CHAPTER - FOUR

CONCEPT OF SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS
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It will be advisable to have a clear concept of social consciousness before going to consider the same in the poetry of Nagarjun.

Dr. Ratnakar Pandey while explaining social consciousness, has maintained.

The concept of social consciousness is progressive and positive not negative. This tendency is present in every individual. Man tried to adopt himself according to the circumstances in which he lives and it is his individual effort that proves effective in this regard.
The movement of social consciousness is like that of a river which remains intact in its flow. It has an inter connecting ring from one individual to another.

According to the Indian Philosopher and thinkers the status of social consciousness is spiritual rather than material. It is a kind of awakening that tries to set things right and tries to correct those who have gone astray. According to Sir William Hamilton the term consciousness is beyond definition in his own words.

According to William James

Dr. Radha Krishnan has given a nice definition of social consciousness according to him.
In fact the writer tries to reflect his conscious awareness through the character whom he refers to in his writing. Such a consciousness is availed by him in some special circumstances. This consciousness provides strengths in the society to which he belongs.

Human Consciousness can be termed as Social Consciousness as it reflects in his mind because of various reactions in the outer worlds.

Social Consciousness has been classified into three Categories as conscious, subconscious and unconsciousness. It is through these aspects of mind that a social being derives the power of thinking and energy to work.
In social context the birth of social consciousness takes place in the society and is based on the oddities of life. Whenever the feeling of high and low takes place then the mind of man makes an outcry. At that very moment this consciousness starts growing. Group struggle, exploitation feelings of high and low, widow marriage, economic inconsistencies etc. are all at the root of social consciousness taking place in the mind of man.

Man is able to acquire knowledge of unfathomable depth. Thus it is social consciousness that provides avenues of knowledge to man. This consciousness moves ahead in the life of man. Just like a river flowing ahead. The social consciousness opposes mismanagement, unreasonability and unmorality which present blocks in the path of human progress.

History stands evidence of the fact that in the development of human civilization, the social organization have played a significant role. This social consciousness has its unchecked movement towards progress.

Scholars and thinkers from each had maintained that with the birth of new ideas in society there comes a change in the traditional
ideas. When society advances by pushing behind the conservative ideas then it is in a position to protest against the social exploitation and the social values full of controversies. All feelings crop up from the social awakening in society. Socialy Consciousness also joins hands at this junctise. This is very essential because it is this consciousness which leads to the path of progress by solving the major problems that stand in the way of progress.

4.2 CRITERION OF SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS:

In the previous pages we have talked about the concept of social consciousness. Here we are going to consider consciousness and its criterion.

The criterion of social consciousness comprises the struggle wide spread in the society, exploitation, the pathetic song of man, the expression of their pain, racial awakening, social inconsistencies, problems of marriage, hatred against the exploiters, protest against conservation, revolt against degrading morality, sympathetic attitude to those living in huts, anger against those high buildings which have been
Social consciousness is a compulsory social duty which is meant for the betterment of the whole human race. Individuals are expected to be attached to this social duty according to their intellect and power. Individual prayer in any religion may grant personal prosperity and happiness. But by performing the duty of social consciousness they can help for the happiness and prosperity of common human beings. The great poet Tulsidas wrote his 'Manas' for the well being of all.
The litterateurs warm up social consciousness with their writings.

4.3 SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND NAGARJUN :

Nagarjun acquired the notion of Social consciousness from the environment where he spent his childhood with the children of the peasants and the people belonging to the proletariat class. As a result of the view equipped with such Sanskaras, got broadened in his fearless writings. He was brought up amidst the orthodox Gramins where he found a vast gaps between man and man and these gaps and inconsistencies refined his feelings. The prevailing circumstances of the contemporary society provided him an angle of social consciousness and made him revolutionary by nature. He had a bitter experience of unmatchable marriage, widow problems and the problem of the prostitutes which pain him actually. Further the ruling policy of the English, their atrocities on the Indians, exploitation of peasants and labourers, poverty and wants from which the poet suffered himself, provided him with a new angle of vision. He warned up social consciousness through his writings and personally took an active part in protesting against the tortures meted out to the weaker section of the society. He severely criticized corruption and the wrong policies adopted by the govt. officials to oppress the common mass, with the keen observation. The poet sees the uneven state of society and desires to bring about a total change in it. Such a change brought aspect of social
consciousness in an exclusive idea of Nagarjun except that of Kabir.
Nagarjun got initiated to Buddhism because he was fade up to see the
present willing condition of society, but he entered family life in order to
provide a voice to the dumb people, then he saw the inclination towards
communism and started criticizing the same after finding some draw-back
in it.

