

Chapter-III

Reflection of K.A. Abbas's Progressive Vision in the Selected Short Stories

K.A. Abbas being a progressive writer has never remained bogus in his writings and has depicted reality as he has observed. He has given voice to the voiceless and hearing to the unheard by projecting their problem of exploitation and injustice being imposed upon them either by society or by orthodox nature of conservatives. Abbas has never shown his propensity to extreme ideologies but has adopted and advocated the median, liberal, and democratic path. The story, "The Sparrows", which made him famous overnight and declared him a progressive writer represents a character of progressive thinking named Rahim Khan and orthodox mind set-up of society and its outdated conventions. He also shows as to how a woman like Radha has no option than to remain silent before a patriarchal dictatorship. She has to behave like a cow whether sold to butcher or imposed husband. It makes no difference for her because her will to marry a person she loves has been killed. The second character focused in the story is Rahim Khan. In his family all people right from his father up to his ancestors were linked with the profession of farming. He has the distinction of being the first in his family to choose a career of his heart. He does not want to follow his forefathers in choosing a career for himself. After all he was an individual with his own wishes and aspirations. He has very keen interest in joining circus as career. He has given full expression to his freedom of thought and choice which is the underlying concept of progressivism. But his father being orthodox in nature opposed his choice of choosing circus as carrier and thus frustrated and dashed to dust all the hopes of Rahim Khan. Dr. Tushar Vyas observes:

The story deal with Rahim Khan's past. In his twenties, Rahim Khan was a promising youth full of the joy of life. He was well versed in arts like Kabadi, wrestling and swimming. As a young man Rahim Khan had two ambitions: (1) to join circus and (2) to marry a girl named Radha. Rahim Khan was impressed by the circus that had come to his village and wanted to join circus company. (Vyas)

He is progressive in the sense that at least he summons up the courage to go for a career unchosen by his ancestors. His father associates the circus career with morality and status. However, for a progressive like Khan no job is low or high and inferior or superior. All jobs are equal. It is basically mind set-up that brands some professions as inferior and others as superior. He is the first person in his family who has shown a great determination to break up the shackles of conventionalism which modifies the behaviour of an individual according to the earlier outdated rules. It also debars an individual to choose a career of his choice and is forced to accept the career chosen for him by his forefathers. He does not believe in that a farmer's son should necessarily become a farmer. He can choose any profession depending upon his taste and talent. According to him there is no hard and fast rule to accept what one is made to accept. At the beginning he detests, rebels and revolts openly against parental authority and social conventions to which his earlier generations were subjected and who accepted it passively. But the conventional set-up was so strong and internalized that he has to accept it and reconcile with parental authority. K.A. Abbas writes parental dictatorship as:

In the circus, he had felt, lay the key to his ambitions, a carrier after his own heart –travel frame.....Circus was too lowly and immoral for a

respectable peasant. Anyway, his father, grandfather and all his ancestors had tilled the land, so he too had to do it. (Abbas 4)

Progressivism respects all religions equally but it denounces when their religious character transforms into communal one. K.A. Abbas depicts Khan with his original feelings for Radha. Though Abbas respects both Hinduism and Islam, he does not like their claim of superiority over one another. He says that it is the claim of superiority and inferiority that makes one communal and once man becomes communal he loses the real feelings of humanity and then religion ceases to be a religion. This communalism is against the essence of progressive vision of Abbas. He gives voice to Khan to express his buried feelings for a Hindu girl, Radha before his father. Abbas says:

He had loved a girl, Radha. And in Radha, the daughter of Ram Charan, the village Banya, he thought he had found his soul-mate. He had noticed her watching him at a wrestling match and it had been the greatest moment of his life when, standing up after vanquishing his adversary– he found Radha looking at him with a light of love in her eyes. (Abbas 4)

Religion, whatever, never offers obstacles in inter-religious marriage. His father considers it the most irreligious and in this way he bends and breaks the second wish of Rahim Khan. It is the unrealizations of these dreams which have frustrated him and made him to revolt against all. The denial of freedoms by parental authority has frustrated Khan though he revolted against fruitless, orthodox and retrogressive thinking. His father condemns the idea of inter-religious marriage and says that a Hindu can only marry a Hindu and a Muslim is born for Muslim. Someone in his family suddenly challenges this for granted notion shocks and shakes him. He says,

“As for marrying Radha, a Hindu, a Kafir, the very idea was infamous and irreligious.” (Abbas 4)

K.A. Abbas has shown how people like Rahim Khan are victimized by society, family and conventionalism. No one in the society has ever tried to know the cause of his strange behaviour. Instead of sympathy, people have started cussing and cursing him. This results in his alienation from the entire village even from his own essence. He forgets who he is. People like Kallu calls him hard-hearted devil, Nanha comments that he is getting worse every day. In nutshell not a single member of society understands that the inner conflict is the real cause of his rude behaviour. Dr.Tushar Vyas argues:

The village people on the chaupal talk about Rahim Khan’s cruelty. They call him “hardhearted devil”. He has beaten poor children, mare, even his own wife, sons and oxen. They complain that Rahim Khan is getting worse and worse each day. (Vyas)

The person who deserves sympathy and compassion from society receives cold titles like cruel man, heard-hearted devil etc. Due to the experience of all this he has grievances against society, family etc. He loses belief in socialization and societal compassion. Summit Sharma rightly says:

It is an ironic story of a broken heart Muslim, Rahim Khan. His love had been placed on the bonfire of so called the caste-system, giving enough to the society to warmth their hands and cook a recipe of his emotions on that same fire forcing him to eat a humble pie himself and personifying him as a symbol of corporal chastisement for thirty long

years. For thirty long years Rahim Khan hadn't slept well often waking up at night to Radha's beckoning face. (Sharma)

K.A. Abbas elaborates the concept of alienation which means to adopt a complete segregation not only from society but even from himself. The character, Khan, separates emotions and feelings from himself and behaves like a machine. He is even indifferent to the animal world. He usually keeps beating his two oxen to give outlet to his anger against life which he is fed up with. Not only animals but his children and wife also suffer a lot at his hands. Life was like death to him and he finds life in death. He caught a cat by tail and hit it at the door. People are afraid of him and have started maintaining distance from him. But nature, as said by William Wordsworth is the best teacher, comes in the form of a progressive Sparrow to replace his solitude with love and affection. Khan who is ignored by society finds solace and touch of healing in the company of Sparrows. They teach him the real value of socialization and the need of family. Summit Sharma remarks:

The self-centred man, Rahim Khan had no mercy for anyone, his family fell like the house of cards but who cares, and he was too busy in adding fuel to the fire however halted by a heroic effort of a small sparrow to protect her house. It struck his mind like a bullet, but by that time it was late already. His entire living had been a prolonging pain, an epic of repressed emotions but not his death. He died with the compunction of his thirty years incessant mistake, remorse in mind and regret in soul leaving behind two children, his wife and crying sparrows. (Sharma)

Progressivism advocates the rights of women. It fights for their rights and then ensures them. It wishes to bring women at par with men in all fields in order to make

them enjoy choice of life partner, work, freedom of speech etc. K.A. Abbas has shown in, “The Sparrows”, as to how the rights of women are crushed, snatched and trampled; as to how their voice is suppressed and are made to speak whatever man wants them to speak. Abbas says Radha was a human being with her own voice and choice. These are natural to every human being and come under the category of fundamental rights. So every man or woman is entitled to enjoy them. But, alas! Radha could not enjoy anyone of these because both were denied to her by dictator tempered father. He did not ask her where and whom she wanted to marry with. Rather, he like a dictator chose a middle-aged man and got her married with him. This all is against the concept of progressivism of Abbas. He says that everyone has full right to dream about their life and their realization. However, no one cared about the wishes and aspirations of Radha and Rahim Khan. Their dreams remained unrealized. Once society comes to know about progressives dream of crossing the barrier of religion, they are stopped and their dreams are snatched from them. Radha was tied to an old man like a stick without being asked as if she was a vehicle given to a driver. Her father did not got her married but sold her to an old butcher like a cow. Abbas observes:

Within a few weeks Radha was married to Ram Lal, a middle aged potbellied Banya of the neighboring village. With a few sad tears shed in the solitude of the night in memory of her hopeless romance with Rahim Khan, she quickly reconciled herself to her fate and proceeded forthwith to be the mother of half a dozen children. (Abbas 5)

Rahim Khans wife became victim of grievances he had against society, family and life. He used to beat her everyday who instead of reacting against him got accustomed

to it. She behaved as if she had no tongue to speak. This is how woman suffers even today in our social set-up dominated by patriarchy, age-old conventions etc.

