

SENSE OF LOSS AND ALIENATION REFLECTED IN THE SELECT POEMS OF DILIP CHITRE

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Post-Independence Indian English Poetry reflects the contemporary world. The poets like Nissim Ezekiel, Don Moraes, P. Lal, Adil Jussawalla, A. K. Ramanujan, R. Parthasarthy, Gieve Patel, Arvind Mahotra, Dilip Chitre to name few presents the social milieu in their writing. The society was undergoing changes due to modernization, East-West encounter, economic progress and industrialization, the scientific and technological advancement. The middle class of the society was mainly affected by these changes. The post-independence poetry portray the picture of the social unrest emerged from the difficulty to adjust with these social and cultural changes. This inner dilemma of common man has been explicitly depicted in modern Indian English Poetry.

Dilip Purushottam Chitre (1938-2009) is a bilingual poet writing in Marathi and English language. His major contribution is the translation work of Marathi bhakti poet Saint Tukaram published as *Says Tuka* (1991). His traveling in Asia, Africa, Europe and north America helped him to study the social and cultural aspects of these continents closely. His poetry is deeply rooted in Indian soil. He writes about inner struggle of man being the part of changing phase. Dilip Chitre's poems explore how the changes in the modern world are reflected in the behavior of modern man. He blends together various elements of human nature the inner conflict, sense of alienation, feelings of being failure, frustration, loneliness, breaking relations with family and others, love for being part of family. At the same time, he is conscious of the evolutions in the society.

The present research paper deals with his select poems: *Father Returning Home*, *Felling of the Banyan Tree*. These poems are selected from his book of English Poems *Travelling in a Cage* (1980).

Father Returning Home narrates the pathetic experience of a father in his own home as well as outside of the home. The poem at the beginning describes the travelling experience of the father. He is an old man who has become bored of his daily routine work. He travels by train daily to his office. He ignored the sights of the suburbs as they are very common to him. His rain coat and clothes full of mud and water indicate the pathetic condition of the father. Even the bag, he carries is heavy. He finds difficult to travel by train due to old age. He feels that a train drops him out as like a word dropped from a long sentence. The poem further describes

his experience at home. Nobody pays attention to him, as he reached the home. In fact, he receives stale chapatti and weak tea. His children do not notice his arrival and do not share their experiences with him. Also they do not share their experiences or feelings with him. He finds himself lonely and alienate in the world which is created by him. He keeps himself busy in reading book and listening a radio. The poem ends with,

... He will now go to sleep
Listening to the static on the radio, dreaming
Of his ancestors and grandchildren, thinkin
Of nomads entering a subcontinent through a narrow pass.

The father finds solution to his loneliness by dreaming a talk with his ancestors and grandchildren. He tries to fulfill his desire to have a dialogue with someone. The poem realistically presents the man's alienation from man-made world. It throws light on the changing human relationship. The family binding and care for each other have been lost as the man has become self-centered. The poem comments on how sacrifice of parents ignored by the children creates sense of frustration. Dilip Chitre ironically presents the modern man's estrangement with the manmade world. The tragedy of the father is the tragedy observed in the modern society.

Felling of the Banyan Tree is an example of loss of roots. The poem describes the incident of cutting of a banyan tree which is deeply rooted. The poet's father orders the tenants to leave the house. Then all the structures are demolished one by one. It is said in the traditionally that trees are sacred and to cut them is a crime. But, father orders to cut the trees ignoring this belief. The two hundred years old huge banyan tree creates problems to cut as it is old and its roots are spread surrounding the house. As the tree is huge, first the branches are cut. The insects and birds start leaving the tree. Then the massive trunk is cut by fifty choppers. The children watch this slaughter in terror and fascination. Then after, poet's family members move to Baroda where they do not find such a big tree. It remains only in their memories. The tree grows in their dreams which aerial roots search the ground to strike. The expressions like

One by one the structures were demolished....
Felling them is a crime but he massacred them all....
Its scraggy aerial roots fell to the ground....
We watched in terror and fascination this slaughter....

reveal the changes in human attitude towards the old tradition which mark the tendency of going away from nature. The narrator of the poem is very much attached with old house and tress surrounding it. The narrator feels sorry for this great loss. Felling of the banyan tree is symbolic of cutting of our roots.