

ISSN 2278 - 1625

# **Kafila** Intercontinental

(An International Tri-annual journal of Art, Literature & Culture)



Summer, 2013



# Kafla

## Intercontinental

(An International Tri-annual journal of Art, Literature & Culture)  
Summer 2013, Vol. XX, Number 2

### Contents

#### Poems

Poetry from Uzbekistan/ 3, Sashibhusan Rath/ 13, Meenu Gupta/ 23, Ran Sharma/ 28, Bushra Naqi/ 32, Janardhan Pathania/ 70, Dev Bhardwaj/ 72

#### Fiction :

Nilpoddyo/ Lovely Bashar/ 8, Bus Stop/ Anuradha Bhattacharya/14

#### Articles

Roma and Romani/ Nalini Pathania/ 17

Theorizing Ecology : Ecocriticism / Dr. Rohit Phutela/ 24

Since Human Journey Begin/ Sabita Das/ 29

Echoes of contemporary reality in the poetry of O. P .Bhatnagar/

Dr. Shelly Mannan/ 33

Hindu Religious Ideologies Reflected in Leaves of Grass/ Dr. Sangeeta Singh

& Dr. Sanjit Mishra/ 38

Striking A Bond With Nature : Ecocritical Paradigms In Shakuntala/

Dr Renu Josan/ 47

The Folk Music of Tamilnadu/ A. Esther Pradeeba/ 53

Theorizing Diaspora and its Literature for World Peace/ Dr. Jayant Kar Sharmas/ 57

#### Book-Review :

Mahendra Bhatnagar' book O, Moon, My Sweet-heart! ...

Reviewed by Anuradha Bhattacharyya/ 68

**Edited, Printed & Published by: Dev Bhardwaj, # 3437 Sector 46-C, Chandigarh-160047 (India).**

Ph. ++91-98728-23437 <editorkafla@yahoo.com www.kaflaintercontinental.com

**Executive Editor (Honorary): Harish K. Thakur (Shimla-H.P.)**

Ph. ++91-94180-08900, <harish\_070@yahoo.co.in>

**Editor at Large : Gurdev Chauhan (Canada).** email: gurdev.chauhan@gmail.com

**Subscription Rates: Rs. 200 (for One year), Rs. 500 (for Three years)**

**Life Membership: Rs. 2000** (includes webpage on www.indianwriters.org)

**Copyright:** The copyright for all material published in *Kafla Inter-continental* belongs to the respective authors, unless otherwise stated.

**Disclaimer:** Views expressed in this journal are those of the contributors and not of the publisher/editor.

**Printed at :** Mona Enterprises, Naveen Shahdara, Delhi, Phone. 98100 80542`



## *Editorial.....*

The Summer-2013 issue of *Kafla* is in your hands with all its youthfulness and greenery of the approaching rains. The contributions by a galaxy of new writers and poets have but glistened its message and content. The current issue has many a papers, essays, stories, book-review and poetry to offer that reverberates the book contents and the fervour in your mind even if you have not gone through the original volume.

The essay *Hindu Religious Ideologies Reflected in Leaves of Grass* by Sangeeta Singh and Sanjit Mishra executes a nice comparative analysis of the use of scriptural ideologies (theme of life, death, compassion, sacrifice, soul, woman, heaven, maya, sin, atonement) between Hindu religious and mythological beliefs and the poetic corpus of Walt Whitman.

*Theorising Ecology: Ecocriticism* by Rohit Phutela is quite interesting and informative paper that explores the evolution of the studies over ecocriticism or Green Studies in the west. The existence of ecological consciousness in Kalidasa's *Shakuntala*, regarded as one of the masterpieces of Sanskrit literature is the prime theme in the paper *Striking a Bond with Nature: Ecocritical Paradigms in Shakuntala* by Renu Josan. The author explores the eco critical concerns in Kalidas's *Shakuntala*.

