



Dr. Santha Kumari

Uplifting the Oppressed

Critical study of Dr. D Vizai Bhaskar's Plays

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UPLIFTING THE OPPRESSED: A STUDY ON DR. D. VIZAI BHASKAR'S SELECT PLAYS

India is a land of rich culture, tradition and rituals. India stands as an icon for *Unity in Diversity*. People of different race, class, ethnicity and cultures live in India. The greatness of India is seen in its acceptability of multi-culture, multi-lingual and multi-racial environment. Such a great land with sound history, culture and tradition is not free from unavoidable social evils like caste discrimination, economic inequalities, political disorder and gender bar. Specifically in Andhra the problem of caste and religion is very prominent. This project is an attempt to create possible awareness among people about downtrodden, suppressed and marginalised communities and their suffering. The select works of Dr. D. Vizai Bhaskar are taken up for analysis to approach the above mentioned problems in a appropriate direction. According to him "art is an organized expression of human experience and it is the supreme creative complementation to life. It is the representation of the highest creative ability, the nature endowed the man with." He rightly said that " The inner spirit of Nature is its creativity and the whole universe is its Theatre. Hence, the medium to represent all social problems is Drama. Dr. D. Vizai Bhaskar is a popular Telugu playwright and also recipient of Prestigious Sangeetha Nataka Academy Award. His plays are thought provoking. In almost all his plays he shows his social concern towards society and the downtrodden communities. *The Return of Gandhi, The Chair, Riding the Tiger, Barber, the King* are taken up for the detailed study with reference to Sootha Theatre Theory to explore the intensity of the problem of existence of the deprived classes in the society. These works majorly focus on the difficulties, problems and ill-treatment of weaker sections. According to him accumulation of knowledge in the hands of so called higher communities is a sin. Knowledge has to be distributed equally. Talent and

capabilities or abilities must be judged based on the efforts of that person concerned but not based on their communities and caste. Thought should be fed but not the caste.

No dramatist can deliberately set out to be a political dramatist, just as no playwright can set out to belong to any other of the labels under which literary critics tend to classify him. A work of art is a collage, in the creation of which many factors such as history, politics, social values, class and ethnic distinctions, personal prejudices, mystical visions and intellectual speculations combine in an intimate and its times unexplainable manner. Scientists, philosophers, historians, architects, medical doctors, too possess the same gift of synthesis -- to a measure. Only while their work can be continued in isolation from the prevailing scene of the day, the artist, or more specifically, the novelist, since he has to create an illusion of wholeness, of completeness of life, must live and work in the very midst of what is his raw material.

It has been said that every writer is the son of his age. One could perhaps say with equal force that every writer is the prisoner of his age; he simply cannot escape the limitations which he is born an heir to. He must be very conscious at the time of composition. He must choose to write the book of specific kind.

To establish the right approach to the problems mentioned above, powerful theory must be applied. Different approaches have their separate traditions and histories, but several ideas are recurrent in critical theory and seem to form what might be regarded as its common bedrock. hence, it makes some sense to speak of 'theory' as if it were a single entity with a set of underlying beliefs, as long as we are aware that doing so is a simplification.

Many of the notions which could we would usually regards as the basic 'givens' of our existence(including our gender identity, individual selfhood, and the notion of literature itself) are actually fluid and unstable things , rather than fixed and reliable essences. instead of being

solidly 'there' in the real world of fact and experience, they are 'socially constructed', that is , dependent on social and political forces and on shifting ways of seeing and thinking.

Theorists generally believe that all thinking and investigation is necessary affected and largely determined by prior ideological commitment. the notion of disinterested enquiry is therefore untenable: none of us, they would argue is capable of standing back from the scales and weighing things up dispassionately; rather, all investigators have a thumb on one side or other of the scales. Every practical procedure presupposes a theoretical perspective of some kind. Hence, theorists distrust all 'totalising' notions. for instance, the notion of 'great' books as an absolute and self-sustaining category is to be distrusted, as books always arise out of a particular socio-political situation, and this situation should not be suppressed, as tends to happen when they are promoted to 'greatness'. Likewise, the concept of a 'human nature' , as a generalised norm which transcends the idea of a particular race, gender, or class is to be distrusted too, since it is usually in practice is human centric. Thus, the appeal to the idea of a generalised, supposedly inclusive, human nature is likely in practice to marginalise, or denigrate, or even deny the humanity of women, or disadvantaged groups. On the whole the theory is based on five outstanding features those are as follows:

Politics is pervasive,

Language is constitutive,

Truth is provisional,

Meaning is contingent,

Human nature is a myth.

The Return of Gandhi, The Chair, Riding the Tiger, Barber, The King are four major plays which explore the social realities and existential questions. In *The Return of Gandhi*, Gandhiji has been sent to the gallows in the end, by the unstable rulers of the present day India, he says that he would return as the 'Spring Thunder' to bring about the social change what he expected along with many dedicated, honest and committed great souls of his time, had won freedom from the authoritative 'White rule'.

The Indian political situation is not free from totalitarianism which conceptually developed in 1920's by Italian Fasists. Totalitarianism is defined as "a political system in which the government controls every aspect of its citizens' public and private lives. An example of totalitarianism can be seen in a government that does not permit individual freedoms of any kind." Of course in India democracy is in practice but when it comes to the downtrodden and oppressed section of people the meaning of democracy completely takes a new shape. By and large it appears as an image of totalitarianism and people suffer, struggle and controlled by the external forces such as race, ethnicity, culture and community. All the marginalised lead an absurd life and forced to accept the unacceptable for their survival. They are all made existential outsiders in the society by the so called community heads and fixed leaders.

The second play *The Chair* is about the social revolutionary change. Historically speaking human societies all over the world had been driven by divisions such as class, caste, language, religion, geography resulting in social conflicts, civil wars, international and global wars. When we speak about all these in this modern era surprisingly this historical legacy continues and we stand as a witness to racial and colour prejudices molesting peace and harmony among societies. To avoid different kinds of prejudices existed in the society India has adopted the secular democracy constitution that provides equal respect to all religions and

castes in a multicultural society. Influenced by the ideology of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar the dramatist, presented the drama in a very effective manner considering the social and economical problems of the people. His target is not to reach the erudite men but to awaken suppressed masses subjugated and marginalized ordinary human beings, who's being is always under question.

Indian constitution is framed in such a way in the post-colonial period that it makes endeavour to fulfill those expectations which were created by its people while they were under the yoke of the Bruisers. Post-colonial constitutions therefore have an agenda of development and always expect social change. Indian constitution has opened up new avenues of human welfare and development in the Indian sub-continent by providing equal rights and privileges to the citizens at large. The preparation of constitution aimed at whole society in general and underprivileged sections in particular.

Riding the Tiger, this play displays a tyrannical trend of 'Factionism' predominantly found in Rayalseema region of Andhra Pradesh. It deals with the typical problem of 'factionism' with pure sensitivity and everyday reality. Writer takes the responsibility to uproot the deeply rooted problem of factionism in that area by approaching it with committed spirit and social reformist attitude which aims at enlightening unfortunate victims of violence just for the sake of upholding the authoritarian status of a handful of landlords and warlords.

Rajjgaadu Rajayyaadu is an interesting play by Dr. D. Vizai Bhaskar. The play consists of three important features as mentioned by Vaadrevu China Veerabhadru that : first , this is a work that has inherited that tradition of North Andhra Literature, Secondly it unveils life in the country- wide protests and movements for social justice and equality , untouched so far by literature; and a narrative mode lost in the dark folds of epics; and thirdly, this is a new experiment in dramaturgy, intensely relevant to modern needs of today.

The barber, being derogatorily called 'Rajigadu', revolts against the system unable to bear the discrimination and exploitation because of his caste, realises that release for him is possible only through attainment of political power, and therefore gathers support from various communities of the village to become the Sarpanch. This is the theme of the play. Raji becoming Rajayya is the result of a big confrontation.

A country and its system look great to those people who have benefited from the system. They praise the country and the system. Though the social fabric has changed, they continue to pay lip service to it. For those who have not benefited from the system and who have been oppressed and insulted, neither the country nor the system appear in anyway praiseworthy. They find nothing to praise in the system. Their descendants too cannot admire it. Even when the social situation has changed, they are critical and wary towards it. If some of these losers are seen praising the system, it only means that they have been inoculated by the benefited. The severe criticism of today's social structure by the Leftists, Dalits, Bahujans, the minority groups, feminists and regionalists is all the criticism of those that have lost. Writers too side with those who have benefited or those who have lost. Dr Vizai Bhaskar has written this play in support of the losers.

Dr. Vizai Bhaskar does not write for entertainment. He is a realistic writer, and is using drama as a tool to revolutionize society. He is a champion of the working class, the labour. He is concerned that the society we live in should be habitable for one and all. He is anxious that this society should belong to the toilers. He feels that it is unjust and unfair for the leisurely class to suppress the working class. He is using his plays to set right this topsy-turvy society. Apparently, Ambedkarism that has amalgamated Marxism is the basis of his outlook. He desires that the working classes belonging to the Dalit and Bahujan communities should rise to

be rulers of the land. He is convinced that it is only through wielding political power can their problem be resolved. *Rajigadu Rajayyadu* is a play written from this viewpoint.

This project is aimed at exploring the questions, answers to those questions, problems, remedies or solutions to those problems, which are posed by society to the unprivileged sections. Since, the author believes that the theatre alone can impress upon people with its powerful operative medium to impart social change and communal awareness, this project would definitely be instrumental in identifying the social, economic, political and religious problems of current Indian society and also to provide solutions for those problems and bring about progressive societal change.

Scope for further Research:

This project would create awareness on everyday realities of culture, complex contemporary life, and critical aesthetics of dialectical materialism, violence, political and economic anxieties in the society. These problems can be explored and thrown for discussion by research scholars and professors to suggest relevant or possible remedies to the problems and can come up with novel opinions and advices. To make the discussion more valid and authentic they could even refer to 'Sootha Theatre' written by Dr. D. Vizai Bhaskar. Many of his plays are translated into various languages which demands the need for the awareness among general folk regarding the most recurrent and burning issues of the state and society. Language itself conditions, limits, and predetermines what we see. Thus, all reality is constructed through language, so that nothing is simply 'there' in an unproblematic way - everything is a linguistic/ textual construct. Language doesn't record reality, it shapes and created it, so that the whole of our universe is

textual. Further, for the theorist, meaning is jointly constructed by reader and writer. It isn't just 'there' and waiting before we get to the text but requires the reader's contribution to bring it into being.

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CHAPTER-I INTRODUCTION

India and Indian literature had existed as idea and images in creative writing in the country for centuries; but they began to emerge as critical concepts and tools of comparison probably only in the nineteenth century when the western scholars inspired by the affinity between European and Indo-Aryan languages, began to study the literatures in Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit that they called "Indian Literature". Of course this was a typical distortion since they took into their account of 'Indian' literature neither the great classical literatures of south Indian Dravidian languages like Tamil and Kannada nor contemporary literatures in all Indian languages including the modern Indo-Aryan ones. This was not an unconscious error; they knew such literatures existed. But their racial, colonial ideology, later identified as 'orientalism' would not permit them to admit that the pre-aryan inhabitants of India could produce any great literature or civilisation or that the subjects of colonial India were capable of producing a literature far more various and richer than their own contemporary literature.

'Post-colonial literature' is one of the interesting term , it is supposed, like other subaltern theories of literature, to privilege those who have sentenced by history to subjugation, diaspora and displacement, and empower the marginalised by retrieving the voices, spaces and identities silenced or suppressed by colonial power. No enterprise can be more desirable than such an act of de-colonisation accompanied by decanonization. But for all practical purposes it is the old " Commonwealth Literature" fashionably rechristened. The title post-colonial embraces, atleast in its " actually existing" form in India, only Indian writing in English from Raja Rao to Salman Rushdie.