It was his deep-thinkers, feeling of sympathy and maturity of
experience that converted him into a visionist writer. It seems proper to
remark that his literature is itself social consciousness and vice-versa.

(i) **STRUGGLE:**

The poetry of Nagarjun full of struggle. Being initiated into
Buddhism. He did not go to the past like Rahul Sankrityayan but moved
towards the present. He freed himself from the fear of divine power and
superstition and moved ahead. He tried to broaden his views from
personal to universal. This can be by referring to "Saroj Smriti" of Nirala
"Sindoor Tilkit Bhaal" of Nagarjun.

Nagarjun considers struggle supreme in life. That is why he odores
those who are ready to indulge in any kind of Sacrifice of struggle. He
welcomes Kedarnath Aggarwal of human nature; offer libation of Rudra Bharadwaj; praises Stalin, encourages Lumumba; sends salutes Benipuri dedicates his poetry of Rajkamal Choudhury and sends red salutes to Lenin. He pays his due regard to Nirala and promises to Bhentendi that he will never sell himself. In other words Nagarjun expresses his heartful thanks to all those personalities who have contributed something towards the society. But he pays his highest respect to those who jumped into the struggle for the emancipation of mankind in general. This cannot be called his personal eccentricity. He has clapped to praise them. Irrespective of their place of birth. This is a well decided policy of is goal in life. Nagarjun has himself experienced the tortures of life and has a personal experiences of the bitter truths faced by him. His remarks about himself is worthnoting.

We know it well that the society today is full of such people who live at the cost of other by using all sorts of false and untrue method for that a big struggle his living they must be exposed to the public. The poet knows full well how to tackle this problem. He supports common people who are against such corruption and anomalies prevailing in the
society. Actually Nagarjun is the poet of the people and he supports them whole heartedly whenever they raise their voice against the atrocities and tortures meted out to them by the vested interests. That may be a movement started by the proletariat class of India. Nagarjun is particularly related in any part of the country to the common mass, specially the people who belong to the working class. The poem ‘Rahe Gunjte Badi Der Tak’, written in 1971, records the Prattling of children in the lines quoted below:

Those who pass through ruin and destruction consider it their first duty to indulge in some sort of struggle and are quite hopeful of success. Even defeat is acceptable at it prepares them for the future struggle. Fighting for rights is a sacred duty. Those who continue their struggles with this angle deserve out salute. But Nagarjun has a different angle here.

'मेले नाम मेले नाम
विएनम विएनाम...
... निर्भय होकर शोपण की चुनियादे
यह खेदेगे।' २७
Nagarjun exposes corruption, exploitation and class distinction as he has deep faith in sociological ideology. He is quite hopeful for the sunrise which symbolise hope and prosperity. Presently the oppressed have to struggle so that they may hope for prosperity in future.

In this way.

(ii) REVOLT AGAINST EXPLOITATION AND HATRED AGAINST EXPLOITERS:

Even after independence no attention has been paid to the problems of the exploited, suppressed and low class people. They are subjected to the tortures of the capitalists and the landlords. They are treated as bonded labourers and tortured by the exploiters. These people have become closely associated with the poet and he never desires to get dissociated with them. He has identified himself with the tortures meted out to these exploited and haggard people. His poetry has sprung up from such tortures and oppression faced by the proletariat class.
This is the extreme form of exploitation. Even today men and women are bought and enslaved and feed on the food partially taken by others. They are beaten mercilessly even at the slightest stir or their poet. They are humiliated every where.

Leaders, traders, landlords businessmen and the people belonging to the upper castes indulge in the exploitation of these helpless people. Nagarjun almost burst out on the legislator to see him misbehave with an ordinary prisoner.

The poet also throws some light on the discrimination and inconsistencies in existence in the jail. Here also a wall is created between man and man.
The main reason of this gap between the exploiters and the exploited is related to the economic conditions.

The basis of this exploitation is the rightful possession of the product by rich who take the lion’s share of the profit depriving the labourers of their reasonable remuneration only for investing his capital for the product. The ‘Rajas’ and the feudal lords used to the same before independence and the mill awners exploit the labourers in the post-independence period. They want to keep this gap intact so that they may indulge in all kinds of luxurious. In his poem ‘Ghin To Nehin Ati’ the poet has depicted the conditions of the farmers and the labourers in the following words.