*Roma and Romani* by Nalini Pathania attempts at elaborating the various levels of subalternation of the Roma (European gypsies) in the White man's world. *Echoes of contemporary reality in the poetry of O.P. Bhatnagar* by Shelly Mannan is a critique on the select poems penned by Bhatnagar. He firmly believes that poetry should not shy away from social reality. Whatever hurts the human dignity and value-system, must find place in the living literature. *Theorising Diaspora and its Literature for World Peace* by Jayant Kar Sharma provides an interesting account of how the estranged people around the world are faced with myriad of problems and challenges. Sabita Das in her essay *Since Human Journey Begins* describes the evolution of life of man on earth through the Einsteinian perspective with the impact of technology and modernisational processes. She highlights the negatives imposed by globalising forces on the social and cultural fabric of life. A. Esther Pradeepa nicely elaborates the various strands and elements of the *Folk Music of Tamilnadu* which is quite ancient in origins and bears a good deal of rurality in it. For the students of art and music the paper is quite significant as it throws light on various dimensions of Tamil folk music and culture.

Some wonderful poetry ranging from the theme of patriotism to humanism, brotherhood, and nature from Uzbekistan embellish the current issue. Poems like *Motherland* by Nilufar Gafurova, *The Life* by Bahora Rajabova, *A Night in my Dreams* by Dilafgor Sanobar, *Pure Love* by Shahlo Tursunova, *The Rain Falls* by Masshura Rahmatora, *Spring* by Dilshoda Bobomurodova & Sabohat Bobomurudova, *The Motherland is my Soul* by Dinara Yuldoshova, *You are my Uzbekistan* by Elboy Kulmanov, *Your name is Motherland* by Dursanam Nur Kizi, *The Time when the Poem was born* by Latofat Buronova, *At my Forward* by Asror Allayarov and *Emptiness* by Kamola Salyamova are a feast to read. We have been able to publish these poems from Uzbekistan through the efforts of our associate Asror Allyarov.

Then there are stories *Nilpoddyo* by Lovely Bashir and *Bus Stop* Anuradha Bhattacharya.

We hope that you have relished the subject and content of the issue and if not please come back to us through emails or letters. We are eager to hear from you that always help us improvise the general standard of the journal.

- **Editors**



# Poetry from Uzbekistan

Selected by Asror Allayorov (Karshi-Uzbekistan)

Ph. ++998-939087070 <allayorovasror@mail.ru>

---

## Motherland

**Nilufar Gafurova**

(Karshi city, Uzbekistan)

In my cradle (beshik) there are your tracks  
In my genealogy your name will be forever  
The stars twinkle and play in the sky  
You are the best of the best  
I endow my life for Uzbekistan!

You are the power for your sons  
Shyness is embodied at your daughters face  
You can see the long future  
You are the soul for me  
I endow my life for Uzbekistan!

I'm happy of being your child  
My heart is buckler for your safe  
My heart is connected with yours  
I'll defend you till my life's end  
I endow my life for Uzbekistan!

## The Life

**Bahora Rajabova**

(Karshi city, Uzbekistan)

The life is perishable and fleeting  
Despite of it people menace each other  
One comes to life – begins it  
But at the same time other one dies.

The life elapses like a stormy river  
It never stops, even if you want it  
The last day and night also pass  
Let's be happy always and all time

We want to live without gossips and slander  
We need each other in our life  
Let's be kind,  
Let your heart blossom with goodness  
Let's die with a smile.

## At Nights in my Dreams...

**Dilafgor Sanobar**

(Koson district, Uzbekistan)

Planting flowers in my heart's field  
I dream happiness at nights  
When it leaves nostalgia on my eyelash  
I wake up, devoting it to the life.

Dawn raised sighing  
From sinful night's dark flap.  
Dust is kissing hope's clean face  
Hope, looking farewell after the days.

I wash it clean and safely in years  
Saving from melancholy and offence.  
I will love beautiful spring in autumns  
Keeping your name in my heart's ardour.

Burning the answers hundred times in my heart,  
I can't avoid of the one question.  
I miss you looking at each passing day,  
When someone calls your name.

At the corner of the solitary soul  
Love cries with burning dream.  
I'm writing a letter by name the LIFE  
At the black page of the destiny.  
I can't find you in any page



Wandering at the soul's skies.  
For rendezvous even in my dreams  
Loneliness,  
I came back to my dark room.

Fire burns and torments the heart,  
Glimmering dark room with its glow  
My feelings' storms are uncurbed  
And hearts' cry tied to my eyes' cradle.

Did you make a bed from unrealized dream  
May love sleep on a soft pillow.  
If happiness was born from your dream  
Life, let me sleep in your embrace

I dream happiness at nights...