There are several writers and critics in India who argue that an Indian Literature does not simply exist, since India does not have a common language. The famous scholar-critic Nihar Ranjan Ray once argued that literature is entirely language based and language as a cultural phenomenon is all but wholly conditioned by its locale and the socio-political forces that have been operating there. Each language, he argued must have its own specific character of form, style, images, symbols, nuances and association; even its specific themes and contents. Literature of course has language specific qualities and language is a very decisive element of literature. However, language is not the sole identity of literature. It has other dimensions --- aesthetic, ethical, cultural, civilizational and historical. Several criteria other than linguistic have been applied to literature by readers and critics: of class, gender, subalternity, of mythical and archetypal patterns, value-systems, perceptual models, and relationships between discourse and power. All these elements that make literary translations, dialogues and comparisons possible also make literature a largely intertextual and even inter-cultural phenomenon whose writing and reading alike are controlled by historical forces, Pure aesthetes who turn literary texts into self-sufficient verbal icons may oppose this view: but even careful structural and semiotic analyses -- not to speak of cultural critiques -- are sure to bring out the extra-linguistic civilizational elements that go into their making.

The making of Indian literature began with the anti-colonial and reform-oriented movements of the nineteenth century. On the one hand the British had to fought, for which the tradition was upheld; on the other the tradition itself had to be re-examined as it also contained several retrogressive customs and practices like untouchability, caste distinctions, denial of remarriage to widows, patriarchy that oppressed and dominated women and sati or widow-burning. This double battle prompted the ambivalence common to the works of this epoch. Again we discover shared patterns of response and articulation in different Indian languages;

the same concerns inspire poets like Vallathol, Kumaran asan, Bhaiveersingh, Keshavsuta, Jaishankar Prasad, Sumitranandan Pant, K.V. Puttappa, D.R Bendre, Veeresalingam, Gulam Ahmad Mahjoor, Tagore and Nazrul Isalam. These writers reflect a genuine respect for India's cultural heritage and Indian values, protest against colonialism and articulate the common urge for social reform. Tagore, for instance attempted a synthesis of modern values and traditional culture, a theme he takes up in a paradigmatic novel like *Gora*.

Most of the writers positively responded to the new Western literary genres like short story, novel, biography, autobiography and literary criticism, and added them to their creative corpus by indigenising them completely and relating them to India's own narrative and critical traditions. At the same time many of them acknowledged and were even deeply influenced by Gandhism and or Marxism which co-existed in the 1930 s since both were driven by opposition to imperialism and concern for the dispossessed section of the society. The Progressive Writers Association which was originally established by some expatriate writers in London like Mulk Raj Anand, soon became a great pan-Indian movement that brought together Gandhian and Marxism insights into Indian literature and society. Its first national conference was held in Lucknow in 1936 with Premchand as president and the second in Calcutta in 1939 that began with a speech by Rabindranath Tagore. The movement was especially conspicuous in Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, Bengali, Telugu and Malayalam; nonetheless its impact was felt all over India.

The Modernism of the fifties and the sixties was also a pan-Indian shift in sensibility and idiom as most Indian languages together experienced the trauma of development with its urbanisation and the consequent alienation and loss of individual identity. The concerns now were more ontological than sociological and the form was foregrounded in an attempt to subvert the existing canons and norms. The developments after Modernism, again, seem not to be confined to one language or region alone -- the Dalit movement the Women's movement, the

literature of ecological concerns -- all these cut across provincial and linguistic boundaries. The thoughtless globalisation that often looks like a re-colonisation and the erosion of values in public life make for a common agenda and a common platform for sensitive writers who increasingly feel that the very existence of serious literature is under threat from the market forces. Rooted inextricably in their social, historical and cultural contexts, Indian writers therefore continue to be, first and foremost, Indian whatever language they write in. This basic unity has in no way eroded the fascinating diversity of our literatures. The local traditions the rhythms of popular speech, the varying landscapes, ethnic communities with their lifestyles and styles of worship and celebration, folklore and forms of art, the general level of awareness, dissemination of diverse ideologies, different combinations of external influences and native elements and the particular genius of each language have given our literatures specific tones, flavours, directions, cultural registers, semantic codes and individual histories that hold a special relation to the general history of Indian literature.

Indian literary encounters of the last fifty years may well be looked at as a series of attempts to grapple with the post-colonial situation. Paradigms are tried and given up; communities are imagined and dissolved; traditions are constructed and deconstructed; the principles of unity and of difference are alternately tried out; the West's presence is acknowledged and negated; radical European concepts and models are alternated with return to the indigenous roots; the classical and the folk elements of the heritage, the written and the oral / performed are explored one after the other. The creativity has thus been dialogic, and our literary discourse marked by the negotiation of a necessary heterogeneity, by a conception of identity that lives through difference and hybridity.

Considering all these changes in the Indian literature here is a writer who has chosen the drama as powerful medium of expression and social transformation has come up with novel

ideas and thought provoking concepts. When we look at the English theatre from modern perspective a lot of characteristics of English theatre travelled to India. The early twentieth century saw a lot of English plays being staged in different parts of India. Indian theatre in the twentieth century owes a great deal of ideas and influences from across the continent from both Europe and America. Both in the first and second world war, idealistic men and women struggled to put across a paper their concerns about the rights and desires of a burgeoning population. The twentieth century is about the spread of notions of democracy all over the world and its implementation in political governments as well. In India also people struggled in the formative years of the twentieth century with colonialism and our own struggles for independence from British Rule. Along side, a strong sense of our identity as Indians people also tried to negotiate the difficulties imposed by rigid caste structures and ossified gender roles and expectations.

Contemporary Indian drama deviating from classical and European models is experimental and innovative in terms of thematic and technical qualities. It is not an off spring of any specific tradition and it has laid the foundation of a distinctive tradition in the history of world drama by reinvestigating history, legend, myth, religion, and folklore with context to contemporary socio-political issues.

Dr. D Vizai Bhaskar is quite simply the most extraordinary playwright of the twenty first century. Bhaskar has extended the boundaries of theatre both thematically and technically. His work is a continuous exploration of changes in society in terms of social conditions, political situations and cultural diversities. He uses both realism and fantasy to work out this task effectively. Bhaskar's plays deal with the external realities of everyday life. Over his thirty year career, he has dealt with a variety of themes of extra-literary importance such as caste

demarcation, oppression, deprivation, gender issues, marginalisation, politics, economy, ethnicity and so on.

Bhaskar is a natural writer: he has the prime novelistic gift of involving one so deeply in the desires and frustrations of his characters that one reads with a positive yearning to spend more time with them. He is active and prolific writer, always restless, moving, probing, testing, the limits of the possible and seeking new possibilities -- searching for " something new". It would be apt to call Vizai Bhaskar as a man of outstanding intelligence and considerable scholarship. He hails from a very simple middle class family from Ampolu village, Srikakulam district. His father Surya Narayana had very little education up to seventh class though his forefathers were totally illiterate. Bhaskar is the first graduate, postgraduate and doctorate in that community. During his childhood, he was not allowed to play Kabaddi with his fellow friends because of his inferior physical strength. He remained a spectator to all the games played by his friends. This rejection from his friends actually made him very strong in terms of academics and he wanted to prove himself as a good student. He wanted to project himself to his teachers and friends in a unique manner. He started reading popular Telugu periodicals like Balamitra, Chandamama and continued this habit. Taking interest not only in reading he started writing small poetry and verses and used to show them to his teacher in the class. His teacher was astonished about his way of writing appreciated him in the class in front of all his classmates and always encouraged him to continue writing. That is where actually his literary journey started. His mother Varalamma was a great inspiration for his imaginative writings. She was a very good story teller and a loving mother. She used to narrate folktales and introduced local oral tradition to the writer, which has helped him a lot in terms of writing stories with the help of myths and local legends.

Professionally speaking Bhaskar started his literary career with his debut play in the year 1982 titled *Turupu Thellarindi*. From then on wards he continued his writing with a great spirit and enthusiasm. His writings are of great literary importance. He has expertise in using different technique in writing dramas. He tried his hand in poetry and prose also but his major interest is drama. His writing career as a dramatist fetched him with many recognitions. He received many prestigious awards and got appreciation from scholarly people.

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CHAPTER -II

CASTE, REGION AND DRAMA

In the history of theatre new trend is set by the dramatists to present the social and moral issues in an effective manner by introducing a new kind of drama named 'Problem Play'. Problem play originated in 19th century popularized by the Norwegian playwright Ibsen, which deals with contemporary social and moral issues touched with melancholy and pessimism.

Problem plays deals with vehement social issues through debated between the characters on stage, who typically represent disputable view points with a realistic social context. In this kind of plays situations faced by the protagonist are put forward by the author as a representative instance of a contemporary social problem and poses a solution to it which is at odds with the prevailing opinion.

This kind of drama is supposed to have arisen out of the sentimental drama of 18th century and often been identified with 'serious drama'. This play essentially differs from tragedy even though it deals with serious issues it normally exhibits ideas, situations and feelings that lack tragic dimensions.

Taking this into consideration, when we look at the English theatre from modern perspective a lot of English theatre travelled to India. The early twentieth century saw a lot of English plays being staged in different parts of India. Indian theatre in the twentieth century owes a great deal of ideas and influences from across the continent from both Europe and America.

Both in the First and Second World War idealistic men and women struggled to put across a paper their concerns about the rights and desires of a burgeoning population. The twentieth Century is about the spread of notions of democracy all over the world and its

implementation in political governments as well. With the exception of small pockets in the world, most countries moved in the direction of governments by the people, of the people, and for the people. This did not of course mean that direction and several play wrights the world over began to engage with the lives of the ordinary people. Most of the characters in modern drama are from a new class that grew to its optimum in the twentieth century, namely the middle class.

In India we also struggled in the formative years of the twentieth century with colonialism and our won struggles for independence from British Rule. Alongside, a strong , a strong sense of our identity as Indians we also tried to negotiate the difficulties imposed by rigid caste structural and ossified gender roles and expectations.

Contemporary Indian drama, slightly different from classical and European models is experimental and innovative in terms of thematic and technical qualities. It is not an off spring of any specific tradition and it has laid the foundation of a distinctive tradition in the history of world drama by reinvestigating history, legend, myth, religion and folklore with context to contemporary socio-political issues.

The caste system and its attendant practice of untouchability were among the darkest blots on Indian society. The problem of untouchables is not a religious convention but it is a part of binary system that existed at the centre of social system rich-poor, male-female, east-west, elite and subaltern involving the politics of subjugation. With reference to the points discussed above here are few plays by Dr. D. Vizai Bhaskar which explore all these aspects of contemporary drama especially caste in relation to drama.

These dramas are summarized in a telegraphic manner, represent some of the problems we encounter in our day to day life. This chapter is an attempt to elaborate them in specific

historical contexts, as , hopefully, invitation to dialogue rather than confrontational polemic. An exploration of colonial and postcolonial historical consciousness, vital for understanding today's many worlds of history, can be useful also as the first of these contexts. A framework grounded in the assumption of pervasive colonial cultural domination has naturally paid considerable attention to the development of 'modern' attitudes towards history and in fact this provides at first sight exceptionally suitable material for a colonial discourse approach.

The colonial history, developed primarily to sustain and ratify British rule, quickly became the ground for contradictory and limited yet powerful assertions of patriotism is a well known and quite undeniable feature of nineteenth-century Bengali intellectual history. Yet some minutiae of dating and language indicate that it still puts the framework of derivative discourse under some strain.

The appeal of the state/ society disjunction at this specific historical conjuncture was clearly related to intelligentsia disillusionment both with 'improvement' under colonial hegemony and initiative, and the possibilities oppositional politics of what had widely come to be termed the 'mendicant' kind – a dual loss of faith that was not always accompanied by enthusiasm about the new politics of the extremist or terrorist varieties. Certain structural features of colonial rule also provided a basis for the conceptualization of samaj as autonomous from rashtra, and identifiable in the main with religious community rather than territorial nationhood. Census classification and enumeration helped to consolidate community boundaries defined in terms of religion and caste, while colonial justice made personal and family laws into distinct religious domains within which textualized norms of high-caste or ashraf social behavior were sought to be universalized in unprecedented way. In census and law alike, ' colonial knowledge' it need to be added , was not just a Western superimposition: such

an interpretation gravely underestimates the extent and significance of inputs from relatively privileged Indian groups with autonomous interests and inclinations.

