CHAPTER- II

LOVE AND MARRIAGE- THE CONCEPTS.

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1) **Love** :   Love has been considered as a many-splendored thing. Love has become so universal a theme because of the remarkable variety of its world. Nothing else that unites human beings so emphatically. Love may create a marvellous degree of mutual consciousness. Love plays a very vital and important role in human life.   *Why this repetition ?*

Western Concept of Love :   Saint Augustine defines love   *Tense ?* (amor) as," a certain life which couples or seeks to couple together some two things, namely him that loves, and that which is beloved"[1] Augustine distinguished between spiritual and carnal love, between the sacred and profane love but from his own experience, he insisted that his definition held true for both, all 'love'. The expression of love in these terms, this two-into-one motif, occurs throughout the literature of secular love.   *Syntax ?*

Love is a sentiment that man and woman feel and who have a fully personal relationship with one another. It is a thing of pleasure. The relationship between man and woman provides the framework withing which love catches fire.

According to the Western concept of love, love between a man and woman is not platonic; it is a desire for proximity. It involves sex. It means enjoying each other's presence, being quickened by the sight and touch of the other, being

physically impelled towards each other. The intensity of love
is part of one's lifetime sexual education. Slowly the body
awakens to its potentialities. Accepting oneself as male or
female is easier when walking hand in hand. Lovers find their
awakened sexuality responding to the sexual identity of the
other in a delicious blend of masculime/feminine capacity.

Indian concept of love :   Indian concept of love is inherent
in the vocabulary used in Sanskrit literature to express love,
that is, in the words which might be translated from Sanskrit
into English as "Love". This vocabulary of love encompasses
the pain of separation and the joy of union and the longing of
separated lovers for union. As 'rasa' means 'taste' it may also
mean 'love! The lover " relishes" the beloved emotionnally in
loving and physically in kissing. Regarding Indian concept of
love reflected in Sanskrit literature Lee Siegel says, " Love
as ecstasy is a death and a resurrection. Pleasure is the
'taste' of love passion is the 'taste' for love-'rasa' is both
the emotional pleasure of love and the biological manifestation
of that pleasure. 'Rasa' is a technical term in Sanskrit poetics
indicating 'mood' or 'sentiment' or flavour!"[2]

According to the Indian concept of love, love born of
sense attraction should be transformed into love based on austerity
and control. Those that are love-stricken are by nature
undiscriminating between conscious and unconscious beings.

The emotionality of love signifies its dynamic characteristic. Love enlarges one's emotional capacity. Sex life is not consistent with spiritual attainment. Sex life under law and restraint is spiritual in character. The goal of life is joy, serenity and not pleasure and happiness. The aim of love is a happy harmony of man and woman. The wife does not belong to the husband but makes a whole with him. The wife is the root of all social welfare. She is with him in the performance of all his duties.

According to the Indian concept of love, love is something more than a (mere) thing of pleasure. It is not merely sexual attraction between two people, but it is the essence of human life. Love is deepened by hardships and sufferings borne for the sake of love. It grows a hundredfold in its intensity when there are obstacles to its realisation. Even in the absence of fulfilment, the yearning gives all the joy that love means.

In other words, we may say that there are different interpretations of the theme of love like 'emotional', 'romantic' 'platonic', 'love at first sight'. Also love has a literary basis in literature of medieval times. Romantic-sexual love is an ambivalent concept of love. And then there is transcendental or spiritual love. All this shows that love is an extremely complex concept.

2)   <u>Marriage</u> :   <u>Western concept of marriage</u> :

The Western concept of marriage has undergone a slow
series of changes. In the first place the Christian religious
services define it as a sacrament ordained by God to join in
"holy wedlock" a man and a woman. It might be assumed that since
the ancient times marriage has existed in all societies for all
known time. Aristotle thinks that marriages are based on
1) Utility or (2) on giving pleasure, or (3) On making a gift of
the self to another. The first two types of marriages tended to
fail easily whereas the third survived well, being strengthed
by adversity because that offered a greater opportunity for
giving, this analysis of Aristotle seems as valid today as in
his time as far as marriage in the Western world is concerned.
Marriage tends to stand or fall in proportion to the way it meets
the legitimate aims of the individual. Marriage appears to lean
heavily towards individual arrangement aimed at the happiness of
the partners. According to the Western idea of marriage,
satisfaction of the sexual urge, romantic love, satisfaction of
the parental urge, satisfaction of the domestic urge these
factors play important role.

