AMBEDKAR COLLEGE RESEARCH JOURNAL (ACRJ)

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From the Desk of the Editor-in-Chief & Principal i/c

Publication of a Research Journal has a vital role in the promotion of research in Higher Education. Enhancing the quality of Higher Education through research is one of the core commitments of Ambedkar College, Fatikroy. Thus, we launched this journal in the year 2015, which was exciting and the response was encouraging. We are happy that we could overcome the challenging task of maintaining the continuity of the publication and bring out the fourth volume of the Ambedkar College Research Journal (ACRJ) for scholars and the general public. This volume contains ten articles, of which eight are in English, and two are in Bengali language covering topics from different disciplines, viz. social science, philosophy, religion, language and literature, etc.

We are extremely thankful to all researchers and scholars who have contributed their scholarly articles for this issue, without which it would not have been possible on our part to materialize the publication of this journal. We do hereby convey our gratitude to the members of the Advisory Board for their valuable suggestions and advice. We are also thankful to reviewers who have spent their valuable time reviewing articles for this volume of ACRJ. Thanks to all the faculty members of Ambedkar College for their all-round help and support in bringing out the fourth issue of this journal.

Hope, like earlier volumes, this volume will also receive a good response from scholars as well as the reading public and will contribute to the field of research and development.

Dr. Subrata Sharma

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A Deconstructive Reading of Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels

Riya Roy

ABSTRACT

With the assistance of the deconstruction theory, propounded by famous French thinker Jasque Derrida, we can eradicate the accepted way of going through a universally-read novella "Gulliver's Travels" by Jonathan Swift, is to enjoy it as a satirical fantasy. The process of approaching the text is to assume it as an adventurous voyage across the weird islands Gulliver lands upon. The journey of Gulliver might be a difficult one by presuming the diverse lands especially Lupata and Land of Houyhnhnms as the patriarchal society for the matriarch that is the other two lands. As far as Derrida's theory deconstruction is concerned, my purpose of this paper would be to "read the text against itself" to reveal what might be "the textual subconscious" which is the definition given by one of the most prominent Marxists Terry Eagleton. In this book, there might be a subtle distinction between what the writer purports to say and what the book ends up conveying. In this paper, I intend to seize the underlying meaning of the book. Through my paper, I would starve the structure of the text with feminist ideology by identifying the textual stage of the deconstruction method, moving beyond the individual phrases, and taking an overall view of the novella. In this book, the feminist approach is not apparent, however, it can be understood with the help of deconstruction.

Keywords: Jonathan Swift, Gulliver's Travels, Deconstruction, Matriarch, Patriarch Binary Opposition.

Many authors throughout the world of literature have been trying to create a Utopian society for centuries in their writings. Among these works, one work can be cited and can be deconstructed through the analysis of their social conditions. The book is "Gulliver's Travels". "Gulliver's Travels" is a novella written by Jonathan Swift, where the main character, Gulliver is a surgeon on a ship, who encounters four voyages in four different circumstances. On his first voyage, Gulliver brought his ship to ruin and reached an island, called Lilliput. The people of Lilliput are all one-twelfth of height and have treated Gulliver with compassion and possess the least power but behave efficacious. In the next adventure, which came up suddenly by the gale in the sea, he arrived at Brobdingnag, where there was

a Queen, and bought Gulliver from a giant farmer. Being a giant, the men had no power and instead of the king, Gulliver's authority has been taken by the Queen. After being attacked by the pirates on the third voyage, Gulliver discovers Lupata, an island, that is flying. Here he meets with the monarchical system that is more patriarchal than the former two. On his fourth voyage, Gulliver comes to know an island, named Houyhnhms where a race of talking horses rules and the deformed creatures are human beings which can be epitomized as a patriarchal society.

Before moving forward towards the way to apply the theory, we must comprehend two major concepts - deconstruction under post-structuralism and patriarchy and matriarchy embodied in feminism. The post-structuralism is an intellectual movement that began in France in the 1960s. Two essential figures of this movement are Ronald Barths and Jacque Derrida. The term "deconstruction" was coined by the latter who first delivered a lecture at an event. In Derrida's lecture "Structure, sign, play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences" where Derrida showed in modern times a specific intellectual "event" opposing the past ways of thought, connected with Western philosophers. The "event" was about the "decentering" of our intellectual universe. In Western philosophy man is in the 'center' and the deviation, moral slip, and change can be discovered and associated in separately as the 'periphery'. But in the twentieth century, these centers were corroded, and the reasons behind this perhaps the disastrous movements such as two World Wars which destroyed the idea of "fixed" or "center absolute". Derrida's three remarkable books are "Speech and Phenomena", "Of Grammatology" and "Writing and Speech". Derrida's method always involves highly manifested 'deconstructing reading' which has been borrowed in this paper. Deconstruction is a theory and reading procedure that interrogates and demands to perturb the perception of any literary text on which the language system is based on the grounds that are sufficient to set up the boundaries, the coherence, and the limited meanings.

Patriarchy is the basic view of any social system of a civilization that is governed by a father. In a complex way, patriarchal society is male-centered, male-controlled which is organized in such a fashion that women are subordinate to men in every domain like - family, religion, politics, society, economy, and even art and culture. The civilization which is ruled by the mother figure is known as matriarchy. Basically, matriarchal society is controlled by women.

Normally prevented to the accustomed meta-narrative approach, the feminist thought and

narrative approach in this fictional novella "Gulliver's Travels" reflect patriarchal society at the back and the matriarchal interpretation at the center. "Gulliver's Travels" tells the story of Lamuel Gulliver, a sea operator who has traveled along the sea and encountered unbelievable adventures and marvelous islands. This book as a whole comprises four voyages that give him diverse experiences. In book I his vessel has been blown off and Gulliver has been shipwrecked. According to Peter Barry, a deconstructive method can be executed through three types of stages - verbal, textual, and linguistic.

"The three stages of the deconstructive process described here I have called verbal, the textual, and the linguistic."[1]

The textual interpretation might be well explained in this novella. One of the most important procedures of deconstructing a text is to make it capable of reversing the polarity of usual binary oppositions. These are male/female, patriarch/matriarch, hard/easy, and so on so far. The purpose of this method is to project importance to the latter, rather than to the former. In this novella, the island of Lilliputians is portrayed as a matriarchal system of rule. Gulliver, the surgeon of the ship landed on an island that has not been shown as a patriarch with his fantastical voyages rather than as a matriarch which can be well understood after studying it with a deconstruction approach.

After questioning the method of interpreting the text, with the assistance of Derrida's fashion of reading a text, we can understand easily that reading does not just represent what the writer's intention was while writing the text. One critical reading can produce the text, without reconstructing, or deconstructing it.

The two voyages of Gulliver are represented respectively as the matriarchal ruling system with the help of 'hierarchy binary opposition' which is perhaps the most fundamental process of analyzing any text. The first land on which Gulliver finds himself after the unfortunate shipwreck is shown as the land, governed by the Lilliputians who behave to have the possession of a great power. The whole system of social rules is portrayed as the ruling of the emperor over all the citizens of that island. But when we apply binary oppositions, we see that the emperor including the subjects of the land is very compassionate towards Gulliver. They can be shown here as the mother figure in the realm. When Gulliver is carried as a prisoner, the majesty shows a sign of compassion. He made a sign to provide meat and drink to Gulliver. Gulliver once has shown a gesture by which he means that he needs some liberty and he can't turn his right because he feels the pain of

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[1] Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory, Peter Barry, P-76

arrows in his face as well as hands. They all became the blisters and then the enemies abruptly increased in number to take a view of it. Gulliver called them 'enemies' but the enemies have shown some civility and cheerful countenance to Gulliver.

As the citizens are eager to see his wounds, Gulliver has proven a pleasure-like look if people perceive that they might do whatever they like with Gulliver's face and his hands with a kind of greasy substance. So, we see despite having a ruler-like attitude, the Lilliputians are very motherly and merciful.

"They had daubed my face and both my hands with a sort of ointment...in a few minutes removed all the smarts of their arrows."[2]

On the other hand, the second voyage takes him to an island of giant-like figures in a place called Brobdingnag. The land is abounded with enormous barbarians who are represented in chapter I as the mother figures who do have the same humbleness towards this little creature. When the giant-like farmer has lifted Gulliver in his palm, he is making sure that this small human being should not slip through his fingers. So, he previously pinched his sides. When Gulliver expressed the pain he got while the man was holding him, then the farmer lifted the laplet of his coat and put Gulliver into his pocket. The farmer is also very humane when he brings Gulliver home. Once his youngest son elevated Gulliver by his leg, the peasant snatched him down and let him take a long breath.

Furthermore, we can deconstruct this book by using symbolic interpretations that break the continuity of the text. Their language, their different sizes, their educational system, and freedom for women in these diverse lands.

In both the Lilliput and Brobdingnag islands, the language is very symbolic. When Gulliver arrived on the first island, he was unable to understand the little creature's language which was incomprehensible to Gulliver. This may indicate that their words are not even that efficacious to make their statement clear. They like the children who do not have a clear utterance to speak and they are also unable to comprehend Gulliver's language. This interpretation can be related to the second voyage too. When the farmer took Gulliver in the inner part of his hand, he spoke to Gulliver and in turn, Gulliver also tried to make his words distinct. But both were in vain. He tried to speak in several languages but all were of no use. By the method of reinterpretation, we can figure out that their languages do not even have the strength to impose upon them.

"I answered as loud as I could in several languages, and he often did laid his ear within

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[2] The Gulliver's Travels, Jonathan Swift, P- 22

two yards of me: but all in vain, for we were wholly unintelligible to each other".[3]

The dimension of the citizens on both these islands represents another symbolic implication. The Lilliputians who are six inches reveal their power in order of their physical appearance. On the other island, the farmers on Brobdingnag are of huge bodies but instead of having this bodily presence, they showed no power to Gulliver while he was a little creature to them.

In the nurseries on the Lilliput Island, the children are governed by the grave and learned professors and their many other deputies. But in a deconstructive way, if we shuffle these oppositions, we make out that despite of having male domination in the nurseries, women 's authority is prominent among them. The aged women who take care of the children, actually govern them under the eye of those professors. In part II, A Voyage to Brobdingnag, we notice that the women are responsible for some works by which they possess power in the family. The daughter of the farmer made clothes for Gulliver, washed him, and also made a bed for him. She even gave a name to Gulliver. The family as well as the whole kingdom took the name, given by her.

"She gave me the name for Grildrig, which the family took up and afterward the whole kingdom."[4]

Another instance of not having power to those little creatures in Lilliput is the mentioning of all the metaphors, used by Gulliver for the comparison of the Lilliputians with his homeland, England. While the Lilliputians were discharging the arrows, Gulliver conjectured whether it was arrows or not. The way they were drifting the arrows seemed as if they were throwing the bomb which generally happened in Europe. Here we can regard this as Gulliver contrasting the two and clearing how the little creatures and their weapons have less potential than any other arms. This perhaps shows how the power of society is not sufficient to win over such a big 'mountain-like' being. These types of samples are being used in a few portions of these chapters. When the emperor of Lilliput made up his mind to entertain Gulliver with several country shows, rope dances, and many others, Gulliver compared this rope with the pack thread of England.

"I have seen him do the summer set several times together, upon a trencher fixed on a rope which is no thicker than a common pack thread in England".[5]

Having interpreted this, the same approach would reveal the underlined meaning of the

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[3] The Gulliver's Travels, Jonathan Swift, P- 89
[4] The Gulliver's Travels, Jonathan Swift, P- 96
[5] The Gulliver's Travels, Jonathan Swift, P- 36

other two voyages of Gulliver in this manner. The third land, detected by Gulliver often getting stacked by the pirates, will imply the patriarchal aspect of the social arrangement. In one portion of the book, we discern the point of the society of being dominated by male figures. Although this island seems to be the land where the wives, as well as the daughters, are wailing for their restrain.

On the other hand, Gulliver experiences some aspects of women being subordinate in the land called Houyhnhnms. The female figures (the mares) have no importance that has been seen in the whole part. They are not assigned any prominent activity, unlike the other two lands. They are quite contemptuous when they take a look at Gulliver.

Additionally, Gulliver was also treated by the king in this Lupata island who showed father-like dominance upon Gulliver and also the people of the land. They did not pay any attention to anything other than mathematics and music. Once Gulliver confessed that he was neglected and disregarded by the king and the prince. On the last voyage to the country of the Houynhnmns, Gulliver was treated as badly as any foe. When the ugly monster in this land met Gulliver in front, he distorted in several ways, the exact opposite of the hospitality of those people in Lilliput and Brobdingnag.

Extending the deconstructive application, these two parts also propose some distinct symbols which can disunite the prolongation of the identical interpretation. The conspicuous symbols are the physical appearance of those citizens and their foods.

The inhabitants of Lupata are shown as irregular creatures who are of quite unusual gestures and countenance. Their heads were leaning back either right or left, one of their eyes turned towards the inside and the other directly up to the peak. With the assistance of a deconstructive reading process, the symbols can be found saying that perhaps these people are more powerful to rule upon, than the others. On the next as well as the last land upon which Gulliver landed, we can furnish some kind of bodily apparent likeness that would prove how magically powerful the people were. The forms of the body were singular and disfigured and Gulliver once concluded by saying that these countenances might be nothing but enchantment and necromancy. So, this purports how these people can do whatever they want with their magical power. The governor has his exceptional power to invoke the dead and exercise supreme authority upon them for at least twenty-four hours.

> "*The governor and his family are served and attended by a kind of*
> *somewhat unusual domestic. By his skill in necromancy, he has a power*
> *of calling whom he pleases from the dead, and commanding their*

service for twenty-four hours but no longer, nor can he call the same persons up again in less than three months, except upon very extraordinary occasions."[6]

The king of Lupata rules over the underlying land named Balnibarbi. The King himself lives on the flying island and operates the inhabitants of the below land. The people are using flappers to hit people while conversing to stay in focus. The women had very little importance on that land, so they became adulterous. The land is governed by a male authority more than anyone else. The same male domination is being seen in the next island of Houyhnhnmns and Yahoo. The reasonable creatures are Yahoo who subjugate others by keeping a tight leash on them if they misbehave.

Jacque Derrida's deconstruction reading procedure for analyzing is seen as an acquisition in the domain of literary criticism and theory given by the baffling and choppy nature of language. With the function of deconstruction reading, we the students are ready in action to detect, deconstruct, and explain the significance of the texts. The deconstruction accession assumes that any specific text can be severely elucidated and has different significances. Unlike other critical fashions of reading any text, deconstruction has its strength in its approach that entangles examining dissimilar interpretations or meanings of texts through analyzing the characters, symbols, figures of speeches, and themes without having a boundary of a rigid conventional structure. The narration of the novel delineates the characters' ways of thinking and behaviors through the treatment of symbols, metaphors, and other literary techniques which adds equivocations. Associating inseparably and deconstructing the binary oppositions and other key elements of a text grants us to detect the unified reality extensively based on the underlying meanings of texts.

The present study, in an exclusive manner, explored Jonathan Swift's satirical fantasy "Gulliver's Travels" in terms of symbolic observations, rhetorical strategies, natures of the characters, and contradictions. Hopefully, the deconstructive analysis in the light of feminism of "Gulliver's Travels' ' by Jonathan Swift would scintillate interest and appraisement to understand the multi-meanings of the novella and develop the idea of deconstruction among the learners. The potential nature of words and expressions in a language has been corroborated by the use of deconstruction theory. The deconstructive reading of "Gulliver's Travels' explored the fantastic underpinning interpretation in the untold passages of the book by constructing the characters, using symbols and the other

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[6] The Gulliver's Travels, Jonathan Swift, P- 202

behaviors and nature that are quite relevant to the readers. Apart from the differentiations of the former two lands with the latter, the paper focuses on the nature and behaviors of the different races. The two lands Lilliput and Brobdingnag are seen as a picture of compassionate characters. These natures strongly contradict the natures of Lupata and the land of that Houyhnhnms. The consequence of the deconstructive analysis would help students like us to dilate their perspectives for contextual analysis.

Eventually, the present study is limited to Jacque Derrida's deconstructive analysis with the glimpse of feminist ideas of "Gulliver's Travels" by Jonathan Swift. Certain parts of this novella have been critically received attention but there are various dimensional meanings to be discovered.

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Shibraikhong: **The Lost Temple of Shiva in Tripura**

Shelly Meska

ABSTRACT

Tripura is no exception in the tradition of Shiva worship. Like other parts of India, Shiva is widely worshipped by lay Hindu devotees belonging to various ethnic groups like Brus/Riangs, Tripuris, other tribal communities, Bengalis, etc. The Unakoti, the famous archaeological site in Tripura, is called the Shiva Tirtha of Tripura and is well known to everyone in India and abroad. Besides that, places of Shiva worship can be found in almost all places of human habitation in Tripura, some of which are known and some have lost their identity and glory over time. One such forgotten and little-known abode of Shiva is popularly known as "Sibraikhong" in the Jampui Hills of Tripura. This paper will shed some light on the Lost Shrine of Shiva which was once situated at the highest crest of Tripura, Betlingsib in Jampui Hills area.

Keywords: Shiva, Tripura, The Riangs/Bru, Shaivism, Sibraikhong.

INTRODUCTION: Shiva the God of great antiquity is one of *trimurti*s, viz. Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwara, the Hindu trinity responsible for the creation, preservation, and destruction of the cosmos respectively. According to Shiva Purana, he is known as the most merciful and benevolent God. In Shaivism, he is known as the foremost lord who creates, protects, and transforms the universe. Shiva is also one of the five equivalent deities in the 'panchayatana-puja'[7] of the *smarta* tradition in Hinduism.

Tripura is a beautiful state nestled in the northeastern part of India. The smallest state in Northeast India. Also, the third smallest state in the country. It is divided into eight districts and twenty-four subdivisions, where Agartala is the capital and the largest city in the state. Spread over thick green undulations, Jampui Hills is known for its enchanting landscapes and bracing climate. Therein there was a Shiva's abode (temple) which was once situated at the highest peak of Tripura Betlingsib (also known as Thaidor Tlang and Sibraikhong). Though presently there are no traces of the physical existence of the temple,

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[7] *Pañcāyatana-pujā* is a system of worship in Hinduism in which five Gods, viz. Shiva, Shakti, Vishnu, Ganesh, and Sun, are worshiped.

it is still alive in the mature minds and oral narrations of elders of Hindu tribal inhabitants of that area. Therefore, an attempt has been made in this paper to explore the unexplored vista of Shaivism in Tripura by shedding some light on the lost shrine of Shiva. This paper is majorly based on the verbal information collected from the elderly people of the Bru community[8], and it will be presented in four sections. Those are 1. The Bru/Riangs   2. Sibraikhong 3. The raising 4. The ruination.

1. **The Bru / Riangs**: The Bru are predominantly inhabitants of Tripura. However, they are also found in the states of Mizoram and some parts of Assam. In terms of appearance, the Bru belong to the Mongoloid groups and speak the Sino-Tibetan dialect known as Kaubru. I came across this legend which talks about the legendary King Tsibrai (Aryans call him Trilochan), he was the patriarch who led his people to the Brahmaputra Valley. King Tsibrai was the first king to rule over Brahmaputra Valley and other dynasties were his descendants. King Tsibrai was a devotee of Lord Shiva and supported the propagation of Shaivism. Besides the worship of horned deities, he worshipped Shiva and even his royal emblem was and is studded with the symbol of Shiva. The common people of Brahmaputra Valley and subsequently the Barack Valley were largely followers of Lord Shiva as patronized by the different native kings. After running a few surveys, I also came across a claim which says that the Bru people are the scions of the Kiratas or Kirat people. Likewise, with the Riangs the Kirats also belong to the Sino-Tibetan ethnic group. Many newer tribes and sub-tribes are believed to be the descendants of the Kiratas. To support the above statement, I would like to add that Tripura's oldest name was *kiratdesh*. Coming back the Kiratas and Riangs, follow the same religion and customs. Both of the communities (Specifically Hindus) consider Shiva as their Supreme deity. Not just faith but even the ethics are identical i.e. the Kiratas were not fine warriors but were also excellent at administration. Men and Women were treated equally. Similarly, the Riangs are a well-knit ethnic group having a rigid, well-ordained, and well-structured self-governing system. During the Manikya era, the Riangs were known as the most skilled warriors among the other Tripuri clans. Speaking of the faith followed by the two communities, originally, believed in Animism but over time they have adopted the Hindu ways. Riangs are the second

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[8] Sri Santi Ranjan Reang and Smt. Sadhana Riang, village Barahaldi, Satnala, North Tripura district; Sri Abani Reang Meska, village Kanchanpur, Uricherra, North Tripura district.

largest populated tribal community of Tripura. They are recognized as one of the 75 primitive tribes of India. Ethnically the Riangs are divided into thirteen clans or sub-groups. These are Meska, Molsoi, Chorkhi, Raikchak, Msha, Choungpreing, Yakcho, Wairem, Noukham, Toimoi, Apeto, Yakstam, and Reang. Among these, the two major clans are Meska and Molsoi. Primitively the Brus are adherents of traditional Hinduism which is locally known as Sangsarik Dharma and is observed as the main religion along with Animism. But with time now most of the Bru population is converting to Christianity. The main Gods and Goddesses of the Bru people are Sibrai (Lord Shiva), Buraha (Lord of Shamshan), Hangrai (Lord of Harvest), Soungrongma (Goddess Shakti), Mainouhma (Goddess Lakshmi), Tuibuma (Goddess Ganga), Nouhsuma (Goddess Manasa), Soinairau, Bonirau, Thuinairau, Khunouhma, Haisuhma, Ker mtai, Lampra mtai, Mkhusningrau and Spirits. The important social and religious festival includes Hojagiri, originally called Mainouhma msamung (Dance of Goddess Lakshmi), Soungrongma puja, ker puja, Kati chamo (Ganga puja), Maiktachamo, Lakshmi puja, Hangrai Sal/Buisu (Sankranti), Shiva Chaturdashi, Goroiya puja, etc. Pigs, fowls, goats, eggs, and buffaloes are used for offering and sacrificing during these festivals.