For a more consistent elaboration of the implications of a Hindu communitarian ideology grounded in hierarchy we need to turn to Satish Mukherji and his *Dawn*. Mukherji's 'The Question of Caste' proclaimed axiomatically 'that in all ages and by virtue of a law of nature, there shall be inequalities and distinctions between man and man.' He reminded those who objected to caste as being hereditary that property, too, descended 'from father to son.' Admittedly, an element of flexibility enabling some promotions or demotions on the basis of merit was advisable to allow 'proper placement and chance of transfer' : but this necessarily presupposed ' a group who can make the best qualifications and traditional expertise for this job of guardianship. Thus a mildly reformist criticism of caste was neatly co-opted into a defence of Brahminical order.

An unintended consequence of this continued and indeed enhanced domination of the nationalist paradigm in historiography pertaining to colonial India has been yet another subordination of the social by the political or economic. The nineteenth-century prehistory of the nationalist middle class intelligentsia, constructed in terms of a narrative of education and social reform leading up to patriotism, received considerable attention: yet Jyothiba Phule symptomatically, had to wait for his first sophisticated historical study till Gail Omved's book in 1976. Lower caste protest had often developed antagonistic relationships with mainstream anti-colonial nationalism, and the penalty extracted was its frequent characterization as 'collaborative', 'devisive', or 'sectional'. Straight-forward anti-colonial narratives could be constructed fairly easily out of political and economic development : the social, inevitably constituted in large part also by ' internal' tensions, presented more intractable material for a

nationalist historiography committed to a saga of a basically united people. Openly communal histories could contribute even less, for the central assumption of homogenized, unchanging, and inevitably conflicting religious identities effectively blocked meaningful social-historical exploration. A critique of mainstream nationalism for its many 'betrayals' was mounted at times, it is true, by Left studies of class struggles of workers and peasants. But once again socio-cultural dimensions tended to get marginalized, as simplified Leninist framework gave priority to a combination of economic pressures and 'external' organisation, and tended often to get lost in debates on the correctness or otherwise of party strategies.

The would-be social historian of modern India had perforce often to turn for guidance to social anthropologists. But that too has been a domain full of problems, where conservative attitudes have often blended with structural-functionalist premises to produce abundance of bland, tension-denuded categories. Thus all kinds of caste mobility, including radical protest, have been grouped together under one label, 'Sanskritization', indicative primarily of the most assimilative kind of change. Lower-caste protests were gathering strength, forcing, after the Mandal flare-up in the mid-nineties, considerable rethinking among Left activists who had for long underestimated its autonomous appeal. History-writing was modified in this changed conjuncture in two more or less parallel but largely unconnected ways: the sudden popularity of 'histories from below' and quantum leap, virtually from scratch, in women's studies, increasingly informed by feminist approaches.

Subaltern studies, in particular, began with a programmatic statement, simultaneously critiquing the elitism of both colonialist and nationalist historiographies. The habit of looking at history solely from the top downwards, in terms of leaders mobilizing the masses through ideals, charisma, or manipulation, it was cogently argued, has often coincided with economic

assumptions: both had combined, even in Left historiography , to obstruct efforts at studying the consciousness and culture of subaltern groups.

Colonial exploitation and domination of course constituted the central set of relationships during these centuries. In so far as its cultural manifestations have been highly productive of undifferentiated illusions of progress, modernity or reason, the critique of colonial discourse does have its uses- though more perhaps in the West, and in English Literature circles, than in the specifically historical world of South Asia, where many of its findings sound rather familiar. There remains a need to recognize nuances and mediations, variations in the extent of colonial cultural or other domination across times, regions, social spaces, and the possibility of earlier tensions(around caste and gender, notably) being reproduced in ways no doubt conditioned by the colonial presence, but not uniquely determined by it. The traditional, orthodox-Marxist way of looking at the colonial world in terms of a series of class-determined oppositions to an alliance between imperialism and a subordinated feudalism rightly appears problem-ridden, stilted and reductionist today. But it did provide some space for distinguishing between varieties of nationalism in terms of their social perspectives and composition.

Taking all these discussed points into consideration here are a few plays by Vizai Bhaskar which focuses mainly on caste, gender and inequalities in the society. In one of the articles in news paper (Hans India) about his writings he says that “ the theatre is more meaningful when it highlights the problems of the underprivileged society as an effective people’s medium.” The main aim of theatre is not just to entertain the audience but to enlighten them on various problems existed in the society around them.

‘Riding the Tiger’ is an extra-ordinary realistic play written by Vizai Bhaskar which deals with the factionism and murders. Traditionally speaking this play is an out and out

tragedy which consists of great moral in it. Technically it can also be defined as a morality play. Faction as its definition says is an opposition who fights with larger group for its own ideas. So many deaths and murders happen in faction to create threat among people.

Ever since mankind invented slavery, the powerful have believed that their happiness could be achieved by means that involved inflicting misery on others. Gradually, with the growth of democracy, and with the quite modern application of Christian ethics to politics and economics, a better ideal than that of the slave-holders has begun to prevail, and the claims of justice are now acknowledged as they never were at any former time. But in seeking justice by means of elaborate systems we have been in danger of forgetting that justice alone is not enough.

One of the advantages to be gained from decentralization is that it provides new opportunities for hopefulness and for individual activities that embody hopes. If our political thoughts are all concerned with vast problems and dangers of world catastrophe, it is easy to become despairing. Fear of war, fear of revolution, fear of reaction, may obsess you according to your temperament and your party bias. Unless you are one of a very small number of powerful individuals, you are likely to feel that you cannot do much about these great issues. But in relation to smaller problems – those of your town, or your trade union, or the local branch of your political party, for example—you can hope to have a successful influence. This will engender a hopeful spirit, and a hopeful spirit is what is most needed if a way is to be found of dealing successfully with the larger problems. War and shortages and financial stringency have caused almost universal fatigue, and have made hopefulness seem shallow and insincere. Success, even if, at first, it is on a small scale, is the best cure for this mood of pessimistic weariness. And success, for most people, means breaking up our problems, and being free to concentrate on those that are not too desperately large.

Throughout the ages of human development men have been subject to miseries of two kinds: those imposed by external nature, and those that human beings misguidedly inflicted upon each other. At first, by far the worst evils were those that were due to the environment. Man was a rare species, whose survival was precarious. But the evils that men inflict upon each other have not diminished in the same degree. There are still wars, oppression, and hideous cruelties, and greedy men still snatch wealth from those who are less skillful or less ruthless than themselves. Love of power still leads to vast tyrannies or to mere obstruction when its grosser forms are impossible. And far-deep, scarcely conscious fear – is still the dominant motive in very many lives.

Riding the Tiger, deals with the most dangerous evil in the society i.e faction and violence. This violence is between two groups one is Ramireddy's group and the other Peddi Naidu group. Both of them are rivals and fight against each other. One group kill the other group men there sprouts the revenge. As mentioned by Francis Bacon in his essay 'Of Revenge' "Revenge is a kind of wild justice", these two groups consider taking revenge is the appropriate gesture. But the irony here is they don't involve in killing or murders but on their behalf their slaves fight for the lives of their masters. So called masters bluff their servants or slaves by offering lands and money and always encourage them to fight on their behalf at the cost of their lives. But of course these offers are not true and their promises are the broken proved to be broken promises. Munemma a very simple and docile character in the drama was upset about this kind of broken promises and ruthless acts by the so called masters expresses her agony and ferociousness by saying very harsh words to Ramreddy:

(Spits on his face) Shit! Damn your dirty lives! You'll be destroyed soon! For Quenching your thirst for blood and for satiating your venomous feelings, you are making all the town as burial grounds! For fulfilling your individual

revenge, you are reducing the villages into ashes! Yeh, Reddy! If you are really born on this land and if you are a full-fledged man with moustaches and if such moustaches possess any sort of prestige, it is not my husband's leg that is to be amputated, you cut away your own leg, I say! You take away your own life! Prestige does not mean taking away other's lives! Sacrificing your own life is what is known as prestige! Mind it! Come on! Kill yourself, I say!(180)

This particular dialogue stands as an eye opener for many innocent people involved in factionism and faction politics. In the first scene of the play the conversation between the daughter and father(Mareppa) is a very heart touching and sensible one. This particular scene awakens audience towards the faction reality in the society. When Mareppa's is explaining about his involvement in killing of someone on behalf of Reddy Saab, his daughter asked him that " But, if you get killed, who provides food to us, Daddy?" . Mareppa very quickly responds to her by saying:

Our Reddy Saab will feed you both, my child. He takes you and your mother to his bungalow and provides food and also clothing, besides pay you money! Further, he buys biscuits too for you!(174)

Mareppa gets upset when she asked " If that is so, when you die and reach the God, if my heart throbs to see you once, will he be able to show you me?" Mareppa took her into his folds with tears and in a fit of fury , and in distress he turned to his wife and very angrily says:

You bloody fool! Is it you who tutored all these words to my daughter? (he slapped her) Otherwise, how can this little child know all these points? Come on! Speak on, I say! Even if I cautioned you not to reveal these issues to the daughter, you did not heed my word. Obstinate fellow! Am I a crack to lose my

life for nothing? Do I ever desire to leave both of you to go elsewhere and die there on my own accord? I too have a loving heart, I say! At the same time, I am conscious of the fact that I have a loving daughter and that I should not make her future gloomy! What to do? The path I chose for my livelihood is a dirty one. I am protecting the faction revenges of elders of the village. What I am doing now is ‘ Tiger -ride’! Yeh! My life is a ride on the Tiger! Once we start riding the tiger, it is impossible to get down from it! If we attempt to get down, it will simply devour us. And, even if you don’t get down from it, after going on riding on it, we have to breathe our last on its back only! Foolish fellows like me are bound to meet such miserable death one day or the other! Once a person agreed to work under that Reddy , he is destined to continue there. If he discontinues in the middle, he will not be allowed to survive by that Reddy.”(174)

The helpless condition of Mareppa and his deep agony is not attributed to him alone but to all the victims of factionism. Many innocent people are misguided and attracted by faction leaders in order to protect their lives these people die. If at all Mareppa decides to free himself from Reddy and live a peaceful life , Reddy’s opposition Naidu will not allow him to live. He will be killed by Naidu.

In either way death is certain for Mareppa , he is helplessly between the devil and the deep sea. That’s why, by blindly following Reddy’s instruction Mareppa is leading his life and agreed to kill Ranganna. Mareppa says:

If I succeed in my mission of killing him, it’s alright! If I get killed in Ranganna’s hands, at least I get fame that I am a faithful servant! Then, that Reddy will definitely provide food and shelter for both of you. You are thinking

about life and death, but I am planning about your life after my death.... That is the difference... that is..(175) (he burst into tears....)

This play is a replica of true factinism. By the words of DSP who is portrayed as a powerful character in the play all the faction leaders are warned strongly by the dramatist. In scene IV of the play DSP says:

Shit! Why do you lead your dirty lives still? I ask you, can you walk freely in Public? Can you go anywhere on your own accord unaided by anybody? At least to your wife, can you go without being accompanied by the gunmen? Can you have a sound sleep in your bedrooms, either? Damn your dreadful lives! Yet you go on twisting your moustaches outside proudly and you lead miserable lives like dogs with panic! You wretched fellows!(225)

This play is not just to enlighten the helpless poor people involved in faction politics but also to warn and teach a lesson to the faction leaders. Naidu and Ramreddy both are realized of their mistakes at the end of the drama and says:

True Sir! It's only when our own lives are at stake, that we are able to realize how meaningless are the concepts of egoism and prestige! It's enough if I am simply allowed to go with life, I promise that I make a living by working under these fellows – yes! Under these men, for pretty wages doing hard labour! Please save me, Sir!(224)

Naidu also pronounced very regretful words and he repents for what he has done all these years of his life:

The value of life can be known only when a sword is kept on the neck! I bequeath all my lands, moveable and immovable properties in favour of these men! I leave this village, migrate to somewhere, with my wife and children leaving everything(225)

DSP scolds and make them realize of their mistakes once for all and says addressing henchmen that:

Leave away both of them! (They relieved both Peddianaidu and Ramireddy. Later they stood with heads down, feeling guilty and with shameful faces too).