Progressivism is highly against the exploitation of any human being no matter whether it is women, children, men, marginal etc. It backs the cause of poor, helpless children, women etc. It advocates fundamental rights for everyone equally irrespective of sex, class, caste, religion. K.A. Abbas highlights the issue of exploitation wherever he finds its roots in existence. He represents such injustice in his films, novels and short stories. K.A. Abbas in his story, "Flowers for the Feet", portrays the issue of exploitation and injustice imposed upon women folk. He says no woman is born prostitute. They do not like to work or behave as sex workers. They, too, have dreams about family life wherein they have a nice husband and healthy children. The cruelties of man heaped upon the woman folk really smashes the writer's heart. Aradhika Sharma conveys: "'Flowers at her Feet' is the story of a courtesan, who is famous in her days of glory, and whom many love. Her tragedy lies in a loss, so sad that it leaves the writer's heart cleft." (Sharma)

Woman, too, follows and agrees with the respectable code of conduct. But on times becomes iconoclastic when she finds the water of injustice is about to submerge her. She knows how to rebel and resist against society but never goes for it as she believes in non-violence, opposite to the nature of man who often resorts to it as a tool. This story shows how a woman is made prostitute by man for his ulterior motives and vested interests. History bears witness to the fact that whenever and wherever man finds women folk economical in terms of money, he allows their exploitation and then justifies it either by law or religion. This brings forth the hypocritical nature of man. Man always wishes women to be submissive and obedient. The moment she asks for basic rights of freedom, education, choice, she is considered as corrupt and

irreligious. Man always wants her to bow down before him. He makes use of her as a sex-object no matter whatever way she is related to him namely daughter, wife or sister. These relations weaken and do not mean anything for man at the time of exploitation. He wishes her to behave like a cow. She should not object him Whether he keeps or sells her. He behaves like a butcher and looks for materialistic ends in women. K.A. Abbas in, "Flowers for her Feet", depicts the progressive journey of a woman who leaves the profession of prostitution for the better future of her daughter. The writer reminds us that no prostitute wishes her generation continue with the profession of prostitution. They like us dream about decent and respectable family life. But the society they live in force them back to the same profession directly or indirectly once society finds them coming to the route of respectable job. This fact is evident in the above mentioned story where Chandra longs to marry a flower seller, Babu, but her stepfather does not allow her. According to Abbas's progressive vision she was right at her place to dream about her life. Her decision was right because everyone has right to choose his/her life partner. She was suppressed and her freedom of marriage was trampled at the moment when her stepfather came to know about her elopement. Like a beast, he cut both of her feet so that she would not be able to run away with her lover. He had cut her feet in order to keep the source of income with him. Nivedita Ramakrishnan illustrates:

The most filmy (if I may use that word) of the stories is "Flowers for her feet" where a prostitute called Chandra purposely spurns, in the end, the kind young man who loves her because she has lost her legs, a fact that she hides from him because she does not want to ruin his life (somewhat like Deborah Kerr trying to throw off Cary Grant in An

Affair to Remember, 1957); and while he still brings flowers for her feet. (Ramakrishnan)

His ambitious looks were right from the inception at Chandra even before he married her mother. Though Chandra did not want to join brothel house, she is forced to transform her room into such house. Since the very beginning of her childhood, she has been put on this service. She had been cultured like a plant in contrived atmosphere of prostitution. She was without the freshness of youth because of induced maturation. K.A. Abbas says:

Yet it must be said that she was young and there was the yeast of youth in the firm curves of her body. She could not be more than twenty but she was like a plant that had been nurtured too quickly in the unnatural atmosphere of a hot house. She has the look of youth, the colour and smell of youth but not its freshness sweetness. (Abbas 18)

K.A. Abbas attempts to convey that her freedom of expression is snatched before its expression. He says that the aesthetic sense of public is too strange and self-centred. They praise that whatever is praiseless, shameful and condemnable. They do not have real identification and taste of art. For example, Chandra was much appreciated the moment when she danced in a sensuous manner because of sexual gestures of her flexible body. This sexual performance made her a screen-hit and she got contract after contract in films. In other words, this is the exploitation of women in the name of freedom and rights. The more a woman succeeds in getting herself exploited, the more she is welcomed. K.A. Abbas observes:

There was nothing in her dance except substantial quantities of Chandra's bare flesh and suggestive gestures. But later, I learnt it was

much appreciated by the public and because of it she got several other film contracts to give similar dances. (Abbas 26)

K.A. Abbas says that Chandra was progressive in the sense that she at least expressed her wish of marriage with a flower seller instead of luxurious life of hot-house. She was even ready to elope with Babu to fulfil her dreams. Progressive vision of Abbas is all against this exploitation of womanhood of women and writes for the cause of their rights. Abbas says that man always nodes about the suffrage of women and does nothing for its practice. The occasion demands such a championship which will not only make him node but will also induce in him positive feelings about her. This feeling will enable man not to behave like Chandra's father who is the living example of exploitation of womanhood. The loss of human value can be brought back provided man will change his mind set-up and behave like a progressive person. Abbas says that woman should not be looked upon as a drop of honey over which all the poisonous flies hover greedily. Her body must not be taken as machine without feelings and emotions. She must be considered one among the human beings.

Peerzada Salman checks up:

My personal favourite, though, is "Flowers at her Feet". Given that Khwaja Sahib worked in and for the Indian film industry (he is the one who introduced Amitabh Bachchan as an actor in the movie Saat Hindustani) he knew the business and those associated with it inside-out. The tale moves like a film, in short but meaningful bursts. It pivots around a dancing girl who has many admirers and, as it often happens, suffers a heart-wrenching setback in life. The reader can sense what the writer feels for his protagonist. There's an element of compassion

(perhaps love too) that stands out in the way he narrates the story.

(Salman)

The concept of progressivism is very wide in its spectrum. On the one hand, it obstructs and opposes human exploitation and on the other hand it is highly against the concept of capitalism. Progressivism believes that capitalism looks upon man/woman as a machine avoiding and ignoring their emotions and feelings. This ideological system of production gives birth to competition and struggle instead of cooperation and harmony. It prefers those who works hard day and night and condemns the talentless ones. Its key lies in the hands of rich ones who are full-fledged with legal and religious right to exploit poor and marginal. It adopts very discriminative approach while deciding the salary of employees paying usually more to man and less to a woman for the same task for the same time.

