous liquor, is of bad conduct, rebellions, diseased, mischievous or wasteful, may at any time be superseded by another wife.”

“A barren wife may be superseded in the eighth year, she whose children all die in the tenth, she who bears only daughters in the eleventh, but she who is quarrelsome without delay.”

– *Manu* ix., 80, 81.

“A wife who, being superseded, in anger departs from her husband’s house, must either be instantly confined or cast off in the presence of the family.”

– *Manu* ix., 83.

“Though a man may have accepted a damsel in due form, he may abandon her if she be blemished or diseased, and if she have been given with fraud.”

– *Manu* ix., 72.

But no such provision is made for the woman; on the contrary, she must remain with and revere her husband as a god, even though he be “destitute of virtue, and seek pleasure elsewhere, or be devoid of good qualities, addicted to evil passion, fond of spirituous liquors or diseased,” and what not!

How much impartial justice is shown in the treatment of womankind by Hindu law, can be fairly understood after reading the above quotations. In olden times these laws were enforced by the community; a husband had absolute power over his wife;

she could do nothing but submit to his will without uttering a word of protest. Now, under the so-called Christian British rule, the woman is in no better condition than of old. True, the husband cannot as in the golden age, take her wherever she may be found, and drag her to his house, but his absolute power over her person has not suffered in the least. He is now bound to bring suit against her in the courts of justice to claim his “marital property,” if she be unwilling to submit to him by any other means.

A near relative of mine had been given in her childhood in marriage to a boy whose parents agreed to let him stay and be educated with her in her own home. No sooner however, had the marriage ceremony been concluded than they forgot their agreement; the boy was taken to the home of his parents where he remained to grow up to be a worthless dunce, while his wife through the kindness and advanced views of her father, developed into a bright young woman and well accomplished.

Thirteen years later, the young man came to claim his wife, but the parents had no heart to send their darling daughter with a beggar who possessed neither the power nor the sense not make an honest living, and was unable to support and protect his wife. The wife too, had no wish to go with him since he was a stranger to her; under the circumstances she could neither love nor respect him. A number of orthodox people in the community who saw no reason why a wife should not follow her husband even though he be a worthless man, collected funds to enable him to sue her and her parents in the British Court of Justice. The case was examined with due ceremony and the verdict was given in the man’s favor, according to Hindu law.² The wife was doomed to go with him. Fortunately she was soon released from this

sorrowful world by cholera. Whatever may be said of the epidemics that yearly assail our country, they are not unwelcome among the unfortunate women who are thus persecuted by social, religious and State laws. Many women put an end to their earthly sufferings by committing suicide. Suits at law between husband and wife are remarkable for their rarity in the British Courts in India, owing to the ever submissive conduct of women who suffer silently, knowing that the gods and justice always favor the men.

The case of Rakhmabai, that was lately profoundly agitated Hindu society, is only one of thousands of the same class. The remarkable thing about her is that she is a well-educated lady, who was brought up under the loving care of her father, and had learned from him how to defend herself against the assaults of social and religious bigotries. But as soon as her father died the man who claimed to be her husband, brought suit against her in the court of Bombay. The young woman bravely defended herself, declining to go to live with the man on the ground that the marriage that was concluded without her consent could not be legally considered as such. Mr. Justice Pinhey, who tried the case in the first instance, had a sufficient sense of justice to refuse to force the lady to live with her husband against her will. Upon hearing this decision, the conservative party all over India rose as one man and girded their loins to denounce the helpless woman and her handful of friends. They encouraged the alleged husband to stand his ground firmly, threatening the British government with public displeasure if it failed to keep its agreement to force the woman to go to live with the husband according to Hindu law. Large sums were collected for the benefit of this man, Dadajee, to enable him to appeal against the decision to the full bench,

whereupon, to the horror of all right-thinking people, the chief-justice sent back the case to the lower court for re-trial on its merits, as judged by the Hindu laws. The painful termination of this trial, I have in a letter written by my dear friend Rakhmabai herself, bearing date Bombay, March 18th, 1887. I quote from her letter:

“The learned and civilized judges of the full bench are determined to enforce, in this enlightened age, the in-human laws enacted in barbaric times, four thousand years ago. They have not only commanded me to go to live with the man, but also have obliged me to pay the costs of the dispute. Just think of this extraordinary decision! Are we not living under the impartial British government, which boasts of giving equal justice to all, and are we not ruled by the Queen-Empress Victoria, herself a woman? My dear friend, I shall have been cast into the State prison when this letter reaches you; this is because I do not, and cannot obey the order of Mr. Justice Farran.

“There is no hope for women in India, whether they be under Hindu rule or British rule; some are of the opinion that my case so cruelly decided, may bring about a better condition for woman by turning public opinion in her favor, but I fear it will be otherwise. The hard-hearted mothers-in-law will now be greatly strengthened, and will induce their sons, who have for some reason or other, been slow to enforce the conjugal rights to sue their wives in the British Courts, since they are now fully assured that under no circumstances can the British government act adversely to the Hindu law.”

Taught by the experience of the past, we are not at all surprised at this decision of the Bombay court. Our only wonder is that a defenseless woman like Rakhmabai dared to raised her voice in the face of the powerful Hindu law, the mighty British

government, the one hundred and twenty-nine million men and the three hundred and thirty million gods of the Hindus, all these having conspired together to crush her into nothingness. We cannot blame the English government for not defending a helpless woman; it is only fulfilling its agreement made with the male population of India. How very true are the words of the Saviour, “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.” Should England serve God by protecting a helpless woman against the powers and principalities of ancient institutions, Mammon would surely be displeased, and British profit and rule in India might be endangered thereby. Let us wish it success, no matter if that success be achieved at the sacrifice of the rights and the comfort of over one hundred million women.

Meanwhile, we shall patiently await the advent of the kingdom of righteousness, wherein the weak, the lowly and the helpless shall be made happy because the great Judge Himself “shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

NOTES

1. My readers would perhaps be interested to see these commandments; they are as follows:- “After having taught the Veda, the teacher instructs the pupil:
 Say what is true.
 Do thy duty.
 Do not neglect the study of the Veda.
 After having brought to thy teacher his proper reward, do not cut off the line of children! (i.e. Do not remain unmarried).
 Do not swerve from the truth.
 Do not swerve from duty.
 Do not neglect what is useful.
 Do not neglect the learning and teaching of the Veda.

Do not neglect the sacrificial works due to the gods and fathers.
Let thy mother be to thee like unto a god.
Let thy father be to thee like unto a god.
Let thy teacher be to thee like unto a god.
Let thy guests be to thee like unto a god.
Whatever actions are blameless those should be regarded, not
others.
Whatever good works have been performed by us, should be
observed by thee, not others.”

– *Taittiriya Upanishad*, Valli, i. An. xi., I, 2.

2. In all cases except those directly connected with life and death, the British Government is bound according to the treaties concluded with the inhabitants of India, not to interfere with their social and religious customs and laws; judicial decisions are given accordingly.



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