

Anna Bhau Sathe: Developing Emotional Intelligence in Classics in Maharashtra

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Abstract

This paper attempts to contend how the literary legacy of classical and global stalwart, Anna BhauSathe through his dramatic works can function to assist in developing Emotional Intelligence(EQ) or Emotional Quotient(EQ). Human emotions play a pivotal role in an individual's personal and public sphere. They are replicated in human behaviour, action and relations. Anna BhauSathe, through his novels, short stories and Loknatya has presented varied and intricate shades of emotions with innate and compassionate humaneness. This different kind of genres such as tragedies, historical novels, problem plays that he has dealt with; have portrayed emotional exuberance in every sense. It is through well-constructed plot-lines, complex characters and over-all engaging dramatic constructions that allows Anna BhauSathe to surpass the captivity of merely being an entertainer but to be in role of philosopher and psychologist as well.

Key Words: Bollywood, Canonical literature, Catharsis, Emotional Intelligence(EI), Aesthetics, Rasa-bhava theory

Introduction:

The role of emotions and emotional intelligence is quite important in human life. Emotional intelligence (EI) is a term coined by two researchers Peter Salavoy and John Mayer- and popularized by Dan Goleman in his 1995 book of the same name. It can be defined as the ability to recognize, understand and manage our own emotions and also of others. In practical terms, this means beings aware that emotions can drive our behaviour and impact people (positively and negatively), and learning how to manage those emotions both our own and others; especially when we are under pressure situations. It is an undebatable fact that human emotions play a pivotal role in influencing life both at personal and public

level. Also, there are a wide range of emotions such as happiness, sadness, surprise, fear, pride, envy and the list goes long enough. These diverse human emotions are artistically recreated and represented through varied art forms such as through paintings, music, dance, sculpting, photography and so also the arena of literature.

Like an image is a means of human expression in a painting, human kinesthetic in a dance form; so are the words in literature to express human thoughts and emotions. These are varied aspects of human emotional intelligence such as feeling varied emotions, expressing emotions, controlling emotions in social sphere, developing social skills, instilling ethical values,

understanding oneself and others and so on, which can be artistically represented through literature and thereby to develop emotional intelligence. Various studies have shown that reading literary fictions is one of the best ways to understand other people's emotions. Moving further on literary scene, various researchers have also claimed that reading literary classics leaves a reader more proficient emotionally than reading popular fictions or potboilers. In this regard, it is important to note a study conducted by psychologists David Comer Kidd and Emanuele Castano at the New School for Social Research in New York. They have argued that reading classic literary fictions enhances the ability to detect and understand other people's emotions, a crucial skill in navigating complex social relationships. They have used literary scholar and critic Roland Barthes' 'notion of readerly' text and 'writerly' text as proposed by him in his noted critical text 'S/Z'. In the aforesaid research Kidd argued that:

"What great writers do is to turn you into the writer. In literary fiction, the incompleteness of the characters turns your mind to trying to understand the minds of others...Some writing is what you call 'writerly', you fill in the gaps and participate, and some is 'readerly', and you are entertained. We tend to see 'readerly' more in genre fiction like adventure, romance and thrillers, where the author dictates your experience as a reader. Literary (writerly) fiction lets you go into a new environment and you have to find your own ways."

Thus with this study, the plea for reading classics has been put strongly. It is in this

relation that valuing Anna Bhau Sathe's literature as a major canonical component can be strongly argued and proposed for readers and viewers across places and times.

In a conventional sense, popular prevalence of Anna Bhau Sathe's influence on Indian lives can be seen as a colonial baggage. With an upsurge for regional literatures and heavy commercialization for sale of popular fictions; the popularity of canonical literature amongst reading masses has been dwindling. Yet, in spite of this the literary geniuses like Anna Bhau Sathe have dazzled and amazed Indian masses for centuries.

In Maharashtra, the fascinating intercultural mingling happens with Anna Bhau Sathe's dramatic pieces. There are various theatre groups across India, who enthusiastically apply the authentic dramatic Rasa-bhava theory from Natyashastra, to various Anna Bhau Sathe's dramatic works. According to Bharata rasa (aesthetics) and bhavas(emotions) are supposed to be interconnected: at times Bharata explains in the theory the bhava leads to the rasa, at the other times the opposite happens. He has identified eight rasas viz. Hasya (comic), shrngara (erotic pleasure), raudra (rage), karuna (pathos), bibhatsya (horrific), bhayanaka (terror), Veer(heroism) and adbhuta (wonder). Many Indian theatre artists have quite beautifully applied Bharata's rasa- bhava theory to Anna Bhau Sathe's Povada, loknatya, short stories and novels. Thus Indian aesthetic sense beautifully merges into western dramatic mode to create artistic exuberances. It is with Anna Bhau Sathe's exploration of the human soul with emotional lining of multiple emotions like love, passion, desire,

greed, ambition, ego, envy, jealousy, suspicion and romance; that the bard creates which neither age can wither nor a rival can smother.

One of the most important reason for popularity of Anna Bhau Sathe's literature is an element of insightful understanding of human emotions in his works. His themes regarding the human condition and artistic merging into literary patterns makes him more applauded over the centuries and across countries. Humanism and his genius to understand the inherent human nature adds vitality to his works. Developing ethics or instilling human values forms an important component of emotional intelligence. With human emotions inspired themes and motifs such as value of mercy in Fakira, destruction due to over – ambitiousness in Pajhar, extermination due to jealousy in Guhral and so on many short stories; the moral aspect of human emotionality is instilled on the readers and audience.

Anna BhauSathe can be considered as a supreme psychologist with deep understanding of human nature. He brought a new psychological realism and depth in Povada and Loknatya with his life-like characters. The Aristotelian concept of catharsis which connotes to cleansing and purgation of human emotions such as pity or fear are achieved through Fakira, Pajhar and many other stories. Also, applying the modern-day psychiatric knowledge, certain researchers and thinkers even trace psychological disorders such as schizophrenia, split-personality disorder in popular characters in his many novels and short stories, all of them different

individuals showing the rich diversity in human kind.

The prominence of academia in instilling and nurturing the love for Anna Bhau Sathe's classics in India is quite undebatable. It can be something as simple as using loknatya, short stories for addressing issues like teenage-suicide, stalking, breaking up, generation gap with parents, gang warfare, macho stupidity and so on. Thus with this addressing emotional issues can be done at its best in quite implicit manner with Anna Bhau Sathe's loknatya material.

However, study of Anna Bhau Sathe's element need to be developed on much advanced grounds in India such as reading with perspective like the English language Anna BhauSathe, the localized Anna BhauSathe, the universalized Anna BhauSathe, the indigenized Anna BhauSathe and the post-colonial Anna BhauSathe.

Films and media are pervasive in our society today, and have drastically impacted the impressionable minds of young adults at college and university level. Modern film adaptations of Anna Bhau Sathe's literary work can be effectively used as a teaching tools for college and university students.

In the Indian theatre world, there are many actors, directors, stageartists; who are completed mesmerized with Anna Bhau Sathe's genius so much so that they live in that world, know the lines by heart and adapt it brilliantly to Indian settings, The availability of dramatic works of Anna BhauSathe in accessible and regional languages is one of the main reasons to increase popularity of the bard in India.

In conclusion it should be noted that Anna Bhau Sathe was neither a moral teacher nor a preacher; he was a supreme artist. His artistic designs of loknatya were such brilliant that it dazzled the romantics, the

whole of twentieth century and has remained highly popular even today with performances and reinterpretations in diverse cultural contexts through the world.

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