K.A. Abbas seeks to explore progressively the inhumane injustice in his story, "Sylvia". He says that in capitalistic society, there is no room for rest, emotions and humanistic values. It employs human beings as a commodity and machine. Morality has no place in it. Abbas reminds us through his story, "Sylvia", as to how capitalism exploits human beings as a machine. This idea of exploitation is very opposite to the concept of Abbas's progressivism. It is, therefore, due to this fact Abbas has taken cudgels on behalf of exploited to highlight their problems of misuse. He has shown in the story, "Sylvia", how the nurse Sylvia works for twelve consecutive hours without a bit of rest. She takes care of the whole general Ward alone during the all night for three consecutive months. This has deteriorated her health and caused dark rings round her eyes. No one worries about her, leaving her alone for her work. Even the higher officials do not feel that she needs rest. She has hardly any time to rest her tired legs which were swollen due to walking all the time. The capitalistic system has

made her accustomed to wails, groans and agonized death pangs as if she has no right to enjoy music, the songs of birds etc. This is because there is no such word like music, love and so on in the dictionary of capitalism. Aradhika Sharma writes: “‘Sylvia’ is the story of a nurse in a hospital tending to the festering aching, who realizes that, in fact, the moaning patients, whom she provides relief, too, are her real succour.” (Sharma)

K.A. Abbas says that capitalism is very impartial in wage fixation as well for it never pays due wages to the employees. They justify the low wage system by one of superstructures. Although Sylvia works for twelve hours during night she is paid only sixty five rupees for one month. This is too low for such a high job to meet her expenses. This was the economic exploitation of Sylvia at the hands of so called job creators.

K.A. Abbas spotlights the double exploitation of Sylvia by the hands of men folk. Most of the men flirted her and left her as soon as their wish was fulfilled leaving her all alone. This brings out the opportunistic behaviour of men who often deceives women by flirting her in the guise of lover. Sylvia too had sensed the opportunism of this market place where women is exploited and man is her exploiter. But in the progressive vision of Abbas everyone whether male or female all have full freedom to think about themselves. One can choose a profession for himself, dream about his life. There is no one entitled to snatch this special privilege from people. However, there are two hidden enemies to it namely man and capitalism. Capitalism keeps one busy almost all the time due to which one gets hardly a minute to think about his other needs. As in “Sylvia” the nurse wishes to have a loving husband, nice comfortable home and her own children. All these dreams are dashed to dust by her busy work

schedule. This way her dreams remain unrealized and unfulfilled. K.A. Abbas remarks:

In the stillness of the night, Sylvia's dormant soul awakened. The desires, the ambitions, the cravings that she kept locked up in her heart now burst forth with the force of a river in spate. Marriage. A kind loving husband. A nice comfortable home. A big soft-mattress bed. And most important of all ... children! Sylvia's own children! (Abbas 40)

K.A. Abbas highlights in the same story the cause of labourers and peasants. The rough, knotty, toughened hands of peasant lying in the hospital shows his hard schedule, his diligence for some company. Moreover, rough hands of the patient also symbolize the victimization of labours by the hands of capitalists who make them work when young and throw them when old. They never attempt to have a glance at the miserable condition of workers rather they only focus on their surplus.

Progressivism of Abbas is obviously a way that is against conservatism and conventionalism. Progressives do not believe in traditional thinking that woman is meant for hearth and man for fields. They do not divide jobs on the basis of sex and job as per sex is totally prohibited. Abbas tries to highlight the age-old conventional behaviour of man who wants woman behind the curtain and once she steps out of it, she is branded as disloyal and double crossed. Abbas says all this is a social construction. These rituals have not come from the sky but are man-made. Something of the same nature has been depicted in "Sylvia" where a nurse fails to get a good husband. Sylvia wants to marry a middle-aged widower ,George, who was a strict follower of conventions of morality. He was basically so-called religious minded and church going person. He interpreted religion in his own way and deduced some

conclusion which he wanted to apply on Sylvia. For George, marriage was like a contract devoid of emotions and feelings. He was not so passionate and romantic as dreamed by Sylvia. His words show that he didn't not consider Sylvia equal to his own status rather he looked upon her as a maid who was bound to serve him. Abbas says: "Sylvia thinks he needed a maid servant, not a wife to look after his household. He would have to find someone else to fill that role." (Abbas 46)

Sylvia had been a victim of so many romantic lovers on account of which she made up her mind to marry old George. Being a great lover of freedom she wished to continue her work in the hospital after marriage. Here Abbas draws our attention towards the reaction and repercussion George made. Marriage is not something bound with conditions, once such a thing happens; it remains no longer a marriage but a mere contract. But George as a dictator reminds Sylvia that after marriage she cannot continue with her work. She has to resign from the hospital. Abbas says:

‘Of course, you will have to resign from the hospital. I cannot let my wife do such work.’... Is it for this man that I am sacrificing my work, my career, my life? Short and sparrow-chested, with a bald head filled with moth-eaten ideas! How proud he was about his Sunday Church-going-and how remote from the spirit of Christ! (Abbas 45)

This idea of denial of working in hospital to Sylvia by George is in complete contrast with the progressive vision of Abbas. According to him she must be given freedom to do job denied to her by George. Instead he planned to curb and confine her freedom. He wished to see her stuck to the hearth. Progressivism of Abbas opposes this type of attitude and advocates freedom. He says that George was not a real religious minded person but was a communal minded who preferred male sex. She was the real regressive character. According to the writer Sylvia proved her

progressive mentality when she dashed George's proposal against the wall for the service of humanity. S.A. Karthik opines: "In "Sylvia" the eponymous nurse feels so passionately about her calling that she is willing to say no to a marriage that would force her to quit her job, even if that means that she will be stigmatized by society." (Karthik)

Progressivism always looks into the cause of poverty and comes up with necessary solutions for it. It never supports policies that bring about poverty and kill people out of hunger. Generally it is against the Right-Wing policies and negates them but it offers a full support to Left-Wing ideology who supports to the cause of poor labours. The vision of Abbas is not against public planning but it is against anti-public policies of government who deliberately creates a conducive atmosphere for poverty. Government believes that overpopulation is a grave problem without looking for possible solutions to deal with it. Progressivism, on the other hand, looks for solutions into the problem of overpopulation and suggests possible solutions to root it out once for ever. They want to strike a balance between population and prosperity. The progressive writer, Abbas, says that our leaders led us to overthrow foreign rule but their leadership absolutely failed to curb poverty. Tulsi Badrinath comments: "The "Miracle of Prajapur" mirrors the irony that though *Azadi* has come to the country, for the poor it has brought no freedom from hunger and penury." (Badrinath)

K.A. Abbas in his story, "The Miracle of Prajapur", has depicted how poverty is brought about saying it is not natural as people use to believe. There are clever minds behind its realization. It does not come on its own from the sky but people like politicians, policy makers etc. are instrumental in its causation. Abbas brings the hypocritical role of politicians into the limelight of public who instead of economical help serves the nation by their lip service. Abbas says that in the story, "The Miracle

of Prajapur”, the politicians get the news of quintuplet published and feel proud and happy, may be, because they have got five more voters. Journalists got unique news to make the market. Everyone, whosoever found it interesting, exploited the news for their self-interest but no one paid attention to them who created the news and who need immediate help. Rather, some of the parties started criticizing and many others were indulged in analysing its prospects. K.A. Abbas observes:

Rashtra Sevak holds if people of Bharat decide to follow in the footsteps of Ramoo and Lajo, in a few years our population can be doubled and thus we dominate the world by sheer force of numbers. ... Janata Gazette writes our country is dangerously populated. There is not enough food for the present population. By encouraging the birth of quintuplets, do we want to accentuate the problems of hunger and unemployment.... The communist Red Front believes if there is no food in the country for the people to eat, it is not due to overpopulation but to the reactionary anti people policies of the government which protects hoarders and profiteers while the common people starve. (Abbas 52)

K.A. Abbas displays in the story as to how mean, clever cunning politicians are. He says that the money raised for the help of Ramoo and Lajo was consumed by industrialists, politicians itself leaving the parents of five children waiting till their children dies of hunger. The industrialists advertised their products in the garb of help offered to Ramoo and Lajo. The five children need milk, food, shelter and medicine etc. to continue their breath. But, unfortunately, they got nothing out of the basic amenities. They got sickness of pneumonia due to the unavailability of medicine and died all the five. Abbas writes:

Shocked and speechless, when the members of the deputation went inside the hut, they found Lajo, her face covered with odhni, lying in a corner on the wet mud floor and sobbing. Wrapped in dirty rags were five little babies –DEAD! (Abbas 58)

This is not only the story of Ramoo and Lajo but it is the story of almost every Indian. Every poor man in our country meets the same fate under the defective system of government. Abbas wants to convey that a poor does not need toys to end his appetite or to please himself with but he needs a basic amenity of life such as food, clothes and shelter. The politicians, contractors of religion, journalists etc. in fact all fell into the hot debate of miraculous delivery rather than help. The paper, Afternoon, records: “In “The Miracle of Prajapur” – quintuplet born to a poor woman fuel a big debate with political and religious overtones, the outcome of which can only be tragic.” (Afternoon)

Progressivism of Abbas is very opposite to communal hatred. He displays how Pakistan and India are still hostile to each other. Abbas says that when Pakistan listened the breaking news of delivery of five children at once in India, they take it as a challenge and were committed to reply India by two such deliveries. This is what both the countries do in case of armament and ammunition production also.

Abbas has also made a good display anti progressive concept of American imperialism in the garb of medical experts. He says they have never been sincere in their help, visit, counselling etc. He draws our attention towards American given capitalism which is unhealthy for general public .But people take it the way to progressivism especially Indians, when its shade is meant for few chosen.

Abbas has also uncovered in the story the faces of so called religious people who exploit the delivery to meet their own ends by associating one of the five children with Avatar of Vishnu. They basically blackmail people emotionally and cheat them easily. The Mahayogi who claimed one of the babies the avatar of Vishnu was found the greatest cheater. He promised a woman to turn her gold into silver.

Progressive vision of Abbas advocates and supports the fundamental right of freedom of speech for women and completely condemn their exploitation. It is highly against the concept of untouchability and casteism. It believes in equality irrespective of religion, caste, colour and creed. This all low and high; inferior and superior etc. is man-made. K.A. Abbas has beautifully depicted a character, Chanda, in the story who suffers a lot on behalf of a society and a well-known respectable man, Thakur Harnam Singh, but a real cheater like a wolf in lambs shape. Aradhika Sharma remarks: “ ‘The Sword of Shiva’ is a story narrated by Chanda, an outcaste, old woman in a village. She tells the story of divine vengeance and fury.” (Sharma)

He has depicted in the story, “The Sword of Shiva”, that casteism and untouchability are gifts of so called religious people who want to continue with these social evils to have a command and control in the society over low castes. They will never allow or support social reformation nor will they show any interest in the abolition of these evil practices. The living example of which is Pandit Dharam Das. The Pandit believes in casteism and untouchability because he was economically dependent upon people who were adherents of both casteism and untouchability. The moment he attempts to disclose the truth will be his last minute in religious house like Temple. Abbas writes:

It was said that Pandit knew all the holy books by heart . And he had one great worry-how to keep the people of the village on the path of

faith. It was entirely due to him that the reformers from the cities, who came sometimes preaching against caste, and untouchability, got no hearing in our village. (Abbas 64)

K.A. Abbas remarks how an orthodox and conservative thinking of people makes hell of other's life. Such people leave no stone unturned to propagate their orthodox ideas and get social victims over-victimized instead of giving them sympathy. The character, Chanda, mother of an illicit child made by landlord, had been turned out of village and was declared an outcaste by none other than Padhit Dharam Das. He carried labels of stigmatization with him to brand victims differently. His thinking and outlook was too mean and narrow. He had not understood the real motive of life which is to help poor, helpless, needy etc. He looked upon untouchables as sinners which is completely untrue. He himself was a real sinner because he incited villagers to turn her out of village, otherwise she would bring wrath of God upon them all. He was a firm believer of Karma Theory and applied it on Chanda. Abbas writes:

And so, at the suggestion of Pandit Dharam Das, she was declared an outcaste and turned out of the village, along with her bastard child. Pandit said that she deserves to reside in the untouchable's quarter, for in the eyes of God the sinner and the untouchable were same. (Abbas 65)

The second major issue focused in the story is money-lending issue of Mool Chand who exploited people in the name of help by lending them money on high interests. The irony lies in the fact that people used to call him generous, God fearing even the religious ones justified his act of exploitation. The another character, Rehmat Khan, a religious minded person, being a corrupt Patwari settled matters of land records by

accepting bribe from people. Though he had made pilgrimage to Mecca and was strict follower of five times Nimaz, he was found indulged in wrong dealings. He bet unreasonably poor people like weaver and cobbler. He used these rough ways to treat lower castes. Abbas observes:

Pandit Dharam Das cried: “Ruldoo Kaka, do not you see where you are going? Stop where you are. With folded hands he said: Take pity on us, Panditji, let us also have shelter under the tree. We will stand away from you, in a corner.” (Abbas 69)

K.A. Abbas reflects in the story as to how Pandit Dharam Das supported by Rehmat Khan, Cheater and money lender did not allow Chanda and an outcaste to take shelter under the Neem tree. Being a firm believer in caste hierarchy he regarded both outcastes impure and sinners of last birth. He believed that God’s wrath would burst upon them, if he allowed them to come under the tree. Abbas no longer call it a religion, but a mere superstition. His progressive vision weighs all humans in the same balance of humanity. He rejects the way of casteism of religion and religion of casteism where people are kept apart by barriers of religion, caste etc. He condemns such malpractices. This story has brought to the surface that more the people claim religious, the more they are irreligious like Pandit and Khan. These four symbolizes power and propagators of casteism. They want to maintain their hegemony over lower castes. S.A. Karthik spells out:

In “The Sword of Shiva” four caste men gather beneath a tree as a storm rages. Together, they are symbols of caste oppression in rural India -priest, landlord, the record keeper and moneylender. They are even willing to kill the people of ‘low caste’ rather than let them into the shelter of the tree. But the forces of nature strike them down,

thereby instilling a sense of justice in the old Hindi cinema way.

(Karthik web)

Progressivism ensures and guarantees the security of a citizen which means security of food, shelter, health facilities, protection etc. It expects the government to make available all these basic facilities to every citizen. According to progressives freedom and symbols of nationality has value so long as it succeeds to provide basic amenities of life to its nationals. Freedom to them means not only emancipation from foreign rule but also emancipation from hunger, poverty, exploitation, insecurity etc. They say what is the fun of being free, if one is alarmed by jerks of hunger and dies of it. National symbols like flag are respected and loved by all but the moment one becomes too poor to cloth his and his family's naked body he becomes utterly blind. He can go to any extent like using the national flag to clad himself because it remains no longer a flag for him but a mere piece of cloth.