If the revolutionary change in the people of the down-trodden classes is not realized and respected any time. The pointed edges of swords which merely touched your necks today might have truly be pushed in and cut your throats tomorrow! Mind it! The drama that is played here becomes a true incident! Keep it in mind forever!(225)

In the entire play among all the characters DSP acts as a motivating officer and a responsible person. His special attention to make the people realize their mistakes is remarkable. Closing of the drama with an inspirational, transformational note is something a very novel idea of the writer. It is fit to be called not just a problem play but also a morality play. DSP's dialogue at the end of the drama conveys the right intention of the dramatist and he says:

If goondas and factionists are ruling the land, we are responsible for that situation. In this country, not individual or institution is greater than the government! The horse may move its tail but the tail should not make its horse to dance to its tunes. Please do not glorify rowdyism and factionism or do not make

it glamorous. We have to take the bull by the horns; otherwise it will take us by hair. Please remember, if a short man gets a longer shadow it indicates that the Sun is going to sink. It is not deadly weapons that we have to hold, but the pigeons symbolizing peace and harmony. It is not the songs of violence that we have to sing, but poems of friendship and fraternity. Come on! Join hands with us for moving towards a faction-less and philanthropic society. Let us chant in one voice the Vedic rhyme for our peaceful co-existence! (227).

The element of caste is very well discussed in the play *The Chair*. The setting of the play is in the house in SC's Colony. A photo of Ambedkar stood hung to the wall. The house belongs to one Narasaiah, the Sarpanch of that village. The poverty and misery usually discernible, in SC's Colony are apparently visible in this house too!. Based on the community and reservation Narasaiah becomes the Sarpanch and it is something unusual for a person like him. Sunkulu the wife of Narasaiah feels so happy about it. She says : Yah! Yah! Wonders will happen hereafter in our lives it seems. While the discussion is going on barber Jogulu came carrying a Chair with him. He kept it in a corner. Jogulu says: "Listen! Occupying this Chair only, our Dora has ruled our village continuously for over twenty years and settled many issues, you know?"(90). Narasaiah says if that is so why did you bring it here? Jogulu responds to it and says: Listen! Our Dora is now an ex-sarpanch! And, you are the present one! So Dora sent this to you.

Narasaiah's is not ready to occupy the chair instead he says: how can I use the Chair on which Dora sat all these years? When Sunkulu asked Jogulu about the Chair on which her husband is about to sit: Will it be for us forever? Jogulu says this will be with you forever because Dora will not touch this chair at all, once this fellow used it? No Never! Sunkulu feels very happy and she says: How beautiful it is, my hubby! That's why perhaps elders say that it is

wise to live for a few months as a swan instead of having a long life like a crow! When you became Sarpanch, what a high honour is showered on you? Dear husband, be seated on this Chair once! I'll witness this grand event in a Dalit life. (With a high aspiration , she made that request). When Tippadu comes to call Narasaiah to attend the meeting, Jogulu advised him to not to attend meeting. But is ready to go along with Thippadu. Jogulu once again warned him to not to attend meeting. If he attends the Meeting, he lands himself in troubles. Patel's followers are preparing complaints against Dora, saying that he swallowed away Panchayat funds. On that score, Dora will see that the hands and legs of Narasaiah are broken into pieces and powdered. Jogulu says: we are in no way inferior to him! If any situation comes, all our followers will stand behind Narasaiah and protect him! Lo, my dear Narasaiah! You sit on the Chair given by Dora and take rest. I will see who can touch you.

Dora is like a serpent he appears very friendly but he is not. He says that Yeh, Narsi! You don't know what an abundant love and affection I possess for you! You are well aware that I and Patel are at loggerheads! As you refused to obey his call, I treat you as my close associate. I'll shield your life with all my men, money and might at all times! Even otherwise, this Dora (Referring to him) will always defend faithful families like yours! Don't you remember how faithfully your father laid his life for the sake of my grandfather? (100) this is a kind of emotional blackmail.

Narasaiah expresses his disgust and hard pressed from all the sides. He was unhappy about his situation and says:

“ By paying respects to Ambedkar's photo) oh, my God father! Did you observe how I am getting sandwiched between both the landlords? If one says 'Yes' the other says "No"! Why should I be made a scapegoat for their politics, for their

vengeance on each other? You wrote many things about our caste people! Sir!
Have you written any solution for situations like this?"

Patel is offended by looking at the Narasaih and he scolds him:

Come on , you dirty rascal ! Did you already forget with whose support you became the Sarpanch. It's with my support! It's with my money! It's with my muscle power! What about Dora's support? He never supported you! On the other hand, he encouraged Ramudu who was your close relative. He canvassed against you. He told everybody not to vote for you. But I who stood behind you, and got votes by spending Notes. Five lakhs ! Five lakhs I spent for getting you elected as Sarpanch. You fool!Rascal! Good for nothing fellow! You have guts to pay a deaf ear to my summons and staying back in the home without attending the meeting? I will see you end. Be careful!(105)

Patel is very angry and expresses his discomfort and degrades Narasaiah : Shit! Dirty fellow! Don't I have that much value at least as you show to this bloody Chair?(So saying with deep contempt, he kicks away the Chair)

Once Bhimaiah enters the play takes a different shape. Only with his intervention Narasaih's outlook changed. He questioned Dora about the mismanagement of funds and the works he has done so far as a Sarpanch. Bhimaiah scolds the clerk and says: What is duty? Do you mean to say that a person born in a slum area should suffer and die in the same slum? Then clerk reacts and says: You kindly lead those born as slum-dwellers like you! Please uplift the miserable and downtrodden beings. Ambedkar will not take birth every time. Sir! You happened to come up in the path laid by Him. For the welfare of your own people, you should become another Ambedkar now. Bhimaiah is realistic in nature he is very practical but he is

misunderstood by his brother Narasaiah: “ By becoming Sarpanch , I wanted to serve the people around us who are hapless and helpless. But, you being selfish are paving way to earn money under the disguise of my Sarpanch post. It is unfair. God will not forgive us. I don’t allow you to do such illegal things. I will resign for my post. But Bhimaiah strongly opposes and expresses his unhappiness :

What a hypocrisy, I say? Is it a life? Have we ever lived like human beings! Have we ever filled our bellies fully? Have we ever covered our bodies fully? Have we ever been treated like humans by them? Just slaves... slaves for whom shame is a rare feeling. Speech is an expensive thing. Freedom is an object not only beyond our experience , but imagination too. Have you ever seen any Dalit who can stand before his landlord without his head bowed and hands folded?

Only because of Bhimaiah an educated man Narasaiah gets awareness about existing political system. He makes Narasaiah understand the reality of life: You are not aware of pleasures; you can take the dire poverty as divinity, cowardice as morality. But you know wealth is forbidden fruit for the poor. I tasted a little of it. Now. I cannot restrain myself from enjoying it fully. In this country, caste is a criterion for everything to be happy, to be courageous, to be wealthy and to be healthy too. Now I am courageous enough to gratify all my desires. Courageous enough to mould myself as a complete human being from a state of sub-human, knave and slave. Better you realize timidness is getting replaced by valour in the minds of downtrodden. (120)

The revolutionary thoughts and ideas of Bhimaiah stands as a strong point of discussion he is now willing to marry Patel’s daughter, breaking the idea of his brother Narasaiah and his wife Sunkulamma and says: It is not always possible for one caste or group to boss over the society. Time is a wheel which keeps rotating forever. Owing to this rotation, every dog has its

hay day sooner or later. No one can stop reformation. If that reformation should get advanced , inter-caste marriages should take place! That's why I'll marry the daughter of that Patel! Yes. I will marry. Bhimaiah questions in what way Dalits are inferior to anybody? We had a similar birth like them! Do you mean to say that I am not aware why this fellow Dora joined hands with me, why that fellow Patel declared to offer his daughter in marriage to me? Whatever may be their line of thinking, the target is only one! Social equality! Their supremacy should get reduced! Their bossism should go! Their feeling of greatness should vanish with the wind! Did you forget how we roamed over fields for a little piece of grabs, for a fistful of rice? We stood and stared at them day and night like watchdogs. For centuries together we were suppressed; crushed cruelly by them. I still remember how many nights I spent with hunger just with a glass of water. All these years, we were pushed down! And now, when we are coming out of this sluggish slavery life, instead of being happy, you still choose to weep, is it? Our way of life should not be inherited to our children! It is not that dirty life they should succeed! I'll bring another match for you sister! Lend me your support and allow me to marry Patel's daughter.(137). The closing remarks of the play is very effective and it is an eye opener for Narasaiah to adorned the Chair. (As per the advice of Bhimaiah, Narasaih adorned the Chair like a king! After occupying ot, an air of triumph embraced him!) you fellows – Dora and Patel! Come and stand here. As the Sarpanch of this Village, as the administrator, I order you to get ready for a case for abetting murder on Bhimaiah. Clerk feels so happy in celebrating the auspicious day. The chair is now occupied by an appropriate person for whom it is reserved! All of us have to remember one thing. Implementation is more important than legislation. Let us redirect ourselves to achieve it. The conclusion of the play is presented in a very realistic and rationalistic manner.

In the other play Barber , the King , the protagonist Rajayya takes a prominent role. The Drama opens in a Naimisha forest where Rishi Sootha narrates epic stories to other Maharshis. Sootha is the name for one born to a Brahmin or Khstria and a Sudhra Woman. Using myth as a background to start the story is an important dramatic device used by the dramatist. Sutha's description on the division of duties allotted to people of different categories he pronounces:

The parties have wrongly defined the duties which are mentioned in Manu, and have converted them to their own advantage. Remember the verse told in the beginning chaturvarna dharmas are converted according to their favour and convenience.

The four classes are created by me.

The four categories must be divided in terms of their attitudes and capabilities- not in terms of their birth and parentage. Moreover, in the past, many illustrious persons defied the norms of the families they were born in, and achieved renown. It is not? Parasurama gave up his Brahman identity, became a Kshatriya, and found a place among the Dasavatars. Has not Buddha, born a Prince, become an enlightened soul, and spread the light of Wisdom to the world?

Why go so far? Aren't you all , sages at various stages of achievement, gathering to listen to the tales told by me, a Sootha – born out of tradition?

So what govern man's conduct is his innate culture, and not his parentage.(19)

The introductory speech of Soothudu about Rajayya, the barber is a highlight which leads us into the story.

You are afraid that the Gods would be angered through this pollution of tradition, aren't you? You think this sinful situation will lead to a cataclysm. No fear at all! The transformation of a caterpillar into a beautiful butterfly would only please the Divine, nor would it cause any disaster. Now let me tell you a story about how a sudra, taking birth in the meanest of communities, without a name, place or identity, becomes a leader of men through sheer determination and his fighting spirit. Sit down and listen to me. (They sat)(21)

Rishi's asked Who is that hero? Raajigadu, born in a barber family said Soothudu. Then the story of Rajayya started. The play opens at Kamala's shop. Kamala is a married woman and a single mother, belong to a mean community. Many men come to her shop not to buy but to talk and spend time with her. On one occasion Kamala's relationship with Naidu is disclosed in the presence of Dabbagadu and others:

Kamala's son wanted to go to toilet (he jumps from the pyol; his leg kicks the laundered clothes. They all fall on the ground. He puts them back one by one, and departs, opening his knicker. He throws the slip of paper that has dropped from the clothes, thinking it is waste paper. Dabbagadu picks up the paper, sits back on the pyol and starts reading it. Meanwhile washer man Buddadu comes whistling and takes the clothes and leaves. Dabbagaadu is exited after reading the letter.(31)

The letter is from Naidu to Kamala. Kamala is helpless and she exploited by Naidu instead of being teased and harassed by so many men she thought of being with one and choose to be with Naidu.

