A TUSSLE BETWEEN MAN AND MACHINE IN MUKTA DHĀRĀ--A BRIEF STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Muktadhārā is originally written in Bengali by Rabindranath Tagore—a world famous Nobel Laureate. This drama was translated into Sanskrit by Dhyanesh Narayan Chakrabarti in 1988. The story of this play projects two ideas of people. One side is the king Ranjit of the state Uttarkūt. The other side is the people who suffer from the king’s decision to build a dam by the help of modern machines. Therefore the play projects a tussle between man and machine. The people who do not get water because of the dam are sympathized by the prince Abhijit. Finally Abhijit succeeds in breaking the dam and dies in the current of the river. He falls prey in the struggle between man and machine.

Key Words: Machine, Dam, Waterfall, Nature, King, Paddy Field

Introduction:

In our present endeavour, we wish to make an analytical study of the drama that epitomizes the dismal fate of man in his struggle with machine.

Muktadhārā is a Bengali play written by great Bengali Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore in the year 1922. The play Muktadhārā was translated into Sanskrit by Dr. Dhyanesh Narayan Chakrabarti in the year 1988. Humanity and morality had disappeared from man’s heart because of the pursuit of civilization with this message Rabindranath showed us very beautifully the tussle between machine and human.

Discussion:

The oppression of the King Ranjit of Uttarkūt compelled the subjects to revolt against him. The subjects were deprived of drinking water because of the construction of a dam by Bibhūti 1.

A pedestrian asked a villager that what the thing which stretches up to the sky. Then the villager answered that may be he didn’t know that it was a machine. The passer-by again asked what type of machine was that. The villager said that the machine was made up for long twenty five years which tide the waterfall Muktadhārā. Bibhūti was a citizen of Uttarkūta. He builds the dam after trying twenty five years. He was very normal student at his early age. When his companion friends could not do anything in life there Bibhūti did a miracle as an engineer after building the dam up for the holding the water of the dam Muktadhārā.

At the beginning of the play a small introduction sketched by Rabindranath about the waterfall Muktadhārā that—’ पार्वत्यदेश उत्तरकूटः।तैत्रै उत्तर-भैरव-मन्दिरं प्रति प्रसारितः।पन्थः।विद्वृद्ध गहनगमर्य कस्त्यचिदभैदे-लौहयज्ञस्य शैवेः।सहनशेषः।ततः भागप्रसरस्यां दिशि हर्षते भैरवमन्दिरसिद्धवस्य विशूलम्।मर्गस्य पार्श्वत आमकाण्डे राजे राेणिषेवः।शिविरसहनेश्वर्षः।अमावस्यायमदूर्यैव भैरवमन्दिरभविष्यति आराज्ञिकम्।राजा पदवण्डे तत्र गामिष्यति।पर्याप्तेषि विशाम्रष्टे।तस्य सभायाः।यत्र राजो विभीित्।हृदयवेत्यायिनया प्रवेष्ट्या लोहयज्ञ्य बन्धनं निर्मायं मुक्तधारायां श्रोतमिनी स्रद्धान्।अनुलोकियोऽभित्ति प्रेरणा स्वरूपकृत्युल्लासरूपं अनुजुंग्यमिस्मा। कीति पुरस्कृतुम्।उत्तरकूटादिविशालसिन्हाः।सर्व उलसावलीशऽर्वविन्यासिनिः।सर्व उत्सावस्य भैरवमन्दिरप्राणाः प्रति प्रचालिता।भैरवमन्दिरदीक्षितः।सन्न्यासिनः।अखिं दियिं दियिं स्तंगीतिः।गायत्रि:।परिभ्रमितिः।तेषां कस्त्यचियों कारे धूपाधारे प्रज्वलितं हृदयः।कस्त्याचियों हर्षे गानस्य अन्तरान्तरं ध्वनिः।तात्पूर्वकम् घण्ठा॥

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पथिक—आकाशभरण्य किंविषिं निर्मितम्।चारुसमस्य भैदे। समुस्याः॥

नागारिकः—नैतरज्ञानां वैदेशिकवश्चम्।एततु यन्त्रम्॥

पथिक—यत्रभैरवं किंमयं विचित्रम्।
D. N. Chakrabarti said Muktadhārā there were many damages. The engineer Bibhūti confessed that he had no idea about the possible damage. He said—

"When we came to know that Amba—an only female character of the play lost her only child at the time when the dam was built."

Many people died because of the dam. So the people of Shivtarai were in pain for their nearest ones death. But they had not the power to protest against this cruelty as the building up the dam was necessary for the kingdom.

In Muktadhārā, dūta asked the engineer Bibhūti about the fate of people who died in the work of constructing a dam on the stream Muktadhārā. D. N. Chakrabarti said—

Dūta—Purnataktālām abhāgamuḥkām kṣetram Ṛṣitum kṣetraḥsiṃhanām pravṛttēśī.

Pūrṇaḥ vatsadānānapāmitaḥ bhūgmaḥ jāntā, tene bāhvaḥ janaḥ śūlaśūlaśvāstvādṛśāḥ ānandāḥ bhūkṣaṃāt kṛtāni kṛtāni dīpam kṣetram ४.२३६.