K.A. Abbas has attempted his best to reflect in his story, "The Flag", as to how people like Ramoo suffers for a single morsel of food and for a single piece of cloth. These victims of bread, cloth and shelter never get time to think about the notion of nation and its symbols. They do not find anything awkward in stepping forward to cover their naked body with symbols like flag. Abbas asks us all that when a person like Ramoo has nothing to eat for days and nothing to wear to cover his shame, what else can he do than to wear a flag. There was a single dhoti in Ramoo's house which was used by all the three members of the house namely Ramoo, his wife and his daughter. The worn out dhoti they had was used for the purpose of going out leaving the other two completely in rags or naked. Abbas highlights here the poverty of poor and cruelty of society who do not understand the pains and pangs of poor. He has also focused on the cause of poverty i.e.

unemployment. He says Ramoo was unemployed and could not get any job though he went all around in search of it. Ultimately, he thought of begging as the best option to afford the food and clothe for his family. The free distribution of food by a nationalist on the eve of *Azadi* attracted poor Ramoo and thought to manage some food for his hungry daughter and wife. But the food was being given only to those who ensured their physical appearance which was utterly impossible for him because of their naked body. Although he asked food for his family members not present physically, they denied and labelled him as a liar. Abbas writes:

May you live long, Sarkar! May God make you a Laath sahib, Sarkar!
Please give me the share of my wife and daughter also, Hazoor. They will pray for you and your children, Sarkar. Get off, you liar .If you have a wife and daughter, why cannot they come here and receive their themselves? (Abbas 74)

Ramoo was unaware about the occasion of *Azadi* on which streets are decorated with a tri- striped cloth called flag. Abbas quotes: “It was said that the country had been granted something called Azadi.”(Abbas 76) K.A. Abbas says that due to the blindness of hunger and deafness of employment he collected many such pieces of cloth for his naked wife and daughter and clothed himself with one. His intention was not to insult the national flag rather merely to cover his never covered naked body. As soon as emotionally blind people saw him wearing a national flag, they caught him, bet him and left him stark naked in the open market. He was then handed over to police who imprisoned him. Abbas writes:

“Eh, you where did you steal this flag from?” “Flag? What do I know about flags?” “S, you didn’t know anything about flags! Then what is this you have wrapped around your loins?” “Look at the rogue –swanking about dressed in a

flag! ‘Snatch it away from the bastard.’ ‘Beat him up- the thief!’ ‘Call a policeman’. (Abbas 77)

What does *Azadi* mean to Ramoo like poor person? Surely, it might mean nakedness and imprisonment to him. This is the punishment of being poor in India. People die hungry and in complete nakedness due to the defective system of government. How does the *Azadi* concerns one if it fails to realize his wishes, aspirations and basic needs. Abbas says that millions of people like Ramoo suffer in the same way for the basic needs of life such as food, cloth and shelter. There is neither the government nor the general public to understand the problem of poor.

Progressivism is basically a gender unbiased approach to deal with issues of women and other suppressed sections of the society. It does not support gender discrimination advocating equal opportunities for all i.e. boys, girls, man, women etc. in the field of education, employment, health facilities etc. K.A. Abbas intends to show in his story, “The Dumb Cow”, as to how such noble and progressive ideas of gender equality, equal treatment of children etc. are frustrated and crushed by unequal attitude of parents towards their male, female and superficially unbalanced children. Parents show a lot of discrimination among their children while deciding their matter of education. He also reflects how a personal or individual freedom suffers in the real world of parents sometimes.

K.A. Abbas tries to mention in the story, “The Dumb Cow”, that when a child is born, merry-making must start with equal enthusiasm no matter what sex is born because both sexes are equal in flesh and bones. But in reality nothing like that happens. Abbas says: “Ramlal in any case was not over pleased at the birth of a fourth daughter.” He depicts a character, Sulekha, who is shown as triply marginalized. She suffered a lot psychological trauma because of parental indifference towards her.

They have never given her a smile but only rebuking and a nickname, Bholi. This was also the way she was treated by her siblings and villagers. Progressives like Abbas condemn it and regard it as anti-humanistic and anti-feministic.

K.A. Abbas then magnifies in the story the concept of sex determined education. Parents usually choose school for boys and home kitchen for girls. Progressives ask repeatedly why it is so. Cannot girls prove themselves equal competent of boys? The character, Ramlal, a Numberdar, sent all his sons to city to access education and got his all daughters married one by one denying them any opportunity for study. This actually reflects the collective consciousness of society who regard girls as inferior and boys as superior. Abbas says:

Ramlal decided to send his sons to the city too, to study in school and later in college as for the daughters, one by one; all of them would be married off. Already the second one Mangla was betrothed and soon after her wedding they would find a match for Champa too. (Abbas 81)

Abbas, a progressive writer, uses his pen to attack this outdated orthodoxy of parents and society who have taken things for granted. He calls into question such orthodoxy and dashes it on the wall. His arguments are valid even today's so-called modern world where latest technological tools and techniques are used to kill the unborn girl selectively.

K.A. Abbas makes a good reflection in his story about woman folk whom he compares with the world of cow. Abbas says women have tongue like a cow but cannot speak out her thoughts because that is locked by man keeping the key with himself. This lock is unlocked by man if and only if he finds some economic benefit in unlocking the locked mouth of women. He then forgets every social convention.

Ramlal and his wife at once sent their daughter, Sulekha, to school because Numberdar was supposed to take initiative otherwise he might lose his job. This brings out the hypocritical attitude of the most loved parent. K.A. Abbas finally portrays, Sulekha, as a progressive character who was known as Bholi, a simpleton. She proved herself far better than other boys and girls of Ramlal as soon as she got a love-smile from her teacher. She was now enough mature to decide what would be right and wrong for her. She reacted against the parental decision of getting her married with an old man of her father's age. She broke the convention of following the autocratic and blind decision of parents regarding her marriage. She refused openly to accept the half dead man as her husband and decided to render her service to her parents and village school than to marry. Abbas writes:

‘Pitaji! Take back your money. I am not going to marry this man.’

‘Bholi, are you crazy? Have some regard for our izzat, daughter.’ For the sake of your izzat, I was willing to marry this lame old man. But I will not have such a mean, greedy and contemptible coward as my husband. I Won't, I won't, I won't. (Abbas 90)

The concept of progressive vision of Abbas is out and out against the process of exploitation of poor, working class, peasants on behalf of landlords and parasitic capitalists. The progressives like Abbas opine that the surplus must be shared among all equally without owned by a single capitalist and landlord. This anti-exploited thought gives voice to the voiceless and the most ignored ones. It believes in agrarianism and gives equal hearing to all.

K.A. Abbas being a progressive writer does not like to bear the dictatorship and feudal autocracy of landlords exposing their luxuries and habits of dissipation. He exposes in his story, “An Evening in Lucknow”, as to how the luxuries of privileged

feudal order work as an undeserved burden on a poor peasant. Peezada Salman states: “The piece ‘An Evening in Lucknow’ is about the writer’s time spent in the city of Lucknow with an alcoholic son of a ‘compensated talugdar of Oudh’. It is in this tale that his writing prowess truly come to the fore.” (Salman)

K.A. Abbas depicts the character of a feudal drunkard whose forefathers were practitioners of feudalism. The drunkard lived on the easy money which his ancestors had sucked like leeches from the poor peasants. This is not only true of him but all nobles like him indulged themselves in exploiting them. Abbas says that they behaved more like pests and parasites of the society. The poor peasants were supposed to pay for their luxuries, likings, liquor and so on and so forth. This happens today with workers by the hands of capitalists. Abbas remarks:

And you would be right to hate us We deserve to be hated. For hundreds of years we have been the pests of society, the blood sucking leeches. I have myself seen how we squeezed the last rupee out of our tenants to pay for all our luxuries, our marble palaces, the wines which were imported from France, the bebies of singing girls and courtesans who filled our harems. (Abbas 99)

K.A. Abbas makes the character drunkard magnify the ways their ancestors were dependent on the poor farmers. In a way, the drunkard seems to progressive because he accepts that his forefathers had been very cruel to the destitute farmers. He wanted to atone for the past sins by supporting the cause of poor through his writings. He wanted to write about the social and economic justice to root out the problem of feudalism. The character appreciated the communistic revolution which was instrumental in getting the feudalism collapsed and demolished. He hoisted his handkerchief in the air and uttered Inqulab Zindabad. This is basically the symbol of

his revolt against the autocratic feudalism. Abbas observes: “Destiny is punishing us for our crimes of many centuries. Yes, sir, to hell with the feudal order –up, up with revolution. Inqulab Zindabad!’ He took out a dirty silken handkerchief and started waving it above his head. The banner of revolt.” (Abbas 100)

K.A. Abbas also reflects in the story the private life of landlords and conveys that they had a keen interest in sex on which they spent a huge amount of money meant for social welfare, national development and some other purposes. They used to arrange and manage sex workers like a sex trader. Abbas writes: “This is where Nawab Begum used to stay – my grandfather wasted lakhs on her. This house was given to Mushtari by my uncle. Ah, this is where Nazneen used to stay . She was my father’s favourite, my brother, too, used to come here.” (Abbas 102)

Progressivism of Abbas in one or other way favours and supports the public centered aspect of communism though he is not a communist as he himself said. His vision takes into consideration the welfare of all people irrespective of their caste, colour, creed, religion and nationality. There is no religion of his vision but whatever he has for the world as a human being is nothing more than a sincere and honest humanism. He believes in universal humanistic values such as love, fraternity, oneness, equality, secularism, peaceful coexistence and so on. He was a great supporter of socialism. It is perhaps because of his socialistic ideology that he was very near and dear to Jawahar Lal Nehru. He was rather obsessed with Nehruvian aesthetics and perspective.

