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# SELECTED SHORT STORIES OF RADHAVALLABHA TRIPATHI: A CRITICAL REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT:

Radhavallabha Tripathi is a Modern story writer. The author seems to be deviated from the traditional way of storytelling and has developed his own structure of story. His stories unfold some harsh realities of the society. We find synthesis of modern and traditional writing style in his present work. In this article the author has made an attempt to study the “Abhinandanam” of Radhaballav Tripathy, to analyze the short story “Vayavah”. It also throws light on the literary style of Radhaballav Tripathy. For this purpose the researcher has followed both primary sources and secondary sources. Internet sources have also been followed for gathering information. The study concludes that he has used many places, traditional grammatical verb forms which are very rarely used by modern authors nowadays, which shows he is well versed in Sanskrit grammar as well. We can easily record those verb forms just by reading his stories.

**Keywords:** Modern story, society, Abhinandanam, Radhaballav Tripathy.

### Introduction:

Radhavallabha Tripathi is an eminent scholar of Sanskrit. His contribution to the field of modern Sanskrit writing is noteworthy as his prose writing gives a new direction to the modern prose in Sanskrit. He has enriched the field of story writing in twin languages; Sanskrit and Hindi. His stories in both the languages have received rave reviews from the scholars. Besides being an excellent prose writer, he is one of the most top-rated poets in Sanskrit. The book under study “Smitarekha” is an anthology of six short stories. All the stories expose some harsh realities of the modern times. The stories Abhinandanam and Vayavah showcase the evils of current education system. How PhD viva are conducted and how the degree of Ph.D is awarded is to the undeserving candidates is satirically depicted by Dr. Tripathi in the story- ‘Viva’ (Tripathi, Radhavallabha, 2011).

Before taking up the actual modern short story, writers felt the need to give as reading material to Sanskrit students simple elegant prose narratives, and for this purpose produced a good deal of literature. They retold Puranic episodes and collected in Sanskrit numerous fables and popular tales. S.Venkatarama Sastri has written Hundreds popular Tales and fables. Abhiraja Rajendra Mishra, Radhavallabha tripathi, Banmali Biswal, Prabhunath Dwivedi, Kalanatha Shastri and Rabindra kumar Panda are some well-known story writers of contemporary Sanskrit literature (Kulshrestha, Ruchi, 2008).

Looking at all the new developments, modern Sanskrit story writing in the twentieth century took a new turn and made a radical departure from the old traditional story writing which was moralistic and didactic. The chief proponents of these ultra modern Sanskrit story writings are Banamali Bishwala, Keshab Chandra Das, Rajendra Mishra, Radha Vallabh Tripathi, Nagraj Rao, Prashasyamitra Shashtri, Devarshi kalanatha Shastri, Janardan Hegde and RabindraKumar Panda. The modern writers looked for the day to day issues of contemporary society. They dwelt on the present day topics like female foeticide, brain drain, terrorism, exploitation, psychoanalysis. These themes are skillfully woven in their stories. Their stories are truly short stories in the sense that they are short in size, but big on modern themes. They touched the core of the day to day problems. The themes and extents of the short stories being written in Sanskrit today have been changed tremendously from the style opted in the panchatantra period.

### Significance of the Study:

Radhavallabha Tripathi is a Modern story writer. The author seems to be deviated from the traditional way of storytelling and has developed his own structure of story. His stories unfold some harsh realities of the society. Somewhere he launches satire on naked truth of the life. So through this study the readers will be able to know the contemporary society and in this regard the present study is significant enough.

### Objectives:

The Present study has aimed at the following objectives-

- To study the “Abhinandanam” of Radhaballav Tripathy

- To analyze the short story “Vayavah”
- To throw light on the literary style of Radhaballav Tripathy.

### Method:

For the above mentioned purpose the researcher has followed both primary sources and secondary sources. Internet sources have also been followed for gathering information

### Abhinandanam:

The story, Abhinandanam throws light on temptation and greediness of some scholarly professors who are hungry for publicity and felicitation. Some educationists have unreasonable desire for self adulation and praise. Many professors wish to celebrate their shastipurti mahotsav and even grand felicitation by their students and colleagues. They can go to any extent for this kind of false glory.