So we got the description of machine. That was like a demon stretching to the sky. When we came to know that Amba—an only female character of the play lost her only child at the time when the dam was built. Bibhūti was not worried about the people of Uttarkūta as he knew that some people would die during the construction. So he needed not to be so anxious about that. He also knew that the paddy field would be dried because of the dam but he was proud for his construction as his name would spread everywhere and he would be famous everywhere for building the dam up. In the process of constructing a dam over the stream, Muktadhārā there were many damages. The engineer Bibhūti confessed that he had no idea about the possible damage. He said—
Bibhuti built the machine upon Muktadhārā. But, nobody of his kingdom was agreed with whatever plan is designed by Ranjit. Minister of Ranjit was anxious as the water of Muktadhārā waterfall contributing to the paddy field of the peasant was drying up. So when Ranjit asked the minister why the minister was jealous and did not take interest in this matter then minister made Ranjit disappointed in his answer that they could not play like this childish way with the farmers who were very poor. If they will not get the water then their own paddy field will be destroyed and the farmer will die in hunger. As because the king had no experience to fight with the nature whatever the farmer could do so they should not do that. Rabindranath wrote—

राणिज्—शिवतलस्य प्रजाशासनानु नर्मोपायन पशिीकृत्य नात्नोत्तमम्। तस्मौ नाचति। किंतु महान्त्रित्वम् तु तावन लक्ष्यते तार्कः। समुत्साहः! किंत्र इथ्याकारणम्?

मनः—हाराजेण्य तस्मान माममन्थितुश्चिताकसलस्तेन मूर्तिकारप्रस्तरण सह द्वंद्वयुद्धः नात्तमां कार्यम्। राणिज्—सशक्तमचरममन्धनूपमासिै अस्मकं व्यवहारः। शिवतलस्य शासनभारो युवराजोंपरी समर्पणीय इति मंत्रण भयवै प्रदत्तः। तेनैव वद्वन्धनं सुरूचित्य स्वातं, न खलु तत्त नायन्यम।

राणिज्—तेन कि फलं प्राप्तम्? वर्षद्वयं यावद् राजस्वं तैनं प्रदत्तम्। इश्वरमुर्छितः तत सदैव संघटते। तेन तु न भवति राजस्वं कदान्यलमद्धम्।

मनः—राजस्वादापि महार्थः किंत्रियतं संलक्षणानात्तमानुस्यम्। एतस्मन्थने समथे तस्म तस्म प्रत्तैवार्तान्तः। भवता समस्थित्म्। राजकर्म शुद्धास्तु कदापि नावजेयः। जानिहि तावात्, यदा अरहान्नी अस्वत्वः सञ्जयते, तदा दुःखस्व शक्त्या शुद्धास्तु समस्थित्म् महतो भविन्ति महततरः।'

Rabindranath presented an irony that expressed his writing excellence and powerful thoughts for the mass. A small boy also used by Rabindranath as a speaker for the poor common people. We saw how the common people of Śhivtarāi had suffered for the water which had stopped to flow. When a group of student was going to take part of the joyous program like Bibhuti’s felicitation then the students were asked by the king Ranjit that whether they know what Bibhuti did or not? Then all the students jumped with a clapping hand going to take part of the joyous program like Bibhuti’s felicitation then the students were asked by the king Ranjit.
So, the cruel mind of the king Ranjit and Bibhūti was so dangerous that people of the Uttarkūta was frightened for that. The king destroyed the life of many people and they did not repent for their work. The king was selfishly played with the mind of the people of Uttarkūta. He jailed prince Abhijit as Abhijit was kind and soft upon the people of Uttarkūta. But on the other hand the man like prince Abhijit tried to stop the king to spoil the life and hope of the people of Uttarkūta. In one hand the festival of death had occurred by the king Ranjit. His policy fulfilled by Bibhūti and the people of Śhivtarāi became helpless. They wanted a shelter which will save from the demon like Ranjit in disguise of a man. They ultimately depended on Prince Abhijit who suffered in pain and agony for the people of Śhivtarāi. They admired Abhijit like God of themselves in this tough situation. As prince came to know that he was left by an unknown mother besides the waterfall Muktadhārā. He said that he heard the call of his mother in the water of Muktadhārā. He loved that place and the waterfall Muktadhārā is a protest against the Machine age. It records the deep sympathy of the poet for the oppression, suppression, and exploitation by the machine are squeezing out the sweetness and tenderness of life. The ignorant, bewildered, helpless masses find the only ray of hope in the song of Dhananjoy Bairagi who sings to the glory of man and call for protest against the machine.

Conclusion:
The play shows how machine is an instrument in the hand of a relentless dictator. When the prince of Uttarkūta dies despite successfully breaking the dam and making the water-streams free, audience are spell-bound feeling the necessity of self-sacrifice in stopping the miseries of man by freeing nature from the shackles.

Footnotes:
3. ibid, pp 7-8.
4. ibid, p. 4.

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5. ibid,pp.4-5.
6. ibid,p.5.
7. ibid,p.8.
8. ibid,13-15.
10. ibid. p.65