2. **Sibraikhong**: Once considered a mystical site where the great God of Gods resided with his glistening glory has now lost its majestic eminence. All that is left is just some bits and pieces that with time have gotten unrecognizable. It is hard to say that it had a place of worship over there. No traces of it are accessible now. It is believed that there was once a magnificent temple dedicated to Lord Shiva there. This tale adds an air of intrigue and wonder to the region, making it a fascinating topic to explore. The temple was said to be a divine place of spiritual energy and tranquillity. But over time it is now lost and its divinity has become a mystery. The story adds an element of riddle and interest to the region, making it an enchanting topic to delve into. It is like a treasure waiting to be discovered.

The name Sibraikhong means 'the house of Shiva' in the authentic language of Bru. The place holds a lot of attachment for the Bru people (specifically believers of Shaivism). To be precise it was not only a place of worship but also marked a feeling of pride and freedom. I have mentioned these two words 'pride' and 'freedom' because both the words justify the fact of how most of the Bru people came to have settled down in the northern part of the state. The Bru originally resided in the

southern side of the state i.e. Gomati but they had to shift eventually due to the major historic event known as The Riang Rebellion in the year 1943. The rebellion started during the reign of the last king of Tripura, Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya. The revolt was organized under the leadership of Guru Ratnamani Tripura, but generally, he is mentioned as Ratanmani Reang, in protest of the persecution of the Riang people by the Riang chiefs during the Second World War. However, the royal councils, not knowing the real facts of the revolt, strongly influenced the king by condemning it against the monarchy. The Royal army killed many Riang rebels, destroyed fifty Riang villages, and three thousand Riangs were taken in as prisoners. It is said Guru Ratnamani, the main leader of the rebellion was killed in captivity[9]. Coming back to the temple, it has now lost its divinity, and also not forgetting the fact that even the people have become ignorant with time. Only a few people are aware of it. It is disheartening to see a mystical site losing its identity.

3. **The Raising**: Let us now look back into the past for a better understanding of how the temple came into existence. It was during the reign of Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya, in 1943, that the rebellion was started. It was the worst time for the Bru community. Originally the Riangs were the habitants of Gomati (Gboingti in Bru language) but most of them were forced to leave their lands to save themselves from the torture of the chiefs. Initially, they settled down in the northern side of the state i.e. Kanchanpur, Ananda Bazaar, Jampui Hills, etc. During that era, the major population of the community was the followers of Shaivism and Shaktism. So, the devotees wanted to keep their chief deity beside them as a sign of protection for them. For that reason, Guru Ratnamani and five of his disciples, namely Dogaingpha, Senipha, Balapha, and two more names are unknown, took the initiative of building the Shiva temple at the highest crest of Tripura i.e. Sibraikhong (AKA Betlingsib and Thaidor Tlang). There is no precise record of the exact year of the building, but I got to know that it was between the years 1945 to 1946. They had first built the temple in a very primitive style using thatch and large wooden logs as pillars. The materials used for the building were very minimal. As an idol of worship, they had a Linga and a Trishul. After the completion of the building, it was first inaugurated by Guru Ratnamani. The devotees then started giving pujas

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[9] Dasgupta, Taritmohan, 1997, P.24

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and offerings to Lord Shiva. Slowly with the passing of time the temple became a glorious spot for the community. Years later between 1972 and 1973, the temple was upgraded and it was given a proper structure using bricks cement, etc. The devotees and their leaders were joyous and satisfied with the result. It was a celebratory moment for them.

4. **The Ruination**: It is truly heartbreaking to even think about the loss of such a sacred shrine. The legends and stories surrounding it only add to its enchantment. The ruins hold so much history in itself. The holistic place faced the first tension regarding the demolition of the Shiva temple in the year 1997. Tensions emerged between the Mizos and the Hindus (tribals like Riangs and non-tribals like Bengalis). The Jampui hills have been home to more than five thousand Mizo tribal families spread over several tiny hamlets. And the foothills are inhabited by Riangs. After that, the place was rocked by political tension twice - first in the early 80's the jampui mizo convention demanded a regional council under the autonomous district council. Secondly, in late 1997 a large influx of Riang tribal refugees from neighbouring state Mizoram threatened to disturb the traditional peace in the area. The Mizos of Jampui however ended up venerating the image of Shiva at the temple. The ruination was the result of the misunderstandings caused among the tribes. The locals were living peacefully but the intrusion of the outsiders has caused the damage. According to the Telegraph online a local Mizo, L.M. Biakchunga, said, "*The image and temple have been there for more than a century and we have never thought of it except with respect and care*"[10]. He also added that the members of his community in the hills were unaware of the identity of those responsible for causing damage to the image. The Bru people in and around Jampui Hills also feel aggrieved as they worship the Lord Shiva. After running a few more thorough surveys I also came across a statement made by a news reporter of "Jotoni Khupo Kok Tripura", that the bru pandit (head priest of the temple) was first chased out of the place and then the assistant pandit named Mangaljoy Reang, who was a resident of Phuldungsei was also chased out after the intervention of the Mizo Govt in 1997. Now we can only hope and pray that the glory and divinity be revived, not just religiously but also among the people living there. The brotherhood and unity should be restored.

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[10] Datta, Sekhar, 2023

5. Ruins of Shibraikhong[11]

CONCLUSION: The above deliberation on the legend surrounding "The Lost Abode of Shiva" in Jampui Hills of Tripura shows that exploring the rich mythology and history of Tripura reveals fascinating insights about the spiritual significance of Lord Shiva and Shaivism in Tripura. It is a captivating aspect of Tripura's cultural heritage that continues to capture the imaginations of many. This is like an enchanting tale that adds an extra layer of mystique to the region. The legends surrounding the lost abode of Shiva in Tripura have been passed down through generations captivating the hearts and minds of the people. This is the story that continues to inspire awe and wonder. And I have attempted to explore, an unexplored side of history which is quite sensitive for the people.

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[11] Image sourced from a Facebook post posted by Goria Khulumnai Bosong in the year 2020, https://images.app.goo.gl/sEtiKpkBJPjcLemd9

Hegel's Epistemological and Ontological Dispositions

Srirupa Datta Choudhury

ABSTRACT

It is not an exaggeration that Hegel builds on Kant's ideas about the limitations of human cognition, but takes them further by asserting that knowledge is not only dependent on our mental faculties but also on the object of knowledge itself. Among the four sources of knowledge, as cited by Hegel, sense-certainty is the richest and truest knowledge. This study has identified the degree of the four sources of knowledge where determinate things are involved in our process of knowledge formation. This paper also finds and mentions the properties involved like being and pure reason that led to the understanding of reality.

Keywords: Hegel, Kant, Ontology, Epistemology

Hegel is primarily impacted by the philosophy of Kant. The phenomenology of Hegel of spirit and Science of Logic contains his examination of the theory of knowledge. To him, knowledge is nothing more than the present moment itself. According to him, the knowledge or understanding that exists at the beginning or that is our immediate object can only be instant knowledge or knowledge of the immediate or of what is simply[12]. Hegel made a distinction between four knowledge sources. They are feelings of certainty, observation, reason, and comprehension. Hegel begins his phenomenology of spirit with a kind of experience known as sense-certainty. He believes that sensory certainty is the finest and most real kind of knowing. It is the purest kind of information as it accurately depicts a thing and omits nothing. Hegel claims that given that it completely encapsulates the object in front of it and hasn't yet excluded anything, that sense-certainty seems to be the purest knowledge. For, sense-certainty is immediate, responsive, and without conceptualization, it is regarded as the fullest type of knowledge.

According to Hegel, a closer examination shows that sensory certainty is not as strictly instantaneous as it first seems. It involves two essential factors 'This' and 'I'. Sense-certainty is considered as direct knowledge in which the mind passively receives information about the external world. Sense-certainty gives us the knowledge of isolated, finite, limited things. Because within the realm of "sense-certainty," the universe is viewed

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[12] Hegel, G. W. F., *Phenomenology of Spirit*, translated by A.V. Muller., p. 58

as a collection of distinct entities, each of which is determined in a way that excludes the others. The individual determinations exclude one another and in the process of change, one determination disappears, and another takes its place. But the one is not the other and can never become the other.

According to Hegel the universal or the pure being is the true essence of sense-certainty. Hegel states that the essence of sense-certainty is neither in the object nor in the I, rather its essence lies in the wholeness of the sense-certainty.

Hegel states that perception is a type of consciousness of the thing that is thought of as having attributes that are revealed via experience. When a person is experiencing perception, they view the world as a collection of objects with qualities. According to Hegel, the goal of perception is to substitute the ineffable naked particular of sense-certainty. "To Perceive" in German is *Wahrnehmen*, which literally translates as "to take truly."[13]

Certain points are evident from the concept of perception; these are——-(i) The fundamental idea of perception is universal. "The Universal as principle is the essence of perception," [14] (ii) A property has negation, meaning that its uniqueness or manifoldness is its fundamental quality. According to Hegel, a property has negation inherently as a determinateness that is immediately one with the immediacy of being, an immediacy that is universality through this unity with negation. (iii) There are many properties in a universal. One property may be a negation of another. They are indifferent and hence they are free from one another. (iv)The simple, self-identical universal, at the same time, is different and free from these properties. Hegel's arguments now, other traits that appear to be attributes of the thing also arise in perception; nonetheless, the thing is One, and we are aware that this variety, without which it would cease to be One, falls inside us. (v) The unity of all these differences in a property is universal. This abstract universality can be expressed as 'thinghood' or 'pure essence'.

What Hegel refers to as "understanding" is the capacity for reflective interpretation, which separates identity from multiplicity and keeps the two from being contaminated. Understanding envisions a cosmos populated by finite entities under the opposing concepts of identity. Understanding has restricted mental processes and confines itself to the restricted. It is often referred to as "finite reason" by Hegel.

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[13] Ibid., See footnote in p. 66
[14] Ibid., p.67

To distinguish and correctly identify items in terms of identity and difference that are typical of knowledge, negation is required. An object is what it is, to the extent that it isn't anything other. It selects what it excludes and defines what it is not. According to Hegel, a finite entity has an innate "negation," which means that it is never what it can or should be; in other words, it is intrinsically negative. They are always in a position where they are leaning in the other direction, where they are dying and changing into someone they are not.

Hegel states that the object is the opposite of itself in one sense; it is for itself in as much as it is for another, and it is for another insofar as it is for itself. According to Hegel, reason is seen as the totality of reality. According to Hegel, the fundamental principle of existence is reason. Hegel holds that reason is not a quality that is specific to a human person, but rather the totality of reality. Hegel argues that reality and reason are synonymous, with only reality being real and only reason being logical. Hegel said reason is consciousness's conviction that everything is real.

The Thing is presented to consciousness as existing for itself or as the ultimate negation, yet the denial is self-related and involves suspending itself. Stated differently, the basic nature of the Thing is found in another Thing. It is theoretically required, according to Hegel, for consciousness to see that the object is destroyed by the same determinateness that constitutes its essence and being-for-self. This experience might be summed up as follows. Stated differently, the essential nature of the Thing is found in another Thing. The Thing is presented as existing for itself, or as the complete negation of all otherness, making it purely negative in terms of self-relation; yet, the suspension of itself is the self-related negation.'[15]

According to Hegel, perception is the type of awareness in which objects are seen as collections of attributes. But how come we consider the qualities to be characteristics of anything specific? Hegel refers to the type of consciousness known as "understanding" to address this issue. The "unconditioned universal" is the object of awareness according to the understanding. Hegel notes that the unconditioned is an object of awareness, from which the distinction between form and content arises. "Being for self" and "being for another" are the two moments that arise from the unconditioned universal. The essence of the diversity of the varied universals, or the independent things, is the unconditioned universal. It alludes to the ability to understand with reflection. Hegel refers to the "being

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[15] Ibid., p.72.

for self" as the unconditioned universal. According to Hegel, put otherwise, the 'matters' that are presented as autonomous flow directly into their unity, and their unity directly reveals its variety, which then flows back into unity. But force refers to this movement.

The concept of force is a part of knowledge. Force is an unconditional, universal force that is equally inherent in itself since the difference is nothing more than one person being another person's relative. It also seems that the many moments of force are forces in and of themselves. As a result, it seems as though two forces are at work simultaneously. They don't depend on one another at all. According to Hegel, what presents itself as an "other" and calls for Force—both to express itself and to return to itself—directly demonstrates that it is Force itself. This is because the "other" reveals itself to be both a universal medium and a singular one, appearing simultaneously as a vanishing moment in each of these forms. Two forces are present at the same moment; their respective concepts are undoubtedly the same, yet they have evolved from unity into duality. Within force, there are two types of distinctions. There are two differences: one is in content, and the other is in form. Two forces are identified by the difference in content: the first is the force's reflection back into itself, and the second is the medium through which the various items are expressed. There are two forces as well, one that solicits and the other that gets solicited, based on the differences in form. While the other is a passive force, the former is an active force [16]Hegel claims that the differences themselves manifest in two ways: first, as a difference in content, where one extreme is the Force reflected into itself, while the other is the medium through which the "matters" are expressed; and second, as a difference in form, where one actively solicits and the other is solicited, the former being passive and the latter active. They are distinct in principle, or for us, based on the difference in substance; but, based on the difference in form, they are autonomous and maintain their separation and opposition to each other in their relationship.[5]

The oneness of the visible world and the absolute is mostly dependent on force. The soliciting force and the solicited force interact with one another. Both of these aspects— the relation of solicitation and the relation of the opposing defined content—interchange with one another. These two relationships are based on the same force, which is the same as the difference in substance between the soliciting force, which is the active, negative unity or the one, and the solicited force, which is the passive medium, on the one hand. The distinction between these two forces disappears in this way. Following that, there is no

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5. Sarma, Arup Jyoti, *Kant and Hrgrl on Is-Ought Dichotomy*, P. 133.

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longer any force, no act of requesting or being solicited no antithesis, and nothing. Every distinction has turned into a universal distinction or a distinction into which every antithesis has been reconciled. Hegel argues that, in this absolute flux, difference exists only as a universal difference, that is, as a difference into which the many antitheses have been resolved. There is, therefore, no such thing as force, no act of soliciting or being solicited, no determinateness of being a stable medium and a unity reflected into itself, no something existing singly by itself, and no diverse antithesis. This difference is the fundamental element of Force's activity and everything that is real within it since it is a universal difference. We call it the Force Law. It reduces to a basic contrast when the entirety of appearance is contrasted with the simplicity of the inner world or of Understanding[17].

In Hegel's view, the inner world exists outside of awareness as consciousness cannot exist there. Our outside look prevents us from understanding the concept of the inner world. Hegel claims that because awareness has not yet found itself in the inner world, it remains pure beyond consciousness. It is empty because it is nothing more than appearance, yet it is unquestionably the basic or unified universal[18].

Hegel believed that appearance is the essence and, in actuality, the completeness of the super sensible cosmos. He explains the emergence of the inner world, also known as the super sensible beyond, as originating from the world of appearance that has mediated it. The super sensible is the sensuous and perceived when positioned as such, yet the truth of the sensuous and perceived is appearance. The super sensible is hence appearance as appearance[19].

Both the sense-certainty and the understanding are limited to presenting what Hegel refers to as a complex of fixed elements. However, things don't stay in their limited state of existence. Finite and its negation are the same. Reason seeks to bring this togetherness back. Reason comprehends oneness by joining and integrating the opposites, whereas sense-certainty and understanding show separate things at odds with each other. Though their content is kept in a higher and more actual form of being, reason alters them so that they cease to exist as opposites. Every aspect of reality is impacted by the process of uniting opposites, which ends only when reason has arranged the universe so that each component exists only in connection to the whole and each unique thing only has meaning and

[17]. Hegel, G. W. F., *Phenomenology of Spirit*, translated by A. V. Miller, p. 85.
7. ibid, p.88
8. ibid

importance about the totality[20].

Hegel, however, makes the point that resistance and seclusion are not the ultimate conditions. Reason ought to understand the opposition and the hostility. It is the job of reason to sublate and reconcile opposites. Marcuse states that reason is driven by the need "to restore the totality," as opposed to comprehension[21].

People begin to see that reason underpins all reality at the point of transition from restricted individuality to the higher plane of existence. Understanding operates on the tenets of identity and opposition, viewing the universe as a collection of finite entities. Reason's job is to bring them together and subdue them.

Reason negates the finite and its negation, binding them together in mutual reliance in the process of uniting the opposite. As a result, they become visible as glimpses of a more encompassing totality. Hegel referred to this totality as the "Absolute," where conflicts are resolved. The logically organized whole in which all conflicts are settled and subdued is referred to as "reality."

According to Hegel, thinking conceptualizes the universe as made up of finite entities. The concepts of "opposition" and "identity" control it. According to Herbert Marcuse, everything is in opposition to everything because of its self-identity; everything is identical with itself and with nothing else. It never loses it or transforms into anything other than itself, even though it can be linked to and merged with them in a variety of ways[22].

Hegel asserts that reality is an eternal, immutable, and orderly totality. Anything that falls short of this is an appearance, not the real thing. On the other hand, everyday objects have beginnings and ends and are transient. Although everyday objects like tables, chairs, mountains, and plants aren't real, they do exist and are real. According to Hegel, reality and appearance are inextricably linked. Despite being at odds, they are the same. Identity-in-difference, or difference-in-identity, is the central idea of Hegel. Though they may not have been in the same sense, existence and reality both have being. Existence and Being are depending upon Reality. Reality is one in Hegel's view.

Hegel has identified the rational with the real. According to him, the unity of the contradictory moments is made by reason and reality is that unity. He points out that, "What

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[20] Marcuse, Herbert, *Reason and Revolution* , (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul., 1969), p. 47.
10. *ibid*, p.45
[22] ibid., p. 45.

is rational is real and what is real is rational"[23] With the help of reason Hegel overcomes the Kantian dichotomy between reality and appearance.

Hegel argues that reality and knowledge are always one and the same. He makes the case that intellect can access all of reality. Beneath the occurrences, there is nothing that cannot be understood or known. Hegelian dialectic bridged the gap between appearance and actuality. He employs the dialectical process in an attempt to arrive at the ultimate truth. According to him, we may know the Absolute by knowing ourselves. Man truly understands himself and the world around him through this self-knowledge.

The *Geist* is the central concept in Hegel's philosophy. He views the *Geist*, or spirit, as the focal point of everything. The *Geist* travels in our finite spirits. However, *Geist* is not limited to the specific location and period of any one limited spirit. *Geist* manifests in several limited spirits. *Geist's* expression establishes the universal's overall structure. From the lowest inanimate forms through several sorts of living creatures to man, it comprises a hierarchy of beings. The *Geist* is only realized by man. Only when a man can recognize himself is it conceivable.

Hegel argues that subjectivity, or the spirit, must unavoidably be incarnate in the world. It is impossible for the spirit, also known as the *Geist*, to exist outside of the cosmos in which he emerges. The cosmos, on the other hand, is his incarnation. There could be no cosmic soul if there were no cosmos. In the sense that worldly knowledge eventually becomes *Geist's* self-knowledge, the conflict between thought and living is resolved.

Hegel bridges the gap between appearance and reality, or between the super sensible and the sensible world, via the dialectic method. Hegel has linked the actual with the rational. He views reality as an everlasting, immutable, and orderly totality. He believes that appearance and reality are not the same. Identity-in-difference, or difference-in-identity, is the central idea of Hegel.

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Relevance of Maulana Azad's Thought in The Context of Hindu-Muslim Unity and Education

Sumit Mahato

ABSTRACT

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was a supporter of Hindu-Muslim unity and undivided India. Maulana wanted to establish a socially harmonious society by erasing the mutual differences between different religions. Azad's thinking was based on "truth, reason, and wisdom". He has established numerous departments, commissions, boards, and institutions. He will always be remembered for establishing the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Indian Institute of Technology Planning (IIT) and Architecture School. He gave importance to basic education, technical education, scholarship schemes, and cultural education, which is the basic basis of the current education policy. At present, communal elements are trying to destroy the unity and integrity of the country. Maulana Azad's nationalism, 'Sarvadharma Sambhav' concept, and secular ideas are completely relevant to maintaining the country's unity and integrity in this difficult situation.

Keywords: Nationalism, Integrity, Education Policy, Universal Education, Hindu-Muslim unity, religion.

Introduction: Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was a social reformer, politician, philosopher, education advocate, and ardent nationalist. He was born On November 11, 1888, in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Later his family moved to Kolkata, West Bengal. His father and other scholars later provided his early education as per Islamic principles. He was educated in Philosophy, History, and Mathematics in addition to Islamic education. Azad was fluent in English, Urdu, Persian, Hindi, and Arabic. As one of the Muslim political thinkers, Maulana Azad advocated syncretism and collective nationalism between the West and the East. He worked for India and its collective cultural unity throughout his life. Rarely do personalities like Maulana Azad come into being. On February 22, 1958, he died.

Azad's views on secularism and nationalism: Azad's thinking was based on "truth, reason, and wisdom". Although he was a traditionalist thinker, his ideas were completely modern. Through the publication of the magazine "Al-hilal," Maulana Azad developed his Islamic political philosophy. Based on the Quran, he presented the concepts of establishing peace, truth, and an ideal state as well as the divine state. He stated that the "Quran" and

"science" are not incompatible concepts. He firmly believed that knowledge and logic do not stand in the way of religion.

- Azad's religious idea had three pillars and represented God's all-encompassing, all-powerful nature. The first premise He stated that man cannot divide the unifying nature of God, regardless of the variety of religious beliefs he may hold. As a result, there is no fundamental difference between the God of Hinduism and Muslims.

