

“Eclecticism” In The Work Of Ved Mehta: A Critical Study Of His Writings

Ms.Vandana Attri^{1*}, Dr. Swati Sharma²

^{1*,2}Department of English, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, Lingaya`s Vidyapeeth, Faridabad

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ARTICLE INFO ABSTRACT

Ved Mehta was the great eclectic Novelist. He was blind from his childhood but indeed an electric writer. He covered a wide range of subjects from his own experiences. Even after being blind, he explored Indian history, culture and politics skillfully. Early in the 1950s, while pursuing an undergraduate degree at Oxford, Mehta obtained the tools of his literary trade. Mehta was steeped in the empiricist literary tradition, much like his mentor William Shawn at The New Yorker. Mehta organizes the motions of the character by using a sophisticated web of narrative devices. During his time as an Oxford University student, Mehta learned the fundamentals of style, including the use of right words.

It's true that Ved Mehta was an eclectic writer whose writing eluded simple classification. Mehta, who was born blind, brought a unique perspective to his varied body of work, which included essays, memoirs, biographies, and novels. Mehta's literary abilities went beyond his writing; he was an adept historian and interviewer as well. His depth as a writer was demonstrated by his ability to skillfully combine personal narrative with more general social and cultural commentary. Mr. Mehta was able to interact with a variety of literary traditions and audiences thanks to his fluency in three languages: Hindi, English, and Urdu. His writings frequently explored difficult subjects like politics, religion, identity, and interpersonal relationships, showcasing his breadth of knowledge and depth of understanding. Ved Mehta made a substantial and varied contribution to literature, demonstrating his true versatility as a writer whose works are still praised for their depth and complexity. Here is an eclecticism-based critical analysis of his writings.

Key Words: Eclecticism, steeped, memoirs, sophisticated

INTRODUCTION

Mehta fervently sought clarity as a goal in his prose, having learned from the masters through The Oxford Book of English Prose. In pursuing this objective, he came to understand that memory is never a self-contained thing in and of itself, but rather grows by association, introspection, and writing (Vedi, i). When one is youthful and open to new concepts, there is a lot of room for intellectual growth. Indeed, Ved Mehta's "Face to Face" is a noteworthy piece of art. It's a part of his bigger autobiographical narrative that documents his experiences growing up, including his eyesight issues. The book explores Mehta's life story, including his Indian background, his schooling at several prominent universities, and his experiences navigating numerous countries and cultures as a blind person. Through "Face to Face," Ved Mehta provides readers with personal glimpses into his life, relationships, and meetings with influential people. He talks about his thoughts on identity, community, and the difficulties he overcame as a result of his impairment. The book is commended for its capacity to bring readers a deeper knowledge of Mehta's perspective and the society around him, as well as for its honest and heartbreaking storytelling style. All things considered, "Face to Face" is an engaging and enlightening addition to Ved Mehta's autobiographical series, giving readers a singular window into the life of an extraordinary person and writer.

A well-rounded classical education broadens one's thinking and promotes intellectual growth. Put another way, a demanding classical education is viewed in Oxford's intellectual milieu as a resource that fills the mind's apparent empty cupboard. Infancy is like a blank sheet of paper, but time fills it in with thoughts, feelings, and introspection. Both the medium and the contents of the mind are made up of ideas. The structures of ideas can be both basic and complex. Simple, essentially invisible concepts interact with our

senses as microscopic particles that make up the material's domains. We actually perceive concepts of objects—that is, objects in the form of small particles rather than actual objects—with such an intricate interactive system in place.

Mr. Ved Prakash Mehta in the middle of the 1980s, claimed that in spite of his blindness, his writing contained vivid descriptions of the many environments he came across, the individuals he spoke with, and the towns he visited. He also went beyond minute reporting, delving deeply into his memories and skillfully employing all four of his senses. Mr. Mehta gave me a language to explain the world around me when I was reading his memoirs at the time, especially the ones about his family members in Lahore and Amritsar. Mehta's gift to Indian writers was to teach them, along with his friend and contemporaries like Dom Moraes, with whom he traveled across India, or others like Khushwant Singh and R.K. Narayan, how to write about our own streets and our own experiences.

A salient feature of Mehta's eclecticism is his openness to delving into a diverse array of topics. Mehta's body of work spans a wide range of subjects, from in-depth analyses of his own experiences growing up blind in India to more general investigations of Indian politics, history, and culture. His openness to exploring a range of topics demonstrates the eclecticism-defining intellectual curiosity.

Even in our increasingly globalized society, eclecticism of this kind is still appreciated, but Mehta's popularity had already begun to decline before his current illness. Furthermore, he stated that although he had been a part of the blind community for a long time, he did not want to write as though that group was only his domain. Yes, despite having no vision, blind writer Ved Mehta enjoyed extraordinary success in his writing career. Even with this enormous obstacle, he didn't let being blind stop him from pursuing a writing career. His writing had an amazing capacity to communicate his experiences, ideas, and feelings, and he received a great deal of recognition for his frank and perceptive account of his existence as a blind person. In addition to showcasing his own journey, Mehta's writing offered insightful perspectives on more general issues like identity, culture, and the human condition. Many budding authors and those facing comparable circumstances find encouragement in his unwavering desire to overcome barriers and achieve success in the literary world.