Secondly, marriage is a contract under the law, whatever the other
properties it may have. In American law it is distinctly a
civil contract. This is a divergence from older English practice
which was based on the canon law of the the church. A number of

variations exist between English and American law on marriage and divorce. The basic requirement for a valid contract of marriage is the written or spoken agreement to marry. This is marriage " per verbe de presenti", or " by words in the present tense" spoken by a man and woman with matrimonial intention. The ceremony of marriage contains such phrasing whether it is formal or informal. Completing the ceremony establishes the contract of marriage and confers on the man and woman the status of marriage.

All the Hindu scriptures consider marriage to be a religious bond rather than a contract. As Giri Raj Gupta points out, " The traditional Hindu marriage has far greater significance than the unification of man and woman in the matrimonial state. Through the Hindu marriage an insight can be gained into the complex of kinship ties, the entanglement of religion with the social structure ... the cohesiveness of the extended family-unit. Marriages reinforce and refurbish the socio-religious structure which has existed in India for centuries."[3] In Indian Mythology, we find the concept of 'Gandharv Vivah' in which man and woman in love used to marry without the presence of a priest or any other person. The commonest and the most popular form of marriage is the regular marriage known as 'byah or Shadi! It is formally arranged by parents and guardians and solemnized with prescribed holy rites and ceremonies. The main rites are 'homa', or offering in the sacred fire, 'Panigrahana' or taking the hand of the bride, and 'Saptapadi' the bride and the bridegroom

going seven steps together. All these rites are performed by a Brahmin in the presence of the sacred fire and are accompanied by the Vedic 'mantras'. All these rites are necessary for marriage to be complete because if they are not properly performed, the marriage may be legally questioned. In this sense, Hindu marriage is a sacrament. Similarly, marriage is said to be essential for woman because that is the only sacrament that can be performed for her. Through marriage husband and wife are bound to each other until the death of either of them. Regarding the functions and aims of Hindu marriage, K.M. Kapadia says, "The aims of Hindu marriage are said to be 'dharma', 'Praja' (progeny) and 'rati' (pleasure). Though sex is one of the function of marriage it is given third place indicating thereby that is the least desirable aim of marriage."[4]

According to the Indian traditional concept of marriage, the wife is supposed to be bound to her husband even after his death. This concept of marriage, that it is indissoluble, is a very significant one because, it means that the husband and wife after marriage have to adjust their tastes and temper, their ideals and interests. It thus involves sacrifices on the part of both husband and wife as such is called upon to overcome the imcompatibility of the other. In this way, Hindu marriage is not an ordinary affair as the Western marriage is, wherein the weakness of flesh plays a major role. On the contrary, demands of personal gratification and pleasures are subordinated, and

every individual is called upon to make marriage a success by means of compromise and adjustment.

In Indian context love is supposed to be developed after the marriage. Any deviation from this routine is bound to meet with failure. In Indian traditional way of life what is normal is the existence of love in the post-marriage state and not in pre-marriage state. The love between husband and wife is considered as normal and healthy. It is tested by centuries of experience and is found valid and working in modern times also. Any deviation from this is either romantic or an aberration which leads to disturbance, confusion, unhappiness, loneliness and sometimes to disaster.

R.K. Narayan in his major novels deals with these themes of love and marriage from this traditional point of view. He uses the strategy of irony to expose the foibles or traps in the modern life with its new-fangled ideas like pre-marital love, pre-marital sex and such other deviations from the normal Indian way of life.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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3. Giri Raj Gupta Marriage, Religion and Society--pattern of Change in an Indian Village, Vikas publishing House, Pvt.Ltd. Delhi, 1974 P. 45.

4. K.M.Kapadia, Marriage and Family in India, Oxford University press, Delhi, 1972, p. 56.