

The Theme of Revolution in B.S. Mardhekar's Poetry : A Marxist Aspect

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In Mardhekar's poetry we come across the picture of exploitation of man in the capitalistic society. His poetry reflects inequality in society. Ahead to this, it also depicts some other things like the misuse of science, man's ambition for power, man's imperialistic tendency, the possession of means of production by the few, the system of surplus value, degrading human life etc. The sensitiveness of Mardhekar about degrading human life is clearly reflected in his poetry. This sensitiveness is but an effect of so many things. Some personal and social, political events have constructed this sensitiveness of the poet. For example, Mardhekar's frustration in different love affairs, his stay in Europe, his study of European literature, the two world wars, his stay in the metropolitan city like Mumbai, the horrible riots that took place in our country before partition etc. have made a deep effect on his mind, as a result of which his sensitive poetry is born. Most of the poems from his collections 'Kahi Kavita' and 'Anakhi Kahi Kavita' reflect his sensitiveness. Thus, the modern poetry of Mardhekar is but an effect of the sensitiveness which was moulded by the contemporary surroundings.

In his poetry Mardhekar has not directly mentioned any thought of revolution. He has not clearly talked about the possibility of revolution by workers class in his poetry. He also has not expressed any thought or any new point about the necessity of revolution. Nor here in his poetry we come across the lines mentioning the aspects of revolution, of class conflict etc. Even we don't find any lines in his poetry directly referring to man's hope for change. When we look at Mardhekar's poetry at a broader level, we come to know that his poetry is a beautiful sketch of the degrading and wretched human society as well as it is a reflection of man's exploitation in the existing social, economic, political, situations. Even though Mardhekar doesn't talk of revolution in his poetry the pains of the sufferings of man and his feeling of hatred for capitalism would always make him restless and disturbed. He was highly conscious of the tragic, helpless nature of man in this age of industrialization. He knew that it was but the capitalistic system which was responsible for the moral, intellectual and social degradation of man. Would man continue to live in this degrading situation and would not there be any transformation in his social economic and political situations?. These doubts and questions would always make Mardhekar to believe in the communistic philosophy. In the early stage of his writing career we see that Mardhekar is a strong believer in the communist philosophy. He also believes that one day the exploited class would definitely come ahead and give a call for revolution. He would opt for revolution and would bring justice to himself at his own. In his poetry, even though there is no direct mention of revolution in the early phase of his poetic career we observe him as a believer in the concept of revolution. In his poetry we also notice his assertive mood in his act of expecting that the exploited class would struggle against its injustice. This mood of Mardhekar indirectly gives us the signal of the emergence of revolution or the signal of man's struggle against his exploitation. In this respect let's consider some of the poems of Mardhekar in which the passion for man's struggle exists. This mood indirectly refers to revolution, the revolting nature of man or to the struggle against injustice and exploitation.

In his poem 'Ahe Raktat Ujala' Mardhekar shows his anxiety for the devaluation of human being in this age of development of science. He says that science has bestowed upon man a rational attitude. Man got scientific attitude because of science. It is due to the development of science even a lame person can climb the Himalayas or man can undertake sea journey by boat. However, in this atomic age there is no value for human life. The poet thinks that there is no proper communication between scientific progress and human development. It is because of this gap of communication we see a huge destruction of human life and wealth in the second world war. He further says that in the modern age everybody has become selfish. The wealthy and rich are dominating the ruling government. They make the political power to work as per their order. On the contrary, the common man is unable to get even sufficient food. Half a belly of the common man is always empty.

Mardhekar observes this inequality in society. He wants to bring an end to the inequality permanently. And hence he appeals to people to undertake a struggle, a revolution. The following lines in the poem reflect Mardhekar's urge to the common man to undertake revolution for ending the regime of the exploiters class -
Firava Firava re dandi / Ani mara hi gachandi /
Vande tamham biahmhandi / bara naad / (Poem No. 6, Kahi Kavita, p. no. 28).

Here, the poet gives a call to people to get united and put in motion the wheel of revolution. He advises them to destroy the class of the exploiters completely. He further says that in this universe every common man is expecting the extermination of the power of the exploiter. And hence there is an echo of the expression 'Vande tamham' in this world. Here the expression 'Vande Tamham' means we salute you, oh exploiters, you disappear from this world forever. The poet here expects the reflection of this sound of revolution all over the world. Here the attempt of the poet to inspire the common people for ending the rule of the exploiters by taking a proper necessary action, suggests revolution or struggle. This aspect of revolution shows the influence of Marxism on this poem: We can support this view by referring to one comment of Dr. Akshaykumar Kale on this poem. He says, "The present poem seems to be approaching to the Marxist philosophy of revolution and struggle". (P. 277)

The poem 'Ahe Buddhishi Iman' depicts the human life destroyed by capitalism and misuse of science. It ends up with the message of revolution.