"पुली मजूर है बोसा ढेते हैं माला, पुल, धुआं भाग से पड़ता है सरका पाला,
धन चाहे जाहें-तहाँ हो जाते हैं तेरे,
सपने में भी सुनाते हैं सबकी धज्जकन।" 23

Because of this attitude of exploitation by the exploiting class, the condition of the farmers, labour and the common people has become miserable. In the words of the poet:

"दह जर्वर है भूल पाया से,
ब्यक्ति ब्यक्ति दुःख दैनय गता है,
तृप्ति में समुद्र फसल है।" 24
The three root factors, i.e., imperialism, feudalism and capitalism are at the root of all kinds of exploitation in society. Capitalists always stand by imperialism, and feudalism and help the two to exploit the people in every possible way. As a result of this the life of the exploited classes has become even worse than before: the lot of the common people cannot be bettered so long these three classes are existing and indulging in exploitation. The poet, being fully warmed up by social consciousness, makes these destructive powers his target, and tries to create the feeling of revolt against them. His social consciousness gives birth to a critical conscience. In his poem "Kalpana Ke Putra He Bhagwan" the poet has expressed his feelings:

Nagarjun has exposed the deceit of the administrators one by one and has made people aware of their misdeeds. He has seen through these leaders right from Nehru till this day. He therefore declares:
He becomes alert where even he sees these leaders indulging in activities which are against the interests of the common mass. This attitude of the poet did not spare his father to see him torturing his mother. The poet is quite hopeful of eradicating this evil from the society by organising the masses.

(iii) **PATHETIC SONG OF MEN AND EXPRESSION OF THEIR PAIN:**

Nagarjun is the poet of the people. His poetry is impregnated with the feelings of social realism and political struggle. It is also satiric in its tone. His plain speaking poems also are quite smarting. His oft-quoted poem ‘Akaal Aur Uske Baad’ presents the photograph of human sufferings.

This is a scene of famine—quite expressive in itself. It is the poorer section of the society that has to bear with this critical situation. In the words of Kedarnath Agarwal—...
He wants to relieve people of their pain and sufferings. These common people belong to various section of society. His sympathetic attitude is not confined to the farmers and labourers but it also extends to teachers and clerks etc. Here is the depiction of the pitiable condition of an Indian teacher who is supposed to build the character of the people and of the nation.

Nagarjun’s poetry has no philosophical gravity nor has it any idea of political stability. He has a deep study of the realistic aspect of human life, this is the reason that the poetry of Nagarjun never went against the welfare of the people. He is attached to people, consciously or unconsciously. He hates every situation which goes to pester the human beings. This feeling has been expressed partly in satiric and partly in challenging tone.
He hates those who want to bring a kind of inter-conflict in the society. He is ever ready to take those people to task who show a kind of humiliating attitude to the people earning bread by the sweat of their labour.

It is a keen observer like Nagarjun who can keep into the inner life of the people who are no better than the beast of burden. Here is a picture of a rickshaw-puller who carries the load of man being himself a man.

The people of the lower class like the rickshaw-puller, like one who cannot provide proper clothes for covering the body of his wife and one who spends his night either by spreading a paper or a sack on the hard ground. They all know full well that the part of their share has been taken away by those who live the life of luxury in big palaces and provide to their dogs better in quality than that taken by the lower class. But they are helpless. They cannot do anything against those rich people who are their exploiters. In his poem, 'Pret Ka Bayan', the conversation between...
an Indian dead person and the Yamraj expresses this very social realism.

In this poem, the poet has expressed the feeling that according to him none is great or small, high and low but all are equal. This is the communistic idea of his poetry is a sharer of the griefs of others. He shares the tears of their eyes falling through his own eyes. While describing the Yakshas pangs of separation from his wife the eyes of the poet must have been suffused with tears. Nagarjun has presented the grief of Yakshas before the people through his writings. His pain has a balmy effect. The poet associates his pain with that of others. In this context we can see a few lines of one of his best poems.
REvolt AGAINst RELIGIONS SUPERSTITIONS.

HYPOCRisy AND UNTOUCHABILITY:

Nagarjun hates religious superstition communalism and untouchability. He even shows his dislike towards the religious superstition of the backward people. He has also expressed his view against those who exploit people in the name of traditional beliefs and the focus.