- The second tenet of Azad's religious philosophy is the emphasis on right karma, which holds that the goal of all religions is the creation of an ideal society.

- In the third premise he asserts concerns regarding imagery after death. He thought that the personality in the previous life was influenced by birth and that death was not the end of life. He, therefore, emphasized doing good deeds based on this.

Azad believed that the door of God is always open to those who are not devout, and he was also of the opinion that no matter what religion a person adheres to, he or she is considered to be pious if they show goodwill and do good deeds.

The religious ideas of Maulana Azad were logical and liberal. He believed that reason is the best quality of humanity and that man develops the best qualities. Consequently, despite his belief in logic, he was religiously skewed, and as a result, he held the belief that this kind of universal religion would never lose its significance to human development.

Gandhiji said "*Azad believed in nationalism as much as he believed in religion. He thought that every Muslim ought to be a true Indian nationalist to help maintain the unity of his country*"[1]. He stood for peace and harmony among people. According to him, India's collective and common culture has developed as a result of nearly eleven hundred years of mutual cohabitation, and the country's history, literature, art, culture, language, costumes, and even daily life are full of a synchronized approach. He views the Hindu-Muslim issue from a social perspective. He imagined a unified, coordinating nationalist on this basis.

Azad's views on Hindu-Muslim unity: Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was a supporter of Hindu-Muslim unity and undivided India. Maulana wanted to establish a socially harmonious society by erasing the mutual differences between different religions. Maulana was a supporter of the unity of religion. According to him, the basic element of all religions is the belief in the existence of God. All religions teach the same truth. the worship of God is an integral part of human nature.

He opposed the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan as an independent nation

based on religion, politics, and culture. He held the beliefs outlined in the Qur'an, which stated that Islam does not accept justification for wars other than when they are required.

Through the Quran, he proposed taking a tolerant stance. He imagined collective nationalism against the backdrop of his liberal syncretic religious philosophy. He asserted that this nation would become a significant contributor to social progress if liberalism was adopted by abandoning fanaticism and narrow sentiment. He believed that nationalism ought to be unrestricted and guided by the spirit of universal brotherhood for the benefit of all.

Through the magazine "*Al-hilal," Azad was a great liberal and secular coordinate thinker. Through the magazine, he influenced public opinion if Muslim society accepted democratic cooperation and goodwill ideas*.[2]

He imagined a democracy based on the universal view of all religions within the context of the unity of divine faith. Tolerance rather than power constitutes a democratic system's foundation. In addition, he asserted that freedom is essential to development in the context of the unity of human-divine faith. As a result, Azad's religious nationalism and democratic ideas served as the foundation for the spirit of faith, loyalty, goodwill, and tolerance.

He stated that all citizens should accept the liberal democratic system because the country belongs to all citizens. Azad believed that the democratic system was the only solution to India's communal issue and was skewed in favour of establishing the parliamentary and federal system after independence.

Azad stood for the integration of East and West. They combined logic and religion. He held that logic and faith are not mutually exclusive. He emphasized "the oneness between Hindus and Muslims and hoped to inspire young Muslims to join revolutionary activities."[4] "Truth, reason, and wisdom" were the foundations of Azad's thinking. His ideas were completely contemporary, although he was a traditionalist thinker.

Azad's views on the modern Indian education system: As India's first independent Education Minister, he oversaw the country's education policy for eleven years. He worked tirelessly for free education, the Indian education system, and the establishment of higher education institutions after becoming the first Education Minister of India.

A modern educational system does not necessitate separation from its traditional roots. For a nation that is moving forward to keep up with the demands of a pluralistic society, the educational system needs to be sufficiently flexible and adaptable. Any nation's

progress and development need to implement an age-appropriate, comprehensive, and accurate educational system. "Academics should build and idealize the capacity of inquiry, creativity, entrepreneurship, and ethical leadership in students,"[5] was the view of Maulana Azad.

However, Indians are disadvantaged due to various factors, including a lack of education, social etiquette, and language skills. Before their independence, Indians were socially, politically, and culturally humiliated due to a lack of education.

He contributed significantly to the freedom movement and was a liberal rather than a conservative due to his philosophical intellect. Many national liberation movements were led by Maulana Azad. India became aware of the significance of education thanks to the efforts of Maulana Azad. Because of this, in the present day every citizen of India has the right to education. Maulana Azad wanted "India's education system to be democratized and the curriculum changed so that it included values like tolerance, acceptance, progressivism, and development for the Indian people."[6] He also wanted to run campaigns for widespread literacy so that as many people as possible could become educated and employed, preserving the social structure and cultural diversity.

The Aligarh movement, led by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, had a significant impact on Azad's educational philosophy. He started the New Education Policy, which was based on it. He wanted to get rid of social problems, make a society that was economically independent, peaceful, and orderly, uphold moral and spiritual values, and reduce inequality. Values and ethics in society. He proposed free and compulsory secondary education for both boys and girls and advocated for the universalization of the basic education system. Maulana Azad made free and compulsory primary education as a civil right for children up to the age of 14 after independence.[7]

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes that the medium of instruction should always be the home language, mother tongue, local language, or regional language whenever possible and emphasizes the significance of multilingualism in education. This was emphasized by Maulana a long time ago. "He saw education as a whole and a tool for social revolution, constantly enhancing cultural, social, moral, and spiritual human life."[8] He advocated for the inclusion of regional languages in education. He always stressed the importance of learning one's native tongue for students to be able to serve their country well while honouring their native tongue.

Not only did he develop and establish many liberal arts, science, and technology

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institutions while serving as education minister, all of which continue to make significant contributions to the development of modern India to this day, but he also laid out the road map and blueprint for the ideological reform of the Indian educational system. In the country, he has established numerous departments, commissions, boards, and institutions. He will always be remembered for establishing the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Indian Institute of Technology Planning (IIT) and Architecture School. In 1948, he established this commission to ensure that India's universities teach cutting-edge subjects that would aid in the country's advancement. In 1952, Maulana Azad set up the All-India Council for Secondary Education Commission to make secondary school structures better. He is also famous for starting important literary, cultural, and academic institutions like the Sahitya Akademi, Sangeet Natak Akademi, and Lalit Kala Akademi. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations is another important institution he founded. Azad also argued for women's education, because he believed that "*no program of national education can be appropriate if it does not give full consideration to the education and advancement of one-half of the society that is women.*"[9]

India's progress and development will continue for many decades to come thanks to his foresight and liberal ideology. Through his educational reforms, Maulana Azad paved the way for a modern, rational, and progressive India. The Government of India declared November 11 as National Education Day in honour of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, a visionary leader, great freedom fighter, renowned educator, and the first Union Minister for Education. Maulana received the Bharat Ratna posthumously in 1992.

Conclusion: Maulana Azad was a strong supporter of Hindu-Muslim unity. He said, "*Even if an angel comes from heaven and declares from the height of Qutub Minar that leave Hindu-Muslim unity and within 24 hours you will get Swarajya, then I will give such Swarajya.*" I will consider it appropriate to refuse and will not move even an inch from my principles. Not getting Swaraj will only affect India but ending our unity will harm the whole of humanity.[10] It is clear from this statement that Maulana Azad was a strong supporter of Hindu-Muslim unity.

Maulana Azad's views on education policy explain his foresight. The current education policy has given importance to basic education, technical education, and socio-cultural education. Therefore, Maulana Azad's thoughts related to education policy will continue to guide us in the future as well. Maulana Azad's vision is that so many years ago, he gave importance to basic education, technical education, scholarship schemes, and

cultural education, which is the basic basis of the current education policy.

At present, communal elements are trying to destroy the unity and integrity of the country. Maulana Azad's nationalism and '*Sarvadharma Sambhav*' concept enshrined in our Constitution of India. His secular ideas are completely relevant to maintaining the country's unity and integrity in this difficult situation.

Presently the youth are being misled in the name of religion and people who are full of anti-national mentality destroying the communal equality of India. Therefore, there seems to be a great need for the study of the religious thoughts of Abul Kalam Azad and there is a need to review his religious thoughts in the context of the relevance in the contemporary era.

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Concept of *Nishkama Karmayoga* in Shrimad Bhagavad Gita

Dr. Savita Mishra & Lombadhar Kumar

ABSTRACT

The Bhagavad Gita is the foundation of Indian philosophy. Gita has the first place among Hindu scriptures. Gita has been called the main book of karmayoga. Karmayoga is made up of two words, karma and yoga. Karma means duty and yoga means union of the soul with God. So, man should do such work that he gets united with God. In reality, no human being can live without action. If there is no action, neither society nor individual will survive. The Gita inspires us to do deeds devoid of selfishness. In the Gita it is considered necessary to follow Dharma for doing any work but to do any work it is necessary to remember that I am not the master of action. you have a right to perform your prescribed duty but you are not entitled to the fruits of action. Never consider yourself to be the reason for the results of your activities and never be attached to not doing your duty. Removing the desire for the fruits of action and protecting from the belief of non-action led to the formation of nishkama-karma. Therefore, only by selfless action, the progress of the world will be maintained and happiness, peace, and prosperity can be established in the world.

Keywords: Bhagavad Gita, Gita, Karma, Nishkama-karma, *Karmayoga*.

The principle of Karma is the basic principle of Indian philosophy. Indian ideology has gained more importance than theism and animism. The theory of *karma* has two parts: *karma* in action form and *karma* in principle. Except for Charvak, all the Indian philosophies, even if they are anti-Vedic recognize the law of Karma. Atheists do not believe in theism, even some leading theists do not believe in it, but everyone believes in *karma*. In the background of the theory of *karma* lies the belief of Indian philosophy that there is an eternal moral order in the world. According to the theory of *karma*, whatever a person does, he experiences its consequences. That means "as we sow, so we reap". According to this rule, the result of a good deed would be auspicious and the result of misdeed would be inauspicious. Happiness and sorrow are considered to be essentially the result of auspicious and inauspicious deeds respectively. Therefore, some schools have called '*Karmavada*' the philosophical explanation of the system inherent in the world.

The 19th-century Western philosopher Bradley has also determined "*My station and its duties' which is mandatory to adopt where there is duty, there are rights also.*"[24] When we cannot be inactive, then our work should be done according to an ideal and not without an ideal. This ideal is of selfless action and not of fruitful action. Selfless action has two parts, renunciation of affection and renunciation of carving. Some people considered *nishkam* to mean the renunciation of lustful deeds like *yajna*, *dana*, etc. for wife, son, wealth, etc. Their renunciation is the renunciation of lustful deeds.

"*Detached action is the obstruction to bondage and seeker of Salvation. Attachment is the cause of bondage. The Person who lacks attachment even while doing work is like a lotus leaf who does not get entangled in water.*"[25] The one who does his work without attachment called Yogi, can attain God. This is the goal of *karmayoga*. Detached action is the step or path to reach God. A human being should always keep working but in a detached manner. By doing detached or selfless work, one can cut the bondage of the world, surpass the cycle of birth and death, and merge with God. Therefore, through selfless action, man can attain God. So, *karmayoga* is the means or path to meet God.

In *nishkama-kamayoga* there is a coordination between two conflicting ideals-*pravitti* and *nirvitti*.[26] The idea of *pravitti* is the idea of action and the ideal of retirement is the ideal of renunciation. In the selfless *karmayoga* of Geeta knowledge, devotion, and action are also co-ordinated. Gita urges every person to perform his duty but also tells them not to be attached to the results of their actions.

The principle of *karma* is one of the basics of Indian philosophy. In Indian ideology, it has gained more importance than theism and animism. Indian society of philosophy believes in the principle of *karma*, according to that principle, '*kritapransh*' i.e. the results of actions done are not destroyed, and '*akritabhyupagam*' i.e. the result of the actions not done, rather not achieved. In this way, the law of *karma* is called causation theory, which plays a vital role in the field of morality. The way causal law explains the system inherent in the physical field, in the same way the law of *karma* explains the inherent system in morality. All the philosophers who believe in the theory of *karma* believe that our present life is the result of past deeds, and our future life will also be the result of our deeds in the present life. From this point of view, three types of *karma*s are considered - *sanchita-karma,*

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[24] Bradley, F.H, Ethical Studies, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1994, Page- 15.
[25] Agarwal, S.P, The Social Role of the Gita: How and Why. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Pvt. Ltd. 1997, Page- 43.
[26] Gandhi, M. The Bhagavad Gita, Delhi Orient Books,1983, Page- 189.

prarabdha-karma and s*anchiyman-karma*

1. *Sanchit-karma*: - The *karma* that is related to past life, and whose results have not yet started.

2. *Prarabdha-karma*: - It is the part of *Sanchita-karma*, which is just started to give the result. It is related to the past.

3. *Sanchiyaman Karma*: - The deeds done in the present life which will yield results in the future, are called *sanchiyaman-karma*.

These three forms of *karma* are three modes of operation of power. Fortune is made from these methods. Creation of past, present & and future is subject to these modes.

The *karmayoga* of Gita is Selfless action. Gita preaches only for actions. *Nishkama-karmayoga* means we should always perform our work as, an end, and never take it as mean. whether we do our work, but shouldn't Look for the result of it. A *karmayogi* should do his work to rise above happiness-sorrow, profit-loss, victory-defeat & and conflict of appearance. There are two types of *karma*. They are – selfish actions, i.e. *sakam-karma*, and selfless actions, which is *nishkama-karma*. We do any physical or mental work only inspired by some wish or desire. This is called *sakam-karma*. For example- Spouse, son, wealth, etc. We act either inspired by desire or under the influence of the desire for success and suffer its good or bad consequences.

This is a selfless action, in which, there is no desire for fruit. Selfless action is called *karmayoga*. In selfless *karmayoga*, there is a proper coordination of two conflicting ideals of nature and retirement. The ideal of attitude is the ideal of action, the ideal of happiness. The ideal of *nivritti* is the ideal of *vairagya* which is associated with the renunciation of all action and more away from all the worldly relations. In the *nishkama-karma* of Gita knowledge, devotion, and actions are coordinated as well. The main lesson of the Gita is the command of selfless action.

Kant, a famous philosopher in modern Western moral philosophy has also discussed selfless action similar to Gita. His principle is known as "duty for duty's Sake". Kant has also emphasized that a person should perform his actions with a sense of duty, not induced by selfishness or capable tendencies. But the *nishkama-karmayoga* of the Gita is higher than Kant's principle.[27]

The Gita urges every person to perform his / her social duties as *swadharma*, i.e. it opposes inaction. It commands to overcome the lower tendencies like Success-failure

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[27] Gupta, Dixit, Nitisastra, Paschimbanga Rajya Pustak Parsat, 2007, Page-148

happiness sorrow, victory & defeat, or profit or loss. Gita itself accepts the superiority of selfless action by doing a comparative study of different *yogamarga*. The importance of *nishkama-karma* is as much as it can't be written. The era in which we are breathing today is an era of struggle, selfishness, deceit, competition and somehow maintaining one existence. Morality is declining completely. Also, human feelings and emotions have no value anymore. They believe in the existence of God but are also confused by the breath of disbelief. The recognition of discipline and rules has finished. The main cause of all these is our -being irreligious and indecisive. For, today self-fulfilment is everyone's ultimate religion.

In Gita, Shri Krishna has said "renunciation of action and selfless action both of them are extremely beneficial. In the current situation, this phrase of Krishna stands on the weapon because modern man is becoming dominant for his rights. If that he can achieve results even after turning away from his duties. "The word action without result" is itself a doubt in current times. Radhakrishnan and Lokmanya Tilak are among those who tried to understand the sense of *nishkamatva* of *karma* and assimilate it in its organic form.

Nishkama-karma gives the message of renunciation of results. Outwardly, talking about *nishkama-karma* is irrelevant and meaningless, but inwardly it appears to be extremely relevant in today's era. Today, devotion to duty and doing the work properly is considered paramount in private companies. It is said that action is the most important thing for success in every area of life. "The messages of Gita make a man an entrepreneur, which can be visible all around in today's life. But the only problem is that a person's greed corrupts the purity of Karma. If every person does his work as a duty, then a very beautiful form of Society will be established."[28] The way a shoulder is motivated only by duty and risks its life in fighting with enemies, in the same way, if we start to do work the face of the world will be changed.

Conclusion: - After the above deliberation, it can be concluded that the instructions of Gita in the present era have immense importance. There are many problems among today's humans. The solutions to these problems can be found by studying Gita. Therefore, in the modern era, humans should take inspiration from Gita. Gita is filled not only with religious ideas but also with philosophical ideas. *Karmayoga* is considered as the most important part of Gita. Lord Krishna has advised Karmayoga to Aajuna. The lesson of *nishkama-*

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[28] Chottopadhyay,Shri Panchanan, Srimadbhagavad Gita, Girija Library, Kolkata, 2019, Page- 258

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karma is said to be the precious gift of Gita. There is a unique coordination between knowledge, action, and devotion in Gita. In the modern era, the supremacy of *karma* is seen and people also indulge in devotion to God. But as far as knowledge is concerned, there is a complete lack of proper knowledge. According to the lesson of Gita, it is necessary to have proper knowledge, but running after an unreal mortal and doing inappropriate deeds is not the message of Gita. According to the lesson of Gita, unless proper knowledge is united with action and devotion, the welfare of society is not possible. Therefore, in today's era, coordination of knowledge of Gita, devotion, and action is also very important.

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Exploring Different Facets of Integral Humanism of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya

Dr. Pranay Deb

ABSTRACT

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya is an Indian socio-political and nationalist thinker, who propounded his views based on indigenous ethos, and social and cultural traditions of India. He is known as an exponent of Indian culture (Bhartiya Sanskriti). Integral humanism as a doctrine developed by Deendayal Upadhyaya and it has been adopted by the Bharatiya Jana Sangh in 1965 as its official doctrine. Deendayal's philosophical postulation of 'unity in diversity' reflects the influence of Advaita Vedanta. His philosophy is centred on different aspects of man and his socio-economic development; essentially believes in a synergy of the individual, society, the universe, and the ultimate supreme. Deendayal emphasizes developing harmony and cooperation among the people of society. He wants to build up the structure of civilization based on love, sacrifice, harmony, and cooperation. Deendayal Upadhyaya's philosophy of Integral Humanism has various dimensions such as social, political, and economic which emphasize every aspect of human life. This paper is an attempt to have a fresh look at all aspects of Integral Humanism and to find a theoretical base way out to the various problems of modern society.

Keywords: Integral Humanism, *Bhārtiya Sanskriti, Dharm-rājya, Antyodaya.*

Introduction: Our society has been overwhelmed by violence, aggressiveness, immorality, poverty, capitalism, communalism, and regionalism in the contemporary days. To find the best answer that is appropriate for our country, we must examine Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's ideology. Indian socio-political and nationalist scholar Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya based his arguments on the country's social and cultural heritage as well as its indigenous ethos. His philosophy is centered on several facets of the human condition and his advancement in society. Deendayal's philosophy fundamentally holds that the person, society, the cosmos, and the ultimate supreme all work together in harmony. He highlights the numerous flaws in capitalism and communism that are innate to those theories in the humanitarian context. He established a theory that promotes the holistic development of society by taking into account all facets of the individual and the nation. Deendayal

Upadhyaya created the idea of integral humanism, which became the official doctrine of the *Bharatiya Jana Sangh* in 1965. It is also the *Bharatiya Janata Party*'s official ideology. Humanism seeks to further the welfare and general social, political, economic, and spiritual advancement of humanity. Furthermore, Deendayal's philosophy is integrative as it aims to balance the needs of the person, the community, and the cosmos. The Integral Humanism ideology of Deendayal Upadhyaya emphasizes all facets of human existence and has several aspects, including social, political, and economic.

Concept of Man and Society: Deendayal's understanding of humanity appears to have been shaped by the Vedanta philosophy, which regards humans as divine spiritual beings in addition to physical beings. In addition to his physical essence, man also has an intellectual and spiritual nature. Deendayal Upadhyaya discusses human nature's good and undesirable traits. He refers to them as the *Devi Bhauv* (dynamic disposition of the Goddess) and the *Asuri Bhauv* (demoniac disposition), and he believes that the latter is founded on selfless service and the former is based on self-interest. According to Deendayal, human nature has evolved to reveal the conscious power of the divine and that man is inherently divine. It is evident from this that he values the better aspects of human nature more than anything else. Deendayal places a strong emphasis on fostering harmony and cooperation. He believes that while conflict is a sign of degeneration, cooperation is a sign of progress. Thus, he aspires to establish love, sacrifice, harmony, and reciprocal cooperation as the cornerstones of civilization. Putting utmost importance on those ideals, he says, "*The recognition of this element of mutual sustenance among different forms of life and taking that as the basis of an effort to make human life mutually sustaining is the prime characteristic of civilisation.*"[29] But the unpleasant truth is that most people in society still succumb to their narrow desires, including greed and self-interest, rather than serving the community and serving others without regard for themselves. In today's culture, there is more confusion and strife and people are much less adjusted. This is because the majority of people are motivated by unending materialistic urges and fail to develop the characteristics and values in life.

According to Deendayal, a person is inextricably linked to society. He says that society is an enlarged man. He thinks that society should be viewed organically. He opines, "*...society is an entity with its own "SELF", its own life; it is a sovereign being like an*

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[29]Upadhyaya, Deendayal. *Integral Humanism*. (E-copy, edited by Vasant Raj Pandit, Secretary, Deendayal Research Institute), 2002, p.14.

individual; it is an organic entity. We have not accepted the view that society is some arbitrary association. It has its own life. Society too has its body, mind, intellect and soul."[30] It might be said that the Upanishads articulate the idea of society as the cosmic man (*Aham Brahmashmi, Ayam atman brahman*). However, it is incorrect to claim that a person belongs to society in the same way as a part of an organism. Deendayal acknowledges that society cannot impose unrestricted demands on an individual. He focuses on achieving significance in one's own life in addition to social development, and he aspires to harmony between the individual and society.