Retiring professors wish that their students should contribute to the publication of the felicitation book as a mark of respect. Some professors leave their dignity and become an object of ridicule among the people for their hunger for publicity. The story Abhinandanam throws light on the same evil. Ramdayalu was a professor in the University of repute. He was a well known as a man of letters. He received many invitations to deliver lectures or to be the chief guest in many literary functions. There would be quite a few letters asking for his expert advice. He was very much excited to read one such which solicited him to write a scholarly article for the felicitation volume of one professor. Suddenly it strikes him that ‘why no one is thinking about my felicitation?’ His greed for his own felicitation and fame was triggered. He thought his colleagues and friends would never think in this direction as they are jealous of his achievements. He was nearly sixty and his retirement was approaching (*Krishnamachariar, M, 1937*).

The professor already started dreaming about his felicitation and fame in the university circles. He appointed Keshavadas as a Chief Editor. He also made the committee for the felicitation volume. He deputed his wife Dularidevi as a treasurer. He dispatched some letters to the scholars requesting to give some contribution to this volume about his scholarship and work. He did not want to disclose about his felicitation in his university and department as they might create some obstacles in this work. Only a few of his close friends, relatives and his wife were aware about this programme. He used to get regular feedback from Keshavprasad about the progress of this function. He used to send scholar’s articles and even some poems he himself was writing and sending to him for the publication.

He was invited by the education minister to remain present in one function. He was very happy and thought that he would go to Delhi and meet some of the ministers and would request them to be the part of his felicitation. He rushed to Delhi and tried to get the appointment from the ministers, but did not succeed as all the appointments were fixed and they were not free till three to four months. Ramdayalu got disappointed. Ultimately he met one of his friends Purnamal who was the deputy minister in the central government and requested to be the chief guest of his function (*Macdonell A.A., 2004*). Ramdayalu was extremely happy as his dream of getting felicitation was fulfilled. But the only pain he had that he could not get the opportunity to have a look of his own felicitation volume. When the programme got over, he called Keshava and asked about his volume where all his life, date, history and research work were summed up. Keshav told Guruji that he had only one copy and that was also taken by Nakul, Keshava’s student. Ramdayalu was angry with him and asked to present him immediately. Again Keshav calmed him down and asked him to finish his lunch or he would miss his train. Ramdayalu was dying to see his own volume, but there was no sight of it. Finally he was handed over the volume as his train was about to leave. When the volume came to his hand, Ramdayalu had a sigh of relief. With great anticipation, he opened his felicitation volume. The binding and cover was very impressive and his own shining photo on the cover page filled his heart with pride. His wife also praised the cover page and felt happy for her husband.

Ramdayalu was desperate to open the first page. To his shock, the first page was blank. The second page too was blank. His heart was beating fast; the third was also no different, blank like a clear sky. Now Ramdayalu had some doubts. He quickly checked the remaining pages; they all were without any ink on it. Ramdayalu was devastated. He was deceived by his own student. He spent forty thousand on this volume, but to no avail. The book was printed with only his photo on it. It was good his wife was sleeping. He could not show his face to anyone. He was heart-broken. He had to pay the heavy price for his own greed for false glory. The book also contained one envelope which had the calculation of expenses. All his forty thousand was spent on some false expenses on the organization of function. Ramdayalu now understood how his student, Keshav cheated him and even swindled him and his book could not see the light of the day in spite of his spending 40,000 rupees.

The whole story exposes man’s hunger for one’s own praise and can result into not only the loss of face but also the hard earned money. The following lines describe the excitement of Ramdayalu when he was on the stage and programme was on and Keshava was anchoring the programme. Actually the author has launched the diatribes on those greedy professors who have unending appetite for their own felicitation and praise:

अभङ्कपमुच्छलति स्म रामदयालोर्हृदयम् । अयं स क्षणः प्राप्त एव  
चिरप्रतीक्षितः। इदानीं सोऽजरोऽमरश्च सञ्जातः। नश्वरमिदं शरीरम् ,  
इदं क्षयं यास्यति , परन्तु अभिनन्दनग्रन्थस्तु आसेतु हिमालयं तेषु तेषु  
ग्रन्थागारेषु यावत् स्थास्यन्ति गिरयः सरितश्च महीतले तावत्  
स्थास्यति ..... इति विचारयन् ब्रह्मानन्द- सहोदरस्य आनन्दस्य  
महासागरे उन्मज्जति स्म निमज्जति स्म रामदयालुः।”(Tripathi,21)

