

Dr VizaiBhaskar's Dramas: A Call for Social Change

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Literature is admirable because of its unique features. These features spark off the change in psyche and action of people. Literature through its aesthetic and artistry has designed and provoked the society to change positively. Every major revolution is inspired and spearheaded by the works of literature and that leads to affirmative changes in society. Literature has the enormous power and tremendous force to change the society and cultivated the path to walk on.

Dr Viazibhaskar, one of the most significant Telugu playwrights of Andhra Pradesh, resonates the social condition prevailing in Indian societies. His words have enormous powerful and potential to bring social change. His central aim of writing is to exterminate and reject social and political atrocities and biased treatment which becomes physical, social, psychological and financial hurdle for individual and social progress. His vision is to form a society where everyone is equal and enjoy equal status in society which may lead to global harmony. Through this paper attempt is made to study thoroughly and comprehend Dr Bhaskar's select plays 'The Return of Gandhi' and 'Ruthwik'.

Keywords: *aesthetic, artistry, spearhead, resonate, enormous power.*

Introduction:

Natyasastra or Dramas in India has had a rich glorious tradition which began its journey with Sanskrit plays. The fragrance of Indian tradition and culture is preserved in the dramas. Drama can educate, entertain and create awareness by opening up debates and manifest changes. Drama is the purest form of art and powerful medium of expression as it is representation of real and fictional life. Dr ViziaBhaskar, a well-known Telugu playwright, has enriched the soil of Indian drama by introducing the new realm of drama with fusion of reality and the mythology. He writes with passion, brilliance and dedication to highlight the problems which torture and torment the Indian spirit in modern times. He dares to point out the drawbacks that plague India, which stop her from moving full steam ahead on the path of success. Dr Bhaskar has been blessed with a sensitive eye and heart to observe, feel, express and understand our social problems. He raised his voice against social, economic, cultural and political oppression in form of caste, creed, demography and political system. Dehumanization, Caste discrimination, disrespect, greed for money and power, lust and unethical practices are the major issues of his writings.

The Return of Gandhi: An Awakening for Social Change:

Every literary creation is a gift to its society and has a significant message to convey through its story. Dr Bhaskar is a committed author and his writing shows his concern for the society and endeavours to bring the reflection of the realistic aspects of society. He has written more than twenty five dramas in Telugu which are

translated in many languages. He has received many awards and laurels from various Natak Academics. The Return of Gandhi is a political and philosophical master piece of Dr Bhaskar. The play attacks on corruption prevail in democratic country. Rebirth of Gandhi, attracts the attention of everyone.

Gandhi, father of the Nation, is the central figure of the play. The play is based on Hindu religious beliefs that people after their death will be treated in Heaven or Hell according to their deeds committed while they were alive. By using this belief, Dr Bhaskar brings back Gandhi on to the earth and poses the problem in front of audience and stimulates them to think about it. The play starts with Lord Yama and Chitragupta conversation and Gandhi was invited to Hell for trial. At the arrival of Gandhi, the atmosphere in Hell changes and occupied with fragrance. Chitragupta stands and says “Accept my salutation Mahatma! It’s my pleasure to serve you.” After the trial, the punishment was levied on him as a father to see the agony of his children. Gandhi was sent back to India from Yamaloka as he committed the biggest sin of winning freedom for an undeserved and immature nation.

On Gandhi Jayanthi, everywhere celebration is going on in India. Gandhi comes back to life by breaking his tomb and finds his follower Rajaram. During his stay in India, Gandhi experiences the pathetic condition of Indian society, which is as a whole got corrupted and degraded its moral values. Ministers are ready to stoop down to any level for the sake of power and money. Gandhi was astonished to see

that how people misuse independence. The playwright strongly presents how politician exploit Gandhi's name, statue and birth and death anniversaries for their benefits.

The play proceeds, Gandhi was shocked to see his name is in voting list but vote was already casted by someone else. He watches Assembly sessions and behaviour of ruling and opposition parties. Every party wants to get benefits of Gandhi's name and fames and offered him a bungalow and car to join their party. Ruling Party leader shamefully utters to Gandhi *"We are not bothered whether you are real Gandhi or a fake one. But people believe that you are real. They are ready to obey your orders. If you support our party, we will give you a decent house in Jubilee hills with a car and a phone. We will arrange yearly four foreign trips for you. For your benefit, we will turn a profit-making public sector undertaking into a sick unit and privatize it in favour of your people,"*

Gandhi repents of his freedom fight for this immature nation. Leaders, who sing empty platitudes for Mahatma Gandhi, make a conspiracy and strong evidences were created against Gandhi. Gandhi is convicted with a murder. The case moves to court and he himself is lawyer for his case.