Many of his non-autobiographical works, such as "Walking the Indian Streets," read as though their author had personally seen the places they described, with no reference to his blindness. Mehta's art is not limited by conventional genre conventions. He dabbled in fiction, biography, and cultural critique in addition to his autobiographical works, which are probably best known for the critically praised "Continents of Exile" series. Mehta's openness to experimenting with many genres is indicative of her eclecticism as a writer.

Mehta, a writer who was born in India and lived most of his life in the US, contributed a multicultural viewpoint to his writing. His works frequently examine the points where Indian and Western cultures converge, giving readers a deeper understanding of the difficulties associated with belonging and identity. Mehta's versatility as a writer and thinker is seen in his ability to switch between many cultural contexts with ease. Mehta provides us a rich and nuanced portrait of the great man and vividly brings him to life by traveling the globe to speak with Gandhi's family, friends, and supporters and meticulously sketching his everyday life. India is a huge, mysterious nation full of contrasts, spanning from the snow-capped Himalayas to the state of Tamil Nadu, which is susceptible to drought. Mehta shares his insights of his own country of India in *Portrait of India*.

Mehta is not only able to illuminate the individuals who shaped contemporary philosophy and the nuances of that philosophical idea, but she is also able to meticulously explore the milieu of mid-century British society. Mehta's writings, which include a selection of his works, provide a wealth of options for contemporary narrative and descriptive writers. With grace and elegance, it covers a wide range of topics, including politics, religion, education, and writing. Mehta draws inspiration from a wide range of academic disciplines, including politics, philosophy, literature, and history, in his work. His ability to discuss difficult concepts and theories from a range of fields is particularly evident in his works. Mehta stands out for his openness to engaging with a variety of intellectual traditions and his curiosity about the world of ideas.

I started living in a world of four senses—that is, a world in which colors and faces and light and darkness are unknown. I started living in a universe where it was not the flood of sunshine streaming through the nursery window or the colors of the rainbow, a sunset or a full moon that mattered, but the feel of the sun against skin, the air just before the coming of the quiet night, the smell of the stubble grass on a warm morning. It was a universe where at first—but only at first—I made my way fumbling and faltering. (Mehta 1957, 1)

In the end, his blindness turns into a family tragedy rather than a personal one. The world of the crippled in India during that historical period was extremely depressing; blind persons would move from corner to corner for begging. Determined that this would not be his son's destiny, his father started contacting a number of well-known educational leaders for support. However, Mehta's father sent him to the nation's top blind school, the Dadar School in Bombay, which was nine hundred miles from their Punjabi home, before Mehta turned five. He gained respect and the self-discipline needed to live a self-sufficient existence in this school.

For instance, Mehta appears more like a sighted Oxford guest in *Walking the Indian Streets* than a blind writer in need of help getting to the exotic. Mehta really takes a strong stand against the notion that a writer

should impart his "handicaps" to readers. Mehta challenged the conventions of traditional storytelling by experimenting with narrative form and structure throughout his career. His memoirs in particular are renowned for their avant-garde storytelling techniques that combine philosophical analysis, historical research, and introspection with personal reflection. Mehta's openness to defy literary rules and try out novel storytelling techniques is indicative of his eclecticism as a writer. The boundaries between autobiography, memoir, and fiction were frequently blurred in Mehta's works. He expertly combined aspects of every genre to weave a complex narrative that was difficult to put into neat categories. Mehta was able to explore intricate ideas and emotions with more depth and complexity thanks to this merging of genres. Mehta pushed the limits of conventional storytelling by experimenting with various narrative styles and approaches. Mehta constantly aimed to test and broaden the possibilities of literary expression, whether through the use of creative stylistic choices, nontraditional narrative frameworks, or stream-of-consciousness writing. Ved Mehta became a trailblazer in the field of autobiographical literature because of his willingness to defy the rules of conventional storytelling, which enhanced the richness and complexity of his writing.

Conclusion

Eclecticism is best shown in Ved Mehta's writing style and topic matter. His work continues to captivate readers all around the world because of his openness to examining a wide range of subjects, genres, and cultural viewpoints as well as his wide intellectual breadth and inventive storytelling. Ved Mehta was indeed a highly acclaimed writer known for his insightful and engaging works. He was particularly noted for his autobiographical series chronicling his life experiences, which included his struggles with blindness. Mehta's writing was praised for its depth, honesty, and ability to vividly capture his experiences and the world around him. Some of his notable works include "Face to Face," "Dark Harbor," and "Continents of Exile." Overall, he made significant contributions to literature, particularly in the realms of memoir and non-fiction.

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