In the 3rd episode Eeramma scolds her father-in-law who is irritating her:

(Rajigadu's house. More a hutment than a house. It is dirty at the entrance and wet. Inside, Rajigadu's father, Narasimhulu is sitting on a string cot, playing a sad tune on his nadaswaram. Rajigadu's wife, Eeramma, enters, looking angrily at Narasimhulu. The more intensely she looks, the higher he raises the pitch. The silent conflict continues, till he gets a bout of coughing that mingles with the tune of the nadaswaram. Getting a chance then, Eeramma goes to him in one stride and pushes him.)

You old barber, if there is a moment's delay, can you not wait? Are we Reddys, Naidus, or Kapus, that we can promptly start eating as per the time? (she come out with a hindalium vessel). Eat this... I brought it from Naidu's place. You wouldn't allow a moment's delay... eat. (beats him. It results in another spate of coughing non-stop). I went in the morning to Naidu's house. By the time I could complete all the work, it is so late. Anyone can do if it is one service. But, clean the vessels, clean the house, wash the children, gather the muck, clean the house-front, collect the cow dung... o, no one should have this kind of life. That lady, the moment she gets one who is ready to do the work, there is no end of things she would order about. There was a chance to get some grain for working on Singayya's farm, but she wouldn't let me go. Asks me to get all the dried dung cakes into a garland. How could I leave? She made me do all that work by myself. Would they allow dhobis and barbers to do other kind of work? This delay is all because of that work. Here you sit playing pi.pi., complaining to the world that your daughter-in-law does not feed you. There is your food. Eat. Eat to your fill. (a blob of phlegm drops in the food as he coughs. Now the cough has gone, he is not panting. He is a bit stronger.) (38)

This dialogue is the best example for the luxurious life lead by other communities and the agony of Eeramma is seen in this.

There are so many instances where the lower community is deprived of comforts and always suffer from identity crisis. Here is a dialogue of Narasaiah which expresses the disgust in him while talking to his son Rajayya.

Listen! Meanness lies in the eyes of the beholder. The world always looked down upon us. I learnt music with devotion. When they closed their eyes and listened, they said it was divine, like nectar to the ears! When they opened their eyes, they saw me and my

community. The Nadaswaram became a barber's pipe. There was Sivayya of our village. He used to play the drum. A great drummer. As talented as I. Felicitations, titles, and government jobs, were heaped upon him in a cluster. I didn't get any, even as consolation! He was very wise. He praised me in my presence, but in public he wouldn't say a word. If anyone spoke to me appreciatively, he would look the other way. Chi! What a rotten life! I thought. Many a time I felt an artist should not be born in a low community. God only knows howoften!(44)

Introducing Bamma's character to the audience is a very interesting thing in the play. She acts as an embodiment of kindness, intelligence and helpful nature. Bamma's grandson Kistappa is behind Kamala, and that is observed by Bamma. Kistappa is a Brahmin but Kamala is not. But to maintain illegal relationship caste never comes in a way. Kamala's interaction with Bamma regarding her relationship with Naidu:

What can I say! You know, madam, how people are? One fellow asks what I have, but would not say what he wants. He scrutinizes the entire shop, and ogles me. One asks about brinjals, all the time staring at my body. Some fellows come and sit there for hours they don't buy anything... when I ask them to leave, they pick out some change and ask for a matchbox. I am an easy target for drunkards, loafers, useless fellows, and those without work. I think, why should I live, I might swallow something and die. But the thought of my son stops me I may kill myself, but I cannot kill my son. That is why, madam, I yielded to Naidu. The harassment has stopped from that time, though Naidu visits only once amonth. (64)

Episode 6-11 are significant in nature, Naidu forces Rajanna to continue his occupation as barber. The death story of Narasimhulu presents the attitude of Naidu and his family. Naidu's wife Mangamma is very proud and scolds Eeramma about Rajayya's rejection to shave his head.

You don't have food, you don't have caste. How your tongue wags! A manly man, an important man, the chief of the village, sarpanch for ten villages! Such a person wants his chin to be shaved. You bloody low caste woman! Poor bitch what do you both think of my husband. He is a big landlord! Chief of the village! 10 villages are under his control! Such a great man asked your husband to shave. What did your husband do? He has not

cared his words and went unheeding without performing his duty. As a wife of such a scoundrel is it not your duty to admonish him? Is it not your duty to enlighten him about his work? you should tell him, how we feel ourselves without destined to our caste by neglecting the responsibilities , you should question him from where we will get our food? get our water? get our gruel?(114)

Eeramma's response to these words of Mangamma:

What did you say?, where will we get food to eat? Or water to drink? If you didn't impose this profession of a caste on our heads, we could sweat and toil and get something to eat. Whenever I go for harvesting you simply prevent me saying that 'I am a barber woman'. Doesn't allow me for sowing , saying that I am unable to do it. You always stamp me as a woman not capable of doing any farming. Question of my caste comes always between me and my work , I am intended to do.

Just because of my community I am not allowed to avail employment guarantee scheme offered by the government. (116)

There are so many situations in this play which display the element caste discrimination. Eeramma ,when she came to ask for the cow dung cakes from Naidu's wife to burn the dead body of Narasimhuluher father-in-law says very sadly that :

Who created these castes and assign duties. We the poor lot were always deprived of respectable professions, expected income and social esteem.. If I get a chance I will catchhold of God by his tuft and ask what mistake we have done to receive such a nasty life? I know we live on your mercy we die on your mercy too and without your mercy we can't even become fistful of ash. I tell you . I don't want your bloody dung cakes, (while going out) (looks back) ...kicks the basket. Remember the pain caused to a pregnant woman will definitely punish you. (120).

There are few incidents where Rajigaadu after getting education from Bamma speaks very wisely. He has become realistic and practical. He is able to voice out the problems faced by the lower community people. He has become logical in his thinking that ability has come to him just because of the education and awareness he received from Bamma. There is an instance where Rajayya says:

Be truthful to your conscience . If you build a dam you give compensation to the people who lost their lands. You give packages. but we are all thrown out of our livelihood by replacement of machines and factories. Where is the compensation for us? Who gave us packages? You didn't give ... you will never give. Because there is no one to represent us. We are orphans, the most backwardcommunities. We stand 'no where'(133)

In the 14th episode the conversation between Dabbagaadu and Padamatodu stands as a point of discussion. Padamatodu says:

The reason is the “caste” sickness of Srikakulam. Even to go to a doctor or a lawyer they first check the community: this sickness is like the unseen moss in a tank. Why do you bother about all these things? Raji turned against your brother-in-law. The lower communities have distanced themselves. I called people from the landlords’ families. They will come in a trice: slowly I shall turn them against your brother-in-law. Already Bamma is on the side of Raji. Kistappa is not a trustworthy man, Thus I can get hold of each village. Nothing can stop me. Can’t I become an MLA if I continue to do so...If become an MLA I can even place you in some post or the other under local quota... till then you have to be against your brother-in-law... you have to work along with me... take this and go...(puts one currency bundle in hispocket)(144)

In the 15th chapter Dabbagaadu speaks in a realistic way and truth is presented to the audiences in a simple way:

Why that headstrongness? You are doing too much.. (Raji comes from inside. He is appearing a little different. He has put dhoti, lalchi, and towel on his shoulder. He has turned up his moustache.)

Look, all of you! Open your eyes and see carefully! Do you observe the difference between Rajigadu, who used of wear torn clothes and always kept his hair unkempt, looked very ugly and a handsome man by wearing new clothes! All the human beings are same! No bastard is born on this earth with two hearts and four brains. Appearances only differentiates people one from the other... after one month he will look like Naidu, after one year he would resemble Padamatodu.... Leadership is in our imagination... caste superiority is our illusion..if you call any one a servant repeatedly he will become a servant. If you call the same person master again and again, he will become a master. (the sound of the song nears them) We have to respect Raji from now onwards as we respected my brother-in-law all these years.(147)

Throughout the play when ever and where ever possible the writer created a situation to present reality about life of downtrodden and underprivileged communities. The conclusion of this play is an eye opener to all the so called leaders who belong to higher communities and believe in the saying 'Might is right'. Rajayya convincingly speaks to his people when they are frustrated and created awareness in their minds about the creation. He addresses the frustrated communities by saying, It's believed that whenever this world is in danger God appeared. That may be true or may be false... but God took different forms at different times. When we needed clothes he took the form of weaver; when we needed a pot he became a potter; when we needed a plough he became a carpenter. Not only these: he made his 1000 hands into thousand professions and gave us... we are the people who made this world firm and strong... made it alive... do we get black mark by killing this man now? Never... if you have respect for me, don't open your mouth!

Conclusion of the play is effective and Naidu made Rajanna to sit on his shoulders.

(Naidu makes Rajanna to sit on his shoulders around him all the symbol of 1000 professions are revolving in an orbit. People feel happy and elated and start howling with delight as if they have seen 'Lord Vishnu' in him.)

The sages are satisfied after listening to the entire story of Rajayya and sharing their pleasure of listening to it among themselves. Finally they agreed that the four-fold dharma should not linked to one's birth.

Sootha says: "Swadharmo nidhanam sreayah;

Paradharmo bhayavahah"

'Swadharma' means that which is appropriate to a person's nature and the proportion of the three gunas found in him: it is not related to one's

community or caste.

The gods are applauding the qualities of innate power to fight, courage, and his readiness to sacrifice: And there you see a shower of petals from the skies!! (a rain of petals from above).

The play ends with the happy note where Rajayya becomes the Sarpanch and ruled the place effectively. The significance of the title (of the drama) can be seen in the last part of the play.

The Return of Gandhi is an another play by Vizai Bhaskar which deals with the imaginary concept of Mahatma Gandhi, Father of Nation coming back to life. Gandhiji was sent to trial to hell and Yamadharmaraja was shocked to see him there. (He looks around and finds a person coming towards him, steady and stiff. To his astonishment, he identifies the person and says) Yes! Its Mahatma Gandhi- the much hailed Father of the Nation!

Yamadharma got up from his seat and gave salutations to Mahatma and asked what made you to come here? He was surprised to listen to the response given by Mahatma and says to Chitragupta : Absurd! Chitragupta Absurd! Mahatma was sent to Heaven for his virtues and sacred deeds. That is true my lord said Chitragupta but after effects of his great deeds turned sour eventually! And the greatest sin committed was: My lord, he won independence for India.

Chitragupta says: The languishing race in feudal society for ages marked with hero worship and dynastic adulation, understands only dependence – not independence. The gullible masses who were divided by caste and religion cannot appreciate the principles of equality. The people at large were illiterate, ignorant and innocent. The few educated were careless and irresponsible. The selfish and immoral rulers always indulged in power-game,

encouraged factions, and further divided the people in the name of language region, culture and the like. What kind of rule can the country expect from such rulers? The nation at large was thrown into a vicious circle. Giving independence to such people and power to such leaders naturally proved suicidal. My Lord, killing a person is a sin. But trying to kill the whole nation? The biggest sin. And this man committed that biggest sin. Hence, it is prayed that appropriate punishment be imposed on this man.

People's false worship of Mahatma Gandhi is seen when MLA has come to felicitate Gandhi's statue in memory of his birthday: PA says: Bring a garland, quick! (Party worker gets a garland and is about to give it to MLA. Presuming it for him, MLA bows his head. Then his PA makes MLA understand through signs that it is meant for Gandhiji. Then MLA curses himself for his ignorance, and garlands the statue. The photographer takes a snap. Then PA calls for flowers. The party worker gets the flowers. Presuming them for him, the MLA again bows his head, obediently. The PA directs the MLA towards the tomb. MLA places those flowers. PA again calls for garland.