An essential component of Deendayal's organic conception of society is the *catur-varna* system. He has given legitimacy to this system for the systematic functioning of the society. However, in doing so, he has blatantly disregarded the detrimental effects of the society's fourfold divide, which could result in the establishment of an inflexible and intolerable caste system that fuels social unrest and inter-caste strife. In response to such criticism, Deendayal asserts –

"*The four castes, are thought of as analogous to the different limbs of the Virat-Purusha. It was suggested that the Brahmins were created from the head of the Virat-Purusha, the Kshatriyas from his hands, the Vaishyas from his abdomen and the Sudras from his legs. If we analyse this concept we are faced with the question of whether there can arise any conflict between the head, arms, stomach and legs of the same Virat-Purusha. If conflict is fundamental, the body cannot be maintained. There cannot be any conflict in the different parts of the same body. On the contrary, 'One Man' prevails. The limbs are not only complementary to one another, but even further, there is individuality, unity. There is a complete identity of interests, identity of belonging.*"[31]

Deendayal does not confine his analysis to the issue of how society views humans. He also discusses how man relates to the rest of mankind, the cosmos, and ultimately, the Almighty. According to Deendayal, everything in nature is a different representation of a single, mystically sensed entity. The center of the cosmos is the Godhead. He contends that nature's outward diversity is only a representation and alteration of its fundamental oneness. He is inspired by the *Sankhya* school of Indian philosophy's *Prinamavada* doctrine in this way. Advaita Vedanta's monism has a deep influence on Deendayal's philosophical theory

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[30] *Ibid*. P.23.
[31] *Ibid*. P.29.

of 'unity in diversity'. But Deendayal opposes Sankara's idea of *Mayavada* even if he adheres to Advaita Vedanta. He saw the universe and the spirit as two sides of the same coin, both of which are real. He rejects the idea of a world-denying mindset. He explains the route of *Niskama karma* and Karma-yoga as described in the *Bhagawad Gita* and affirms his belief in Karam-marga. Deendayal also subscribes to the idea of *'yat pinde tad brahmande,'* which states that 'what is in microcosm is also in macrocosm' and has the same relationship to both human and global existence. This idea is supported by current scientific discoveries, which maintain that every atom contains fate about the universe's past and future.[32]

Deendayal's Concept of *Purushartha*: *Purushartha* is formulated in a hierarchical, comprehensive, and integrated manner by Deendayal. He is in favor of striking a balance between Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha. Deendayal highlights the importance of every life value. He believes that without the lesser ones, higher ones cannot be reached. In his view, "*We regard the body as an instrument for achieving our aims... The satisfaction of our bodily needs is necessary, but we don't consider this to be the sole aim of all our efforts. Here in Bharat, we have placed before ourselves the ideal of the four-fold responsibilities of catering to the needs of body, mind, intellect and soul, with a view to achieve the integrated progress of man.*"[33] Dharma is seen as the anchor sheet or stabilizing pivot in this design. Without a doubt, Deendayal's interpretation of *Purushartha* is conventional. Its foundation is on the model of traditional Indian thinking. It should be mentioned that despite his strong belief in the significance of spiritual values, Deendayal does not exhibit any prejudice against materialism. In actuality, he advocates striking a balance between spiritualism and materialism. Deendayal places a strong emphasis on the holistic fulfilment of all goals that lead to both material and spiritual satisfaction. Furthermore, he pursues everyone's pleasure while denying the factual concept of individual satisfaction. Deendayal's perspective is similar to the Bhagawad Gita's *Sarvabhutahita* (the benefit of everyone).

The Notion of 'Nation': The concept of nation holds a significant place in Deendayal's Integral Humanism ideology. According to Deendayal Upadhyaya, the country is the motherland. In his opinion, "*When a group of persons live with a goal, an ideal, a mission and look upon a particular piece of land as motherland, this group constitutes a Nation. If*

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[32] Ferris. *The New York Times Magazine.* 26. 9. 1982, p.87.
[33] Upadhyaya, *Op. Cit.,* p.19.

either of the two - an ideal and a motherland - is not there, then there is no Nation."[34] The nation is referred to as the mother. This idea stands for the people's ultimate goal of love and fidelity to the land as their mother. The Hindu ideal of patriotism, which portrays nationalism as the essence of the concept of homeland, is likewise conceived and reflected in this concept of motherland. According to Deendayal, a nation cannot become strong, solid, vibrant, or flourish energetically unless the values that make up its *Chiti* (own unique consciousness) are respected and adhered to. He says, "*Chiti is fundamental and is central to the nation from its very beginning. Chiti determines the direction in which the Nation is to advance culturally. Whatever is in accordance with Chiti is included in culture*."[35] According to him, *Chiti* is the essence of any nation, giving it the strength and vitality known as *Virat*. He highlights the necessity of behaving in line with the nation's ethos, or *Chiti*, in order to awaken *Virat* of the nation.

Today's national life is regrettably drifting away from our core beliefs and ideals, as Deendayal denounces. People are engrossed in the materialistic rat race and consumeristic society. Regionalism, casteism, linguism, and other issues have been destroying society. He says that although individuals may have various languages, worship methods, lifestyles, and eating habits, peace may be achieved across these differences if people support complete trust in the homeland and feel a strong connection to their own culture and principles. Deendayal Upadhyaya is regarded as an exemplar of Indian culture (*Bhartiya Sanskriti*). He contends that this idea is dynamic rather than static.

Further, he believes that diversities also characterize the life of our nation. Among the diversities and differences, he wants to establish harmony. According to Deendayal, "*Unity in diversity and the expression of unity in various forms have remained the central thought of Bharatiya culture. If this truth is wholeheartedly accepted, then there will not exist any cause for conflict among various powers. Conflict is not a sign of culture or nature; rather it is a symptom of perversion*."[36] For him, India's historical legacy and culture define the country. He says we shouldn't ignore or reject our historical heritage. He wants to make them stronger. It stands for a mindset that rejects the mindless enthusiasm for an alien culture. He does, however, place a strong emphasis on eschewing the unnecessary and outmoded aspects. It is important to note that Deendayal is not opposed to the embrace of new ideas; rather, he suggests accepting only those that align with Indian

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[34] *Ibid.,* PP. 24-25.
[35] *Ibid.,* p.26.
[36] *Ibid.,* p.14.

culture, conscience, and circumstances. He supported the *Indianization* of all cultures before their acceptance. Deendayal does not see Western concepts as the pinnacle of knowledge, even if he is not opposed to their embrace. He analyzed that, "*Western science and the Western way of life are two different things. Whereas Western science is universal and must be absorbed by us if we wish to go forward, the same is not true of the Western way of life and values. In fact, thoughtless imitation of the West must be scrupulously avoided*."[37] He is a champion of Indian culture and feels that India must be a major global lighthouse for other cultures due to the uniqueness of its ancient wisdom.

Deendayal Upadhyaya wished to revitalize and revitalize the age-old Indian culture via the *Bharatiya Jana Sangh*'s messages. He feels that a positive and impending interchange of values is about to occur. There has to be a mutual interchange of ideas and attitudes as well as a flow of civilizations and philosophies among the nations of the world. Ideas should be spread, but when this is done with the goal of imperialism and expansionism, or to further personal gain, it becomes a hazardous trend. Throughout history, European nationalism has been characterized by its military-based expansionism and imperialism. European nationalism was described by Deendayal as belligerent, self-serving, and commercial. He placed great emphasis on educating the world's population about Indian wisdom. Deendayal is therefore both an internationalist and a nationalist in this sense. The cornerstone of his ideology is mutual collaboration. His goal is to achieve global peace via mutual aid and harmonious relationships with all living things. Nationalism in the hands of Deendayal is neither hostile nor exploitative of humankind. He has a geo-cultural conception of the country. According to him, the region where people live is their motherland, not just a little area of land. He exhorts the populace to serve and progress their country with sincere devotion and allegiance. Based on the sentimental and emotional mother-son relationship between the land and her people, he seeks to evolve the feeling of nationalism. He asserts that Hinduism is a symbol of the old Indian traditions and culture, which form the foundation of India as a country. He admits that numerous ethnicities have migrated to India over time, but he insists that their cultures have blended with traditional Indian customs, maintaining the unique essence of Indian culture. Deendayal espoused his sincere care for the people of India as a whole. He promised to work for India's communities.

Deendayal's Concept of State: According to Deendayal, a country creates several

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[37] *Ibid.,* p.6.

institutions to meet its demands on an economic, social, and cultural level. He views the state as one of the institutions, yet a significant one, not superior to any others. Stating the importance of the state he says, "*The government has to maintain law and order and prevent chaos which definitely destroys Dharma. In the time of chaos, the law of the jungle prevails where the strong feed upon the weak. Therefore, stability of the State is also essential for the prevalence of Dharma.*"[38] Deendayal, on the other hand, sees the state as transitory and questions its significance. He asserts that the state serves as the country's attorney. The country grants it power of attorney. The power of attorney may be altered if the current attorney is not performing up to par. Upadhyaya therefore holds that serving the country is the primary goal of the state. The state's structures and procedures will alter if it fails to fulfil its obligations. He says –

> "*Excessive power of the State is also harmful for Dharma. It was said that a king should be neither too harsh nor too soft with his people. Excessive reliance on harsh measures produces a feeling of revolt in people. When the State usurps the rightful place of Dharma, then there is this evil of the preponderance of power of the State. Dharma suffers thereby. This is the reason for the decline of Dharma in ruthless States. When the State acquires all powers, political and economic, the result is a decline of Dharma.*"[39]

Deendayal was strongly opposed to foreign control and dominance. Even if it is a kind form of governance, he rejects it because it is strange. He fervently advocates for self-rule, which he defines as having a broader and more inclusive meaning than merely national independence. According to him, *Swarajya* won't have any significance until it is used as a tool for cultural expression. He therefore places more emphasis on the country's cultural independence. According to Deendayal, post-independence India's self-rule has not succeeded in granting actual freedom. Because of its slavish adherence to foreign ideas and notions, independent India has become a victim of mental slavery and lacks a sense of self-reliance. Like Gandhi, he opposes the careless emulation of Western ideologies. Deendayal is seeking liberation from the enslavement of foreign ideologies. According to him, the nation's original culture has to be preserved and upheld as a fundamental fact.

Supremacy of *Dharam-rajya*: The idea of democracy had an impact on Deendayal. But what he really wants is democracy along Indian lines. He feels that truth can only be found

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[38] *Ibid.,* p.20.
[39] *Ibid.,* p.20.

in Dharma, which is why he favours *Dharam-rajya* over *Jana-rajya*. According to him, *Dharma* is *"...the laws of life. All those principles which bring about harmony, peace and progress in the life of mankind are included in this term Dharma. ....When nature is channelised according to the principles of Dharma, we have culture and civilisation. It is indeed this culture which will enable us to sustain and sublimate the life of mankind. Dharma is translated here as law."*[40] According to him, truth is only embodied in that one individual who stands for something that follows *Dharma*, then the majority chooses something that is against *Dharma*. According to him, a single *Dharma* believer possesses power comparable to those with immense interest. According to Upadhyaya, *Dharma* is the exclusive source of sovereignty. According to him, the government, the legislature, and the judiciary are powerless to subvert *Dharma*. He continues by saying that not even God could intervene in opposition to it. "*Dharma is supreme. Dharma is the repository of the Nation's soul. If Dharma is destroyed, the Nation perishes. Anyone who abandons Dharma, betrays the Nation.*"[41]

However, it is crucial to remember that Deendayal did not envision a theocratic concept of *Dharma-rajya*, i.e., a government run by religious leaders. According to Deendayal's conception of the state, everyone is free to practice and spread their religion without facing prejudice or obstacles. He clarifies his points as he says, "*There is no need to tie up State and religion. This does not happen in Dharma Rajya. Rather, there is freedom to worship according to one's religion. Dharma Rajya accepts the importance of religion for peace, happiness, and progress of an individual. Therefore, the State has the responsibility to maintain an atmosphere in which every individual can follow the religion of his choice and live in peace.*"[42] Deendayal Upadhyaya is against the federal state in his *Dharam-rajya* system. By viewing India as a federation of distinct states, he perceives it as a blow to the foundation of our nation's unity. According to him, the federal constitution needs to be replaced with a unitary one. But a unitary state shouldn't be a dictatorial center, nor should it mean doing away with the provinces.

Deendayal advocates for the decentralization of appropriate authorities down to the panchayat level. Furthermore, he thinks that the unitary state is the center of authority even if he supports the devolution of power. He seeks devolution but also wants to bring about unity. He makes a comparison between how a family and a state operate. The head of a

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[40] *Ibid.,* p.16.
[41] *Ibid.,* p.31.
[42] *Ibid.,* p.37.

family and its members are analogous to how power is distributed between the center and other body politic units. In his word, "*Unitary State does not mean a highly autocratic centre, nor does it entail the elimination of provinces. The provinces will have various executive powers. Even the various entities below the provincial level, such as the Janapadas, will have suitable powers*."[43]

Furthermore, Deendayal Upadhyaya opposed the existence of distinct political parties. Different political parties with distinct ideologies and agendas exist in democracies. Both the federal and provincial governments are made up of these parties. Parties at the national level can even threaten other parties' provincial governments. As a political party activist, Deendayal has responded to the reckless actions of the national government. It is noteworthy to emphasize that, as a political party activist, he concurs that a dominant center may abuse power for the benefit of special interests. Deendayal's understanding of *Dharm-rajya* is distinct from Mahatma Gandhi's *Ram-rajya* and M.N. Roy's *Organised Democracy*. Deendayal favours a strong, unified state, whereas Gandhi advocates for enlightened anarchy. Whereas both Deendayal and M.N. Roy support the devolution of authority, Deendayal bases democracy on dharma, Roy places more emphasis on radical or organized democracy, which is predicated on the broadest possible distribution of power to the People's Committees.

Economic Dimensions of Integral Humanism: While outlining the economic aspects of his Integral Humanism philosophy, Deendayal holds the current economic theories accountable for psychological instability, the decline in human values, and general economic sadness. He is against the systems of capitalism and communism. Both imply the concentration of political and economic power, which dehumanizes people. In his opinion –

> "*Capitalist as well as communist, have failed to take account of the 'Integral Man', his true and complete personality and his aspirations, One considers him a mere selfish being hankering after money, having only one law, the law of fierce competition, in essence the law of the jungle; whereas the other has viewed him as a feeble lifeless cog in the whole scheme of things, regulated by rigid rules, and incapable of any good unless directed.*"[44]

The primary focus of Deendayal's economic theories is man. He views humanity as God's

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[43] *Ibid.,* p.35.
[44] *Ibid.,* p.52.

greatest creation and strives for Integral Man's advancement and pleasure. He brings to our attention the long-standing Indian tradition of understanding man, which maintains that he is both a spiritual being and a storehouse of material impulses and actions. Man is the whole of his body, mind, soul, and intellect. He thus desires a well-coordinated structure that guarantees both materialistic and spiritualistic life values for the appropriate advancement of humankind.

The idea of *Antyodaya* was introduced by Deendayal Upadhyaya to empower or advance the most marginalized members of society. He claims that the economic system must supply the bare minimum required for human survival. It is only a rule of *Dharma* if the government meets the bare minimum. If not, it is an *adharma* rule. He supports fair distribution practices, minimum salaries, and some form of social security. Thus, it can be seen that Deendayal aspires to build economic democracy in addition to political democracy. He talks about how everyone should be able to work, and that each person should have that choice.

For India's growth, Deendayal places a strong emphasis on decentralization and *Swadeshi*. He contends that only a decentralized economy can establish man in his proper place. Deendayal considers the person and his family to be the fundamental units of productive activities in his decentralized economic model. Justifying his views he asserts, "*The needs of the wealthy and well-fed are attended to, rather than those of the poor and the hungry. As a result, where countless varieties of goods are produced for the needs of the wealthy, even the basic necessities of life for the poor become scarce. The centralisation and monopolisation of production totally undermine the influence of the consumer*."[45] Given that India is predominantly an agricultural nation, Deendayal places a strong emphasis on the growth of both industry and agriculture. He claims that self-sufficiency in agricultural output may be attained. In actuality, he weaves together the symbiotic growth of business and agriculture. Rather than emphasizing large-scale enterprises, he provides small-scale industries with enough attention. He opposes urbanization and is in favour of industrializing communities. Deendayal is neither in favour of total nationalization nor total privatization when it comes to industry ownership. According to him, the realistic and pragmatic foundation should be used to determine who owns which industries. He works to create harmony among various industries by attempting to eradicate the detrimental rivalry and conflict among them.

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[45] *Ibid.,* p.50.

Deendayal highlights the need to take into account the seven 'M's' for the formation and the growth of an industry: man, material, money, management, motive power, market, and machine. When it comes to automation, he is cautious. Deendayal does not support either blind mechanization or no mechanization at all. He is against automated machines being installed everywhere. According to him, achieving full employment is a prerequisite for moving toward automation. He points out his thought that "*...instead of the usual exhortation of "Every worker must get food" we must think of "Everyone who eats must get work", as the basis of our economy. No doubt the charkha has to be replaced by machines, but not necessarily automatic machines everywhere.*"[46] Deendayal places emphasis on creating indigenous or *Bharatiya* technology that takes into account India's circumstances and resource availability. Because of the unique circumstances of Indian society, he created an integrated indigenous model of development, which is crucial for the growth of that society. Like Gandhi, Deendayal favours manufacturing that is driven by necessity rather than greed. He is adamant about consuming less. He is against the overuse, obvious, and brutal exploitation of natural resources, provided that limits are placed in place to preserve the natural order. He says, "*The physical objects necessary for a purposeful, happy and progressive life must be obtained. The Almighty has provided that much. It will not be wise, however, to engage in a blind rat-race of consumption and production as if man is created for the sole purpose of consumption.*"[47] Deendayal does not see humanity as being outside of nature. Similar to Advaita Vedantists, he sees the universe as a single, cohesive system, of which man is a fundamental component.

Conclusion: It is evident that Deendayal's philosophy centers on man and aims to further both his spiritual and material development. Furthermore, because his humanism aims to achieve the well-being and pleasure of all people, it has implications for cosmopolitanism. In his words, "*We shall be able to re-reconcile nationalism, democracy, socialism, and world peace with the traditional values of Bharatiya culture, and think of all these ideals in an integrated form.*"[48] Deendayal is comparable to Indian spiritual humanists such as Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Tagore, Gandhi, Radhakrishnan, and others in the framework mentioned above. He is not the same as M.N. Roy or J.L. Nehru. Even though Nehru acknowledges the importance of spiritual principles in life, his scientific humanism is not predicated on the ancient Indian customs of Deendayal. Integral humanism, another name

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[46] *Ibid.,* p.50.
[47] *Ibid.,* p.44.
[48] *Ibid.,* p.54.

for M.N. Roy's brand of humanism, entirely ignores the spiritual dimension. For Deendayal, this seeming world is the result of spiritual advancement; for Roy, it is the result of biological processes through physical evolution. Furthermore, Deendayal's Integral Humanism concept is significant since it aims to balance the needs of the person, the community, and the cosmos. Therefore, his ideas are of great significance to man and mankind as a whole.

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Women's Education & Political Participation in India

Dr. Md Imam Uddin Ansari

ABSTRACT

Women`s education in India has witnessed significant progress over the years, although challenges and disparities persist. In recent decades, there has been a notable increase in girls' enrollment in primary and secondary education in India. Efforts by the government, civil society organizations, and international agencies have focused on improving access to education for girls, reducing gender disparities, and addressing social and cultural barriers. One of the primary obstacles is the prevailing patriarchal norms and gender biases, which limit girls' educational opportunities. Women's education is crucial for their political participation. By promoting women's education, societies enable women to participate fully in political spheres, enhance democratic governance, and shape policies that address their needs. Women's education and political participation are interconnected, creating a positive cycle of empowerment, gender equality, and social progress. Thus, the present study will present a brief account of women's education and their participation in politics in India.

Gender equality and women's empowerment are contingent upon women's political involvement and educational attainment. Ensuring women and girls have access to high-quality education at all educational levels, from basic to postsecondary, is a crucial aspect of women's education. It entails initiatives to close the gender gap in enrolment rates, upgrade the caliber of education provided to women and girls, and improve the infrastructure of educational institutions. In addition to being a basic human right, education also promotes social and economic advancement. Women who have more education are more qualified to engage in politics and other areas of life. Women's involvement in local, national, and international political decision-making processes is referred to as political participation. It encompasses activities such as voting, running for office, joining political parties or organizations, and advocating for women's rights and gender equality. Women's political participation is essential for achieving inclusive and representative governance. It ensures that women's voices, perspectives, and interests are taken into account in policy-making and decision-making processes, leading to more equitable and responsive societies.

Women's education plays a vital role in promoting and enhancing their political participation[49]. It serves as a foundation for women's empowerment, enabling them to actively engage in political processes and contribute to decision-making at all levels of society. Education equips women with knowledge and critical thinking skills necessary to understand and navigate complex political systems. By gaining access to education, women can develop a deeper understanding of political ideologies, policies, and processes. They can critically analyze social issues, evaluate the impact of policies on different segments of society, and articulate their own perspectives and concerns. Education fosters a sense of political agency among women, enabling them to actively participate in discussions, debates, and decision-making forums. Women who have received an education are more self-assured and confident, which helps them to overcome obstacles to political engagement. Women have the opportunity to improve their leadership, negotiating, and communication abilities via education. It empowers them to voice their opinions, challenge gender stereotypes, and assert their rights in political spaces. Through education, women can gain the necessary self-assurance to enter male-dominated fields, run for political office, and assert their influence in political parties and organizations. Women's education contributes to breaking down traditional gender roles and challenging societal norms that limit women's participation in politics. Education exposes women to diverse perspectives, cultures, and experiences, expanding their understanding of gender equality and women's rights. It helps women recognize and challenge discriminatory practices and barriers that impede their political engagement. Furthermore, educated women inspire females to seek education and participate in politics fearlessly by acting as role models for younger generations.

