CONCLUSION

FICTION AS A WEAPON FOR SOCIAL CRITICISM

The fact is that every writer creates his own precursors. His work modifies our conception of the past, as it will modify the future.

-Michel Foucault
CONCLUSION:

FICTION AS A WEAPON FOR SOCIAL CRITICISM

The struggle between exploiter and exploited is known as the class struggle. This occurs because of three main reasons such as economical, political and theoretical. K. Chinnappa Bharathi has focused on two grounds one at economic level and the other at theoretical level but not at political level. The protagonists of Bharathi do not show the political will to achieve their goals. Changes can be noticed in all the novels of Bharathi. Sometimes, changes take place at psychological or conscious level like Periannan in Pavalayi; sometimes openly through combined struggle like Sadayan in The Awakening, and sometimes with force like Veeranna and Kandasamy in Sugar.

An exploited class might get the fruit of success as in the novel, The Generations. Here Manivanna, the grandson of Alagappan, protests against the cunning nature of his father Iswaran. Transformation and social change are the dominant themes. Sometimes violence occurs due to the irresponsible behaviour of the capitalist-exploiters. Chinnappa Bharathi is a staunch Marxist, Marxism never teaches dreaming towers, and it talks about the realities of life. Preaching is easy but practicing is difficult. Yet Marx practised what he taught. The importance of Marx as well as Engel’s lies here. Even today, if one observes the existing society, it is commonly found that one factory or the other, one mega industry or the other is being either locked out or closed down permanently. It leads to
the hardships and suicides among workers but never among the owners. This is the significant aspect in the novels of Bharathi.

Maculay in Indian education, and Miechel in Kenyan education failed to bring out the growth of living standard of the common man. Their system of education not only divided the societies but also fragmented them beyond recognition. They produced the seed of suspicion in the name of reformation. They are responsible for the creation of elite capitalist class. Their type of education produces the class to rule not to consider human beings equally.

One tradition constantly confronts with another tradition and sometimes it compromises. One culture does not exclude the other. This is because of conceptual changes or historical reasons. This foregoing study of the two novelists proves that the two writers do 'confront' and 'compromise' in their respective societies. The thesis deals with one of the major issues in the post-colonial field today, namely 'exploitation' expressed in the novels. Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Chinnappa Bharathi are biting critiques of the situations arising out of the realistic social phenomena. They try to clean the society of which they are a part and parcel. As an eminent critic elaborates:

The challenge was then and it is now and will always be, as far as I understand anything, the challenge of the fact. The English painter Francis Bacon called it the brutality of fact. The problem is always what to leave out. The problem is never what to invent. It is not necessary to invent anything. There is already too much. The novelist deals with fact, with accurate observation. Fiction is not invention but is the process of making subjective the alien fact and of communicating its subjectivity within the artful carapace of story. Fiction is engaging meaning in the subjective life, so that one is not overwhelmed by futility.

(Miller, Alex)
Ngugi in his *Moving the Centre: The Struggle for cultural Freedom*: comments:

Ideology is the whole system of symbols, images, beliefs, feelings, thoughts, and attitudes by which we explain the world and our place in it. It often comes wrapped up in culture, as cultural practice, but it can also come up wrapped up in books as the conscious programme of a ruling class of a given race or nation.

(Ngugi: 1993: p126)

But Ngugi has been attacked on the ground that he uses his ideology at the cost of artistic creation. The present thesis questions this wrong notion of separating art and ideology as two different entities. Because 'art' cannot be divorced from ideology, it leads to another question, is there any pure art? Pure? There is no chance for pure work without the base of ideology. Mere combination of words into grammatical sentences cannot be considered as art at all. But one can see the deviations and modifications in every writer's standpoint. This is a different issue. For example, if one looks at the articles, and essays of Gandhiji, it is seen that the writings propagate his philosophy for changing society in which he lived. Then, what is wrong if Ngugi and Chinnappa Bharathi use their ideology in their writings? How does it become propaganda? Ideology through art or art through ideology is not literally immoral or non-aesthetic. Reading of Ngugi's works gives a beautiful worldview. Of course, one confronts it with a painful situation. Hence, the argument that ideology corrupts art has no justification.

Novels of Ngugi embody his philosophy, his message and his view of the human race. His novels are not meant merely for
entertainment, but also for social change. Hence the African novel is ever changing, becoming and growing. In the similar way, K. Chinnappa Bharathi depicts the woes and sufferings of the poor, their misery and wretchedness.

The observation of Annika Joensen and Anna reflects the necessity of making comparative study:

> Literature will always be and must always be critical to the existing society. This is the only space in which critics of the present order are allowed freely (ideally) to voice their disapproval of the establishment, without risking their life and freedom, protecting themselves behind the convenient label fiction. Yet, as most people are aware of, there is always a bit of truth in fiction, or as the proverb goes: where there is smoke, there is fire. The readers are aware of this as the writers, which makes literature the perfect medium to communicate that which would otherwise be unsaid.

(Joensen & Rulherford:16)

Ngugi not only subverts the center of colonialism, which made Afro-Asians second class citizens, meant to be ruled by Euro-centric people, but also reactionarily attacks his won rulers, such as Jomo Kenyatta, Daniel arap Moi and now elected President Mwai Kibaki who have been ruling Kenya for the last 43 years-. Through literature he shows the anti-human policies of the rulers to the people. He argues that fiction cannot be separated from life or society, because it is a part of it and leads to the growth of humanity.


