

**CHAPTER -IV**  
**CONCLUSIONS**

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This concluding chapter states in brief some of the findings as a result of the critical study of the two selected political prisoners' diaries viz. *Prison Days* by Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit and *Prison Diary-1975* by Jayaprakash Narayan on the acceptable theory of form and function of diary. Though both the diaries were written by the contemporary leading political figures in different phases, it is not merely the study of their thoughts, events and documentation but it is a critical generic study based on the theory of the genre, formulated mainly on the views of the theorists and practitioners of diary form. The two diaries belong to two different political phases i.e. the colonial and the post colonial period in India.

The origin of the diary is in the human impulse to record the important day-to-day events and self-analysis in the form of written memorial. Diary is different form from other types of non-fictional prose literature. Diary existed since the 16th century in Europe. Diary has its origin in a Latin word i.e. '**Diarium**' and it means a notebook or a register of daily records. It was similarly considered in

England as a daily register. Samuel Pepys' *Diary* is the most famous diary in England. Many have tried to define diary but it is very difficult to give its final and comprehensive definition. European writers including British and French wrote diaries in their languages. Diary is not only the record of present life events but also the significant form of self-revelation and documentation. Writing a diary is not an easy task because a diarist is expected to tell the truth of his life and milieu by selecting the events with subjectivity and self-centripetal approach and provide the documentation of the contemporary life. These literary expectations are the parameters of the form. An author's self-revelation and the documentation of the contemporary ethos are the essential functions of the diary.

Indians wrote '*Rozmanchas*' in the middle ages. They were like diary but were not diaries in the modern sense of the term. Indians have been writing diaries in English and in Indian regional languages since 18th century on the western models. Many writers became familiar with the western form of diary through English Education. During socio-political movements led by Gandhiji, many leading personalities

handled this form in English and this tradition was continued in future also.

Both Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit and Jayaprakash Narayan were by class political prisoners. In fact, they were not convicted as the criminals or accused. They were detenues. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit wrote her diary viz. *Prison Days* in her third term of imprisonment in Allahabad Central Prison in 1942 during the Quit India Movement at her age of 42 in her middle age, while *Prison Diary-1975* was written by Jayaprakash Narayan during the Emergency of 1975 in his imprisonment at Chandigarh at his mature age of 73. This shows there is no definite age for writing a good diary. Coincidentally both the political leaders were arrested during Quit India Movement in 1942 as well as during the Emergency in 1975. Both were the well-known political leaders in and outside India. They were remarkable patriots of India.

Both the authors were active social workers and freedom fighters and had immense impact on the public and the political affairs in the country. Jayaprakash Narayan had more strong hold on the youth as well as the public mind than Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit.

Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit belonged to traditionally rich and intellectual Kashmiri Pandit family while Jayaprakash Narayan was a Kayastha. Both were by birth, domicile and heritage were North Indians and were closely associated with Mahatma Gandhiji in person and Gandhian philosophy.

Both the diary writers wrote and published their diaries in India by Indian publishers. Naturally one assumes that they kept in mind Indian audience for their diary but their diaries were written in English. This leads us to conclude that their audience is both the Indians and the westerners.

The material of their diary writing was decided by their motives to write the diaries. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit's motive was to help the readers in giving the real picture of jail conditions in British India as the readers were ignorant of it. On the other hand, Jayaprakash Narayan's motive was explicitly stated by one of his close friends, A. B. Shah in his preface to the diary that the writer wrote the diary for 'self-analysis and analysis of where and why the things went wrong' in Indian political life. In fact, Jayaprakash Narayan, as A. B. Shah states, wanted to present the existing political situation before the people. These two motives are closer and related to the Indian public.

*Prison Days* begins its record since the day of imprisonment, while *Prison Diary-1975* begins after 26 days of imprisonment., It is expected that diary should be written everyday but both these diaries are exceptions to this as there are many unrecorded days in these diaries. There is no set and specific gap. It varies from minimum one day to maximum 38 days. Their motives had decided the selected significant events, self-revelation and the documentation in these diaries. They stick up carefully to their motives and that is one of the reasons of their success as good diary writing.

Both the diaries adhere to the accepted parameters of the diary form and do not deviate from them. First, they are the record of the facts in the imprisonments of the writers. Being diaries the writers do not spin the yarns but write down the daily record of the real happenings in their jail period and provide us with the faithful picture of their 'self' and its 'milieu'. The common content of their facts is related to their personal ill-health, their moods, their attachment to relatives, the harassment done by the rulers and their officers as political prisoners, the worst and unhealthy jail conditions, the corruption in the jail. But the truth related to the documentation is different in both because the two diaries

were produced in two different ethos in two political phases viz. the colonial and post colonial India. The tone of the writers is harsh, bitter and criticizing the rulers as they were dissatisfied with their inhuman conduct and loss of real spirit as the Governments.

As stated earlier, it is but natural that the motives of the writers have decided the volume and content of the said diaries as well as the selection of the events.

The writers are the centre of all the narration in the diaries. All the details about the 'self' and the 'milieu' go to contribute to the central position of the protagonists. Similarly, the self-revelation in the diaries show us that the diary writers have taken simultaneously a subjective and objective view of the 'self'. Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, being introvert, is more subjective. She narrates the events, the persons, the milieu in British India from the subjective point of view. Naturally her narration in the diary is more personal in its touch. On the other hand, Jayaprakash Narayan, being extrovert, takes the objective view of the jail, the men around him, the political and social happenings and the Government in free India. Both the diary writers gave an

excellent documentation of the socio-political ethos of their concerned political phases.

Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit's diary is more or less a diary of sensitive mind and it unfolds the subtle personality traits of the writer. It records her firmness as a freedom fighter, despaired mood being a house wife and having worries as mother, wife, adoration for her brother etc. She had developed gardening as her hobby and spent time in reading books. Often she is lyrical in describing the beauty of night etc. The documentation in her diary is decided by her motive and is confined to uncomfortable and unhealthy jail conditions, the worst food, insecure life. She disliked the British police and their harassments to all types of prisoners.

Jayaprakash Narayan's diary, more or less, presents his self revelation mainly as an idealistic and moral political and social thinker. He considers the democratic rule of Mrs. Indira Gandhi was deceptive and he narrated at length the drawbacks in the administration of Indira Gandhi etc. He narrates faithfully the political situation of the Emergency of 1975, the defects in Twenty Point Programme of Indira Gandhi, the supremacy of Parliament, his aspirations for Total Revolution with the help of the students with



constructive programme and the Bhoodan Movement. The diary is full of minute social observations of the poverty of people and the population problem. As a political thinker he advocates the real role of opposite party.

Both the diary writers are lover of books and they used to read the books in the boredom of jail life. Similarly, both show the poetic turn of mind.

The gender of the writers definitely decides the difference in their sensibility as political prisoners. Vijaya Lakshmi being a woman expresses her feminine sensibility. She is more sensitive and sensible than Jayaprakash who is more rational. She, being a woman, worried more about her domestic anxieties and household people. She had compassion for the innocent female convicts. But Jayaprakash did not express similar feelings about his co-prisoners. Jayaprakash was more critical in his assessment of the political events in the Emergency but Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit could not write a diary or anything about the same event though she was arrested in the Emergency like Jayaprakash.

Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit's *Prison Days* is an intimate diary and Jayaprakash Narayan's *Prison Diary-1975* is anecdotal diary.

To sum up, the two diaries under study fulfill almost all the essential parameters of the diary form. The two diaries excel in the self-revelation and the documentation on the proper lines so as to place them among some of the good diaries in Indian English Literature.

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