

সামাজিক ন্যায় বিচার প্রতিষ্ঠায় দৃঢ়প্রতিজ্ঞ বাবা সাহেব শুধুমাত্র যে অস্পৃশ্য-অচ্ছ্যৎ দলিত এর জন্যই ভেবেছেন তা কিন্তু নয়। তিনি দেখেছিলেন সমাজে একইভাবে পিছিয়ে রয়েছে নারীরাও। তিনি লক্ষ্য করেছিলেন এই সমাজ ব্যবস্থাতে দলিত, শ্রমিক ও স্ত্রী জাতি সার্বাধিক দমিতা। তিনি বলেছিলেন, “ব্রাহ্মণ্যবাদী সমাজ ব্যবস্থায় সব থেকে বেশী নির্যাতনের শিকার হয়েছে নারী সমাজ। তারা জন্ম থেকে মৃত্যু পর্যন্ত অধিকার বিহীন থেকে পুরুষের কৃপার পাত্র অথবা ভোগের সামগ্রী হয়ে বেঁচে রয়েছে। নারী সমাজের প্রতি এতবড় অসম্মান আর কোন ধর্ম করেনি। কেন্দ্রীয় আইন মন্ত্রী থাকাকালীন সময়ে হিন্দু সমাজের সংস্কারের উদ্দেশ্যে হিন্দু কোড বিল তৈরীর ভার প্রধান মন্ত্রী নেহেরু তাঁকে অর্পণ করেন। সমাজ সংস্কারক উৎসাহী আশ্বেদকর বিলে যৌথ পরিবারের ক্ষতিকারক দিক হিসাবে মেয়েদের অধিকার, বিবাহ ও বিবাহ-বিচ্ছেদ প্রভৃতি বিষয়ে ডঃ আশ্বেদকরের প্রস্তাব সমূহ হিন্দু সমাজের প্রতিক্রিয়াশীল রক্ষণশীলদের প্রবল বাধার মুখে পড়ে। হিন্দু কোড বিল নিয়ে বিতর্কে সামনে চলে আসে হিন্দু সমাজে নারীর অধিকারের প্রশ্নটি। এব্যাপারে আশ্বেদকর যা বলেছিলেন তা আজও সমানভাবে প্রাসঙ্গিক। তিনি বলেছিলেন, “হিন্দু সমাজ শূদ্রদের যে চোখে দেখে, নারীদেরও সেই একইভাবে দেখে— উভয়ের ক্ষেত্রেই সমাজ তাদের কোন অধিকারকে স্বীকৃতি দেয়নি। হিন্দু বিবাহের নিয়ম হচ্ছে— “Polygamy for man and perpetual slavery for the women” তিনি সমাজের কাছে আরো প্রশ্ন রেখেছিলেন এইভাবে “হিন্দু সমাজের বর্ণাশ্রম ব্যবস্থা কেবলমাত্র পুরুষদের জন্য। নারীর বর্ণাশ্রম নেই, কেন? তারা কি মানব সমাজের বাইরে? তারা কি গুণহীন? হিন্দু শাস্ত্রকারদের মতে নারী মাত্রই শূদ্রাণী এবং তার কোন স্বাধীন সত্ত্বা নেই। নারী সমাজের প্রতি এতবড় অসম্মান আরকোন ধর্ম করেনি। তিনি বিশ্বাস করতেন সমাজে নারীর অগ্রগতি ভিন্ন সমাজ এগিয়ে যেতে পারে না। তাই তিনি ছেলেদের পাশাপাশি মেয়েদেরও লেখাপড়ার ওপর জোড় দিয়েছিলেন।