Nagarjun himself experienced all kinds of oddities in his life. Being a brahmin he did not behave like a brahmin. He did not become buddhist even after being initiated into Buddhism. His social consciousness had the first tussle took place with regard to the narrowness of religion. Contemporary religion did not help the people in any way. There prevailed all kinds of differences in the name of religion. The social condition was equally unhealthy the people had to suffer the distinction between high and low exploitation in the name of religion was the order of the day. The worship of mammon among the people of the upper classes was ripe. Nagarjun has a bitter experience about the role of religion in the society. It had already gone astray added to that the so called religious preachers had added several new dimensions to it which were is no way helpful in improving the condition of the people. The evil systems like untouchability, widow marriage, unmatching marriages, caste system, sacrifice etc. had almost dehumanised the people.
Nagarjun did not accept this aspects of the society which mislead people and make them helpless 'He Hamri Kalpna a Putra He Bhagwan'

He felt that the evil aspects that were associated with religion did great harm to mankind. In other words religion established its superiority over the real values of men.

Nagarjun is in favour of living life in its true form. He laughs at those who wrest money by befooling people.

These so called protectors of religion try to confine the society by narrow rules and customs and superstitions by establishing their superiority over others for their personal benefits. They misguide the people. The communal riots in the country are the creations of these destructive forces. They always hide their real faces behind the mask. There must be a complete revolution against anomalies in the name of religion.
These lines of the poet express his feeling of revolt like those of Kabir against the established traditions. They are explosions against the exploiting tendency of the society. After reading these lines he feel like remembering the lines of Kabir "Pahar Puje Hari Mile" and "Kya Sahab Tera Hain".

Nagarjun also tried to find out "Laghu Manav" and "Sahaj Manav". The poet tried to establish the fact that a hungry man recognises neither a religion for a God. For him saving himself is the greatest religion.

The greatest tragedy of the modern man is that he is completely under the influence of the conventionalism of tradition, superstition and outward show, the old systems and ideas have found the people hand and feet. The progressive writers think it to be their duty to free the people from these evils prevailing in society. This will help the exposed, the exploiters and their hidden motives. It is the tradition that is in the very blood of the people. There comes a change in his flow in the course of time and it is converted into conventionalism or conservatism. The tradition dissociated from conventionalism is worth accepting. In the words of Nagarjun.
"The poet wants to defend society by removing ignorance regarding
conventionalism.

Nagarjun violently reacts against those capitalists who tried to
establish that man suffers in this world because of his actions. His
present life is based on the action of his past life. His suffering in this life
is owing to the sins that he committed in his previous life. So he should
do some Religious works in this life in order to better his future life. This
is nothing but a conspiracy hatched by the so-called religious people. The
poet has little faith in such arguments based on false ideas. He feels it his
duty to destroy such feelings even to the root and make people free from
such mental bindings.

(v) **Social oddities and racial awakening**:

The poet, Nagarjun has dedicated himself to establish the
eternal values of life. This is the real temper of his poetry. He has never
desired for his own benefit by worshipping God. He is fully engaged in
his social religion whose main motive is the welfare of the people. It is
for this reason that his literature is acceptable by all. The social consciousness of such a broad dimension is found nowhere except in Kabir. It is this social consciousness of Nagarjun that his raised in them to the level of a "Jankabi" in a poet of the people. In the words of Vishnu Khare.

Nagarjun is the poet of 80% people of this country who are compelled to live the life of poverty under scarcity, want and exploitation.

Nagarjun has recognised his real self by peeping into his personality and he found that the one aspect of his personality is to make himself healthy and strong. This is his social consciousness in which there are inconsistencies, deformities and destructive individualistic feelings and he has decided to destroy them wholesale. In fact the life of the common man is being involved in the down- ward moving politics. This is the greatest drawback of the social oddities. The social
consciousness of Nagarjun desires to live in the limits of humanity. Any regrettable work done by man is a stand and leprosy for the society. He feels that the racial discrimination and parochialism and narrow feelings are really sorrowful. The sorrow of Nagarjun is associated with that of others.

The poet, living with his people, is able to see and realise all. He feels that the society is divided into religion, race and language. There is staunch enmity between two brothers. The politics of vote-bank is in its sanguine mood. The poet is pleased to feel that an environment is possible by bringing various social forces in the right line.

The poet wants to take his country out of the surrounding darkness of slavery and make it free from the present fear. It is the duty of a true leader to the society from all evil. The society has been divided into various classes. It is the curse of the feudal system where more
importance was attached to birth than work. Even today the same situation is prevailing.