Ngugi consciously imagines through his plays, novels and short stories a Kenya fighting for liberation. This is not to say that his stories follow a formulaic pattern of sorrow, struggle, and liberation. *On the contrary, his stories are steeped in history's dates, numbers, and primary actors; and clearly, Kenya's political history is not
overflowing with happy endings. Ngugi’s goal is not to create a fantasy of social harmony and equal economic opportunities, but to move forward a plurality of cultures, where people have the power to tell their stories, their histories from a centre of their own selection.

For both Ngugi and Chinnappa Bharathi, literature is a sort of machete to fight against the injustice meted out on their countrymen in particular and on the mankind in general. They believe that the society has two extreme positions, i.e. exploiter and exploited, oppressor and oppressed. One is always in the center and another is in the peripheral. Ngugi’s very recent novel Wizard of the Crow and Chinnappa Bharathi’s recent novel The Generations exhibit their ‘undying spirit’ to protest vehemently against the continued exploitation of peasants and workers in their respective countries. Their writings give a boost to resist new coined words—such as neocolonialism, post-colonialism, and Globalization which are rooted in colonialism itself. Instead of talking about ‘things fall apart’, let us rejuvenate ourselves to change the unbearable society of which we are a part and parcel. These writers have become ‘the voice of the voiceless’ naturally. They continue to exhort their countrymen to ‘fight, struggle and change. Not even an iota, they are traitors but true patriots. Both the writers confront with despotic rulers. They argue that without ideology, history, politics and experience, there would be no scope for creative writing. They reject the long established notion of literature as ‘autotelic’, ‘linguistic activity’ and ‘scatological’.

Today, silence means cowardice, and questioning means anti-national, anti-human, anti-religious and so on and so forth. The writers are made to move on the sharp edge of the blade. The words
of Ngugi would recapitulate the concept. He laments in his *Barrel of a pen: Resistance to Repression in New-Colonial Kenya*:

> Questioning colonialism is sedition. Teaching the history of the Kenyan people's resistance to colonialism is sedition. Theatrical exposure of colonial culture is sedition. Questioning the exploitation and oppression of peasants and workers is Marxism and hence treason. Questioning corruption in high place is sedition.

( Ngugi: 1983: p2)⁶

Ngugi does hammer Euro-centrism by the following ways. Firstly, in his fiction, he uses multiple characters, multiple centers, and multiple tellers of tales in every saga of his fiction. This is the reverse of Euro-centric storytellers, where a single-hero or protagonist narrates the story, which has a single center. Secondly, Ngugi, except his earlier writings, writes in his mother tongue Gikuyu and later translates into English. Is it a balanced equation, if all languages must come to English to mean something? The answer is self-explanatory. Of course, he is not a pessimist. The deeper layer of his writings proves the same.

The references to the two kinds of writers—the compromising writers and the committed writers—in the Introduction, reminds us of Nadime Gordiner, who divides the writers as ‘Innocent’ and ‘Responsible’ writers. The innocent writer is neither answerable to anybody nor his writings read by anybody. But the responsible writer is always answerable to everybody and his writings are ready by everybody. The meaning of commitment can be summed up, as commitment is a definite direction. It is a particular vision, a foresighted view of the writer. It also reflects the way of life and a philosophy of life. Commitment of a writer does not destroy the creative power of writer. In fact, a creative writer never escapes
from social responsibility. If these elements are not found in one's writings, what can be noticed is a literarily barbaric.

Is society untouchable to art and literature? The question of the relationship between art/literature and society has been the matter for the concern of the writers and readers since the inception of folk literature and it increased after the advent of the printing machine. Art/literature cannot be separated from society. If it is separated, it has to deal with only imagination, hallucination and creation of cock and bull stories, which may give only mimic pleasure to the reader and nothing. So much of water has flown in the river, but for the sake of revision, here the following words would be quoted of Adolfo Sanchez Vazques a prominent thinker:

The relationship between art and society cannot be ignored for art itself is a social phenomenon. First, because the artist, however unique his primary experience might be, is a social being; second, because his work, however, deeply marked by his primary experience and however unique and unrepeatable its objectification or form might be, is always a bridge, a connecting link between the artist and other members of the society; because a work of art affects people—it contributes to the reaffirmation or devaluation of their ideas, goals or values—and is a social force which with its emotional or ideological weight, shakes or moves people. Nobody remains the same after having been deeply moved by a true work of art.

(Vazques:1973 p112-113)

The above lengthy statement shows that the point of view of Ngugi and Bharathi is the same. Being serious thinkers of the society, they write according to the social situations they see. They highlight the difficult conditions of the mass poignantly. 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' Gayatri Spivak made this question that created furious debate in literary and non-literary circles. For this Ngugi and Bharathi certainly would say a resounding 'yes'. It is opt to conclude with the stunning words of Ngugi, used while addressing his readers at a lecture on his recent novel Wizard of the Crow: 'We are all connected, we are each other's keeper, no matter where we are or come from'. (Ngugi:2007)
(Emphasis added)
NOTES

1. Foucault, Michel: Language, counter-Memory, practice: Selected essays and Interviews: 5p: Qted by: Annika Joensen and Anna Rutherford: In their: Rewriting and reinterpreting of history through literature

2. Miller, Alex: Chasing My Tale: The Lecture was held in Arhus 6:12:1993 at the University of Arhus: 5-6p) qtd by Annika Joensen and Anna Rutherford: Arhus University: In their: Rewriting and reinterpreting of history through literature)


4. Miller, Alex: Chasing My Tale: The Lecture was held in Arhus 6:12:1993 at the University of Arhus: 5-6p) qtd by Annika Joensen and Anna Rutherford: Arhus University: In their: Rewriting and reinterpreting of history through literature) Ibid: p16


