
The Tricky Thumb

By: Bharat Thakor

(A poem translated from Gujarātī into English)

Translated by:
Dr. Amit R. Prajapati.

Clay creates rooms, rooms shape buildings collectively
Buildings architect factories collaboratively
Where a human into a machine revolutionized
Lives have been utterly mechanized . . .
Life is trapped in an arena of advantage-disadvantage
The illiterate put thumb-impressions formerly
The literate presently . . .
Thumbs changed . . .
Places to put thumb-impressions changed . . .
Tables changed, methods changed . . .
Those who put thumb-impressions never changed
Deserted, distressed, dependent . . . cadaverous completely . . .
Thumbs claim an identity of existence presently . . .
This thumb unlocks an office in the morning
And locks heart-doors in the evening . . .
This stupid thumb ah! Since *Eklavya*'s day
Has been a prey till today . . .
Sometimes by caste, sometimes by itself . . .
Ugh! What to do of this thumb-self?
This thumb transmuted all into sheep certainly . . .
In the morning sheep run about mechanically . . .
Loiter a whole day in an office-wilderness thoroughly
In the evening back in house-manger apparently
This thumb has animalized
A human rather than humanized
The perfect beast of 21st century sophisticatedly
In making a move aimlessly
Has lost its genuine identity truly.

Eklavya: *Eklavya*, the son of *Hiranyadhanus*, the chief of the *Bhīl* tribe, was rejected as a

student by *Dronāchārya*, the *Gūrū* (teacher) of *Pāndavās* and *Kauravās* to teach archery as he was not *Kshatrīya*. Being determined, *Eklavya* while not giving up to learn archery, staying hidden in the forest where *Gūrū Dronāchārya* was teaching *Pāndavās* and *Kauravās*, practised archery before the mud-idol of *Gūrū Dronāchārya* and expertized. When *Gūrū Dronāchārya* came to know about *Eklavya*'s expertise in archery, he asked *Eklavya* to cut off his right thumb and offer it to him as *Gūrū Dakshīnā*.

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