K.A. Abbas tries to display in his story, “June in December”, as to how the character, Professor Kohli, thinks progressively about economic policies and comes up with a solution of community ownership. The professor propagates and transmits the ideas to everyone and to every generation through his brilliant

students like Sunail Kaushik and Sarita Bajaj. He was the embodiment and epitome of Nehruvian taste. He was highly against the dry concept of capitalism which is directly against socialism. He was so obsessed with Nehru that he thought death of socialistic revolution with the death of Nehru. Then he devoted himself to the task of bringing about the revolution left in the half way by his mentor Nehru. This thought fired and infused his bones with new energy and enthusiasm. K.A. Abbas writes:

I don't want to live in a world, in an India, without Jawaharlal Nehru, 'he had told the doctors of the Medical Institute attending upon him. One of them said: 'You have to live for him ,for his ideals ,to complete the revolution in people's thinking which he had just begun to change ! (Abbas 108-109)

K.A. Abbas depicts further in the story how the professor then carries forward the agenda of progressivism. He started transmitting and transfusing his progressive ideas of socialism in economic policies and at the same time exposed the follies and foibles of its counterpart capitalism. He never accepted the higher posts to cut himself off the students whom he regarded the upcoming socialists. He believed that the stagnation of revolution would take place if he accepted the higher chair. Finally, he joined JNU to produce the children of socialism.

K.A. Abbas tries to reflect the romantic side of progressivism in the story where he shows love is love if heart is won before the body. He says we can love wife if and only if the involvement of heart is ensure first. The professor could have enjoyed Sarita's body, but he didn't do that nor even he proposed her thinking that she might mind or would be engaged elsewhere. Her tight hug to professor was like June in December for the professor Kohli. K.A. Abbas writes: "But the eternal romantic that

he was, he would not touch the much-used or much-abused body unless she give her heart along with it, her heart and mind.” (Abbas 108)

Progressivism is a firm supporter to maintain and preserve ecological balance and environmentalism. Even they do not support such technological advancement which renders human and animal world homeless. This threat to environmentalism has been reflected by K.A. Abbas in his story “The New Temple” the government has constructed a dam over the mountain displacing the locals living over there. The locals were engaged in its construction who earned money more than their forefathers used to earn. They were used for their own destruction in the name of modernization, development and progress as is happening nowadays with Adivasies. Mostly animal and plant world suffers a great loss due to its construction and indirectly ecological balance. The construction of dam forced round about hundred villages to evacuate their natural habitats and rendered them complete homeless and destitute. K.A. Abbas contributes: “Nearly three hundred villages in the valley would be evacuated and flooded out to form the vast reservoirs which would be like a new sea. And then one day the dreadful news came that Chhota Parbatpur was one of those villages which were doomed.” (Abbas 118)

Mangal, son of Parshuram, propelled hundreds of villagers into the mouth of danger by working on a dam construction which would uproot thousands of people. This is against the idea of progressivism. Abbas highlights that the progressive vision of his supports individual differences but not being selfish towards the others. The government explained to all the villagers that construction of dam will bring about peace and prosperity to the village. They even justified this act of modernization by the verses of Gita. But in reality it benefitted less than its damage. This story is often associated with propaganda of spreading Nehru’s statement that dams will be optional

temples to Indians. Avni Majithia Sejpal comments: “Others are strangely propagandist; ‘A New Temple’, for instance, is a thinly disguised endorsement of Jawaharlal Nehru’s claim about dams being the temples of modern India.” (Sejpal)

The safeguard of rights of woman is in the agenda of progressivism. Progressives ensure not only rights of women folk but they also fight for their rights if denied to them. They highlight their sufferings, miseries, pains and pangs either directly or indirectly like writings.

K.A. Abbas, one of the progressive writers, brings out before the public how women is used as a commodity and thrown as wastage by society, parents and man. He depicts in the story “The Three Woman” whose life had been made hellish by man as a lover, as a father and even as a brother. This is not true of any particular culture but it holds good for all cultures. One of the three women characters, the one as a beggar thinks of committing suicide than to live a life of dishonour. The beggar woman advises the other two to end their life than to spent the whole life time in regretting about the disloyalty of male. She says that love is an illusive and deceptive word for a man using it as a tool to just ensnare women. He forgets and cheats women as soon as his purpose is fulfilled. The younger woman had an unscrupulous lover and the third one was mother of a child. All the three were cheated by male dominated society and even by parents. K.A. Abbas shows that they were treated in such a way as if they were no longer humans. They were fed up with societal behaviour and treatment. These two made them to commit suicide otherwise they, too, love their life like us or as we do. The beggar one at least understood how love is used as a tool and trap by man to catch up emotional women folk. The other two characters still have a faith in love and lovers. The beggar one forcefully says that man exploits women because of her sentimentalism. He

blackmails her emotionally. Women will have to suffer all atrocities of man unless she wakes up from the deep sleep of illusion shown to her by man. K.A. Abbas writes: “Bah!’ the beggar woman impatiently interrupted, ‘you make me sick with your sentimentalism. Did your father and mother think of that when they turned you out of their home on a stormy night? Flesh of their flesh.” (Abbas 126)

Progressivism of Abbas is a firm and strong adherent of agrarianism, communal harmony, love, humanity and brotherhood opposing vehemently the thoughts, feelings and ideology of anti-democratic force of racialism. His focus is on the transmission of human values. K.A. Abbas attempts to show in his story, “The Umbrella”, as to how blindly life is devalued, demeaned and then killed as soon as the spark of racialism is burnt. The progressive vision of Abbas is highly against racial wars where human lives lost their value. He referred in the story to racial war moments started in Europe such as Fascism and Nazism. He argues that the wars brought about death and destruction to the world because the idea underlying them was mean, base and inferior i.e. to exploit others for the sake of their own advantage in the name of racial superiority. They killed millions of people living in minorities in Germany etc. This brings out the global aspect of Abbas’s vision. They caused the biggest holocaust and carnage for the first time in the history of human world, might be perhaps the cause of Second World War indirectly. He has described the blood-spattered movements of war and Fascism by symbols of rain and storm. He wishes to communicate the destructive effect of joint action of rain and storm. These movements threatened the world peace by shouting the slogan that their race is the superior to all other races. They aimed at to have a place under the sun violating all the barriers of humanity. Abbas observes: “This rain and wind are the storms of

Fascism and War. And this broken umbrella is the poor resources of India which were needed to save both India and Britain from the evil storm.” (Abbas 135)