The playwright ends the play with a positive hope which inspires readers and audience to introspect. Gandhi... *"Now I prefer to adhere to No-violence- 'Nirhima', which is greater than Ahimsa in which violence would be tackled firmly to protect the good and*

innocent. To propagate this, I will come back again, not in the human form, but in the purest form of consciousness- ChaitanyaSwaroopa. I will be everywhere and anywhere. There will be no barriers and frontiers for my presence. I will be in green leaves and blooming flowers. I will be in the rays of rising Sun and the brightening Moon. I will be in the shining Stars and raining Clouds. In the dawn and dusk, in the air and water and pervade every nook and corner of my motherland. I will become the body, mind and soul of common man to unearth the hidden, illegal treasure to prevent the immortal ways of power and to cut down the crooked wings of untruth, the wicked strings of selfishness. Beware!Be careful! I will come like spring thunder! Yes! I will come again. Again and again to this holy land till the end of political turmoil.”(p.81)

The court announces death sentence on Gandhi. Before implementing the punishment a PushpakaVimana comes from Heaven to take Gandhi back.

The play ‘*The Return of Gandhi*’ is an imaginative and illusionary experiment of Dr Bhaskar. The intellectual experiment made by him is first of its kind. It is very successful in achieving its goal. Audience witness many realities that are happening in every part of our country and provoke the youth to realize the power of Gandhism to bring social change. Dr Bhaskar usher a hope in audience by advocating ‘No-Violence’ Nirhimsa which is greater than Ahimsa. No-Violence teaches us how to tackle violence to protect the good and innocent.

Ruthwik: A waking for Individual Integrity:

VizaiBhaskar's another play 'Ruthwik' is a moral play deals with unrest in the world. Ruthwik, a character, opens up the play by sermonizing with a Sanskrit verse DurjanoParharthavyoVidyayalankruthopisanManinaBhushithassarpaKimasowNa Bhayankara to invoke the inner conscience of the audience to think about the deteriorating human values and relationships. He advises that we need to move towards universal peace. He demands to find the root cause of sufferings.

Ruthwik, a spiritual anchor and prominent character in the play, speaks about the importance of Dharma's presence in every individual's life. A middle class family of Manmadha Rao, reflects modern families with their selfish desires and greed, suffers and loses their peace by neglecting the practice of faithfulness, honesty and loyalty. Manmadha Rao and his family adopt all ill-wills practices of modern man like greed of money, unlawful practices and disloyalty. The drama shows the path of liberation, new outlook and emancipation from suffering.

ManmadhaRao cheats his wife and maintains illegal relationship with his typist Manjula. His vagabond son Sekhar has no attachment with family. Manikyam wife of ManmadhaRao, a middle class house wife, tries to be modern. She is very greedy and obtains her husband's illegal property in her name.

"May God forbid!If something odd happens to you tomorrow due to my

misfortune, will anybody around me come to my rescue and allow me to enjoy the property? How am I to survive?”(P48)

Abbulu, Manikyam’s brother, is an opportunist who lives under the grace of his brother-in law ManmadhaRao but takes the advantage of his trust. He takes share of money with lawyer Rama Murthy. His dishonesty and opportunist quality is found as follows:

“No more sharing hereafter Mr Rama Murthy! Management comes into my hands! Brother-in-law will not recover from bed in near future! So, no need for manipulation and no scope for your share!” (P22)

In the final scene, the height of selfishness is presented. Manikyam is hurt and wounded by her son and brother. ManmadhaRao was very shocked to see his wife’s condition. He repents and realizes that he has been punished for his deeds. Ruthwik ends the play by highlighting the significance of spiritual living and truth loving.

Dr Bhaskar points out that the characters are victim of modernization and how man is losing his ability to think and lead a happy life. God bestows boon in form of human life, how the man is using the boon for evil practice and losing its blessings. He advised the audience to use their wisdom to lead a happy life. Human life can attain bliss with virtues like love, care, share, concern and sympathy.

Dr VizaiBhaskar’s plays ‘*Ruthwik*’ and ‘*The Return of Gandhi*’ shows that exploitative practices are prevalent in every society all over the world. These practices originate due to human greed for power,

money, authority and superiority. These social evils become a scar on the face of any civilized country. In the play Ruthwik, Ruthwik speaks about significance of spiritual living and truth loving. He strives to see the whole world should live like a family aspire for universal peace and practice the concept of VasudhaikaKutumbam. The playwright has used Ruthwik and Gandhi as his mouthpiece to spread the message of universal peace. In The Return of Gandhi, Gandhi's vision is establishment of Rama Rajyam. Rama Rajyam is the ideal state where everyone lives in harmony, equality, freedom and brotherhood among all the section of society.

Conclusion:

VizaiBhaskarhas through the medium of his writing mirrored the various phases of social problems of India. His body of work underlines the specific features of social problems like corruption, degradation of moral values which engage our attention and also seek to give us direction in order to solve the problems. Overall, through his writings he emerges as a humanist and social critic who not only criticises but also shows the path of contentment in life. His writings are immensely readable and easily convey serious issues in simpler manner. His plays entertain, educate, teach us to introspect and give direction to solve our problems. Dr Bhaskar through his writings tried to fulfil his duty as writer.

Dr VizaiBhaskaris a virtuous playwright who is concerned about humanity and mankind above anything else. He is a true leader who wants to change the existing state of things for the betterment of

humanity; a saint who has an enlightened thought process; a social reformer who cannot stand the sufferings of the weaker section of people; and above all a human being who believes in his duty bestowed upon him as a writer to nurture the earth as a better place than it was. In fact Dr Bhaskar is a social reformer in a form of an ordinary man who wants to serve the humanity in extraordinary ways.

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