A person born in a brahmin family is regarded worth worshipping even if his life is full of evils. A person of low caste is disliked by all even if he is equipped with all virtues. The spread of knowledge was limited to family a few in the society. Even today caste is the basis of superiority in the villages. The division of work is done according to cast. There are untouchable in the villages they have no right to enter the temples. They are not allowed to live in the village. They have the residence outside the village. They have a separate well for drinking water. They have their own festivals. Even their social structure is separate. They are boycotted from the society even if they form and important path of it, because born in the family of Sudra, they have to lead the life of untouchable. They are kept out of Hindu relegion in spite of their being Hindu by caste. This is their mental exploitation. It is the evil thoughts to make them feel uneasy as a result of this strange treatment they feel themselves helpless low and fatalist. This system of untouchability is the defective aspect of Indian caste system. The Indian society has brought a reflection on itself by an inevitable part of this untouchable. They have no right to education. So it means that they are and easy pray to exploitation. The poet is quite aware of all this atrocities and injustice and meted out to those be belong to the lower caste. He wants to eradicate such systems.
The poet stands among them and tries to make them familiar with their rights. The poet decides to fight against the social evils for the whole of his life he thinks.

Nagarjun has written about every section of people. The sensibility
of the age speaks through all his writings. In spite of having faith in communism, he is more attached to the people of the society. He is of the viewpoint that the country will have to pass through a long way in order to come to the right back. A political awakening is inevitable in order to improve the condition of the people along with the social consciousness. He is ready to make any amount of sacrifice even ready to go to Jail as he did in the past in order to improve the condition of country. He is even ready to give voice to those who are neglected. In his own words:

जब कभी मैं प्रामाण्य में क्रियाएँ-क्रियारूप बसी हुई शुल्कों की जुलियाएं में जाता हूँ, तो सुबिधा प्राप्त बनाई
द्वारा परिवर्तित राजनीति के प्रति प्रेम रोम-रोम नकसत में मुलगा उठाता है।

He spared none of the great leaders and the countries of the world when he found something wrong with them, thus even Agyeya, Pant, Nehru, Gandhi the imperialistic America have been his targets from time to time. He swept his boom where ever he found dirt. His attack on those who enjoy facilities provided by the govt. can be seen here.

One specialty of Nagarjun’s social consciousness is that he always present a sublime picture of people whether they are in trouble or in
distress. They are presented in their full glory in his poetry. On the other hand, he presents the exploiting class in most ugly form. The symbols used here are ugly and the images those of animals.

These little arguments of the poet bring life and excitement in his poetry.

Rajesh Joshi writes:

Common people are the centre of his writings.

That is why when he casts his glance towards the present situations.

Today poetry reveals the thinking of the poets. It is the open book of their faith and way of thinking. Today the altert writer of social
consciousness can not deceive the freedom of mind, of people:

He is one with crores of hearts.

The poet who carries with him the powers of crores is far away from sentimentality. The shape of his poetic consciousness is realistic. Nambar Singh writes about Nagarjun’s poetic consciousness.

The poetic life of Nagarjun is going to complete the fifth decay. In this connection his social consciousness has played a significant role in order to organise human power for destroying oddities and inequality from society and human life. It is because of this consciousness that a revolutionary idea develop in the mind of the poet.

It is the inner power which shapes the social consciousness and creates social revolution. The poet has created an environment everywhere and encouraged everyone for the inspiration of action so that
It can be said by way of conclusion that Nagarjun is busy in creating a sensitive and liberal feelings of humanity with full faith. In order to reach his goal he has written poems in Hindi, Mathili, Sanskrit and Bengali. Cherishing a noble dream in his mind the poet declares.

A writer can not be indifferent to time and society. The maturity of his thinking and ideas is the main aspect of social consciousness. Thinking is a characteristic quality of human nature which creates social human beings and universalises it. The history and culture of social man and his thoughts are the base of social consciousness.
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2. Dr. Ratnakar Pandey: Hindi Sahitya Samajik Chetana, p-156
3. Prof. Pranay: Nagarjun Ki Samajik Chetana, p-30
4. Dr. Kunwarpal Singh: Hindi Upanyas, Samajik Chetana, p-118
5. Dr. Premchand Vijaybargiya: Aadhunik Hindi Kabiyon Ka Samajik Darshan, p-28
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