K.A. Abbas’s progressive vision is out and out against imperialistic temperament of Europe. He was very sensitive to the exploiting nature of countries like British and exposed it through his writings. He portrayed an English girl, who picked the pocket of an Indian very sympathetic to her. The two characters actually symbolize the two countries British and India, the former is the exploiter and latter the exploited. These exploiters kept exploiting Indian resources symbolized by torn umbrella for about two centuries. K.A. Abbas contributed: “You are India— poor, destitute India, with holes in your shoes and in your destiny .This blonde girl is Britain who rules over the hearts of the Indians.” (Abbas 135)

K.A. Abbas has also shown in the story how his progressive vision was against the concept of partition and two nation theory. He was in opposition to the demand of creating Pakistan which became latter the cause of communal riots and national wars resulted in the deaths of thousands and lakhs of people. Abbas comments:

PAKISTAN OR DEATH. Pakistan had grown a beard and Death had become more fearful. I thought to my-self, I am afraid of Death. Give me Pakistan instead. And then my newspaper mind said, ‘You are Hindustan and this girl is Pakistan. And this umbrella is the Himalayas which protects both.’ (Abbas 136)

Progressivism of K.A. Abbas supports the idea of global vision instead to confine itself within the boundaries of one’s nationality, region, race, culture and religion. He holds the view of a global citizen who always thinks good for all other citizens of the world. Progressives like Abbas never restrict themselves in the chrysalis of one

country, one nation but believes in democratic and secular multi-religiosity. Basically, he opposes and calls into question the man-made national and international borders. He even condemns the very idea of creation of new independent states on the basis of religion. He wishes to communicate that partition of land separates and knives brother from sister, lover from beloved, heart from mind and so on. He was secular enough to envision a state inhabited by denizens of all religions.

K.A. Abbas in his story, "The Green Motor Car", has attempted to give a picture of cruelties of partition and its subsequent consequences. He brings to light a character, Gopal, a graduate refugee from Pakistan and his beloved Sheela. The two characters love each other since their childhood and yearn for marriage in the time to come but this dream of theirs remains no more than a dream because of the partition of India. They lost each other's whereabouts failing to find address and location of each other.

K.A. Abbas contributes:

And then this green motor car, which was the symbol of all their dreams of love and happiness, had crashed even before it had taken to the road. The country was partitioned, millions on both sides of the new border had to forsake their ancestral hearths and homes, wives and sweethearts had got separated from each other. (Abbas 146)

Sheela became orphan like thousands of other children and was destined to live alone to bear the vindictive fruits of partition. Gopal left behind his entire father's property in Pakistan and without any compensation from either side of border leaving him a complete destitute. He failed to get any job due to corruption. Abbas puts across that this is the way refugees rather children of partition were treated everywhere. Wherever they felt need of love, hostility and indifference came running to surround them. The children of partition found every helping-door like hospitals, job offices

etc. shut, closed and unresponsive. K.A. Abbas illustrates the way people like Gopal were treated in hospital. He was not attended by any doctor and was treated like a dog and even sent to a lunatic asylum though he was normal. His only fault was fault of being victim of partition. Thousands of such Gopal's received even far worse treatment than this. Abbas states:

Then I was ill –in a charitable hospital- but I got little charity there, like butchers they cut me up a couple of times – that's all-the doctors treated poor patients like dogs –one day I got mad and bit one of them so they certified me. (Abbas 146)

K.A. Abbas brings home the point of horror of victimization of partition. He continues that the partition gave birth to several other negative forces such as communal riots. Human values and humanity faced a great threat and were trampled under the brutal tread of partition. Human started killing human in the name of religion, be it so-called Muslim or so-called Hindu. Exploitation of opposite community became job and talk of the day and the mother earth was shedding tears of blood. The spark that divided us overnight was lighted by Britain, but none realized it merely started blaming each other. Abbas pronounces that partition brought nothing to the two fragments of single country except hunger, bloodshed, poverty, unemployment, hatred etc., the effects of which are still felt in every nook and corner of the INDO-PAK.

Progressivism being good for all condemns communal riots, massacres and revenge making people social, cooperative and fraternal. It always supports peace, prosperity and welfare of masses because it is rooted in principles rather than in politics. Its focus is welfare and well-being of people. It is opposite to the idea of division of

people in the name of religion and race which bring about bloodshed and death using the two as base.

K.A. Abbas being the advocate of progressivism has the great vision of public harmony and fraternity. He was an ideal secular towards people in treatment and behaviour. He tries to show us through his story, "Revenge", as to how madly people killed each other during partition. Not even a single person from either side tried to make them stop from causing bloodshed. Every human started killing of other community members like butchers as if human life has lost its value and humanity had died out in them. Abbas says that people saved during killings had only one thing in their cognition and psyche, revenge and retaliation. Millions of women became widows, billions of children became orphans, innumerable women lost their honour, people in thousands were killed ruthlessly. This was due to religious based partition and communal based thinking. Abbas being a progressive writer was on neither side but surely had taken cudgels on behalf of humanism wherein human life is valued irrespective of religion .

Abbas portrays a character, Hari Das, who lost his entire family in massacres and was left deliberately alive to watch the death of his daughter by dishonour and wife by drowning respectively. This massacre of his family, friends, relatives, etc. had left a lasting impression on his psyche. It is the bloodshed and paleness due to fear which reminds him over and again about red and yellow. His daughter, Janki, only seventeen years old, was dishonoured before him and both of her bosoms were cut off leaving behind only two scars. He offered them to convert and marry her but don't dishonour her. This incident drove him crazy but crazy he was not. Thousands of such Jankies were dishonoured and killed overnight. This is the given gift of partition. It is because of all this bloodshed, massacre, theft, house burning and so on

which has permeated the entire psyche of Hari Das. Burning with inner fire, he started looking for a Muslim girl to avenge Janki's dishonour and finally hunted one who too like Janki was from a good family and was forced to work in brothel. As soon as Hari Das removed her bra, he found nothing other than the two scars like Janki. This substantiates the statement that both communities suffered equally. K.A. Abbas remarks:

I am ready to become a Muslim. My daughter, too, will adopt your faith. Please do not harm her. ...My daughter is young. She is beautiful as you can see. Let one of you convert her and then marry her .But spare her life. (Abbas 217)

K.A. Abbas goes on to explore and expose that both the communities were blind, deaf and brutal to human life and its values. The communities have proved how irreligious and barbaric they are. He says no Muslim, no Hindu was killed but a human being was killed. They did not pity on the one being murdered and dishonoured. He addresses the communities if Islam/Hinduism teach really this untamed and uncontrolled behaviour. No way. The fact is that they have not understood the actual message of the two religions, the teachings of which are based on love, peace etc. They have interpreted religions in a way to meet their own economic and political ends. The killings have more to do with materialistic connotations because people found never such a chance than at partition to loot and plunder their religious rival neighbours.

K.A. Abbas also brings the fact to light that partition and two nation theory had been used as a tool by some demagogues known to us as statesman across both borders to chair the portfolio of prime minister. In both the two countries, mainly minorities suffered and even today such jerks of partition are felt sometimes.

Progressives like Abbas always ask and support the birth right i.e. freedom of every being whether animal or human. They oppose the concept of slavery advocating equal chance for all to live and enjoy freely. The basic principle adopted, followed and preached is 'live and let live'. They never taught to encroach upon the rights of any individual and are against bondage etc. They are strong advocates of environmentalism and its ecological balance. They do not want to destabilize its peace and balance at any cost.

K.A. Abbas has reflected in the story, "The Madness of Man", as to how the animal world suffers a huge loss at the hands of human beings. Human beings enter without any reason into the animal territory and start their hunting to meet their economic needs. Animals hardly violate the natural peace of human dwellings. They always respect human villages even sacrifice themselves for their safety.