MLA Yadagiri's speech acts as an instrument for the second coming of Gandhi. While he is giving speech he said. Do you know how Gandhiji became so great? Because Britishers were ruling us. Because, their policemen tortured us. Because, they looted all our wealth. To set things right, Gandhiji is born.... Even now, if people are tortured, looted, another Gandhi will be born, (commotion from the public) MLA said if you don't like birth of a new Gandhi , we will see that the old Gandhi comes back alive. (Gandhi and Rajaram comes there immediately.)

This play '*The Return of Gandhi*' is an imagination of the playwright. The writer expressed his ideas in a specific situation. The writer tried to pull all the Indian love, adoration and spirit of following Gandhi is put into the heart of Yama Dharma Raja and

presented before the readers lively through the characters. Rajaram who is the true follower of Gandhi only recognizes his re-entry. He emphasizes the hold of superstition on Indian social psyche with rare insight and sensitivity. He said our people are sentimental. The more educated they are, the more stupid they become. There were many interesting factors in the play which displays the practices like present democratic system, election polling, vote franchise to Gandhi still, leaders will and wish in adopting various untruthful ways to attract voters, appear before Gandhi for his total unhappiness. The writer mentioned how the people are facing a lot of difficulties in our democratic system of our country.

This drama presents the social and economic inequalities, poverty and unemployment, illiteracy and ignorance, caste, communism, population explosion, regionalism, corruption and terrorism etc., According to the writer, since voting is not a compulsory duty of the people, many of them do not exercise this right and they choose to remain in their houses and do something else on that day. Actually elections are a significant part of the Indian democratic structure. Elections in India are held for the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, the state Legislative Assemblies and Legislative council. Many politicians try to get votes by unethical tricks. This results in an unfair decision and corrupt political practices.

In this play, the writer cleverly asked through the character of poor people leader, in Assembly, three questions to the ruling party concerned minister. First question was, is there any government in the state? Second, whether the government is functioning with ethical values and morals? The third, when will the government fulfill the promises given to the people? Then the ruling party minister said, these are not only ridiculous, but also horrible. These situations are indicating the knowledge and thought provoking to the present readers. This play is an outstanding experimentation of the idea of many to expect a savior like Gandhi to come to guide the present generation.

Caste and region projected in his dramas with various examples and situations. Being a writer of social responsibility the writer presented every problem related to community bias, life of downtrodden people with much effective and convincing dialogues and situations. On the whole these plays serve as medium to mirror the problems existed in the present day society.

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CHAPTER -III
LITERARY STYLE OF THE WRITER

**Language has always been the consort of empire, and forever shall remain its mate.
Together they came into being, together they grow and flower.**

- Elio Antonio de Nebrija, Bishop of Avila, Introduction to Gramatics Castellana, 1492(Glenn T. Morris 2003:103)

Language and empires have always gone together. Colonization, requiring legal, social, and political control, is also an archivization project, to document, disseminate, and formulate rules, information, and policies. Often colonialism's drive to generate its own vocabulary and command and evacuate non- European languages of signification in official transactions mean that the natives were forced to speak the language of the colonizer. As Walter Mignolo's magisterial study, *The Darker Side Of The Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, And Colonization*(2003) has demonstrated, language grammars, codices, and cartography are all rhetorical forms engineered by colonialism to attain control over the non- European. Postcolonial literary and cultural studies explore the role of language in the process of colonialism. The subjects of post-colonialism's study of language in colonialism include: the domination of native languages by European ones; the hybridization of both languages; and the politics of language, literature and translation. Raja Rao, one of the first generation of Indian writers in English, in a much-quoted formulation expressed the linguistic and narrative anxiety of the postcolonial writer:

“One has to convey in a language that is not one’s own the spirit that is one’s own. One has to convey the various shades and omissions of a certain thought movement that looks maltreated in an alien language.”

What language must the postcolonial writer write in? What cultural and social factors are involved in the choice of a language of articulation? Is a distinctive, indigenized ‘version’ of the colonizer’s language possible? Would the use of one’s mother tongue mark a reactionary activism? How does one locate oneself within global geo- and cultural politics without recourse to a global language? And finally, can one use a ‘foreign’ language and still retain cultural identities? These are the most recurrent questions come to any author’s mind as far as the usage of language is concerned.

Literary critics prior to Anandavardhana had offered valuable insights about different aspects of beauty in language and literature. They had also lighted upon the truth that all poetic expression is a kind of deviation from the mode of normal social discourse. But they set out analyzing the deviant ways of communication as so many modes of ‘alankaras’ instead of offering any theory underlying the nature of all poetic language. The colonial writer does not have words of his own. It is not possible that he projects his own condition of voicelessness into whatever he creates? That he articulates his own powerlessness, in the face of alien words, by seeking out fresh tales of victims? ...perhaps the colonial imagination is driven to recreate, again and again, the experience of writing in colonial space. Issues of indignity, language, and place must be taken into consideration when the writer attempts to convey very important social conditions.

Studying the literature of a country marked by such dissonances—historical, social, cultural, and political- involves, on the part of the reader, an effort to disengage from the fetters

of conditioned response. More significantly, it is a critical engagement of reading a text within text, or a code. Although true of all new literature, it is more so the Indian literature. It is composed and constituted the socio-political and psycho-ethnic complexion of the land.

The comprehensive view of Vizai Bhaskar's plays, usage of language and the stagecraft gives us the complete picture of his motivating ideology and extraordinary future vision. The alienation (theme of the modern drama), identity crisis and struggle for its regaining, myth, doubt (in terms of exercising power), tension in the plot technically called the conflict, and crisis of confidence have been identified as the hallmarks of Vizai Bhaskar's writings. Nativism, middle class consciousness that is domesticised, sanitized and blurred the focus of issues like poverty, untouchability, class, caste and gender oppression are his chief concerns. (as a writer he always tried to rewind the minds of Indian psyche not just in terms of remembering the myth or making the characters realize their rights but also the spirit of native drama by using very natural themes and characters)

'Nativism' if we look at the immediate genealogy of this word it is borrowed from social sciences. The mechanics are more or less well-defined. The word 'nativism' is used always in association with 'culture'. Most of the plays written by Vizai Bhaskar consists nativism in it. In the present socio-political environment in our country the words 'nativity' and 'nativism' bring home at once the constitutional status enjoyed by citizens in contrast to aliens or mere residents. According to Vizai Bhaskar, the whole civilization is characterized by national mentality represented by attempting to synthesize the material, mental and spiritual aspirations of the human beings against the background of human values, ceaseless effort in search of liberation of man from grief, and fastidious belief in pristine destiny and cycle of birth and death. Thus the evolution of any human faculty can be understood when valued against this national mentality, otherwise the historical perspective shall be lost sight of.

Vizai Bhaskar's plays are known for the usage of language, dialects and idiolects of the characters acts as an asset to his plays. To mention a few in *Return of Gandhi* for Gandhi's conversation he has used informal or the local language but where as in introducing the character of Yamadharma raj he has used textual and authentic language. The character of Chitra Guptha also uses listener's friendly language and this experiment helped audience to follow the concept of the play thoroughly. Right word at right place concept is strictly followed by him in all most all his works. Political register is used in the conversations between the leaders and also at the time of election. The projection of Rajaram's character is praiseworthy and as a freedom fighter the genuineness in his speeches is established by his way of speaking. To distinguish one character from the other different idiolects are used. For example the language used by the ruling party leaders is different from the language used by the opposition party leader. Specific language for naxals, and Dalit representatives added new colour to the play. Strong and suitable vocabulary is used to describe the intrigues of the political leaders and the politics.

The characters in the play appear to be very simple and realistic but each character has its significance and the importance is visible in their dialogues. "The chair" is an another example where, through the poor characters the problem of exercising constitutional rights is presented very comprehensively. In some contexts dialects of the characters with unique accentuation,

Sharp words, at some places abusive and unparliamentarily used language intensify the conversations of the characters. Old sayings, adages, proverbs, aphorisms are used much based on the context. Ironical and satirical dialogues by the prominent characters such as Dora, Patel, Sunkulamma, Bheemaih, Narasaih, exhibits the character traits of them. Authoritative behavior of the landlords, their rock heartedness and their unusual authoritative behavior has been

exhibited not by their behavior alone but by their powerful dialogues. The language used by Narasaih who got his turn as a village Sarpanch projects his simple life style and innocent and soft attitude. But as far as the dialogues are concerned the plays is originally written in Telugu, later on translated into English as the translator cannot translate the original sense of the writer with the same ease there we find the difference in the ease of each dialogue. For us translation has been a revitalization of the original through the imagination of a writer of another space and another time. Translation to us has been a version of intertextuality. Original has never been specially privileged; it can never be absolutely repeated. Most of us now understand the interface between translations and colonization and the complicity of colonial administration, historiography, ethnology and missionary activities in the politics of containment. Literature uses words with which the people of a language community can associate the experience of their composite cultural past.

Another play ‘Puliswari’ translated as ‘Riding the Tiger’ is also one of the powerful plays of Vizai Bhaskar with extraordinary factionism based dialogues and themes . Use of language always contributes for the standards of any literature. Here in this play *Riding the Tiger* the dramatist impressively uses the powerful vocabulary to convey the situations and problems effectively. Acts and attitudes of politicians and complexities of politics is presented with much attention. Every discussion and conversation leads readers to think about the worst situations and conditions experienced by the people in this dirty political world. Language used at the time of settlements, corruption, robberies, and bad deeds is used with much consciousness to confer the vehemence of the occurrences in the society. Any reader for that matter first notices the horizontal, syntactical, denotational relationships of words and meanings and then passes on into the vertical, associational, connotational relationships to produce a succession of moods, meaning and experiences, each subtler than the one that precedes it. The focus here is

on the reader's powers of conjecture and free play of imagination; reading becomes writing. The historical forces behind the interpretative act, the modes of text production and the aesthetic notions that underlie the process of reading with of course their ideological underpinnings involves the process of reading. Without changing them we simply cannot explain the changing status and meanings attributed to 'works' form time to time. Reading takes place within history and is as such decided y the needs of various layers of society, the aesthetic concepts available in a particular period, the discipline within which reading is done and the general development of human knowledge at a specific point of history.

'*Rajjigaadu Rajayyaadu*' translated as *Barber, The King* is a very thought provoking and motivating drama. The dialogues are very pleasing and at some places powerful. The character of Rajjigaadu speaks very helplessly before he could get education from Bamma and later on we could see a drastic change in his language and conversations. The language used by Bamma is very refined and presentable. Vizai Bhaskar's language is more implied in practice then spelt out in theory, it is always characterized by the inscription of the oral on the written, the foregrounding of the everyday life in the pattern of experience, rhythm and imagery, the openness of form that refuses to conform to set standards and is full of surprises and deviations, lack of the urban kind of sophistication, attention to detail, strong physical basis, prepondence of expletives and taboo words, gestures and symbols that challenges the upper caste ideas of propriety, strong sub-cultural bias, the assertion, even celebration, of life with all its material deprivation and oppression and the emphasis on collective, rather than individual identity.

In this text we could observe the touch of folklore as far as the hero's (barber) community is concerned. It is essential to understand the folk-idiom to comprehend both public culture and domestic culture. Every kind of Indian cultural practice, every Indian cultural performance, whether classical epic or theatre of modern film, and political rhetoric, is

invariably indebted to oral traditions and folk forms. We know how folklore pervades childhoods, families and communities as the symbolic language of the non-literate parts of the people and the culture. Even in large modern cities with Western style nuclear families, folklore is only a suburb away, a cousin or a grandmother away; and authentic folk theatre flourishes in the backstreets of cities; and festivals with attendant folk performances are the major annual events in all villages and even our cities. Wherever people live folklore grows, verbal folklore, non-verbal modes and composite performing arts weave in and out of every aspect of city, village and small-town life. It is always a challenging task for the writer to modify the idea of texts in the Indian context. It includes not only written and hallowed texts but oral/ visual cultural performances including plays, games and rituals all of which contain texts. Folk texts thus have to be placed in an ever present network of intertextuality. The written text is just a continuation of the oral context. Oral traditions do not have a single, unified 'author'. The modern notion of the author comes from Europe (linking with its emphasis on the autonomous individual and individual subject-hood), especially with print literacy in the early modern period. In oral story-telling forms, the 'author' is less a person than the context of enunciation and performance. Performance is a collective, i.e, communal, event. It is improvised, adapted, and 'formatted' to suit that particular moment and setting of the story's enunciation. It is also important to note that there are various kinds of genres within the oral tradition itself. These present a writer with a ready source of material and narrative strategies. Most postcolonial writers turn to local and indigenous myths and folk tales even as they write in a form that is Western. In most cases, however, the Western form is subverted and adapted through a process of indigenization, through the incorporation of local strategies, themes and images.