Furthermore, women's education is closely linked to their ability to exercise their right to vote[50]. In many countries, literacy and education levels are closely tied to voter turnout rates. Educated women are more likely to understand the significance of their vote, the importance of participating in elections, and the potential impact of political decisions on their lives and communities. By ensuring women's education, societies can foster an informed and engaged electorate, leading to more representative and responsive governance.

Women's political engagement and education are therefore closely related. Societies

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[49] Kassa, S., 2015
[50] Kose, E., Kuka, E., & Shenhav, N. A. 2021

may enable women to actively participate in political processes, fight for their rights, and participate in decision-making by granting them access to high-quality education. Consequently, funding women's education is a calculated step toward attaining gender equality and sustainable development as well as a question of human rights.

In many regions of the world, gender disparities in women's access to political representation and education continue despite recent gains. In India, though women are becoming educated in various fields, their participation in politics especially at the higher decision-making level is not up to the level of satisfaction[51]. However, several initiatives like the *Mahila Samakhya* Program, *Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya* (KGBV), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), *Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao* (BBBP) Campaign and so on which demonstrate the transformative power of education in empowering women in the field of education. Besides, the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments acts have given reservation to women to participate in the local-self-government. Thus, the present study will highlight the positive impact of women's education on policy-making, governance, and democratic institutions in India.

Women's education and political participation are crucial aspects of gender equality and societal development. In India, where gender disparities have persisted for centuries, understanding the relationship between women's education and political participation is of paramount importance. However, the present scenario of women in education shows significant progress and positive trends. Over the years, there has been a notable increase in female literacy rates and educational attainment. According to the Census of India 2011, the female literacy rate was 65.46% compared to the male literacy rate of 82.14%. This indicates a gender gap in literacy, but efforts have been made to bridge it. As per UNESCO Report-2022, the male literacy rate in India stands at 84.7% and the female literacy rate stands at 70.3% as compared to the global average female literacy rate of 79%. By examining the existing literature, empirical evidence, and key theories, this study seeks to shed light on the potential pathways through which education can enhance women's political participation and contribute to more inclusive and democratic governance.

Objectives of the Study: The following goals guided the conduct of the study:

a. To understand the factors that influence/deter women's participation in politics;

b. To highlight the positive impact of women's education on policy-making especially in politics.

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[51] Kabeer, 2005

    c. To highlight how education empowers women in the field of political participation.

Hypotheses/ Research questions:

    a. Socio-economic background influences participation in politics.

    b. What is the nature of their participation in local bodies?

    c. Education is one of the important means in the field of overall empowerment.

Methodology: This study is purely based on Secondary data available in the sources of procurement of literature reviews like journals, books, newspapers, research articles, and web sources. In this context, some case studies were highlighted to understand the present scenarios of women's role in decision-making.

Women's education and empowerment: Women's education plays a significant role in empowering them to participate actively in various spheres of life, including politics. Education equips women with knowledge, skills, and critical thinking abilities, enabling them to understand their rights, articulate their opinions, and engage in decision-making processes. Moreover, education enhances women's confidence, self-esteem, and agency, enabling them to challenge traditional gender norms and stereotypes that hinder their political involvement. Research has consistently shown a positive correlation between women's education and their empowerment, contributing to their increased political participation.

Education and political awareness: Education catalyzes political awareness among women. As women gain access to education, they become more informed about political systems, governance structures, and their rights as citizens. Education fosters critical thinking, analytical skills, and the ability to evaluate political issues objectively. It also exposes women to diverse perspectives and ideologies, broadening their understanding of social and political dynamics. By nurturing political awareness, education motivates women to actively participate in political processes, such as voting, joining political parties, running for public office, and so on.

Education and political leadership: One significant outcome of women's education is the emergence of female political leaders. Education equips women with the necessary knowledge, skills, and confidence to assume leadership roles. Educated women are more likely to seek positions of authority, challenge gender-based barriers, and become advocates for gender equality within political institutions. Examples of successful female political leaders, such as Indira Gandhi, Pratibha Patil, and Mamata Banerjee, highlight the transformative power of education in enabling women to occupy influential positions and

shape policy decisions.

Education, social networks, and political participation: Education also facilitates the formation of social networks that are essential for political participation. Educational institutions serve as platforms for women to connect, share experiences, and build supportive networks. These networks provide women with valuable resources, mentorship opportunities, and access to political spaces. Moreover, educated women are more likely to have networks beyond their immediate communities, expanding their reach and influence. Strong social networks enhance women's political efficacy and encourage their involvement in political activities, campaigns, and advocacy initiatives.

Barriers and challenges: Despite the positive relationship between women's education and political participation, several barriers and challenges continue in India.

1. **Socio-cultural barriers:** Deep-rooted socio-cultural norms and traditional gender roles often limit women's access to education and hinder their participation in political processes. Societies that prioritize male education and assign traditional gender roles to women may discourage girls from pursuing education or engaging in political activities. The National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) estimates that 84.4% of Indian men and 71.5% of Indian women are literate as of 2019–21. In all of India, there is a male-to-female ratio of 12.9. Kerala has the lowest percentage difference in literacy between males and females, at just 2.2 percent.

   Access to quality education**:** Even when education is available, women often face barriers in accessing quality education. Factors such as distance, lack of infrastructure, safety concerns, and financial constraints disproportionately affect girls and women, particularly in rural and marginalized communities. Limited access to education restricts their ability to develop critical thinking skills, political awareness, and leadership capacities.

   In India, however, the gross enrolment ratio for female students is higher than that of male students (26.9%) at 27.3%, according to the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2019–20. This shows that between 2015–16 and 2019–20, the gross enrolment ratio of female students in higher education increased by an overall 18%.

2. **Gender bias in curriculum:** Education systems may perpetuate gender biases through curriculum content, teaching materials, and pedagogical practices. The

lack of gender-responsive education hinders the development of women's political agency and reinforces stereotypes and discrimination. Educational materials that neglect women's contributions to history and politics contribute to the underrepresentation of women in decision-making roles.

Stereotypes and societal expectations: Deeply ingrained stereotypes about women's roles in society can discourage women from engaging in politics. Societal expectations often prioritize women's roles as caregivers and homemakers, undermining their political aspirations. Women may face criticism, prejudice, or backlash when they actively participate in politics, making it challenging for them to overcome societal barriers.

3. **Absence of female role models**: Aspiring female politicians are discouraged by the low number of women in political leadership roles. Without visible female role models, it becomes difficult to challenge the notion that politics is a male-dominated domain. Women need inspiring examples to demonstrate that their participation is not only possible but also impactful.

4. **Structural barriers**: Political systems often lack gender-responsive mechanisms and policies that support women's political participation. Electoral systems, party structures, and campaign financing mechanisms can inadvertently disadvantage women, making it difficult for them to compete on an equal footing with their male counterparts. Limited resources and support networks further worsen these structural barriers.

Besides, several theories can help understand the relationship between women's education and political participation in India. These theories provide insights into the underlying mechanisms and factors that shape women's engagement in politics. Here are three prominent theories in this context:

Human capital theory: The Human Capital Theory posits that education enhances individuals' skills, knowledge, and capabilities, increasing their productivity and opportunities for social and economic advancement[52]. Applied to women's education and political participation, this theory suggests that educated women are more likely to possess the necessary skills, confidence, and awareness to engage in politics effectively. Education equips women with critical thinking abilities, political awareness, and leadership skills, enabling them to overcome barriers and actively participate in political processes.

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[52] Becker, G. S., 2009

Empowerment theory: The Empowerment Theory focuses on the transformative effects of education in empowering individuals, particularly marginalized groups, to challenge existing power structures and inequalities[53]. This idea contends that education is essential to women's empowerment in the context of their political engagement and education because it gives them agency, knowledge, and self-confidence. Through questioning gender conventions, standing up for their rights, and actively participating in politics, education empowers women and helps shift the balance of power in society.

Political opportunity structure theory: This theory examines the external factors and structures that shape political participation. It highlights how institutional arrangements, policies, and social contexts either enable or constrain individuals' engagement in politics. In the context of women's education and political participation, this theory emphasizes the role of political systems, electoral mechanisms, and gender-responsive policies[54]. It suggests that creating an enabling environment with inclusive political structures and supportive policies is crucial for women's political participation, and education can help women navigate and take advantage of these opportunities.

These theories provide valuable frameworks for understanding the dynamics of women's education and political participation in India. However, it is important to recognize that the reality is complex and multifaceted, and no single theory can fully explain all aspects of women's engagement in politics. Other factors such as cultural norms, socioeconomic status, and historical contexts also influence women's participation.

Moreover, intersectionality theory is relevant in examining how various intersecting identities, such as caste, religion, and class, intersect with gender to shape women's experiences of education and political participation in India. Intersectionality recognizes that women's experiences are not homogenous and that multiple systems of oppression can interact and compound to create unique challenges and opportunities for different groups of women.

By considering these theories and adopting an intersectional lens, researchers can gain deeper insights into the complex dynamics of women's education and political participation in India. This understanding can inform policy interventions, educational initiatives, and advocacy efforts aimed at promoting gender equality and women's meaningful participation in political processes.

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[53] Kreisberg, S., 1991
[54] Barnes. M.., Newman J., & Sullivan H., 2007

Thus, women's education is a crucial factor in promoting their political participation in India. By empowering women, fostering political awareness, nurturing leadership qualities, and facilitating social networks, education can contribute to a more inclusive and democratic political landscape. In this regard, some of the following pieces of evidence and case studies demonstrate the positive impact of women's participation in decision-making processes in Indian politics.

Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs): The 73rd Amendment to the Indian Constitution in 1992 mandated 33% reservation for women in local governance through PRIs. Several studies have highlighted the positive outcomes of women's participation in PRIs. A study conducted by the World Bank found that villages with women-led PRIs in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra showed improvements in public service delivery, increased investment in public goods, and greater responsiveness to women's needs. A study conducted by Besley et al. (2018) analyzed the impact of reservation for women in the rural level in West Bengal and Bihar. The study found that reservations led to increased female political participation, improved education outcomes for girls, reduced child marriage rates, and increased public goods provision in female-reserved areas.

Women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs): SHGs, comprising women from economically marginalized backgrounds, have gained prominence in India. Research by Sindhav indicates that women's participation in SHGs has empowered them politically[55]. Through collective decision-making and capacity-building, women in SHGs have gained confidence, challenged gender norms, and actively participated in local governance processes. Recently, the goal of Kudumbashree (a successful SHG from Kerala) is to eliminate absolute poverty within a specific timeframe of 10 years, with the active involvement of local self-governments[56].

Women's Reservation Bill: In the Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament, and state legislative assemblies, one-third of the seats are to be reserved for women under the Women's Reservation Bill, which was adopted in 2008. Nevertheless, as of right present, this bill is still pending. In 2004, Chattopadhyay and Duflo conducted research to investigate the effects of women's reservation in West Bengal local government. Their findings indicated a noteworthy decrease in corruption as a result of the greater presence of women in local government.

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[55] Sindhav, K. 2017
[56] Devika J., & Thampi B. V., 2007

Impact on policy priorities: Studies have shown that women's political representation influences policy priorities. Research found that constituencies with women legislators in the Lok Sabha allocated a larger share of public funds to basic social services like health and education, compared to those of male representatives. This suggests that women in politics prioritize policies that address social welfare and human development.

State-level case study: Kerala is often cited as a positive case of women's political involvement in India. Kerala has consistently achieved high levels of women's participation in the state legislature and local governance bodies[57]. The state's efforts in promoting women's education, strong social movements, and political will have contributed to greater gender equality and women's empowerment.

Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in Gujarat: SEWA is a women's trade union and cooperative movement in Gujarat. It emphasizes the importance of education in empowering women economically and politically[58]. By providing education and training to women, SEWA has enabled them to actively participate in trade union activities, become community leaders, and engage in policy advocacy.

The Pathways Project in Jharkhand: The Pathways Project, implemented by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), focused on addressing the barriers that hindered girls' education in Jharkhand[59]. The project provided girls with access to education and also emphasized life skills and leadership training. As a result, many girls who participated in the project not only completed their education but also became politically engaged, advocating for gender equality and social justice in their communities.

Nari Shakti Sangathan, Rajasthan: The Nari Shakti Sangathan (NSS) is a women's collective in Rajasthan that works towards gender equality and women's empowerment[60]. NSS has been instrumental in promoting women's education and training programs, enabling women to develop critical thinking and leadership skills. Women from NSS have participated in panchayat elections, held leadership positions, and implemented policies that address women's issues and social welfare.

Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan, Gujarat: The Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (KMVS) is a women's organization in Gujarat that focuses on empowering rural women through education[61]. KMVS runs schools and adult literacy programs that have successfully enabled

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[57] Biju, M. R.:1997
[58] Venkatesh H., 2004
[59] Kumar, P. et.al, 2021
[60] Berry K., 2014
[61] Ramachandran V., & Saihjee A., 2000

women to acquire knowledge and skills. As a result, many women from KMVS have actively participated in local governance, contested elections, and become influential leaders in their communities.

Dantewada District, Chhattisgarh: In Dantewada district, which is affected by conflict and violence, educational initiatives have empowered women and facilitated their political engagement[62]. The District Administration, in collaboration with NGOs, has established residential schools for girls, enabling them to access education and develop critical thinking abilities. As a result, several young women from the region have pursued higher education, engaged in political discussions, and actively participated in decision-making processes at various levels.

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha Women's Wing, Jharkhand: The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha Women's Wing is a political organization in Jharkhand that focuses on women's empowerment[63]. The organization has emphasized women's education and leadership development. Many women associated with the JMM Women's Wing have successfully contested elections, held political offices, and worked towards addressing women's issues and social justice.

From the above analysis, it is clear that these case studies highlight the positive outcomes of women's participation in the decision-making levels. Women's representation through reservation in the local self-government. decision-making processes lead to more responsive and inclusive governance, improved policy outcomes, and increased focus on social welfare. Besides, women's education and political participation in India are intricately linked and crucial for achieving gender equality and inclusive governance. In this study, we found that educated women were involved in all fields compared to uneducated women. In the case of Kerala where literacy rate is high and the women from Kerala were found to higher level of development in the socio-economic and political field in comparison to the other states of India. But it does not mean that women from other states are not active rather they are following the model of women in Kerala. While progress has been made, numerous challenges and obstacles hinder women's full engagement in politics. Sociocultural barriers, limited access to quality education, gender biases in curriculum, stereotypes, the lack of female role models, and structural barriers all contribute to the underrepresentation of women in politics.

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[62] Padhee U., 2010
[63] Marcil J., 2009

To address these challenges and promote women's political participation, several measures can be taken. First and foremost, there is a need to enhance access to education for girls, particularly in rural and marginalized communities across India. This requires investment in infrastructure, transportation, and scholarships to make education more accessible and affordable.

Empowering women through mentorship and providing them with female role models is vital. Mentorship programs and initiatives that connect aspiring female politicians with experienced women leaders can provide guidance, support, and inspiration.

Creating an enabling environment within political parties and electoral systems is essential. Gender-responsive policies, training programs, and resource allocation for women candidates can help level the playing field and promote women's political participation.

Challenging gender stereotypes and raising awareness about the importance of women's voices in decision-making are also crucial steps. Awareness campaigns targeted at communities, families, and educational institutions can help challenge traditional gender roles and encourage support for women's political participation.

Lastly, engaging men as allies is essential. Men should be encouraged to actively support and champion women's political participation. Their involvement in initiatives promoting gender equality and inclusive governance can help break down barriers and foster a more equitable political landscape.

By implementing these measures, India can create an environment that fosters women's education and political participation. Empowered women in politics will contribute to more inclusive policies, address the needs of diverse populations, and drive positive societal change. Recognizing and harnessing the immense potential of women in politics is crucial for building truly democratic and gender equality in India.

Further investigation into women's education and political participation in India can focus on different areas. First and foremost, research must be done on how women's education affects their leadership and political participation over the long run. Studying the experiences of educated women who have successfully entered politics can provide insights into the barriers they faced, the strategies they employed, and the impact they have had. Additionally, research can explore the effectiveness of gender-responsive education initiatives and curriculum reforms in promoting women's political participation. Evaluating the implementation and outcomes of these interventions can help identify best practices

and areas for improvement.

Exploring the role of social media and technology in facilitating women's political engagement is another area of interest. Investigating how digital platforms can serve as empowering spaces for women to express their political opinions, build networks, and mobilize support can shed light on the changing dynamics of women's political participation. Furthermore, comparative studies that examine the experiences of women in different regions of India, considering factors such as caste, religion, and socio-economic status, can provide a nuanced understanding of intersectionality and its impact on women's political participation.

Finally, exploring the perceptions, attitudes, and motivations of men regarding women's political participation can contribute to understanding the role of male allies and the potential for transforming gender norms and expectations. By conducting further research in these areas, policymakers, educators, and activists can gain valuable insights to inform evidence-based interventions and policies that promote women's education and enhance their meaningful participation in Indian politics.

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Elusive Civility: Understanding Domestic Violence in South Asia

Megha Dutta

ABSTRACT

Human rights violations against women and girls are the most pervasive in today's world. It is supported by the continuance of inter- and intra-gender hierarchies and patriarchal societal standards. Numerous victims reside in households with strongly ingrained patriarchal and traditional behaviors, some of which are detrimental to women. Although the government has taken several steps to reduce the number of cases associated with domestic abuse, statistics indicate that crimes against women have not decreased. This article examines the prevalence of domestic violence, its general effects on women residing in South Asian nations, and the government's involvement in lessening its severity.

Introduction: *"The bodily bruises are not what hurt. It is the mental scars and the wounds on the heart."* Aisha Mirza (Domestic Violence Survivor). Total control is more important in domestic violence than a loss of control. It is a common irony that those who engage in abusive behaviour often see themselves as the victims rather than the cause of harm. Many abusers have sophisticated defence mechanisms that allow them to justify or excuse their actions[64]. In India, women are the rendition of Maa Durga, a Hindu goddess known to be the protector of the righteous and the destroyer of evil. Paradoxically, a significant proportion of 30% of women in India face domestic violence at least once since the age of 15[65]. Violence against women, or gender-based violence (GBV), is a worldwide pandemic today. The reasons are complex, including socioeconomic structures, patriarchal attitudes, and prevalent social norms defining gender roles[66]. Gender-based violence is not limited to physical harm but encompasses sexual and mental harassment and suffering inflicted upon women in both public and private settings. South Asia is a patchwork of diverse civilizations, economic regions, and gender roles and sexual orientations. Pakistan is home to about 228 million people, making it the seventh most populated country in the world. However, Pakistan does not have any laws that specifically criminalize domestic abuse.

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[64] Buddy T., 2021
[65] Paikaray, T., 2021
[66] BRIEF, 2019

Nearly one in three Pakistani women report experiencing domestic abuse at the hands of their husbands, in-laws, and occasionally even their siblings and parents[67]. Article 38 in the Constitution of Nepal distinctly states that there shall not be any physical, mental, sexual, psychological, or any other kind of violence against women[68]. Still, in actuality, as many as 25% of women in Nepal experience a lifetime of violence committed by partners[69].

Gender-based violence (GBV) against women and girls is one of Bhutan's most important societal challenges at the moment, affecting productivity, well-being, health, and overall development, according to a World Bank blog[70]. In Bangladesh, the idea that men should rule over women is accepted by the community, and gender imbalance within religious fundamentalism fuels violence against women. In Bangladesh, between 50 and 70 percent of women claim that their male partners have assaulted them[71]. After being ratified in 1981, Sri Lanka embraced the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1980. But even though successive Sri Lankan administrations have repeatedly pledged to address the issue, Amnesty International highlighted in 2020 the continued impunity of sexual and gender-based violence[72]. The prevalence of non-partner violence and intimate partner violence (IPV) are two indicators of how well the Sustainable Development Objective (SDG) objective 5—ending all kinds of violence against women and girls—is being met. Intimate partner violence affected 26% of ever-married or partnered women globally, according to estimates from the World Health Organization (WHO), which used a comprehensive survey instrument and random sampling procedures to ensure a representative sample concerningly, this prevalence is higher at 35% for the South Asian region[73]. Although the WHO study offers insightful information on the prevalence of IPV, it is important to recognize several limitations. The accuracy of the results may be impacted by cultural differences in how IPV encounters are interpreted and reported, and the use of self-reported data raises the risk of social desirability bias. This emphasizes the need for more longitudinal research in this field.

Conceptual and theoretical frameworks: The societal disparity that exists between men and women is the source of the gendered crime of domestic violence. Gender-based

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[67] Khan, S., 2021
[68] UNWomen, 2015
[69] UNwomen, Global Database on Violence against Women, 2017
[70] Lhaden, T., 2020
[71] Rahaman, F., & Khatun, T., 2012
[72] ECCHR, 2010
[73] UNSD, 2021

violence is defined as acts committed against a woman because of her gender or because they have a disproportionately negative impact[74]. The term "abusive behavior" refers to a set of behaviors that include coercion, threats, dehumanization, control, or violence. One example of this type of conduct is sexual violence, which is typically carried out by a spouse or ex-partner. However, caretakers or family members could also be at fault[75]. It can occur in a range of relationships, including those in which two people are living together, dating, or getting married. One kind of violence against women and girls is domestic abuse. Other kinds of family violence include forced marriage, female genital mutilation, and so-called honor crimes, which are usually committed by family members and frequently include many perpetrators.