Mardhekar finds that the capitalist class has exploited the workers class. There is inequality in society because of the exploitation of labourers by the capitalists. Even the growth of science has not come to the help of man. On the other hand, we see the misuse of science. The war hungry people i.e. wealthy nations are using weapons developed by science for killing thousands of men. This abuse of science and a sense of inequality arouses frustration in the mind of the poet.

In Mardhekar's opinion human life has two aspects desire, attraction and repulsion, selfishness and selflessness, love and unlove, freedom and restriction. However, in actual life we don't find these two forms of human life. Instead we find one side of human life reflecting only. (attraction, love, selfishness and restriction). He thought upon life deeply and found that life meant a greater negativity. He also learns that nobody in this world is interested in fighting against injustice and oppression. All men have lost humanity. They are merely hypocrites now. In this situation Mardhekar makes an appeal to all those who are oppressed and exploited. He advises them to set themselves in motion and fight against the calamity of exploitation. In the following lines, we notice his desire for revolution of the exploited class :

Sanga sanga ho, uttar / Ajuni na shunyakar
Mag lava atkepar / Chid - Zende (Poem no. 11, K.K., p.no. 32).

Here, the clause 'atkepar chid zende' suggests the need of revolution for struggling against the exploiters class and bringing victory to the oppressed and the underprivileged. This suggestion for fighting against the capitalistic society with the weapon of revolution reflects the influence of Marxism in this poem.

In the poem 'Badavit Tirrya' Mardhekar believes that struggle is inevitable in human life. The wealthy class has exploited the common man. The men lusty for power have spoiled every system of society. The poet is conscious of this sorrowful condition of our nation where poor children who are clothless have to maintain their livelihood by begging alms from one house to another house. He is also aware of the fact that the rich make use of political power for their own benefit. The political power no more exists for the welfare of common people. In a sense, these common people are no more different from the small naked beggar boy who has been exploited mentally and bodily. Thus, man is entangled in the problem of inequality. The poet thinks that this tangle of inequality will be broken only by the exploited ones, especially those who are naked mentally and bodily. He also believes that struggle is inevitable now. And this struggle will come up through the conflict started by the exploited and their sympathizers. The following lines indicate Mardhekar's view of the emergence of revolution :

Nangyanchah ata, yethe karbhar
Kondi arpar, fodaya hi ||

(Badvit Tirrya... Poem No. 19, Kahi Kavita, p. 40)

The thought of revolution can be seen in Mardhekar's poem. Kuni Maarave also, While expressing his thoughts on the process of exploitation in this poem, Mardhekar has also revealed his hope for revolution. He thinks that the exploited class is always seen to be crying or dying or facing sorrow all the time in his real life, will undoubtedly one day express his anger against the existing wretched condition. The exploited men will tighten their fists and they will express these anger. They will move up the arms of their shirts and will express their anger. It means they will get ready for the conflict against the exploiters. In this conflict between the exploited and the exploiter, the age old system of exploitation will come to an end. Here, Mardhekar appears to be optimistic about revolution. He is confident that the oppressed class will wage a war against the oppressors and in this war they will break the shield of their enemies into pieces with the attack of their sword upon it. The following lines reflect this optimism of Mardhekar for struggle, revolution or war against injustice, inequality and exploitation :

Hya jaganyatun, hya marnyatun
Hasnyatun un radnyatun hya;
Ashashwatachya muthi waluni.
Apo ap varati ekadhintil bahya
Akher ghetta takkar jari mag
Yugayuganche futel bhal
Ashakwatachya samsheriwar.
Shashwatachi tutel dhal |

(Poem No. 5, A.K.K., p. no. 77)

The aspect of revolution expressed in the above stanzas shows the influence of Marxist philosophy on Mardhekar. Besides revolution, we come across some other features of Marxism in this poem such as class inequality, class conflict, Marx's

theory of labour and surplus value etc. Indeed, this poem can be cited as a good example of Mardhekar's love for revolution. It shows his attachment with the concept of revolution. In other poems Mardhekar is not seen so hopeful for revolution as he is seen in this poem. The utterance of Dr. Kale is worth mentioning here in this regard. He says, "In other poems having thought of revolution, we see Mardhekar as a pessimist. But this poem is an exception to all those poems. In most of his poems Mardhekar shows his deep insight while depicting the realistic picture of exploitation. However, while expressing his view point of revolution and change, he appears to be suspicious and nervous. In fact, he expresses his nervousness in ironical language in those poems. The poem, however, indicates his deep attachment with the concept of revolution".

In short, the study of all the poems discussed above represents that in his poetry Mardhekar makes an attempt of enlightening the exploited class about revolution. He appeals to them for using the weapon of revolution for ending their miseries. The study of the above poems also makes clear his optimistic attitude for revolution. He thinks that the exploited will definitely initiate struggle one day. Thus, here we see Mardhekar as a Marxist poet believing in struggle for bringing in the necessary change and happiness in human life.

References:

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