বহুমুখী প্রতিভার অধিকারী সংগ্রামী পুরুষ ডঃ আশ্বেদকর তিনি শুধু সমাজ সংস্কারকই ছিলেন না তিনি দলিত সমাজের পরিব্রাতাও ছিলেন। জীবনের শুরুতে তিনি যে সমাজ সংস্কারের উপর জোড় দিয়েছিলেন সেই তিনিই জীবনের একটা সময়ে এসে যখন উপলব্ধি করলেন যে ধরণের সমাজ ব্যবস্থা প্রতিষ্ঠার স্বপ্ন তিনি দেখতেন তা ঠিক সেইভাবে সফলতা পেলনা। তাই তিনি আক্ষেপের সুরে বলেছিলেন “I feel sad because I have not been able to fulfil my mission to the extent I wanted” এর জন্য তিনি যেমন একদিকে বৃহত্তর সমাজ ব্যবস্থাকে দায়ী করেছেন অন্যদিকে তেমনি তার নিজের সমাজকেও দায়ী করেছেন এবং বিশেষ করে দায়ী করেছেন দলিত সম্প্রদায়ের সেই অংশটিকে যারা কিনা উচ্চশিক্ষা ও সম্মানজনক পেশা লাভ করা সত্ত্বেও তাদের সমাজেরই শোষিত দুর্ভাগ্য পীড়িত মানুষগুলির দিকে সহযোগিতার হাত বাড়িয়ে দিল না। ডঃ আশ্বেদকর তাদেরকেই দলিত সমাজের সবচেয়ে বড় শোষক হিসাবে চিহ্নিত করেছিলেন। এই প্রসঙ্গে বেদনার্ত ডঃ আশ্বেদকর আরো বলেছিলেন, “The educated higher educated class (from Dalit Samaj) have betrayed me. I had expected that after acquiring education- highly education - they will serve the society. But I see a crowd of clerks who are engaged in feeding their own stomach.” সমাজকে সম্পূর্ণ বৈষম্য মুক্ত ন্যায়ের নীতি প্রতিষ্ঠা করতে গেলে সমাজ সংস্কারের আগে রাজনৈতিক সংস্কার প্রয়োজন এই ভাবনাও একটা সময় তাঁর মনে স্থান করে নেয়। পুণায় একাটি অনুষ্ঠানে একটি বক্তব্যের মধ্যে দিয়েই তা স্পষ্ট হয়ে ওঠে। সেখানে তিনি বলেছিলেন, “আমি বিভিন্ন সম্প্রদায়ের মধ্যে ভোজ কিম্বা মন্দির, কূপ চাহিনা— আমি চাহি সরকারী চাকুরী, স্বাস্থ্য, বস্ত্র, শিক্ষা এবং অন্যান্য সুযোগ সুবিধা। সমাজে জাতিভেদ ছাড়া গুণভেদ ইত্যাদি অন্যান্য বৈষম্যও রহিয়াছে। এইসবের উচ্ছেদ সাধন করে রাজনৈতিক সংস্কারের প্রয়োজন। এই কারণে আমার মত এখন পরিবর্তিত হইয়াছে। আমি এখন বুঝিতে পারিয়াছি যে, সমাজ সংস্কারের পূর্বে শাসন সংস্কার হওয়া উচিত”।

In the very first part of the Trilogy 'Home Coming' we learn that the Mannon house is awaiting the homecoming of Brigadier Ezra Mannon. His wife Christine is having an illicit relationship with Adam Brant in his absence and planning to poison him to death. Lavinia is disgusted with her mother's love affair and decides to dedicate her life to her father to the extent of asking her lover Peter Niles not to think of marriage between the two anymore. She says "I can't marry anymore. Peter. I have got to stay at home." In reply Peter says, "He's got your mother". She replies sharply, "He needs me more! I am sorry, Peter."(p.12)

Lavinia's desire for her father is shown by O'Neill in the very initiation of the play. This desire for the father and rivalry with Christine makes the title relevant. She is going to be the Electra.

In the second act of the homecoming, in the first part of the trilogy Lavinia tells her mother that she has discovered her secret. She says, "Stop lying, I tell you! I went upstairs! I heard you telling him- "I love you Adam"- and kissing him! Yo vile- ! You're shameless and evil! Even if you are my mother, I say it."(p.29)

Just before the lines she said "How can you lie like that? How can you be so vile as to try to use me to hide your adultery?"(p.29) when Christine said that she went to meet Adam just because he wanted to talk about Lavinia.

This rage and outburst of Lavinia is evident of her Love for her father, made more explicit by the stage direction of the act in its beginning which reads "...she turns slowly to her father's portrait and for a moment stares at it fixedly. Then she goes to it and puts her hand over one of his hands with a loving protecting gesture"(p.28)

In this very act Christine blames Lavinia of trying to take her place and wanted to become the "wife of your father and the mother of Orin" (p.32) On the contrary Lavinia blames her mother for stealing all love from her the love of a father and the love of a brother.

O'Neill introduced and developed the themes of Oedipus and Electra complex in the same act by positioning the two women in rivalry to each other for love from the men in the family. Christine is attached to Orin while Lavinia to Ezra. Christine hates her husband and considers Lavinia to be born of her father only.

In the third act Christine says to Lavinia, "why don't you marry Peter? You don't want to be left an old maid, do you?" (p.46)Lavinia replies "you needn't hope to get rid of me that way. I am not marrying anymore. I've got my duty to father."(p.46)

Lavinia's complete rejection of marital life enhances the theme of Electra complex or female oedipal complex as Freud propounded.

In the same scene the moment Ezra returns and praises his wife, Lavinia seizes the opportunity to shower her love to her father in order to compete with her mother. She asks Ezra to come in and says "...I'll get you something to eat. You poor dear, you must be starved"(p.49). Though Ezra revealed at his daughter's coddling but felt embarrassed before his wife.

In this act we get a bit of hint about the oedipal complex of Orin when Ezra reports Orin's being in brain fever, wounded in the war. In his stage of mental disorder Orin behaved like a little boy and behaved as if he was talking to his mother. Perhaps Orin's injury to his brain drove him to the imaginary stage from the symbolic stage of the pre-war life where there is no distinction between the self and the other and there is a kind of idealized identification with the mother. This is the reason perhaps that Orin behaved like a baby and his father consequently warned Christine.