### Critical Appreciation of the Story:

This story is also a strong criticism of the corruption in the field of education. The story is humorous as it has a comic portrayal of the professor who cuts a sorry figure at the end of the story. Radhavallabha Tripathi stands out as a master story teller in the story. His prose is crisp and the quality of writing is par excellence. He has used a number of new words and his syntax is beyond comparison. The character portrayal is outstanding. Both the main characters leave a lasting impact on the minds of the readers.

**Vayavah:** The story Vayavah written by Dr. Radhavallbh Tripathi is his self-experience. The author was once invited to take a viva in one of the university near to his city. He has to travel to that city. While travelling, he was thinking that like his university, this university also awards the degree of PhD easily. The author was the renowned scholar and academician. He was the professor of Hindi. He often called for taking interviews and viva. He was not very much excited to go, but it was the part of his duty. He knew well how PhD is done and how degrees are awarded without much serious work. Every year he has to read many theses and with the comments and evaluation, he used to send back the thesis to a particular university. He found nothing spectacular in the thesis also. Most of the theses are common with ordinary ideas; some were copy from the other thesis. The theme or the topic used to have no novelty. With the same mind set, he was going to take an interview. This time the candidate was the female. The author doesn't remember her name but the only thing he remembered that the title page and the binding was attractive. The author read this thesis and he found many interesting thoughts and good research there. But he did not read thoroughly. Again her guide was Dr. Vinayshankar whom the author knew well as a very ordinary researcher. There was no scholarship in his work, neither in his students.

The author had doubts about the quality of the thesis. He thought if the lady was married, this must be written by her husband or some scholar must have been roped in to write this thesis for her. Even now a days the business of writing thesis has expanded, but the author was not able to believe how such professional people can write such qualitative thesis with all the excellent features. His mind was moving in many directions, any way he thought whatever the reason might be, his duty was to take the viva.

He reached the place of viva on a decided day. As soon as he got down from the train, the person was ready at his service. He took the author near the university area in a car. The area was known to him as the last year only he visited the place, but it was not the same area. And even the person who was serving him was also unknown to the author. The person took the author in a grand hotel and made all the arrangement for his stay and proper food. The author was surprised to get all the VIP treatment from Vinay. Moreover all the professors from Vinay's department knew the author well. This fellow was new and was taking so much pain. He asked the person who he was and who sent him. He introduced himself as a professor of physics in the same university and his name was Rajendra Prasad. He also added that Vinayshankar instructed him to receive him well. The author was surprised how Vinay had changed and given him such royal welcome. The author asked Rajendra to take him to university. Rajendra told him that Vinayshankar was to comethere and he had to wait in the hotel.

This was another surprise for the author. The whole programme of conducting viva was pre –planned. The author now understood why Vinayshankar was taking pains to receivehim very well and why he was given a special treatment. The student whose interview was to be taken must be weak in subject and must be the close relative of Vinayshankar. After some time Vinayshankar came to the hotel and met the author. The other striking episode the author witnessed was that as soon as Vinayshankar entered the room, Rajendra, the professor who took the author there and was bowed down to Vinay. This was really shocking for the author. Vinay again in a very harsh tone asked him to get up and instructed him to look after the author very well (*Tripathi Radhavallbha, 1999*).

The poor fellow replied in very a gentle tone –'Yes sir you don't worry, everything is taken care of.' Vinay asked the author for tea and breakfast, the author said that he had just finished. Vinay then asked the author whether he knew Rajendra? The author immediately replied that he was a professor in the physics department and he was sent to welcome him. Vinay revealed that he was also a husband of Nirmala whose viva was arranged that day.

The author was surprised and perplexed. Now he understood the meanness of Vinayshankar. He was exploiting Nirmala's husband. Nirmala being a female could not help in extra work of her guide. So Vinay was treating Rajendra as his attendant and all the extra works of Vinay was accomplished by him. Even all the expenses of hotel and taxi etc. were managed by Rajendra. The author thought how it was wrong to treat the PhD students like a slave. The author was highly disappointed; any how he had to conduct the viva. .