K.A. Abbas has made use of animal character such as Black Mountain, Flapping Ears, Thunder Cloud etc. in order to put forward his progressive point of view regarding their and human world. Abbas shows Black Mountain, a very loving huge elephant following natural law of jungle which forbids any animal to kill another. The way Abbas has portrayed the character of Black Mountain seems as natural and progressive as he himself. He had enough insight to enter the psyche of animals and explains everything from their point of View. Black Mountain has been shown progressive because he does not only think about himself but also about other animals of a forest. He even goes to the extent to kill his lone son in order to maintain the balance of peace and stability between humans and animals.

Black Mountain like a wise king says that how humans transgress their territories of forest whenever some untoward incident happens on the part of animals. Humans do not make then use of reason to kill the real culprit and defaulter but they shoot blindly

all animals no matter whosoever comes to their way, innocent or guilty. They often do so to disturb the ecological balance of nature. Once a wild beast crosses the border, humans play havoc with the entire animal world. They even shatter the communal peace of animals making them to fight each other. This is what according to Black Mountain is called madness of man.

K.A. Abbas tries to express through his story, “The Madness of Man”, about the selfish motives of man who often looks for a chance to enslave animals. Black Mountain remembers how he was enslaved and used to uproot stumps. His legs were then chained cutting deep his skin. He was often beaten and left hungry after day’s work by his owner. His owner a small creature ordered him to get his work done. This was sort of humiliation for him. He was tortured and made to do what man willed him. These were the consequences of entering human dwellings. So as a progressive thinker he thought if his son Thunder Cloud repeated his father’s mistake by entering the human village, they will again play havoc with the whole animal world again and would enslave thousands of them. Therefore, he felt it necessary to kill him for the sake of entire community otherwise many have to lose their life. Better for one to die than to make entire community suffer. K.A. Abbas adds:

It was preposterously scandalous that one little rouge should jeopardize the lives –and freedom- of so many decent, peace loving animals. Thunder Cloud must die, he must be killed, before his insane marauding brought irretrievable disaster on the community. (Abbas 206)

Progressivism, a way to progress and prosperity, promotes the cause of community ownership. It never favours a single person to exploit the all resources individually. It believes in nationalization of resources whether natural or artificial.

K.A. Abbas one of the greatest champions of progressivism reflects various aspects in the story, “The Rock and the Dream”. He highlights the issues of hegemony and capitalistic mind of government making people certainly poorer than poor. He does not miss the opportunity of exposing the politicians who visit far flung areas in times of election and revenue collection and then forget them during droughts and famine etc. He has depicted the character Ramna Majhi who thinks progressively and depends more on himself than on the government, the officials of which are never sincere to his village. They have never visited the village for public good but always come with some selfish motives. Abbas writes: “But what Ramna Majhi did know was that the Khaki –clad officers always came to take something from them, never to give them anything.” (Abbas 187)

Abbas says when public really need help of government, neither the police nor the politicians turn up. That is what happened with Paharpur and Rajapur. When the two villages were caught by Great Drought like Bengal Famine, they were left to their destiny. This is similar to Bengal famine where thousands of people died of hunger though there was lot of stock in store with the English government which could have saved many lives. Similarly Paharpur and Rajapur were victimized by drought having no food and availability of water-supply. They had to go miles far to get some water due to which women developed haunches. The people of the village didn’t bath for a year, led a life of poverty, sold their live-stock, utensils etc. The government raised the prices of eatables making them unable to buy and survive. Ramna like respectable people then turned to alms out of hunger. K.A. Abbas shares:

Ramna knew the value of water. Paharpur being on the top of a hill, there was no well in their village. They had to go down to the valley below and fetch water for drinking and cooking. The women had

developed haunches carrying uphill their heavy pots of water. (Abbas 192)

K.A. Abbas observes that Ramna then thinks like a progressive about his whole village and leaves the charity house without eating anything and thinks of digging a well in his own field with the help of some government employees to ensure the possibility of water. He brought prosperity to the village with water. He was the first person as per Abbas who thought differently for his people. He didn't accept alms given in charity that too by posing oneself as disable. Like Abbas, Ramna hates hypocrisy and always loves bread of truth and honesty.

Progressivism of K.A. Abbas champions the cause of freedom both of individual and state from the barbaric rule of imperialism. It never supports war and the killings of people but believes in love, peace and prosperity of masses. Although progressives support modernization in the field of technology and industry to an optimum level, they never prefer it over human prosperity and at the cost of humans. It firmly believes in racial equality denouncing the use of such racial words as Nigger etc.

K.A. Abbas as a progressive writer displays in the story, "The Black Sun", several issues of injustice together with exploitation of poor people and their natural resources either by imperialists or capitalists. He has also shown the brutal killings caused by British during colonial rule. Even the UNO has been exposed as a kind of shop where Europeans and British justify their crime. He has also reflected in the story as to how Blacks suffered across the world at the hands of Whites who even today use to regard themselves as a superior race. It is because of this superiority complex Black slaves were sent to fight against Germans during the holocaust. Moreover, the writer has given a clue towards McCarthyism in which reactionaries in USA were identified and then killed one by one.

K.A. Abbas attempts to show how the preachers of anti-violence, global warming, anti-arms, anti-exploitation of poor countries are themselves involved in all such activities and then justify it as a way to progress and prosperity but if the same thing is performed by some other country that is declared as crime and breach of UNO resolution. UNO is like a game and Atom Bomb like a football to them. They can kick it into any corner of the world they wish. Abbas hints us here to the pollution of New York which is not natural or from hearths, it is the outcome of nuclear plants, factories, mills and burning of surplus grains to stabilize the market. This is the result of American armament race which had caused the dark smoke clouds in New York. The writer says that these weapons are not meant for any peaceful purposes but alert for playing havoc with human life as happened in Japan.

Abbas reminds us how the whites call the Blacks by the common nickname Nigger which is anti-racial and anti-progressive though they have names to be called by. The character, Mr Peter Abraham Jefferson, has been shown as a ghost going to UNO to ask for justice denied to him in his life time. He was shot dead because of his revolutionary and rebellious nature. The Cab driver's granddad, Donald John O' Connor had met the same fate for the same cause. UNO is not the house of justice rather it constantly homes murderers and butchers, slamming the door on the face of those looking for justice. K.A. Abbas brings into light the injustice being imposed upon Blacks on behalf of Whites. He architects a black woman character who represents Black woman folk. The Blacks in America or in any other part of Europe called Negroes were not allowed to mix up with white ones. Therefore, there was a separate school, locality and even Church for Blacks. They were not given equal status with Whites. The only place where blacks could have the right to stay with whites is war due to which the black women lost her husband in Korean war. Blacks

were treated as beasts for war. Even she lost her son Henry Junior by sending him in the school of Whites. This is the maltreatment Blacks receive in the White dominated world. Abbas attempts to draw our attention towards Abraham Lincoln who, too, was assassinated for Being black and strong advocate to abolish slavery act. K.A. Abbas writes:

And the White ones decided that though we Blacks were not good enough to worship with them in their churches, or to send our children to their schools, or to travel with them in the same railway compartment, we were good enough to be sent to war to die along with the White soldiers. (Abbas 163)

Abbas touches upon the issue of English barbarism during colonial rule and the massacre they caused in Jallianwala Bagh through this story. The Indian character speaks that UNO is like a spiritual headquarter for Indians but it does nothing except giving grand burial to our freedom and peace. Abbas asks where UNO was when thousands of Indians were massacred in Jallianwala Bagh. UNO is nothing but simply a symbol of authority of Europeans to do what they want .

The Negro Jefferson being progressive in thinking tried not to shoot the soldiers of the rival side and secretly tried to leave the battle field but was killed by an English officer to show such humanistic behaviour. He believed in oneness of humanity with love, serenity, opulence and its values. He got a bad punishment for that. This all killing is at daggers drawn with the progressive vision of Abbas whose dream, vision and mission was improvement of human life.

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