Postcolonial writers take recourse to their narrative forms and traditions in order to counter, oppose, or re-write the existing literature. The attempt is often to provide an alternate

view of their culture. While such an attempt is frequently articulated in genres borrowed from the former colonizer culture, the genre is adapted and injected with native traditions. Postcolonial writers are, therefore, clearly concerned with questions of form, style, genre and language.

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CHAPTER-IV

CONCLUSION

Drama is a powerful medium of communicating social issues and problems existed in the society. Traditional drama has basic rules as said by the famous dramatist's like Christopher Marlow such as unity of time, unity of place and unity of action. The four plays selected by me for the study are analyzed thoroughly and all the dramas fulfill the three unities. Being a dramatist of reality and social responsibility the themes and motifs of the dramatist are executed very well in all his dramas. Carrying out the spirit and mood of the drama happened effortlessly in every drama of his because of the sensitive and thought provoking themes.

The union of all the literary arts is, however, not only the highest perfection, but also—although in its still undeveloped form, it is the starting point of poetry. E. Gross rightly points out that “every primitive drama is a narrative drama”, since the narrator, is not satisfied by just telling his story in a simple manner, but he makes his words lively with the help of corresponding mimic intonations and gesticulations- he “represents the events dramatically,” so that in a certain sense the drama is the beginning stage of all types of poetry.

Faction power politics, spirit of nationalism, executing constitutional rights of dalits, gaining identity are the chief concerns of the writer which are presented by him successfully in *Riding the Tiger*, *The Chair*, *Return of Gandhi*, *Barber*, *the King* respectively. As an inventor of Sutha Theatre, the writer's focus is mainly on the central character of every drama considering him as Suthradhara. The suthradhara or stage-manager, according to our dramas(of the West), as also according to the *Natyasastra* must be a highly cultured man. He should be not only an expert in music and the art of stage-technique, but he should have also command over languages. The Suthradhara was generally also the Chief Actor, who played the main role,

that is of the hero. In the Indian drama original characters are rare. Certain particular types mostly recur as a rule, thus the hero or the lover is mostly young, handsome, refined and endowed with all good qualities, but he is always ardently loved as well. One more peculiar characteristic of the Indian drama is the great amount of variation in respect of language – a thing that too points to its development on the basis of popular models.

In *Barber: the King*, the author focuses on the central character Rajayya who is often called by everyone as Raajigaadu (derogatory word, word of disrespect). The journey of Raajigaadu as Rajayya is the real catharsis. Growth of the character is clearly seen in the novel as the hero says:

This is a land in which God took care of the Brahmins. Various rulers took care of Reddy's. Theories thought about the Kammas. Political parties concerned themselves with Kapus, Kalingas and Velamas. The constitution took care of Harijans and Girijans. Governments thought about the minorities. So far no one care to think of us. Kindly spare some thought for us also."

In Episode 16 he says:

No ... our fight is not for properties and lands. Keep everything with you! You understand our condition.

Caste minority is more difficult to bear than religious minority. Not only I but also know how terrible it is. But no one spares a thought for us. If you put tigers and goats under the same roof, and ask us to share, we lack sharp teeth or talons. We have not even the ability to stoutly demand. Consider what would come to us. You are taking care of many religions that have come from outside the

country. It is not wrong. But we are born in this country. We made things for you. We catered to your needs. Please tell what you think about us.(163)

This powerful dialogue is the soul of the entire drama. Subjugation and suppression are the common practices in the so called caste based society. He questions the so called Naidu and others: “Can you not see how many classes are deprived of their traditional tasks and are starving? Don’t you understand that they are slowly getting destroyed? There are some classes who have no roof on their heads. Some are still alive like nomads.”

He represents the entire suffering of downtrodden people. In this democratic country the fundamental rights are not executed properly. The real meaning of democracy vanished. How can anyone call it a democratic country when there are so many who are not in the electoral records? and considered insignificant. Sarpanchship may be a status symbol to anybody like Naidu, but for downtrodden people it is a recognition. It gives the feeling of human being to the protagonist. He is not worried about chair of position. But he always fought for self-respect and recognition. He is even ready to die for the sake of suffering people. And offers knife(knife of a barber) to Naidu to kill him.

This awareness and confidence has come to Rajayya with the help of Bamma. When Bamma interacted with Rajayya and making him understand few things about life and life style of people in the society she says:

The modern man came only last week. He civilized himself, got mastery over Nature. Only an hour ago he invented agriculture, and took a steady habitation, leaving the nomadic life. He cultivated and ate what he wished. The Industrial Revolution came a minute ago and man made his life easy and comfortable – life has become speedy, he started driving vehicles on land and water.....(72)

She slowly made Rajayya to think about life in a different perspective. He started questioning Bamma about: When did agriculture started? None of our class knows anything about agriculture. He also questioned her that “can you tell me, we the people belong to most backward communities are equal to primitives, or beast or birds or even insects.?” The ability of questioning in Rajayya has been identified by Bamma and from then on he started learning things and thinking like an educated man. Education has brought so much change and knowledge to him. He got identity and recognition what he strived for and aspired to get and now he is ready to sacrifice his life for the sake of his people. The drama ends with a very gripping idea as pronounced by Sootha:

‘Swadharma’ means that which is appropriate to a person’s nature and the proportion of the four gunas found in him: it is not related to one’s class or caste. The gods are applauding the qualities of innate power to fight, courage, and his readiness to sacrifice: and there you see a shower of petals from the skies!!(a rain of petals from above)(166).

The opening of the drama is with the introduction of Sootha and ending is also executed so perfectly not missing the storyline and narrative construction.

In the other play ‘The Chair’ the constitutional rights of the dalits and their attitude towards power is exhibited very well. Dr.B.R. Ambedkar , an architect of Indian constitution always is in favour of deprived section of people in the society. He struggled in his childhood to get education and experienced the pain of marginalization. Keeping all the experiences in view the constitution is designed in such a way where underprivileged sections are also given priority in the society.

In this play 'The Chair' the problem of power and the helplessness of deprived sectioned people in terms of executing the power is discussed with much attention. It is clear that dalits too get an opportunity to serve for the society, but technically speaking administration skills are not known to them because they don't have proper education and financial stability. The problem of here is dalits don't get an opportunity to pursue education some time ago and if at all they get education they are not allowed to question the leaders because they belong to oppressed sections.

According to constitution every individual is equal and valuable in society. But practically the power and authority is confined only to the landlords and capitalists, belong to higher communities and financially well off. If at all based on the distributed constitutional rights are concerned a dalit man gets an opportunity to take up the responsibility, the so called former local leaders don't allow them to work properly for the sake of their people. These leaders always put them under pressure to not to do anything individually on the top of it the main key is in their hands and the dalit leader just become the puppet in their hands.

'The Chair' is a provocative play and realistic in its themes and concerns. The character of Bhimaiah who is an educated man acts as an instrument to create awareness to his brother and others. He gets this knowledge not by himself but studying many books, his interactions with educated people and very good education what he received from the University.

In the first scene of the play Jogulu gets the chair what the Sarpanch used previously and says:

Listen! Occupying this chair only, our Dora has ruled our village continuously for over twenty years and settled many issues, you know?(90) by occupying this chair you are supposed to rule now.

But Narasaiah expressed his fear or respect towards Narasaiah and feels that how can he use the chair on which Dora sat all these years? He is afraid even to sit on it and think so much. This shows the reality of power which is given to dalits based on constitutional rights is not executed with confidence but with fear and also under conditioning.

Bhimaiah makes Narasaiah aware of his rights and his decision to marry a girl from rich and upper caste family believing that if they don't go for inter community marriages their caste or community will never grow out of all the evils existed in the society. In the end of the play Bhimaiah says that :

I spell out the prologue for the history of our downtrodden castes! Let us not give up the aspirations of that great leader of all times! Let us not run after petty pleasures leaving the community welfare aside. If we do so, we get totally destroyed in the hands of so called feudal! I realized this fact belatedly! This truth is to be grasped by the entire educated fraternity of our communities! In spite of our advancement in many fields, we are remaining still as their slaves and servants! This tendency should not be perpetuated any longer! My dear, brother! This particular Chair does not indicate power only, it's a sign for our social freedom and reform. This Chair should become a "Gandeevam" in our hands, a "Paasupatastra" to baffle all the social barricades kept around us! That chair is ours! Adorn it! The power is ours! Exercise it! Its reigns are in our own hands! You start ruling the system.(154)

Narasaiah as advised by his brother with much confidence and dedication adorned the Chair like a king. He as an administrator called Dora and Patel to come and stand near him and ordered them get ready to face the murder case what they have attempted on Bhimaiah. As

pronounced at the end of the play by Clerk the day is very auspicious since Narasaiah occupied the chair and he felt that is appropriate because the chair is reserved for him. He says to ever one that: “ all of us have to remember one thing Implementation is more important than legislation. Let us rededicate ourselves to achieve it.”

Riding the Tiger is an extra-ordinary play which presents the socio-political certainties existed in the society. The very opening lines of the play projects the intensity of factionism. Ranganna says to Munemma : “ that fellow Mareppa certainly came here. Come on! Tell me where he is? (with his henchmen) search the house, I say! Munemma’s gives response to him by carrying a sickle in her hand , “ you bloody fellows! If you are dare enough, take a step forward, I’ll sack you with this sickle, you know? I say my husband has not come here. Every minute in the life of Mareppa is a threat. His life is not in his hands it in the hands of Reddy. Munemma is very unhappy and afraid always about her husband.

Munemma pleads Ramreddy to not to amputate her husband’s leg. She says first amputate your leg, and later you get your calculations changed. Mareppa scolds Munemma : You first keep your mouth shut and then go inside! Tell me Reddy Saab, is it my leg after all that is to be amputated? (He sits comfortably stretching his leg forward) Yeh, Khadar! Just cut it I say!. Munemma fights and she doesn’t allow Khadar to cut the leg of her husband and says: No! I won’t go! It is only after sacking my head that you can touch my husband! Come on! Do it, I say.

Munemma expresses her disgust by saying it is only with your(Ramreddy’s) word that my husband went on committing all misdeeds, and I too am keeping quiet all these days! And now, I can’t tolerate this!. Munemma ferociously says I will sack your neck! But then also Mareppa scolds Munemma : I ‘ll kill you bloody bitch. You are going too much! After all for this petty

leg my Reddy Saab is to beg for so long is it? He is a man of prestige, you know? You get inside first. This particular situation gives us the idea that how blindly Mareppa follows Reddy.

The entry of DSP who is called a tiger is an amazing thing. When CI is introducing DSP to Naidu he says: “ its not my flattery and pour of felicitations ! When he worked at Vijayawada, all the street- rowdies and anti-social elements, unable to bear his blow, skulked away from htat City, you know? During his tenure of work in Hyderabad, not a single murder or reape or even pick-pocketing incident took place! Wherever he is, he is a danger-diabolic for thieves, rowdies and mafia leaders! That’s why, he is nick-named as ‘tiger’, you know.” (190)

DSP’s words are very important and he warns Ramreddy by saying: If you still feel that the public has so much respect and affection towards you both, it’s nothing but a false impression! If you die, nobody on this earth will mourn for your death, you know?” he is offended by the response given by Ramreddy: If we are killed, even Government will not spare you. Ours is the Ruling Party, you know? DSP responds to it and pronounces that “Shut up! Government means not a fake or torn off currency note in your pocket! Just by taming a few unethical and corrupt officers, you are under an illusion that the entire Government is in your grip! You fellows! I’ll show that you are shot dead in an encounter! Sack them, I say!”(223)

With the intervention of DSP, the dirty deeds of Reddy and Naidu have been exposed out and the sufferers realized their mistakes. Faction violence between Ramireddy group and Peddi Naidu group is presented perfectly by the author in this play.

