



COUP OF HUMANITARIAN OVER SCIENCE IN TAGORE'S MUKTA-DHARA

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ABSTRACT

Tagore's greatest play Mukta-dhara, which deals with the terrible inroads which the machine can make into the human personality, and with the ruthless technological power of science which tends to crush the human spirit. Of course, science is the greatest benefactor mankind has known so far; but science has its dark side too: think only of the two atomic bombs which were thrown over two cities of Japan during World War II, and the destruction which they wrought. The play Mukta-dhara depicts the conflict between the evil side of science and the humanitarian impulses of mankind.

Key words: - ruthless technological power of science, atomic bombs, World War II, humanitarian impulses, mankind

Main theme of the play

The title of the play Mukta-dhara refers to a mountain-spring, the water of which flows down the mountain-slopes of Uttarakut into the plains below. "Mukta – dhara" means the free Current, Bibhuti and the play has been named after this free current. Succeeded in, fettering and imprisoning the water of this free Current .By building a dam across its waters in order to make it possible for King Ranajit, to withhold these wasters from the Shiv-tarayans or to release them for their benefit just as it suits his own pleasure or his political purpose. The dam is thus a device to block the natural flow of the water of a stream which was originally free. The dam also becomes the symbol of a restrictive and restraining influence on the soul and the spirit of the protagonist of this play. When Abhijit knows that he is not the son of King Ranajit but a founding who had been picked up from below the falls of Mukta-dhara, he is shaken to his very depths. The disclosure of this fact comes to him from Maharaja Visvajit: and, from that moment onwards, Abhijit has known no rest because the dam built by Bibhuti now blocks the waters of Mukta-dhara which he had begun to regard as his nurse or his foster-mother. Realizing that the sound of the waters of Mukta-dhara was the first sound which he as infant had heard, he begins to think that now, whenever he hears the sound of those waters, he is listening to the voice of his mother whom he had never seen. Abhijit now

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wants to release the waters of Mukta-dhara from the grip of the dam firstly because he does not want these waters to be denied to the Shiv-tarayans, and secondly, because the release of Mukta-dhara would mean the release of his own spirit from a bondage. The royal palace and the royal throne seem to him at this time to be a prison. Talking to Sanjaya, he says that the throne of Uttarakut now seems to him a dam binding his spirit; and, later, he tells Maharaja Visrajit that he has made up his mind to free the waters of Mukta-dhara by breaking dam. Subsequently, when Abhijit has actually broken the dam and released the waters of Mukta-dhara, king Ranjit, speaking about Abhijit's action in freeing Mukta-dhara, says that in the freedom of Mukta-dhara, Abhijit has found his own freedom too. This is, of course, spiritual freedom or the freedom of the individual soul; and Tagore's must himself have esteemed such freedom very highly. Tagore has attributed to the protagonist in this play an ardent love of individual freedom: and the protagonist's love of such freedom reflects Tagore's own of it. Abhijit sacrifices his life in the attempt to liberate the imprisoned current by forcing the dam at a point where it had been weakly built. The leaping torrent breaks free, carrying away the body of its foster-child in its turbulent rush.

This play also contains, a bit of satire on the kind of education which the schoolmaster is imparting to his pupils. The schoolmaster tells King Ranjit that he has taught his pupils the lesson that the people of Uttarakut were never defeated in any war, that pragjit, one of the ancestors of Ranjit, had with two hundred and ninety three men, driver back an army of thirty-one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three invaders, and that the great people of Uttarakut would eventually conquer everyone else in the world. This is the kind of fanatical patriotism, which this schoolmaster is trying to inculcate among his pupils. What kind of citizens these pupils would grow into, we can well imagine. They would grow into aggressors and racial maniacs trying to overpower other races in order to rule over them.

Then there is some more satire in the play too. Tagore speaks fun at both the Shiv-tarayans and the Uttarakut citizens for speaking highly of their own particular race, and speaking contemptuously or mock about the other race. The Shiv-tarayans say that the people of Uttarakut have strange faces, that they wear ridiculously tight clothes, that they do nothing but loiter about that they have no culture, that their scriptures are shallow, as having a divine origin and so on and Uttarakut citizens ridiculing the Shiv-tarayans for the kind of caps which they wear, and then taunting the Shiv-tarayans over the dam which Bidhuti has built to prevent the waters of Mukta-dhara from flowing into their territory. This kind of racial prejudice, as expressed in this play, is most relevant to our own times when we find that aggressive and narrow-minded nationalism, is the order of the day and when even small countries like Yugoslavia and Afghanistan, which had been single and united entities before, are today fighting civil wars. Yugoslavia has now been split into three regions, while Afghanistan is today plagued by the conflicts among the different factions, into which the people are divided.



Dhananjaya is a very important character in this play, not from the point of view of the plot of the story but from the point of view of its philosophy or ideas. Dhananjaya gives expression to several views which Tagore himself undoubtedly help, and which appeal to us greatly too. Dhananjaya preaches resistance to unjust taxation. He bluntly tells to king can collect for excess food of the Shiv-tarayanans, but not the food of their hunger. He preaches ahimsa or non-violence to the people of Shiv-tarai. He urges these people to develop to their inner strength and become self – reliant instead of always looking to him for guidance or leadership. He is also a great believer in god and in the ultimate triumph of good over evil.

Conclusion

Tagore also conveys to us his appreciation of the self-sacrifice through the final deed of heroism performed by Abhijit. Abhijit dies a martyr in the cause of freedom, for the stream known as Mukta-dhara, and freedom, for his own spirit which had been feeling suffocated on account of the dam designed to imprison and fetter its waters. And Abhijit affected the liberation of these waters to benefit the Shiv-tarayanans as well as to give emotional relief to his own spirit, though in the process of doing so he loses his life. At the end, we are left with a feeling of the splendor of the human spirit which can rise to great heights when faced with a crisis.

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