"I don't want you to baby him when he comes home, Christine..."(p.50) Ezra Mannon deliberately wants to keep Orin in the symbolic stage to prohibit the development of any oedipal complex in him. Ezra wants no rival in his love to Christine and fears to share the love.

In the last part of the act three of homecoming Lavinia reiterates her love for her father and says, "...You are the only man I'll ever love! I am going to stay with you" (p.52) to which Ezra replies "I hope so. I want you to remain my little girl..."(p.52)

Now Ezra and Christine move to the bedroom. Ezra says that he is feeling strange as if he were afraid Christine is waiting for his death to set her free. This angers Christine and she reveals to Ezra how she fell in love with Adam. Ezra is shaken and asks for medicine. Instead of medicine Christine offers her pellets of poison and administers one to him. Before his death Ezra calls Lavinia and cries out. "She is guilty - not medicine"(p.65) This reveals the kind of trust that existed between father and daughter. Here the ironical title of the first part Homecoming becomes apt.

In this stage directions of the next part of the trilogy 'The Haunted' we learn that Orin's face has a boyish charm which can make women want to mother him. He wears a moustache similar to Adam Brant which hints at the ugly history of the family. Orin's child like face reinforces the idea of his being in imaginary state.

On his return home Orin is haunted by the images of war. His mind is full of the battle imaginary. Here war may have been deliberately used by Orin as a metaphor for the rivalry with his own father, the oedipal war against the law of the father, the prohibition that Ezra was talking about in the first part of the trilogy. The adjustment problem of Orin can be linked to his denial to fit in the symbolic order and his desire to perpetuate the idyllic order of the imaginary state.

Christine identifies his need for a relief from the war he carries within his psycho and adores him through words common to childhood. My boy! My baby! And kisses him.

In the second act of the *Haunted Orin* quite unconsciously reveals his oedipal fixation when he tells his mother how younger and beautiful she looks now. But strangely Orin discovers her beauty coincidentally with the death of his father the patriarch the symbol of prohibition the law. With the start of the act two of the *Hunted Orin* is already under Christine's influence. He says that he is not sorry at his father's death. This brings the mother and the son close and in confidence. Orin pledges that Lavinia will not be able to come between them and he will not let Lavinia to turn him against her. Suddenly Orin changes the topic and starts discussing with his mother, his trip to the South Sea Islands. Referring to the book *Typee* he says when he was out of his mind, he felt he was amidst the beauties of nature and that his mother was also with him. He promises Christine that he will never marry Hazel or any other girl and that she will be his "only girl", Christine tell him that she still considers him to be her boy. Christine then discloses her plan to Orin that after Lavinia marries Peter Niles Orin should live with her ever after. This scene completes the bonding of mother and child and brings to surface the imaginary stage where the self and the other mingle.

In the next acts Orin is disillusioned by being told by Lavinia that his mother betrayed his father. Lavinia instigates him to murder Adam Brant and finally Adam Brant is shot dead. The moment Orin kills Adam Brant his mother Christine unable to bear the insult of being traced and adultress shoots herself in guilt. Orin considers himself responsible for the death of his mother and becomes a cry baby (in Lavinia's words) again. In this act O'Neill introduces the theme of incest. Lavinia and Orin came closer and she says, 'you have me, haven't you? I love you I'll help you to forget'.

In the last part of the trilogy named *The Haunted Lavinia* behaves with Orin exactly as Christine used to behave with his father. She is now a mature woman who resembles her mother in the brown gold hair. Orin says "You don't know how like mother you've become" Lavinia replies "you really think I am pretty now as she was, Orin?" Orin assumes the role of father conscious of the fact that Lavinia is in the role of his mother and transformation is complete. Orin's attachment to Lavinia is incestuous when he says "I love you now with all the guilt in me - the guilt we share! Perhaps I love you too much" In Act one Scene two of the *Haunted Orin* becomes too much possessive about Lavinia and accuses her of entertaining a fancy for Wilkin (a ship officer) Adam and Avahanni (a native on the island they visited recently) Lavinia makes him jealous by pretending that she loved the native Avahanni. Orin does not want Lavinia to marry Peter Niles and decides

to live with Lavinia. But when he is unable to force Lavinia to change his decision he commits suicide.

Before committing suicide Orin poisons the mind of Peter by filtering it with doubts about Lavinia's chastity and Peter leaves Lavinia to Mourn because Mourning becomes Lavinia / Electra.

This psychoanalytic perspective on the text can also be supplemented by the autobiographical elements in the life of Eugene O'Neill's devotion to his mother and the fact that Eugene always thought that this devotion kept his brother unmarried. Eugene's own attachment to his mother was deep and firm. Travis Bogard has aptly pointed out O'Neill is right in asserting that as a dramatist, and therefore presumably as a student of human nature he will necessarily see patterns that reflect Freudian truths. Yet this explanation, while it satisfies for Shakespeare and for Sophocles does not quite relieve O'Neill of indebtedness to psychoanalytic theory which loomed large in his life in the years immediately preceding the writing of the trilogy."

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