The Return of Gandhiis a different play which portrays the scenario of Indian politics. This play depicts the true meaning of democracy and how this term has been misinterpreted and mistreated by people. The corruption in Indian politics, thirst for power, authority are the major concerns of the author in this play.

The opening scene of the play takes place in the court of Yama and this carries the whole spirit of drama. Gandhiji who is called the father of the Nation, who sacrificed his life for the sake of getting independence to Indian from the clutches of Britain bought from heaven to hell for the trial.

Chitragupta takes a prominent role in the entire drama and presents the spirit of winning independence which has become a sin. The past good deeds of Gandhi become a sin in the present. The major sin committed by Gandhiji is to win freedom from Britain.

“The people at large were illiterate, ignorant and innocent. The few educated were careless and irresponsible. The selfish and immoral rulers always indulged in power-game, encouraged factions, and further divided the people in the name of language region, culture and the like. What kind of rule can country expect from such rulers? The nation at large was thrown into a vicious circle. Giving independence to such people and power to such leaders naturally proved suicidal. My Lord, killing a person is a sin. And this man committed that biggest sin. Hence, it is prayed that appropriate punishment be imposed on this man.(22)

The irony here is instead of appreciating Gandhi for achieving freedom people are blaming him for that.

Gandhi's return is another twist where he wanted to make people realize the importance of truth and non-violence which has become impossible for him. The elections stand as a best example for this. During the election the opposition party and ruling party fight for fair conduct of election. But that is not possible. All the parties try to win election by adopting different methods to cheat and win. Open ballot, rigging, cycling, booth capturing, box snatching, Ballot tearing, water pouring are some of the activities to win the election by either parties.

Gandhi's speech in the TV goes as , “ politics without scruples, scientific knowledge minus humanity, happiness without conscience, worship without sacrifice, business without ethics, wealth without hard work and education without character – are the seven VICIES which our politicians have acquired. And they have to shun these VICIES (66). Gandhi appeals to politicians that “ If politicians do not respond and shun the vices aforesaid within fifteen days, a non-violent war will be declared against them. He also said that he will stage dharna in front of the assembly with one crore people and demand their resignations” (60).

On the whole the play stands an example for corrupted, unethical politics existed in India. Political leaders fail to accept the Gandhian ideology and principles. Thrust for power, money, authority is very much visible in political leaders which is projected by the author with much clarity.

The quest for equality, social justice is the goal and the basic spirit of Dr. D. Vizai Bhaskar's dramatic art. One may opine that such playwright who completely brood over social realities which hardly pay attentions to the subjects of spiritual or philosophical nature. But his poetry proved us wrong because he deals with the philosophy and spirituality in his presentation of poems. In the prefatory note to the book *Subaltern Theatre : Critical Perspectives on Dr. D. Vizai Bhaskar's works* Prof. S. Krishna Sarma mentioned that: “The themes in the plays of Vizai Bhaskar deals with social ostracism and oppression, inequality, basic human traits like cupidity, greed and political corruption. Dr. Bhaskar takes help from myths and mythical situations, and synchronizes the past and the present by making an ancient character enter in mid-action and comment on what is going on, as in some of the plays of Karnad and MacLeish. Some of the strategies he has followed, like bringing back Mahatma Gandhi to life, have inspired many movie makers absorb the technique of a human creating havoc in the land of Yama or a dead one getting a reprieve and coming back to life to punish the criminal etc.”

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Literary biography in a chronological order:

His dramas and other writings are...

Plays

1. Turupu Thellarindi(1982)
2. Gruha Pravesam(1984)
3. Hiranyagarbha (1985)
4. Ruthwik(1989)
5. Kala kootam(1992)
6. Puliswari(1997)
7. Kurchi(1998)
8. Kinchitbhogam(1999)
9. Mabbulo Bomma(2000)
10. Gandhi Jayanthi(2001)
11. Jeevan natakam(2002)
12. Minister(2003)
13. Bapu Cheppina Maata(2004)
14. Brahmaratha (2005)
15. Sramanakam(2006)
16. Satruvu(2006)
17. Kabirdas(2007)
18. Mere Devullu(2008)
19. Bommalu Cheppina
Bhajagovindam(2008)
20. Chitram(2009)
21. Ontari Rekkalu(2010)
22. Mahatma Jyothi Rao Pule(2011)
23. Rajigaadu Rajayyadu(2012)

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24. Yogi Vemana(2013)

25. Gaali Bathkulu(2014)

Other Writings:

1. Mounamtho Matalu
(1999)Poetry
2. Mahasoonyam (2013) Poetry
3. Nirupeda Kanchamlo Nindu
Bhojanam (2014) Life
History of Dr.William Dhar

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Awards Received

- Nandi Award as Best Writer (*Kurchi*) in 1999 by Government of AndhraPradesh
- Nandi Award as Best Writer (*Mabbullo Bomma*) in 2000 by Government of Andhra Pradesh
- Nandi Award as Best Writer (*Jeevannaatakam*) in 2003 by Government of Andhra Pradesh
- *Ugadi Sahitya Puraskar* 2003 by Andhra Saaraswatha Samithi, a literary organization of internationalrepute
- Nandi Award as Best Writer (*Minister*) in 2004 by Government of AndhraPradesh
- *Rashtriya Vikas Shiromani* Award (Ugadi Puraskar) by Delhi Telugu Academy for the year2004
- Sri Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University *Sahitya Puraskaram* for the year2004
- Nandi Award as Best Writer (*Bapu Cheppina Maata – Teleplay*) for 2005 by Government AndhraPradesh
- Nandi Award as Best Writer (*Bommalu Cheppina Bhajagovindam*) in 2009 by Government of AndhraPradesh
- **Central Sangeet Natak Akademi Award -2010 for BestPlaywriting**
- Nandi Award (Jeevannatakam Teleplay in TV1 Channel) in 2011 by Government of Andhra Pradesh.
- “Delhi Telugu Academy Excellency Award” on the occasion of 24thAnnual National Awards, 2011 for valuable contribution in the field ofLiterature.

- “Gurajada Sahiti Puraskaram” by Government of Andhra Pradesh on the eve of 150th Birthday Celebrations of Mahakavi Gurajada Apparao on 21-09-2012 for safeguarding the culture and tradition of Telugu Literature

Award Winning Dramas

1. “Swarna Nandi” in 1999 for **Kinchith Bhogam**
2. “Silver Nandi” in 2002 for **Gandhi Jayanthi**
3. “Silver Nandi” in 2003 for **Jeevannatakam**
4. “Sri Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University Sahitya Puraskaram” for **Ruthwik** for the year 2004.
5. “Swarna Nandi” in 2005 for **Baapu Cheppina Maata**
6. “Swarna Nandi” in 2009 for **Bommalu Cheppina Bhajagovindam**.
7. “Bronze Nandi” in 2011 for **Vontari Rekkalu**.

Translations

1. “Gandhi Jayanthi” is translated into Kannada, Malayalam, Oriya, Gujarati, Tamil and Hindi as “Gandhi Jayanthi”, into English as “The Return of Gandhi” and in Marathi as “Punha Gandhi”.
2. “Ruthwik” is translated into English as “Ruthwik”.
3. “Kaalakootam” is translated into English as “Kaalakootam” and into Marathi as “Visha Vruksha”.
4. “Minister” is translated into Kannada, Gujarati, Hindi, Bengali and Manipuri as “Minister” and in Tamil as “Amaiccar”.
5. “Kabeerdas” is translated into Kannada as “Kabeerdas”.

6. “*Kurchi*” is translated into Bengali as “*Chair*“, in English as “*The Chair*“, in Hindi as “*Kursi*“, in Gujarati as “*Khel Kurshi No*“ and in Tamil as “*Narkali*“.
7. “*Puliswaari*“ is translated into English as “*Riding the Tiger*“.
8. “*Jeevannatakam*” is translated into as “*Jeevannataka*” in Kannada, as “*Zindagi Ka Khel*” in Hindi, as “*Jindagi*”

Drama Festivals conducted on Vizai Bhaskar’s name

- ✓ Samaikya Bharati (a famous cultural Organization in Hyderabad) has conducted “*Vizai Bhaskar Naatakotsavaalu*” in Ravindra Bharati, Hyderabad from 2nd to 4th November, 2004, wherein “*Ruthwik*”, “*Jeevannatakam*”, “*Brahmarata*” and “*Minister*” Plays were staged.
- ✓ In association with Department of Culture, Government Andhra Pradesh and Dravidian University, Kuppam, Abhinaya (a Theatre monthly Magazine) and Samaikya Bharati (a famous Cultural Organization in Hyderabad) have jointly conducted “*Vizai Bhaskar’s Gandhi Jayanthi Multi Lingual Theatre Festival*” wherein Gandhi Jayanthi play was staged in five languages Kannada, English, Malayalam, Hindi and Telugu in Ravindra Bharati, Hyderabad from 29th to 31st October, 2007.
- ✓ In collaboration with Department of Culture, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Chaitanya Art Theatres and Samaikya Bharati, famous cultural organizations in Hyderabad, have jointly conducted “*Vizai Bhaskar’s bahu bhasha naatakostav*”, a festival of nine Telugu Plays of D. Vizai Bhaskar translated into different Indian Languages viz., Telugu, Bengali, Hindi, Tamil, Marathi, Malayalam, Gujarathi, Manipuri and Kannada in Ravindra Bharathi, Hyderabad from 16th to 19th March, 2009.

- ✓ Karnataka Nataka Akademy, National School of Drama, Karnataka Telugu Akademy and Department of Kannada & Culture have conducted “Kannada-Telugu Ranga Sammilana” – “Dr. D. Vizai Bhaskar”’s Kannada Drama Fest” from 10th to 12th June, 2010 in Ravindra Kalakshetra, Bangalore, wherein Dr. Vizai Bhaskar”’s Kannada Dramas viz., Gandhi Jayanti, Jeevannataka and Kabeerdas werestaged.
- ✓ Chaitanya Art Theatres (a famous cultural organization in Hyderabad) has conducted “Vizai Bhaskar Bengal Natakotsav” in Ravindra Bharati on 31.8.2011, wherein Plays *Kursi* and *Minister* were staged in Bengali language by “Rangashram” team from WestBengal

Vizai Bhaskar’s Dramas published in Press

“Mahatma Jyotirao Phule” was published as a daily serial in popular Telugu Daily “Sakshi” in its Sunday Supplement every week from 9th May, 2010 to 8th August, 2010.

Vizai’s Dramas telecasted in Doordarshan

- Kurchee
- Puliswaari
- Chitram
- Babu CheppinaMaata
- Mahatma Jyotirao Phule(Serial)
- Jeevannaatakam (Telugu &Kannada)

India is a land of rich culture, tradition and rituals. India stands as an icon for Unity in Diversity. People of different race, class, ethnicity and cultures live in India. The greatness of India is seen in its acceptability of multi-culture, multi-lingual and multi-racial environment. Such a great land with sound history, culture and tradition is not free from unavoidable social evils like caste discrimination, economic inequalities, political disorder and gender bar. Specifically in Andhra the problem of caste and religion is very prominent. This project is an attempt to create possible awareness among people about downtrodden, suppressed and marginalized communities and their suffering. The select works of Dr. D. Vizai Bhaskar are taken up for analysis to approach the above mentioned problems in a appropriate direction. According to him "art is an organized expression of human experience and it is the supreme creative complementary to life.



Dr. K. Santha Kumari is working as an Assistant Professor in P.B Siddhartha College of Arts and Science, Vijayawada. She received best student award for her Masters Degree. She received a prestigious award from Department of Language and Culture, Andhra Pradesh, on International Women's Day for her contribution to English Literature.