Situations leading to violence: Negative gender stereotypes and norms are the root cause of gender-based violence against women and girls. The idea that women should be subordinate to males in the home is frequently the result of patriarchal traditions[76]. There are particular difficulties in South Asia in combating violence against girls. Women are socially conditioned to keep their ideas to themselves and participate quietly in-home discussions. They must act in a certain way and follow certain rules when they sit, walk, and converse[77]. On the other hand, the concept of masculinity as a whole calls for being biased, loud, aggressive, and unflappable. Men are encouraged to take on all financial duties and work outside the home, but women are viewed as strange when they engage in lucrative employment[78]. Gender-based violence persists because of various factors such as economic disempowerment, a lack of formal education, deeply ingrained patriarchal norms and attitudes, and a lack of knowledge about available legal and supportive resources. In countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan, and some regions of India, the State and the society often accept the physical, sexual, and psychological abuse of women in the home[79]. Men are free to act whatever they choose with women because of the pre-existing roles that civilizations have set for men and women. The majority of domestic abuse situations remain unreported due to societal discomfiture and fear. Violence is a method used by some abusers to keep their intimate partner from cheating on them or abandoning the relationship, even if it means forcing them to stay[80]. Domestic abusers' negative emotional dynamics

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[74] Women's Aid, 2022
[75] Flannery, S., 2021
[76] Concern Worldwide US, 2019
[77] Solotaroff, L., Pande, P., 2014
[78] UNM Sociology dept., 2010
[79] Singh, P., & Pattanaik, F., 2020
[80] Ahmed, F., 2021

toward themselves and their spouses are frequently the primary cause of the violence. Such unfavorable ideas might include assertions that regulating behavior is what makes a man truly[81]. In South Asian nations, the dowry custom is an inescapable aspect[82]. More than 8,000 fatalities are caused by dowers annually, with the most common practice being the brutal murder of women by their husbands or in-laws. In other cases, women kill themselves after being mistreated and harassed for not paying the dowry[83]. According to a survey by NCRB, dowries in India claimed the lives of one woman per hour in 2019. Furthermore, per hour, 14 incidents were reported under the category "Cruelty by Husband"[84].

Tools aimed at shielding girls and women from gender-based violence:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights: 58 United Nations members ratified the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. It is the most important international agreement for preventing violence against women since it affirms that men and women have equal rights, including the right to personal security[85].

The United Nations Declaration to End Violence Against Women: This UN General Assembly declaration, which was adopted in 1993, describes violence against women. The Declaration's Article 1 defines "violence against women," and Article 2 establishes the parameters of domestic violence, encompassing physical, sexual, and psychological abuse[86].

Legislation on Domestic Violence and How It's Implemented: An Examination of ASEAN Nations Using International Guidelines and Best Practices: This document analyses domestic violence legislation in ASEAN countries concerning international standards, specifically the CEDAW and UDHR[87].

Laws established by countries to prevent domestic violence from taking place in society:

1. **India:** (a)The Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961 was amended in 1984 after its initial provisions were shown to be ineffectual in preventing violence against women tied to dowries. (b) In the Indian Penal Code, Section 498A allows a married woman who experiences abuse from her in-laws or spouse to launch a

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[81] Firestone, L., 2012
[82] Riswan, M., 2022
[83] McCarthy, J., 2017
[84] Mittra, P. & Sengupta, I., 2021
[85] United Nations, 2023
[86] General Assembly resolution,48/104, 1993
[87] Lawyers Collective Women's Rights Initiative- India, 2009

lawsuit against them. (c) The Act of 2005 that protects women from domestic violence: The purpose of this parliamentary legislation is to shield women from domestic abuse. It allowed for a more effective defense of the constitutionally protected rights of women who experience domestic abuse of any kind, as well as issues related to or tangential to such abuse[88].

2. **Afghanistan:** The 2009 edition of EVAW (Elimination of Violence Against Women): The President originally issued it in 2009, and it was reaffirmed in 2018. According to the legislation, there are 22 different ways that women might be abused; they include forced marriage, rape, and forbidding women or girls from working or attending school[89].

3. **Pakistan:** (a) The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act of 2020 seeks to shield women and children from domestic abuse and to offer them assistance and rehabilitation. (b) The Sindh Domestic Violence Act of 2013 was a legislative legislation that established protective measures against domestic violence for women and other vulnerable individuals. It mandated the appointment of protection officers to assist victims of domestic abuse. (c) The Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act, 2006: - Added and altered many provisions of sexual attacks against women from the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) and Pakistan Penal Code (PPC). (d) The 2009 Domestic Violence Bill established guidelines for victim protection, financial assistance, and the imposition of fines or jail time for individuals who violate protection orders[90].

4. **Nepal:** (a) The 2009 Domestic Violence (Offense and Punishment) Act included measures protecting victims of abuse and penalizing domestic abuse. It also addressed the right of every individual to a safe and respectable existence and the prevention of violence within the family. (b) The 2010 Domestic Violence (Offence and Punishment) Act: The framework of domestic violence is explicitly mentioned, including verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, mental, and financial abuse[91]. (c) The Constitution of Nepal, Article 38(3): - No woman should be the victim of physical, mental, sexual, psychological, or any other

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[88] Vashi, T., 2020
[89] Human Rights Watch, Nicholson, 2009
[90] UNWomen, 2023
[91] Acharya, P., 2023

type of abuse or exploitation because of her religion, social or cultural customs, practice, or any other reason, according to this article.

5. **Bangladesh:** (a) The Act of 2010 that prevents and protects against domestic violence: Domestic violence is defined as any kind of abuse—physical, psychological, sexual, or financial—inflicted on a woman or a child by any other member of the family with whom the victim is or has been in a family connection[92]. (b) Act of 2000 to Suppress Violence Against Women and Children: It speaks to the need for abusers of women and children to be prosecuted more successfully. This Act provides for the victim's recompense from the culpable parties. Additionally, it stipulates that a father must retain a child born as a consequence of rape and that corrective actions must be taken for any carelessness or intentional errors on the part of an investigating officer[93].

6. **Sri Lanka:** (a) Ordinance No. 2 of the Penal Code, 1883: - It includes all of the following listed offenses: sexual abuse and exploitation, assault, physical abuse, kidnapping, wrongful and unlawful imprisonment, rape, forced miscarriages, incest, use of criminal force, attempted murder, extortion, criminal intimidation, and any attempt to commit any of these offenses. Emotional abuse also refers to a series of severe, harsh, cruel, degrading, or humiliating actions performed at an angry party. (b) The 2005 Prevention of Domestic Violence Act (PDVA): - Focuses on ensuring the victim's protection by offering a civil remedy; and maintaining the ability to pursue separate civil or criminal proceedings if necessary. Under Section 23 of the PDVA, "domestic violence" is defined as physical or emotional harm done to the other by the spouse, ex-spouse, or cohabiting partner. (c) Articles 11 and 27 of the Sri Lankan Constitution: - Article 11 of the 1978 Constitution of Sri Lanka provides that "no one shall be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment." The Constitution's Article 27 has the following clauses. To ensure children's and adolescents' full physical, mental, moral, religious, and social development and to protect them from

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[92] LACSB, 2023
[93] Human Rights Watch, Emerson, 2020

discrimination and exploitation, the State must pay particular attention to their welfare[94].

7. **Bhutan:** The 2013 Domestic Violence Prevention Act of Bhutan identifies four categories of domestic violence: emotional, financial, physical, and sexual[95].

8. **Maldives:** (a) Domestic abuse is now illegal under the 2012 Domestic Abuse Prevention Act (DVPA). Several organizations, professional service providers, and other relevant stakeholders must implement the law to prevent domestic violence[96]. (b) The Maldivian government enacted the Gender Equality Act, of 2016 to advance women's rights in the country. (c) The 2014 Sexual Harassment and Prevention Act is a significant step forward in the Maldives towards the recognition of women's rights. (c) The Sexual Offenses Act of 2016 was enacted to improve and alter the legal processes concerning sexual offenses. It established several criteria related to sexual assault, such as guidelines for establishing consent about sexual offenses and the severity of the accompanying sanctions. It even created a system for victims of sexual offenses to recoup damages.

Violence behind the doors- the statistics and numbers:

Source: UN Women, Country Fact Sheet, 2021

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[94] Sirimanne, M.
[95] UNWomen, Domestic Violence Prevention Act 2013
[96] UNWomen, Prevalence statistics on different types of violence against women

Conclusion: According to prevalence studies conducted in several South Asian nations, about half of women say they have experienced physical or sexual abuse at the hands of a close companion[97]. A poll conducted in India revealed that 39% of men and women believe that beating one's wife is acceptable in certain situations or situations overall. Only four South Asian nations have laws that forbid domestic violence, whereas five have laws that forbid sexual harassment. Due to a diverse methodology, variety in name, framing, and defining is seen in the legislation; thus, the outcomes reflect the same degree of variance.

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আর্যসত্য চতুস্টয়ের সাক্ষাৎ উপলব্ধিতে বৌদ্ধ নির্বাণ লাভ : একটি পর্যালোচনা

দেবজানী মজুমদার

সারসংক্ষেপ

"সর্বং দুঃখম্ দুঃখম্" ভগবান বুদ্ধের এই বাণী মহান সত্য। দুঃখ হলো মানুষের জীবনে সবচেয়ে তীব্র এবং বেদনাদায়ক আবেগ। জগত সংসারে এমন কোন ব্যক্তি নেই যাদের দুঃখ নেই, দুঃখ থাকা সত্ত্বেও বুদ্ধ সমস্ত মানুষকে প্রসন্ন থাকতে বলেছেন। তিনি জরামরণজনিত মানুষের দুঃখ কষ্ট দেখেছেন এবং কিভাবে দুঃখ থেকে নিবৃতি পাওয়া সম্ভব তার উপায় অনুসন্ধান করেছেন। বৌদ্ধ দর্শন হলো সার্বজনীন, সর্বকালীন সনাতন ধর্ম যা প্রজ্ঞা-শীল-সমাধির দ্বারা চিত্তকে শুদ্ধ করে সাংসারিক যাবতীয় দুঃখ-বেদনা থেকে নিবৃত্তির মার্গ দর্শন করে। এই দর্শনে বলা হয়েছে, নির্বাণ হলো আধ্যাত্মিক মার্গের সর্বোচ্চ লক্ষ্য। বুদ্ধের মতে সমুদ্রের স্বাদ যেমন লবণ তেমনি তাঁর ধর্মের একটিমাত্র লক্ষ্য হলো দুঃখ থেকে মানুষের নিবৃতি ঘটানো। শুধুমাত্র তত্ত্বালোচনার মাধ্যমে এই দুঃখ থেকে নিবৃতি সম্ভব নয় বরং নৈতিক চরিত্র গঠনের মাধ্যমে এই মুক্তি লাভ সম্ভব। দুঃখ থেকে নিবৃতি আমাদের সর্বাগ্রে প্রয়োজন। মানুষের রোগ মুক্তির ক্ষেত্রে যেমন চিকিৎসকের ভূমিকা আছে, তেমনই দুঃখ রূপ রোগের হাত থেকে মুক্তি পেতে বুদ্ধের অবদান উল্লেখযোগ্য। এই দুঃখ থেকে মুক্তির জন্য তিনি চার আর্যসত্যের কথা বলেছেন এবং চতুর্থ আর্য সত্যের দ্বারা অর্থাৎ অষ্টাঙ্গিক মার্গ অবলম্বনে দুঃখমুক্তির উপায় কিভাবে সম্ভব তা আলোচনা করেছেন। তাই ভগবান বুদ্ধের দেখানো পথকে চিকিৎসা বিজ্ঞানের চার নিদানের সাথে তুলনা করা হয়েছে। চতুরার্য সত্য এবং অষ্টাঙ্গিক মার্গ অবলম্বনে কিভাবে দুঃখ থেকে নিবৃতি সম্ভব সেটি আমার এই নিবন্ধের অন্তরালে আলোচিত হবে।

মুখ্য শব্দাবলী– আর্যসত্য, অষ্টাঙ্গিক মার্গ, নির্বাণ,তৃষ্ণা, অবিদ্যা, প্রজ্ঞা-শীল -সমাধি।

বুদ্ধদেবের মতে জগৎ এবং জীবন হলো দুঃখময়। মানুষের জীবনে জরা, ব্যাধি, মৃত্যু এগুলি অবস্যম্ভাবী। মানুষের জীবনে যেমন শোক বা দুঃখ আছে তেমনই সুখও আছে। সুখ এবং দুঃখ ছাড়া কখনো মানুষের জীবন সম্পন্ন হতে পারে না। বুদ্ধদেব বলেন, নিছক তত্ত্ব আলোচনার মাধ্যমে কখনো দুঃখের অবসান ঘটানো সম্ভব নয়। একজন ব্যক্তির নৈতিক চরিত্র গঠনের মাধ্যমে দুঃখের অবসান হতে পারে। আমরা যেমন সুখ কে কামনা করি, সুখকে আমরা পেতে চাই, অপর দিকে দুঃখকে পরিহার করতে চাই। জরামরণ ক্লিষ্ট মানুষের প্রথম এবং প্রধান কর্তব্য হবে দুঃখ থেকে মুক্তি লাভ করা সেটা অবশ্যই নৈতিক চরিত্র গঠনের মাধ্যম দিয়ে, কখনোই তত্ত্ব আলোচনার মধ্য দিয়ে নয়, যেটি বুদ্ধদেব বলেছেন এবং এটিই বৌদ্ধদর্শনের সারকথা। অর্থাৎ মনুষ্য জীবনে সুখের চেয়ে দুঃখের পরিমাণ বেশি। মনুষ্য জীবন কামনা–বাসনার দ্বারা চালিত। ফলত মানুষ সবকিছুতেই সুখের কামনা করে। কামনা, বাসনা এবং আসক্তি পরিপুরিত হওয়ার ফলে মানুষের জীবনে সুখের চেয়ে দুঃখের পরিমাণ বেশি। কখনোই

কোনো মানুষ শুধু সুখের কথা বলে না, কারণ তার জীবনে সুখের সঙ্গে সঙ্গে দুঃখ জড়িত। সুখ-দুঃখ সংমিশ্রণে মনুষ্য জীবন। তাই জরামরণ জীবন বা দুঃখময় জীবনের কথা কখনোই অস্বীকার করা যায় না। দুঃখ বিনা মনুষ্য জীবন সম্ভব নয়, তাই বুদ্ধদেব দুঃখকে স্বীকার করে সেই দুঃখের দিকটির আলোকপাত করেছেন এবং মানুষ যাতে দুঃখ সমুদ্রে নিমজ্জিত হয়ে না পড়ে তার জন্য তিনি আর্যসত্য চতুষ্টয়ের অবতারণা করেছেন। আমরা জানি অবিদ্যা হলো সকল দুঃখের মূল কারণ। বেদ, উপনিষদ সকল ভারতীয় দর্শনে এই অবিদ্যাকেই দুঃখের মূল কারণ হিসেবে ব্যাখ্যা করা হয়েছে। কিন্তু এই অবিদ্যা হলো চারটি আর্যসত্যের জ্ঞানের অভাব। কিন্তু দুঃখ-নিবৃত্তির জন্য এই চার আর্যসত্যের জ্ঞান অবস্থাবী। এখানে দুঃখকে রোগের সঙ্গে তুলনা করা হয়েছে। কারণ মানুষের কোন রোগ হলে তার চিকিৎসার প্রয়োজন, চিকিৎসক যেরূপ মানুষের রোগ মুক্তি ঘটান ঠিক সেইরূপ বুদ্ধদেব মানুষের দুঃখ রূপ রোগের মুক্তির জন্য বাস্তবিক পন্থার উল্লেখ করেছেন যার দ্বারা মানুষের এই দুঃখরূপ রোগ মুক্তি সম্ভব। এই দুঃখ রূপ রোগ মুক্তির জন্য চারটি আর্যসত্য গুরুত্বপূর্ণ। যথা "রোগ অর্থাৎ দুঃখ, রোগের কারণ অর্থাৎ দুঃখের কারণ, রোগ নিবৃত্তি অর্থাৎ দুঃখ নিবৃত্তি এবং রোগ নিবৃত্তির উপায় বা উপশম অর্থাৎ দুঃখ নিবৃত্তির উপায়।"[৯৪] তাই বুদ্ধদেব আকারে প্রকারে চার আর্য সত্যের ব্যাখ্যা দিয়েছেন যে আর্যসত্যকে চিকিৎসা বিজ্ঞানের চার নিদানের সঙ্গে তুলনা করা হয়েছে। চার প্রকার আর্যসত্য হলো বুদ্ধের অনন্য উপলব্ধি।

প্রথম আর্যসত্য দুঃখ বা রোগ সম্পর্কে বুদ্ধমতে বলা হয়েছে 'সর্বং দুঃখম্ দুঃখম্।' জগতে দুঃখ আছে এবং তা আমাদের প্রত্যক্ষ গোচর। জন্ম দুঃখ,জরা দুঃখ,ব্যাধি দুঃখ,মৃত্যু দুঃখ, অপ্রিয় সংযোগ দুঃখ, প্রিয় বিচ্ছেদ দুঃখ, কোন প্রিয়তর বস্তুকে না পাওয়ার দুঃখ এই সবই দুঃখ আমাদের প্রত্যক্ষ গোচর। বেঁচে থাকতে হলে দুঃখ ভোগ না করে উপায় নেই। জন্মগ্রহণ করে মানুষ জরাগ্রস্ত হয়ে ব্যাধির কবলে পড়ে এবং মানুষ মৃত্যুমুখে পতিত হয় ফলতো দুঃখ ভোগ করে। এ জীবনে সুখ হল দুঃখেরই নামান্তর। মানুষের জীবন না পাওয়ার বেদনায় জর্জরিত। মানুষ সুখকর বস্তুকে পেতে চায় এবং সেই চাওয়ার মধ্যে যদি আসক্তি, আকাঙ্ক্ষা, কামনা, বাসনা থাকে তাহলে সে সুখকর বস্তুকে পাওয়ার থেকে দুঃখরূপ রোগ পেয়ে থাকে। সুখের প্রতি আকাঙ্ক্ষা আমাদের তাড়িয়ে নিয়ে বেড়ায়। ছুটে চলার মাঝে আমরা দুঃখ বেশি পাই কিন্তু সুখ যেন পরশপাথর সুখ কে বোঝার আগেই হারিয়ে যায় কারণ সুখ ক্ষণস্থায়ী। এই সুখের আড়ালেই দুঃখ রয়েছে। আমাদের অবিদ্যা বসত আমরা দুঃখকে চিনতে পারিনা। তাই বুদ্ধদেব বলেন "দুঃখ তাপে ক্লিষ্ট হয়ে মানুষ সমুদ্র জলের পরিমাণ এর চেয়ে বেশি অশ্রু বর্ষণ করেছে। কিন্তু এই দুঃখই কি শুধু দুঃখ? একটা উদাহরণ দিয়ে বলা যায় যে, "*মাতৃগর্ভে দশ মাস একটি শিশু যখন বেড়ে ওঠে তখন সেই গর্ভধারিনী মায়ের যে কষ্ট সেই কষ্ট সুখ সমান এবং সেই মাতৃগর্ভ থেকে জন্ম হওয়ার পর শুধু দুঃখ আর দুঃখ। এই দুঃখ অনন্ত, এ দুঃখ সর্বজনীন, আমৃত্যু পর্যন্ত দুঃখ।*"

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[৯৪]বৌদ্ধ দর্শন ও ধর্ম, সুকোমল চৌধুরী, পৃষ্ঠা- ১৫

দ্বিতীয় আর্যসত্য দুঃখের কারণ বা রোগের কারণ সম্পর্কে বৌদ্ধ দর্শনে বলা হয়েছে যে, কার্য মাত্রই কারণ নির্ভর অর্থাৎ দুঃখ যেমন আছে দুঃখের কারণও আছে। কারণ ছাড়া কার্য স্থায়ী হয় না। কারণের নিরোধ না হলে কার্যেরও নিরোধ সম্ভব নয়। বুদ্ধদেব বলেছেন সমস্ত কিছুই ক্ষণিক, কোন কিছুই স্থায়ী নয়। মানুষ যে সুখের কামনা করে সেই সুখও স্থায়ী নয়। সুখ হলো দুঃখের নামান্তর। দুঃখ ভোগ আমরা কেন করি? এই উত্তরে বুদ্ধদেব বলেন বিনা কারণে দুঃখ হয় না অর্থাৎ হঠাৎ করে কোন কার্যের উৎপত্তি হয় না। কোন কিছুই শূন্য থেকে উৎপন্ন নয় অর্থাৎ "ex nihilo nihil fit"[99]। আমাদের পাপ কর্মের ফলে দুঃখ ভোগ হয়। পৃথিবীতে সব কিছুই শর্তাধীন, আপেক্ষিক এবং সীমিত। দুঃখ যেহেতু কার্য বা ঘটনা সেহেতু দুঃখ কারণ থেকে উৎপন্ন হয় অর্থাৎ একটি থেকে আরেকটি উৎপত্তি হয়,যাকে বৌদ্ধদর্শনে বলা হয়েছে প্রতিত্যসমুৎপাদবাদ। এক্ষেত্রে বুদ্ধদেব অবিদ্যাকে দুঃখের মূল কারণ বলেছেন। অর্থাৎ বুদ্ধদেব বলেছেন দ্বাদশ নিদানের কথা যাকে বলা হয় সংসার চক্র, ভবচক্র, জরামরণ চক্র, যেখানে বারটি কার্য কারণ শৃঙ্খলের দ্বারা মানুষের জীবন অগ্রসর হয়। পূর্বজন্ম, বর্তমান জন্ম এবং ভবিষ্যৎ জন্ম এক অপরের কারণ অর্থাৎ পূর্বজন্ম বর্তমান জন্মের কারণ, বর্তমান জন্ম ভবিষ্যৎ জন্মের কারণ। এভাবে মানুষের জন্ম থেকে মৃত্যু, তারপর আবার তার জন্ম হয় এভাবে ঘূর্ণায়মান চক্রের দ্বারা পূর্ব জীবন থেকে বর্তমান জীবন, বর্তমান জীবন থেকে ভবিষ্যৎ জীবনের প্রতি মানুষ অগ্রসর হয়। এই আর্য সত্যের ভিত্তি হল প্রতিত্যসমুৎপাদ তত্ত্ব। এই বারটি সংসার চক্রের দ্বারা মানুষ জন্ম- মৃত্যু জন্মান্তর প্রবাহে আবর্তিত হয়। এই জরামরণ,ব্যাধি এর থেকে মুক্ত হওয়া সম্ভব নয়,যদি এই অবিদ্যা নাশ হয় তাহলে একমাত্র দুঃখমুক্তি সম্ভব।