The author started talking with Vinay and asked about the working system in the department and the level of research. Vinayshankar again gave his views and said that the quality of research had drastically gone down there. No students had the genuine interest and most of the students were female there. And he started criticizing Nirmala, Vinay also added that he firmly believed that ladies should not indulge in any research and for them their family and husband's service was the only research. They should not be promoted for the research. This episode throws light on a serious issue at the university where professors have a gender bias and fail to give respect to the female students. The male chauvinism of university professors has become quite apparent.

He further said that Nirmala had no aptitude for research and she didn't get even time for research. So Vinayshankar created a false image of Nirmala. Vinay Shankar also said that Rajendra, the husband of Nirmala was also not worthy for research. He was known for his hooliganism on the campus.

The author was stunned by such made up stories. The author was little scared by Vinay's story. He thought that if husband was a ruffian what would happen if he took an interview of his wife, Nirmala. He was in a dilemma and even little scared. Vinayshankara, the guide of Nirmala created a false impression and the wrong image of the couple in order to mislead him. After sometime Vinayshankar arrived with great disdain and was chewing pan. He was looking disgusting and started ordering Rajendra. He again criticized Rajendra telling him although he had not completed his PhD, his wife would complete her research and receive the degree of doctorate. Files and documents were put in front of the author and the viva was about to begin. The author had formed a typical impression about the lady researcher.

The viva started. The author found that the lady was little shy, but a scholar par excellence. The author again remembered the statement of Vinayshankar why house wives should not do their PhDs .The author started asking questions to the lady. The lady started speaking slowly and softly. To his great surprise, she could perform very well. She answered all the questions with grace and was a real scholar. The author thought how many times he had to go to conduct the viva and always returned with great despair as students were not well prepared or it was just a formality. It was for the first time that the author enjoyed taking the interview of Nirmala. She had real love for her topic and was well prepared. Vinayshankar was the guide,

but was not interested in asking any question or never wished that Nirmala should perform well. Being an external examiner, the author had all praise for Nirmal's thesis. He gave final comments in praise of Nirmala's thesis and her hard work.

The author has shown the true scenario of the research in some institutions of higher education. How research is conducted and how students are tortured by the guide is aptly shown by the author in this story. The story lays bare the ills of present day education system in our country.

### Literary style of Radhavallabha Tripathi:

We find synthesis of modern and traditional writing style in his present work. As far as his literary style is concerned, we must say his stories are bit complex, not easy to decipher. Stories are bit difficult to understand for the readers as the sentences are long winding and the style is intricate. The language he uses is full of scholarly diction and wordy. The majority of his writing is extremely abstruse, however in some stories we find small and effective sentence formation which provides force and flow to the stories. Sentences are long and compounded words are used in his stories. Traditional grammatical forms are also at full display in his stories. He has used appropriate figures of speeches to make his stories more effective and expressive. Apart from these, the use of proper idioms, phrases and proverbs make the stories reader friendly and very much clear. He uses many figures of speeches like simile, metaphor, pun, vibhavana, vishesokti etc. He also uses similes and Rupaka frequently (Tripathi, Radhavllabh, 2002).

Another important characteristic of his writing is that he has used many places, traditional grammatical verb forms which are very rarely used by modern authors nowadays, which shows he is well versed in Sanskrit grammar as well. We can easily record those verb forms just by reading his stories.

अन्येद्युरेवगरां प्राप, गिरां निजगाद, गृहनगरमाजगाम, हृदयस्फोटकं  
पत्रं प्रपाठ, ते प्रपच्छुः, लेखान् लिखित्वा इतो दद्युः मे हस्ताक्षरं  
जग्राह, मठवासिनः द्वात्राः ददृशुः, विरराम कृष्णनाथः, स्वकक्षमुपेत्य  
सुष्वाप, तूष्णीमेव तस्थौ, कर्कशेन स्वरेणासौ बभाण etc.

### Conclusion:

In the stories of Radhavallabha Tripathi we find majority of all the four types of writing style as popular in language and literature such as expository style, Descriptive style, persuasive style and Narrative style. Apart from these, we also find Autobiographical style, symbolic style, flashback writing style or even dramatic writing style in Radhavallabha's stories.

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