আমরা যদি তৃতীয় নিদান অর্থাৎ দুঃখ নিরোধ বা রোগ নিরোধের কথা আলোচনা করি তাহলে দেখা যায়, এই তৃতীয় নিদানে নির্বাণ প্রাপ্তির কথা বলা হয়েছে। নির্বাণ মানে আমরা জানি নির্বাপিত হওয়া (blowing out) । আমরা চাই দুঃখ যাতে আমাদের জীবন থেকে নির্বাপিত হয়। কিন্তু এখানে একটি প্রশ্ন হয় যে, এই দুঃখ নিবৃত্তি বা দুঃখনিরোধের জন্য কি প্রয়োজন? এর উত্তরে বলা হয়েছে যে, তৃষ্ণার যদি অবসান ঘটানো যায় তাহলে দুঃখ-নিবৃত্তি সম্ভব,কিন্তু তৃষ্ণা থাকাকালীন দুঃখ নিবৃত্তি সম্ভব নয়। তৃষ্ণা যদি থাকে তাহলে জরামরণ জনিত মানুষের বারংবার পুনর্জন্ম হবে যার ফলে জন্ম থেকে মৃত্যু, মৃত্যুর পর আবার জন্ম তারপর আবার মৃত্যু এভাবে মানুষ জরামরণের কবলে আচ্ছাদিত হয়ে পড়বে। জন্ম জন্মান্তরের সঞ্চিত যে কর্ম বেদনার আকারে প্রকটিত হয় সেই বেদনার যদি নিবৃত্তি ঘটানো যায় তাহলে তৃষ্ণা নিবারণ হয়, উপাদান নিবৃত্তিতে ভবনিবৃত্তি, ভব নিবৃত্তি দ্বারা জাতির নিবৃত্তি এবং জাতির নিবৃত্তির দ্বারা দুঃখের নিবৃত্তি ঘটে। এটিই হলো নির্বাণ।

বুদ্ধদেব মানুষকে বাস্তববাদী হতে শিখিয়েছেন কারণ তাঁর মূল লক্ষ্যই ছিল দুঃখ কি বা দুঃখের কারণ কি এবং দুঃখমুক্তির উপায়ই বা কি? এই উপায় অনুসন্ধান করতে গিয়ে তিনি যেরূপ আর্য সত্য চতুষ্টয় এর উল্লেখ করেছেন সেরূপ চতুর্থ আর্যসত্য অষ্টাঙ্গিক মার্গ (eightfold

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[99]A critical survey of Indian philosophy, Chandradhar Sharma, p.71

path） বা মধ্যমপন্থা যাকে বলে মাধ্যমিক পথ তার উল্লেখ করেছেন। বুদ্ধদেব দুঃখ মুক্তিকামী সমস্ত ব্যক্তিকে এই পন্থা অবলম্বন করতে বলেছেন। সেই আটটি পন্থা সম্পর্কে নিম্নে ব্যক্ত করা হলো–

জগৎ এবং জীবন সম্পর্কে যদি সত্য জ্ঞান না থাকে তাহলে অবিদ্যা জনিত দুঃখ থেকে মুক্তি পাওয়া সম্ভব নয়। বিশ্ব জগত সৃষ্টির পশ্চাতে যে কার্যকারণ তত্ত্ব রয়েছে সে বিষয়ে সম্যক অভিজ্ঞতা হল সম্যক্ দৃষ্টি। বুদ্ধদেব বলেছেন যে, যার বিশুদ্ধ বুদ্ধির উদয় হয় সেই ব্যক্তি এটা উপলব্ধি করবে যে, জগতে সমস্ত কিছু অনিত্য, দুঃখই একমাত্র সত্য এবং সুখ হলো ক্ষণিক। দুঃখ থেকে নিবৃতি পাওয়ার জন্য সম্যক্ দৃষ্টি একান্ত প্রয়োজন।

সম্যক্ সংকল্প বলতে বোঝানো হয়েছে সৎসংকল্প বা উত্তম সংকল্প অর্থাৎ মোহনীয় সংকল্প মানুষকে নির্বাণমুখী করে তোলে, দুঃখ থেকে নিবৃতি পাওয়ার জন্য উদ্দীপ্ত করে তা হল সৎসংকল্প। মানুষ তিনটি দ্বারের মাধ্যমে তার ভালো এবং মন্দ কর্ম করে থাকে সেগুলি হল বাক্যদ্বার, কায়দ্বার এবং মনোদ্বার। বুদ্ধের মতে, দুঃখ মুক্তিকামী ব্যক্তি কে বাক্যদ্বার এবং কায়দ্বার সংযত করতে হবে। বাক্যদ্বার কে সংযত করার উপায় হল মিথ্যা ভাষণ থেকে বিরত থাকা, কটু কথা না বলা, বৃথাবাক্য না বলা, প্রগলভ ভাষণ এই সমস্ত কিছু থেকে একান্তভাবে পরিহার করে সাধককে সত্যভাষী হতে হবে, সৎ বাক্য ব্যবহার করতে হবে। সাধককে বা দুঃখ–মুক্তিকামী ব্যক্তিকে সত্য, শিষ্ট এবং মিষ্ট ভাষণ প্রদান করতে হবে তবে সেই বাক্য হবে সম্যক্ বাক্। কিন্তু প্রশ্ন হল, কায়দ্বার কে কিভাবে সংযত করা যায়? কায়দ্বার হলো চুরি না করা, হিংসা না করা, পাপকর্ম থেকে বিরত থাকা অর্থাৎ যে কাজ আমি করব না সেই কাজ অপরে যাতে না করে সেই কাজ থেকে বিরত থাকা। কোনরকম কাম সুখ ভোগ না করা অর্থাৎ কামনা বাসনাহীন কর্ম থেকে বিরত থাকা এটি হলো সম্যক্ কর্ম। সৎকর্ম বা পবিত্রকর্ম বা বিশুদ্ধকর্ম হল সম্যক্ কর্ম। সৎ ভাবে জীবন যাপন করা, থারাপ কর্ম থেকে বিরত থাকা, হিংসা, প্রাণী হত্যা, মাদকদ্রব্য, অস্ত্র, বিষ ইত্যাদি দ্বারা জীবিকা নির্বাহ বন্ধ করতে হবে অর্থাৎ এমনভাবে জীবিকা নির্বাহ করতে হবে যাতে পঞ্চশীল লঙ্ঘিত না হয়। সেইরূপ জীবিকা নির্বাহ করতে হবে যে জীবিকার দ্বারা অন্য প্রাণীর ক্ষতি না হয়, যে জীবিকা হবে নির্দোষ, নিষ্পাপ ও অনান্য জীবিকা তাই হল সম্যক্ আজীব।

কায়দ্বার এবং বাক্যদ্বার কে যেমনভাবে সংযত করা উচিত ঠিক তেমনভাবে মনোদ্বারকেও সংযত করা আবশ্যিক। কিন্তু এই মনোদ্বারকে সংযত করা কঠিন। কারণ আমাদের মন চঞ্চল, আমাদের মন স্থির নয়, মন অত্যন্ত চপল। তাই বুদ্ধ বলেছেন মন সমস্ত কিছুর পূর্বগামী অর্থাৎ "মনোপুব্বঙ্গমা ধম্মা।"[100]

সম্যক্ ব্যায়াম হলো সম্যক্ প্রচেষ্টা। এটি হল মানসিক প্রচেষ্টা কারণ এখানে মনের শুদ্ধিকরণ ঘটাতে হবে অর্থাৎ নির্বাণ লাভের জন্য মনকে শুদ্ধ করতে হবে, মনের মধ্যে কুচিন্তা দূর করতে হবে, মনের মধ্যে সৎ চিন্তা আনতে হবে, মনকে নির্মল করতে হবে,মনের মধ্যে উৎপন্ন সমস্ত পাপ পরিত্যাগ করতে হবে এবং সেই পাপ যাতে আর উৎপন্ন না হয় তার চেষ্টা করতে হবে। এই সৎ প্রচেষ্টার মাধ্যমে ব্যক্তির দুঃখ নিবৃতি সম্ভব। মনের মধ্যে কায়ানুস্মৃতি,

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[100] বিজ্ঞপ্তিমাত্রতাসিদ্ধিঃ, সুকোমল চৌধুরী, পৃষ্ঠা-১৪০

বেদানুস্মৃতি, চিত্তানুস্মৃতি, ধর্মানুস্মৃতির ধর্মীয় অনুসরণ করতে হবে।

কায়ানুস্মৃতি – অর্থাৎ কায় বলতে বোঝায়, ক্লেশ, লোম, দন্ত, ত্বক ,অস্থি যুক্ত যে ৩২ প্রকার দ্রব্যে পরিপূর্ণ আমার দেহ অর্থাৎ আমি, আমার এই রূপ অহংকার।

বেদানুস্মৃতি – মনের মধ্যে যে সুখ– দুঃখ, অদুঃখ ও সুখাদি এ সমস্ত যে বেদনা বা অনুভূতি যথাযথ বিচার করা ।

চিত্তানুস্মৃতি – চিত্তানুস্মৃতি বলতে বোঝায় অকুশল চিন্তা, অকুশল চিত্ত পরিত্যাগ করে কুশল চিন্তা, কুশল চিত্তের অবতারণা করা অর্থাৎ চিত্তকে অকুশল মুক্ত করা।

ধর্মানুস্মৃতি – ধর্মানুস্মৃতি বলতে বোঝায় চিত্তের কুশল অকুশল গুন, কৃষ্ণ, শুক্ল গুন বিচার করে যেগুলি গ্রহণীয় তাকে গ্রহণ এবং যেগুলি বর্জনীয় তাকে বর্জন করা । এইভাবে স্মৃতিকে কর্মের দ্বারা পরিচালনা করা হলো সম্যক স্মৃতি।

অষ্টাঙ্গিক মার্গের শ্রেষ্ঠ স্তর হল সমাধি। উপরিউক্ত সাতটি মার্গ কে অতিক্রম করে সমাধিতে আসতে হয়। সমাধি হল শান্ত ও সমায়িত অবস্থা। এই অবস্থায় ব্যক্তির মন বা চিত্তকে একাগ্র অবস্থায় রাখতে হবে অর্থাৎ মনের মধ্যে সত্ত্ব গুণ বিরাজ করবে, রজগুণের প্রভাব থাকবে না। মনের মধ্যে কোন অলসতা থাকবে না মন হালকা অর্থাৎ লঘু অবস্থায় সমায়িত থাকবে। মন ধ্যানে নিবিষ্ট থাকবে।

এই অষ্টাঙ্গিক মার্গ হল প্রজ্ঞা–শীল–সমাধির সোপান অর্থাৎ শীল হলো সমাধির সোপান। নৈতিক চারিত্রিক গঠনের মাধ্যমে বা স্বচরিত্র গঠনের মাধ্যমে প্রজ্ঞা বা জ্ঞানের উদয় হয়, আত্মতত্ত্ব জ্ঞানের উদয় হয় এবং সেই আত্মতত্ত্ব জ্ঞানের মাধ্যমে ব্যক্তির সাধনা লাভ হয় অর্থাৎ মুক্তি লাভ হয়। চিত্তকে যদি সমাপ্ত করা না যায়, চিত্তের মধ্যে বা মনের মধ্যে যদি কামনা, বাসনা, আসক্তি, তৃষ্ণা, নিবারণ না করা যায় তাহলে কখনোই দুঃখমুক্তি সম্ভব নয়। তাই ব্যক্তির বা সাধকের একমাত্র উদ্দেশ্য হল এই সমস্ত কামনা, আসক্তি, তৃষ্ণা সমস্ত কিছুর নিবারণ করা,অপরের প্রতি হিংসা, বিতৃষ্ণা, মিথ্যা ভাষণ, কাম, ক্রোধ, লোভ বর্জন করে সত্য ভাষণ, অহিংস হয়ে নিষ্কাম ভাবে কর্ম করা আবশ্যিক। তাই বুদ্ধদেব বলেছেন চিত্তের কলুষ বৃত্তকে সমুচ্ছেদ করাই হলো দুঃখ মুক্তিকামী ব্যক্তির পরম পুরুষার্থ। সংবাক্য, সংকর্ম এবং সৎ জীবিকা এই তিনটিকে শীল এর অন্তর্গত করা হয়। কিন্তু এই শীল কে গুরুত্ব দেওয়ার কারণ কি? শীল হল দুঃখ মুক্তিকামী ব্যক্তির আধার বা নির্বাণ লাভের আধার, কারণ একজন দুঃখ মুক্তিকামী ব্যক্তির দুঃখ নিবৃত্তির জন্য সৎ বাক্য, সংকর্ম এবং সৎ জীবিকা পালন করা আবশ্যিক নচেৎ দুঃখ থেকে নিবৃত্তি পাওয়ার জন্য কখনোই মার্গ বা দুঃখ নিবারণের পথে অগ্রসর হওয়া যাবে না অর্থাৎ শীলের বিশুদ্ধিকরণ ঘটাতে হবে। শীল অর্থে প্রাণী হত্যা থেকে বিরতি, চিত্তের অকুশলতা দূরীকরণ। একজন মাতা যেমন তার জীবনের বিনিময়ে সন্তানের রক্ষা করেন ঠিক সেরূপ দুঃখমুক্তিকামী ব্যক্তির উচিত অপর ব্যক্তির প্রতি মৈত্রী, প্রেম, করুণা পোষণ করা, প্রিয়বাক্য বলা, মিথ্যা ভাষণ থেকে বিরত থাকা। সুতরাং শীলের যদি বিশুদ্ধিকরণ হয় তাহলে মানুষ দুঃখ থেকে নিবৃত্তি পেতে পারে। কারণ মানুষ মাত্রই সুখের অবতারণা করে কিন্তু সেই সুখ ক্ষণস্থায়ী, একক্ষণ স্থায়ী পরক্ষণে আবার তার বিনাশ। প্রজ্ঞা–শীল – সমাধি ব্যতীত নির্বাণ লাভ সম্ভব নয়। প্রজ্ঞা–শীল– সমাধি অঙ্গাঙ্গিভাবে যুক্ত। তাই বুদ্ধদেবের এই

চতুরার্য সত্য যেমন মানুষের দুঃখ থেকে নিবৃতির জন্য সঠিক পথ দেখায়, ঠিক তেমনি মানুষকেও আর্যসত্যের চারটি পথকে অতিক্রম করার কৌশল আয়ত্ত করা আবশ্যিক। যেন শাস্ত্রে পূর্বে বলা হয়েছে বদ্ধ জীব দুই প্রকার যথা- ভব্য এবং অভব্য। যারা চতুরার্য সত্যকে উপলব্ধি করে মুক্তি লাভ করে তারা ভব্য অর্থাৎ যারা দুঃখকে প্রকৃষ্ট রূপে জানে এবং যারা চতুরার্য সত্যকে উপলব্ধি করতে পারেনা তারা অভব্য অর্থাৎ যারা দুঃখ মুক্তি কে প্রকৃষ্ট রূপে জানে না। যারা নির্বাণ লাভ করতে সমর্থ হয় তারা ভব্য ব্যক্তি এবং যারা নির্বাণ লাভ করতে অসমর্থ্য তারা অভব্য ব্যক্তি। বৌদ্ধ দর্শন নাস্তিক হয়েও মানুষের দুঃখের কথা বলেছে, দুঃখ থেকে মুক্তির পথ দেখিয়েছে। মানুষকে পরিণত করে কিভাবে নির্বাণের পথে অগ্রসর হওয়া যায় তার যথাযথ শিক্ষা বৌদ্ধ দর্শনে ব্যক্ত করা হয়েছে। মানুষ কখনোই পরিপূর্ণ নয়। মানুষের জীবন নদীর স্রোতের মতো সুখ-দুঃখকে অতিক্রম করে বয়ে চলে –এ প্রসঙ্গে শেলির উক্তিটি হল

"Worlds on worlds are rolling ever,
from creation to decay,
Like the bubbles on a river,
sparkling, bursting, borne away"[101]

অর্থাৎ পৃথিবীর বুদবুদ গুলো সৃষ্টি থেকে ক্ষয় পর্যন্ত নদীর বুদবুদ এর মত ঝকঝকে হয়ে বয়ে চলে। সুখের খোঁজ বিষয়ে অর্থাৎ বুদ্ধের অভিগমন পথের বিষয়ে আর্যসত্যের রূপরেখা প্রদান করা হয়েছে। এই আর্যসত্যের দ্বারা আমাদের জীবনকে প্রকৃতভাবে সার্থক করে তোলা উচিত এবং তার জন্য দুঃখ সত্য কে জানতে হবে, সমুদয় সত্য থেকে মুক্ত হতে হবে, দুঃখ নিরোধ সত্যকে প্রাপ্ত করতে হবে এবং চিত্তের মার্গ সত্যকে অবতারণা করতে হবে। কোনরকম পাপকর্ম না করে, কামনা, বাসনা, আসক্তিকে বর্জন করে কর্মক্ষয় হয়, সেই কর্মক্ষয় এর দ্বারা দুঃখক্ষয় হয় এবং দুঃখ ক্ষয়ের ফলে বেদনা ক্ষয় এবং বেদনার ক্ষয়ের ফলে সর্বদুঃখ নিবৃত্তি ঘটে। তাই পরিশেষে বলা যায় যে, বৌদ্ধ দর্শন যতদিন বেঁচে থাকবে ততদিন জায়গা করে নেবে মানুষের মননশীল চেতনায়।

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[101]*A critical survey of Indian philosophy*, Chandradhar Sharma, p.77

একটি দার্শনিক প্রবন্ধ : রাজা রাম মোহন রায় এবং সমসাময়িক হিন্দু ধর্মের নবজাগরণ

প্রশান্ত কুমার সাহা

সারসংক্ষেপ

রাজা রাম মোহন রায় ছিলেন বাঙালি তথা আধুনিক ভারতের একজন প্রগতিশীল সমাজ সংস্কারক ও যুক্তিবাদী। রাম মোহনের সমসাময়িক সমাজ ব্যবস্থা ছিল ধর্মের জালে বোনা কু-সংস্কারাচ্ছন্ন বিধিনিষেধ, যা পুরোহিতের দ্বারা সাধারন মানুষকে ভুল পথে চালিত করা হয়েছিল। ওই সময় কুসংস্কার বাংলার হিন্দুদের মধ্যে ব্যাপকভাবে প্রচলিত ছিল। উপনিষদ ও বেদ বিরোধী মূর্তি পূজা, ধর্মীয় আচার-অনুষ্ঠান ও রীতিনীতি এগুলিকে ব্রাহ্মণরা সমাজে হাতিয়ার হিসেবে ব্যবহার করেছিল, যার তীব্র সমালোচনা করেন রামমোহন। সমাজে পুরোহিতরা তাদের প্রাধান্য ফেলবার জন্য ধর্মগ্রন্থ বিরোধী ধর্ম প্রচার করত,ফলত সাধারণ মানুষ সেইসব নির্দেশ অন্ধভাবে অনুসরণ করে চলত। কেননা তৎকালীন সময় উপনিষদের বাংলা কোন অনুবাদ ছিল না। রামমোহন প্রথম সেইসব গ্রন্থ গুলি অনুবাদ করেন বাংলায়।যাতে সাধারন মানুষ শাস্ত্রীয় বিধি নিয়ম-কানুন সম্পর্কে অবগত হয়।ফলে সাধারণ মানুষ ধর্মের কঠোর গোঁড়ামী থেকে বেরিয়ে আসে। তিনি বলেন উপনিষদ কোন প্রকার মূর্তি পূজা প্রচার করে না।তিনি সাধারণ মানুষের মধ্যে যুক্তিবাদী মনোভাব গড়ে তুলতে চেয়েছিলেন। তিনি মনে করতেন মানুষের যুক্তিশীলতাই যেকোনো মতাদর্শের সত্যতার হদিশ দেয়। তিনি হিন্দু ধর্মের নতুন একটি দিক তুলে ধরতে চেয়েছেন যা "নব্য হিন্দুত্ব" (Neo-Hinduism) নামে পরিচিত। এই লেখনীর মধ্য দিয়ে তৎকাল হিন্দু ধর্মের যে মর্মান্তিক চিত্র এবং তিনি কীভাবে সমাজে ধর্মীয় নবজাগরণের সূত্রপাত ঘটিয়েছেন তা আমি তুলে ধরতে চাই।

ভূমিকা: রামমোহন রায় ছিলেন উনিশ শতকের বাংলা রেনেসাঁ এবং সামাজিক ধর্মীয় সংস্কারের জনক। বাংলায় রামমোহন কে ধর্মীয় নবজাগরণের জনক বলা হয়। দেশীয় রাজনৈতিক, সামাজিক, ধর্মীয় ও বৌদ্ধিক পুনজাগরণের জন্য রামমোহন তাঁর সারাটা জীবন ধরে কঠোর পরিশ্রম করে গেছেন। উনবিংশ শতাব্দী হল বাংলার ইতিহাসে এক স্বর্ণযুগ, বাংলায় ধর্ম প্রচারে চৈতন্য মহাপ্রভুর আবির্ভাব হয়, তার পূর্বে বাংলায় এমন গৌরবময় যুগ আসেনি। উনবিংশ শতাব্দীতে বাংলার ইতিহাসে রামমোহনের হাত ধরে এক মহাপরিবর্তন আসে ধর্মীয়, সাহিত্য ও সংস্কৃতিতে, এই মহাপরিবর্তনকে বাংলায় রেনেসাঁস (Bengal renaissances) বলা হয়।দেশের ধর্মীয় কুসংস্কার, সামাজিক কু-প্রথা, অজ্ঞতা, জাতিভেদ প্রথা এবং নারীজাতির দুরবস্থা তাকে পীড়া দিত।তিনি উপনিষদ,বেদ, বেদান্ত সহ প্রাচীন ধর্মীয় গ্রন্থ বা ধর্মীয় শাস্ত্র অধ্যয়ন করেন, যেহেতু তিনি ব্রাহ্মণ পরিবারে জন্মগ্রহণ করেছিলেন। পাশাপাশি তিনি আরবি ও ফরাসি ভাষাও জানতেন। তিনি একটি আধুনিক সমাজ গঠনের স্বপ্ন দেখেছিলেন। ধর্ম সংস্কারকে তিনি বেশি

গুরুত্ব দিয়েছিলেন কারণ খ্রিস্টান মিশনারীরা ভারতের ধর্ম ও আচার অনুষ্ঠানকে তীব্রভাবে সমালোচনা করেছিল। রামমোহন খ্রিস্টান ধর্মশাস্ত্র গভীরভাবে অধ্যয়ন করে এর নৈতিকতা ও সেবামূলক দিকটিকে প্রশংসা করেন কিন্তু খ্রিস্টের অবতারবাদ বাতিল করেন। ইসলামের একেশ্বরবাদ ও যুক্তিবাদ তাকে প্রভাবিত করেছিল। 'তুফাৎ-উল-মুবাহিদিন' নামে প্রবন্ধ লিখে তিনি সমন্বয়বাদ চিন্তার পরিচয় তুলে ধরেন।   রামমোহন বেদান্ত ও ইসলামের একেঈশ্বরবাদ (monotheism) কে এক করে বিশ্বজনীন সত্যের ব্যাখ্যা দিতে চেয়েছিলেন যে "সর্বশক্তিমান একজনমাত্র সৃষ্টিকর্তাই বিশ্বাসী" প্রত্যেক ধর্মের মূলসূত্র বা মূল বাণী। ঈশ্বর নিরাকার ব্রাহ্ম।এক ঈশ্বরবাদ প্রতিষ্ঠার জন্য তিনি 'ব্রাহ্মণ সমাজ'(১৮২৮খ্রীঃ) স্থাপন করেন। মানুষ ছিল স্বার্থপর।নিজেদের সংকীর্ণ স্বার্থ পূরণের জন্য তারা প্রায়শই সামাজিক স্বার্থকে জলাঞ্জলি দিত। প্রাচ্যের দর্শনে ছিল রামমোহনের গভীর শ্রদ্ধা ও ভালোবাসা। কিন্তু আবার একই সন্দে তার বিশ্বাস ছিল যে আধুনিক সংস্কৃতি-ই ভারতীয় সমাজের পুনর্জাগরণ ঘটাবে।বিশেষ করে তিনি চাইতেন তাঁর দেশের মানুষ যুক্তিশীল ও বৈজ্ঞানিক দৃষ্টিভদী গ্রহণ করুক। তিনি চাইতেন ভারতীয় সমাজে সব পুরুষ ও মহিলারাই যেন সামাজিক সমতা ও মানবিক মর্যাদা পায়।সেই মানবিক নীতিই গ্রহণ করুক তাঁর দেশের মানুষ। এই ছিল তার ইচ্ছা। তিনি এও চাইতেন যে দেশে আধুনিক ধনতন্ত্র ও শিল্প চালু হোক। রামমোহন রায় প্রাচ্য ও পাশ্চাত্যের চিন্তার মধ্যে মিলন ঘটাতে চেয়েছিলেন। তিনি পণ্ডিত মানুষ ছিলেন। জানতেন বহু ভাষা—সংস্কৃত, ফার্সী, আরবী, ইংরেজী, ফরাসী, লাতিন, গ্রীক ও হিব্রু।তিনি তরুণ বয়সে বারাণসীতে হিন্দু দর্শন ও সংস্কৃত সাহিত্য অধ্যয়ন করেন। কোরাণ, আরবী ও ফার্সী সাহিত্য অধ্যয়ন করেন পাটনায়।তিনি ভারতের অন্যান্য ধর্মীয় সম্প্রদায় ও আন্দোলন এবং জৈন ধর্ম সম্বন্ধেও ভালোই অবহিত ছিলেন। তারপরে তিনি পাশ্চাত্য চিন্তা-ভাবনা ও সংস্কৃতিকে অধ্যয়ন করেন। বাইবেলকে মূল অনুযায়ী অধ্যয়ন করার জন্য তিনি গ্রীক ও হিব্রু ভাষাও শিখেছিলেন। ১৮০৯ সালে তিনি তাঁর বিখ্যাত গ্রন্থ *'গিফট টু মোনোথিইষ্টস'* ফার্সী ভাষায় লিখেছিলেন। এই গ্রন্থেই তিনি বহু দেবতার বিশ্বাসের বিরুদ্ধে তাঁর যুক্তির অবতারণা করেছিলেন। আবার এই গ্রন্থেই এক ঈশ্বর আরাধনার পক্ষে যুক্তি রেখেছিলেন।১৮১৪ সালে তিনি কলকাতায় স্থায়ী হন। কিছুদিনের মধ্যেই একদল তরুণদের সহযোগিতায় শুরু করেন আত্মীয়সভা। এই সময় থেকেই তিনি সামাজিক ও ধর্মীয় কুপ্রথা ও কুসংস্কারের বিরুদ্ধে ধারাবাহিকভাবে সংগ্রাম চালাতে থাকেন। সেসব কুসংস্কার বাংলার হিন্দুদের মধ্যে ব্যাপকভাবে প্রচলিত ছিল। বিশেষ করে তিনি দেবতার মূর্তি পূজার তীব্র বিরোধিতা করেন। জাতপাতের কঠোরতা, অর্থহীন ধর্মীয় সংস্কারের প্রচলনেরও তীব্র বিরোধিতা তিনি করেছিলেন।পুরোহিত শ্রেণীকে তিনি নিন্দা করেছিলেন। কারণ এরাই সংস্কারমূলক কাজকর্মকে প্রশ্রয় দিতেন।তিনি মনে করতেন হিন্দুদের সব প্রধান শাস্ত্র গ্রন্থেই এক ঈশ্বরের পূজার কথাই বলা হয়েছে। তিনি বেদগ্রন্থের বাংলা অনুবাদ প্রকাশ করেন। পাঁচটি প্রধান উপনিষদেরও বাংলা অনুবাদ প্রকাশ করেন। তাঁর মতের সপক্ষে প্রমাণস্বরূপ। একেশ্বরবাদের সপক্ষে সমর্থন জানিয়ে তিনি ধারাবাহিকভাবে অনেক পুস্তিকাও রচনা করেছিলেন। রামমোহন তাঁর দার্শনিক মতাদর্শের সপক্ষে প্রাচীন শাস্ত্রগ্রন্থের উল্লেখ করেছিলেন। তবে মানুষের যুক্তিভিত্তিক ক্ষমতার ওপরে তিনি নির্ভর করতেন। তিনি মনে করতেন মানুষের যুক্তিশীলতাই যেকোন মতাদর্শের সত্যতার হদিশ

দেয়। সে মতাদর্শ প্রাচ্যেরই হোক বা পাশ্চাত্যেরই হোক। তিনি বিশ্বাস করতেন যে, বেদান্ত দর্শন এই যুক্তির নীতির ওপরেই প্রতিষ্ঠিত ছিল। ১৮২৮ সালে তিনি নতুন ধর্মীয় সমাজ স্থাপন করেন যার নাম 'ব্রহ্মসভা' যেটা পরবর্তীকালে ব্রহ্মসমাজ নামে খ্যাতি লাভ লাভ করে। এই ব্রাহ্মসমাজের উদ্দেশ্য ছিল সনাতন হিন্দু ধর্মকেকুসংস্কারে বেড়াজাল থেকে বাইরে আনা এবংউপনিষদ বেদনিষ্ঠ একেশ্বরবাদ বা এক ঈশ্বরের বিশ্বাস প্রচার করা।[102]

রামমোহন রায়ের উপনিষদ ভাবধারা : রামমোহন রায়ের আগ্রহের অন্যতম ক্ষেত্র বেদান্ত এবং উপনিষদ। তার ধর্মীয় সংস্কারের মূলে ছিল শংকরাচার্যের অদ্বৈত বেদান্ত (৭৮৮– ৮২০)।তিনি মুসলিম সুফিবাদ এবংউপনিষদীয় একেশ্বরবাদ কে একত্রিত করেন।তিনি বৈজ্ঞানিক দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি দিক থেকে বেদান্তের গভীর অধ্যায়নের মাধ্যমে বুঝতে পেরেছিলেন যে বেদান্তের মূল বক্তব্য বা উপনিষদ 'একেশ্বরবাদ' বা 'একমেবাদ্বিতীয়ম'। যারা আরবি অনুবাদ হল 'লা ইলাহা ইল্লাল্লাহ'।শংকরাচার্যের আদিষ্টবাদের মূল বক্তব্য ছিল –

"শ্লোকার্ধেন প্রবক্ষ্যামি যদুক্তং গ্রন্থকোটিভিঃ
ব্রহ্মসত্যং জগৎ মিথ্যা জীবো ব্রহ্মৈব নাপরঃ।।"[103]

কোটি কোটি গ্রন্থ যে সত্য প্রতিবেদন করতে ব্যস্ত, আচার্যতা শ্লোকার্ধেই ব্যক্ত করেছেন। এই মূল সত্য হল :ব্রহ্মসত্য জগৎ মিথ্যা এবং জীব ব্রহ্মস্বরূপ।বস্তুত ব্রহ্ম, জগত ও জীবের স্বরূপ ব্যাখ্যা সমগ্র বেদান্ত দর্শনালি প্রতিপাদ্য বিষয়। অদ্বৈতবাদ জগৎ ও জীব কে ব্রহ্মে লীন করে একমাত্র ব্রহ্মকেই সত্য বলে স্বীকার করা হয়েছে। ব্রহ্মই জগতে নিমিত্ত ও উপাদান কারণ। জীব মায়া মুক্ত হলে নিজেকে ব্রহ্ম বলেই জানে। সুতরাং ব্রহ্মই প্রকৃতপক্ষে সৎ। আচার্য শংকর উপনিষদীয় নিষ্প্রপঞ্চ ব্রহ্মতত্ত্বের অন্যতম প্রধান সমার্থক। তার মতে ব্রহ্ম নির্গুণ, নিরাকার, নির্বিকার, এক এবং অদ্বিতীয়। কিন্তু তৎকালীন ধর্মকে বিপদগামী করেছিল বেদান্ত বিরোধী পুরোহিতরা, সনাতন হিন্দু ধর্মের ওপর বেদ বিরোধী কুসংস্কারের বোঝা চাপিয়ে দেয় – মূর্তি পূজা, বহু দেবতায় বিশ্বাসী, ধর্মীয় আচরণ (বিধবাদের জ্বালিয়ে দেওয়া)।কিন্তু উপনিষদে বা বেদে মূর্তি পূজার। রামমোহন সমসাময়িক হিন্দু সম্প্রদায় মূর্তি পূজারী হয়ে উঠেছিল এবং এক ঈশ্বরের পরিবর্তে বহুত্ব দেবদেবতা ও আচার–আচরণ, রীতিনীতি উদ্ভাবন করে যা উপনিষদে উল্লেখ নেই। তৎকালীন সময়ে উপনিষদ বাংলায় পাওয়া যেত না, এ কারণে বাংলার জনসাধারণ হিন্দু ধর্মের বেদান্তনিষ্ঠ এক ঈশ্বরবাদী ঐতিহ্য সম্পর্কে সচেতন ছিল না।রামমোহন উপনিষদ বাংলায় অনুবাদ করেছিলেন পরে তা ইংরেজিতে অনুবাদ করা হয়। রামমোহন ফারসি ভাষায় –'তোহাফাত উল মোওয়াহিদিন' নামে একটি বই লেখেন যার মূল আলোচ্য বিষয় ছিল একেশ্বরবাদ। ১৮১৭ সালে রামমোহন 'A defense of hindu theism' আরেকটি বই লেখেন, যার মধ্য দিয়ে হিন্দু ধর্মের সারমর্ম বেদান্ত দৃষ্টিতে বোঝাতে চেয়েছিলেন (Essence of hinduism was the theism of vedanta)।অদ্বৈত বেদান্তের স্রষ্টা শংকর বিশ্বাস করতেনযে সত্তা এক এবং মহাবিশ্ব তাঁর সৃষ্টি (shankar believes that Existene is one and all

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102 আধুনিক ভারতের ইতিহাস, বিপান চন্দ্র,পৃ-১৩৮।

103 ভারতীয় দর্শন, প্রদ্যোত কুমার মন্ডল, পৃ-২৯৬।

creation of God) । রামমোহন বিশ্বাস করতেন স্রষ্টা, ধারক এবং মহাবিশ্বের সমার্থক হলেন একজন জ্ঞানী সৃষ্টসত্তা। তিনি কুরানের দৃষ্টি ভঙ্গি তুলে ধরেন যে শের একটি বাস্তব এবং কঠিন অস্তিত্ব আছে। ১৮২৮খ্রিস্টাব্দে তিনি ব্রাহ্মণ সমাজ প্রতিষ্ঠা করেন যেখানে বেদান্ত নীতি ও দর্শন এবং তার ওপর বিশ্বাস করে এক ঈশ্বর বাদ প্রচার করেন। তিনি বলেন ঈশ্বর লাভ প্রেম এবং উপাসনার সম্ভব। তিনি হিন্দু ধর্মের সংস্কার আনার চেষ্টা করেছিলেন। সমাজের সাধারণ মানুষের কাছে উপনিষদের বার্তা ছড়িয়ে দেয়, এ হিন্দু ধর্মের নতুন যুগান্তরকারী (নব্য হিন্দুত্ব –Neo hinduism) দিকের উন্মেষণ ঘটে, মানুষ কুসংস্কারের বেড়াজাল ভেঙে হিন্দু ধর্ম অবলম্বনী মানুষ বেদান্তের আসল স্বাদ নিতে সোচ্চার হোন, যা বাংলার ইতিহাসে ধর্মীয় নবজাগরণ বা বেঙ্গল   রেনেসাঁস (Renaissance in Bengal)।

ব্রাহ্মণ সমাজ(১৮২৮) অবদানঃ হিন্দুসমাজের কুসংস্কার,জাতিভেদ প্রথা, অস্পৃশ্যতা, বহুবিবাহ, কুলীন প্রথা, সতীদাহ, শিশু হত্যা সমাজকে একেবার এক মর্মান্তিক করে তুলেছিল। কেশব চন্দ্র তার 'Destiny of Human life ' শীর্ষক এক বক্তৃতায় অস্পৃশ্যতাকে মানুষ্য সৃষ্টি এক সামাজিক ব্যাধি রূপে উল্লেখ করেন। শিশু বিবাহ, কুলীন প্রথা, সতীদাহ, সন্তান হত্যা, সামাজিক অবক্ষয়ের কারণ হিসেবে চিহ্নিত করেন। হিন্দু জাতির অধঃপতনের আসল কারণ এওসব সামাজিক কু-প্রথা।এই সভার মধ্য দিয়ে সমাজে যা প্রচার করা হয়েছিল :

- হিন্দু ধর্মের প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা এবং একেশ্বরবাদে বিশ্বাস করা।
- উপনিষদের যথার্থ অর্থ ব্যাখার মধ্য দিয়ে হিন্দু ধর্মের সারমর্ম ও বেদ বিরোধী আচার-আচরণ রীতিনীতিকে বর্জন করা।
- মূর্তি পূজার বেদ বিরোধী তা প্রচার করত।
- সতীদাহের মতো সামাজিক কুসংস্কারের বিরুদ্ধে নিন্দা পোষণ করত।
- গঙ্গায় সন্তান বিসর্জন তীব্র বিরোধিতা করে।
- বর্ণ প্রথার বিরোধিতা করে।

রবি ঠাকুর রামমোহন রায়কে বলেছেন "ভারত পথিক",ভারতকে পথ দেখিয়েছেন, তিনি হলেন আধুনিক ভারতের স্রষ্টা। এই সাংস্কৃতিক জাগরণের কেন্দ্রীয় চরিত্র ছিলেন রামমোহন রায়। সামাজিক কু প্রথার অবসান করে তিনি এক সামাজিক বিপ্লব আনতে চেয়েছিলেন বস্তুত ব্রাহ্মণ সমাজে যোগদান করার আগেই তিনি কল্যাণমূলক কাজে নেতৃত্ব দেন। ১৮৭২সালে সরকারকে দিয়ে ব্রহ্ম বিবাহ আইন নিষিদ্ধ করেন, যার ফলস্বরূপ বহুবিবাহ বাল্যবিবাহ নিষিদ্ধ হয়ে পড়ে। রামমোহন তাঁর দার্শনিক মতাদর্শের পক্ষে প্রাচীন শাস্ত্র গ্রন্থের উল্লেখ করেছিলেন তবে মানুষের যুক্তিভিত্তিক ক্ষমতার ওপর তিনি নির্ভর করতেন তিনি মনে করতেন মানুষের যুক্তি ছিল তাই যেকোনো মতাদর্শের সত্যতার হদিস দেয়। তিনি বিশ্বাস করতেন যে প্রাচ্য দর্শন এই যুক্তি নীতির ওপরেই প্রতিষ্ঠিত। আর এই বেদান্তই উপনিষদের শেষ অংশ। তিনি উপনিষদের বাণী গুলোকে অনুবাদ করে তৎকালীন মানুষের কাছে উপস্থাপন করেছিলেন, কেননা ভন্ড পুরোহিতরা ধর্মের নামে মানুষকে শোষণ করতো। মানুষকে ভুল পথে পরিচালিত করত। রামমোহন সমসাময়িক কালে উপনিষদের কোন বাংলা অনুবাদ ছিল না, তিনিই প্রথম উপনিষদ কে বাংলায় অনুবাদ করেন, এবং সাধারন মানুষের কাছে হিন্দু ধর্মের সারমর্মকে তুলে ধরেন।

তিনি কোরআন এবং উপনিষদ বর্ণিত এক ঈশ্বর বাদের প্রচার করেন।

'ধর্ম' শব্দটি এসেছে 'ধৃ' ধাতুর উত্তর মন প্রত্যয় যোগ করে। এর প্রাচীন অর্থ, যা মানুষ, সমাজ ও বিশ্বকে ধারণ করে ধারণাৎ ধর্মম্ ইত্যাহঃ। প্রাচীন ধর্মগ্রন্থ ঋকবেদে ধর্মকে 'ঋতং', 'সত্য' বলা হয়েছে, কারণ ধর্ম ঋত অর্থাৎ অমোঘ নৈতিক নিয়মের ন্যায় সত্য। মুনি যারা ধর্ম সম্বন্ধে বলেন 'অয়মের পরমো ধর্ম যদোগেনাত্মদর্শনম্"[104] অর্থাৎ যোগ অবলম্বনে আত্মদর্শন পরম ধর্ম। রামমোহন আত্মদর্শন দিয়েই এই হিন্দু ধর্মে একেশ্বরবাদ প্রচার করেন। আমরা জানি ধর্ম হলো, তাই যা ধারণ করে। ধর্মসংস্কারক ও ধর্মপ্রবক্তারূপে রামমোহনের ধর্মবিষয়ক মতামতের আধুনিকতার মৌলিক ভিত্তি এখানে যে,তাঁর ধর্মসংস্কার শুধুমাত্র ব্যক্তিগত ধর্মজীবনে বা স্তরে ধর্মবিশ্বাস ও ধর্মাচরণের পরিবর্তন নয়, তার যে একটি বৃহত্তর সামাজিক অর্থনৈতিক রাজনৈতিক আধ্যাত্মিক ভূমিকা আছে, রাজনৈতিক স্বৈরাচার ও সামাজিক শোষণের প্রতিষেধকরূপেই যে তার পূর্ণ সার্থকতা এই সত্যের স্বীকৃতিই রামমোহনের চিন্তার তথা সংস্কারকর্মের বৈশিষ্ট্য। সুতরাং রামমোহনের ঈপ্সিত ধর্মসংস্কারের তত্ত্বগত ভিত্তিটি ছিলো সর্বাত্মক ও বিশ্বজনীন। রামমোহন মূলত হিন্দু ধর্মের সাথে খ্রিস্টান ও ইসলাম ধর্মের যে মেলবন্ধন করতে চেয়েছিলেন,উপনিষদের দৃষ্টিতে। তিনি এটা প্রতিষ্ঠা করতে চেয়ে ছিলেন যে সব ধর্মের মূল বানী একটাই ঈশ্বরের পূজা করা। যিনি আমাদের ধারক, বাহক এবং এই জগতের সৃষ্টি কর্তা।বেদান্তের মত নিরাকার ব্রহ্ম বিশ্বাসী হওয়া। রামকৃষ্ণ বলেছেন "যত মত তত পথ", তাই এক ঈশ্বরে বিশ্বাসী হলে ধর্মে ধর্মে ভ্রাতৃত্ব বোধ গড়ে উঠবে।

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