### **Pure Love**

**Shahlo Tursunova**

(Karshi district, Uzbekistan)

Is there anyone not burnt in love flame  
Poets' feather glorifies her without fatigue  
True sweethearts' love never ends  
Pure love never be trampled, never left alone.

Love lives in the fervour, in the ardour  
She never dies, she is eternal.  
We'll take care of it, save in the heart  
Pure love never be trampled, never left alone.

As a fire burning our heart  
Love flares up, never fades.  
Love's suffering is bitter, but rendezvous is sweet  
Pure love never be trampled, never left alone.

Don't lose your heart, let it be, dear,  
Don't cry,  
The world never fulls with it  
True love is pure as spring

Pure love never be trampled, never left alone.  
No one listens your hearts' sob  
Dark hearts never be happy.  
Become straight, don't give your pride stoop  
Pure love never be trampled, never left alone.

### **The Rain Falls**

**Mashhura Rahmatova**

(Chirokchi district, Uzbekistan)

Potting my feelings  
Requesting for my pampering  
The rain falls.  
It washes my hair taking care  
And whispers softly: -Keep under cover!  
Not resting even for a while  
The rain falls.  
I immersed in my dreams  
Grief is forgotten at once  
There is nostalgia on my brief  
The rain falls.  
A hot wind is very tender  
It's smell like a flower's  
The more I like it,  
the more it became happy  
The rain falls.

### **Spring**

**Dilshoda Bobomurodova,**

**Sabohat Bobomurodova**

(Koson district, Uzbekistan)

When bloom the trees  
And water also flows  
Boasting of her beauty  
Spring began to sing.

The trees appeared  
Displaying its green

And Mother-Nature said:  
“Beautiful spring has come”.

Our grandmothers began  
to share sumalak from dashkazan,  
We met Navruz applauding  
And singing songs with friends.

### **The Motherland is the Soul**

**Dinara Yuldosheva**

(Karshi district, Uzbekistan)

The motherland is the soul  
in my heart  
You are more  
beautiful than flowers  
I'll glorify your name  
Making and singing songs  
The motherland is the soul.

Trees are growing  
Flowers are blooming  
I'll gather them  
Cover under your feet.  
The embodiment of the beauty  
Homeland is eternal  
and alive forever  
Motherland is the soul.

Beautiful buildings  
Attract my attention  
The fields and gardens  
Boast of their beauty  
As a sign of piece  
The flag is swaying  
The motherland is the soul.

Honor and esteem  
Are personified in you.  
Pride and authority

Are important in it too.  
Our future lives  
In it shining brightly  
The motherland is the soul.

### **You are my Dear Uzbekistan**

**Elboy Kulmanov**

(Koson district, Uzbekistan)

The name of free Uzbek name is on the  
tongue of the sky  
The world is striving for you in its way  
Happiness and the power of grandeur is  
in your hand  
You are my dear,  
you are free blood in my heart  
You are pride and esteem my Uzbekistan!

You are arrow of the bow  
You are lance and blade,  
which reached the sight  
You are perpetual success  
in the field of the chance  
You are my dear,  
you are free blood in my heart  
You are pride and esteem my Uzbekistan!

Young posterity is your wing, fly higher  
Seeking and aspiration radiates and shines  
Win and reach the highest rocks of victory  
You are my dear,  
you are free blood in my heart  
You are pride and esteem my Uzbekistan!

If the family is firm,  
the life also will flourish  
New beautiful and attractive  
places were rebuilt  
You are the hub of my soul,  
prospered country



You are my dear,  
you are free blood in my heart  
You are pride and esteem my Uzbekistan!

My beautiful gardens will  
bloom and bloom  
And mountains are high and stand with pride  
My days became more bright and happy  
You are my dear,  
you are free blood in my heart  
You are pride and esteem my Uzbekistan!

I am proud of being Uzbek son  
Remembering of your wise children  
is delight  
Thanks to the country  
which supports the youth  
You are my dear,  
you are free blood in my heart  
You are pride and esteem my Uzbekistan!

### **Your Name is Motherland** **Dursanam Nur kizi**

(Mirishkor district, Uzbekistan)

Tell me, are you bright pattern of paradise  
The beauty of the world embodied in you.  
You are the love grass, which blinds us  
Your name reached the skies, Motherland!

Allah loving scholars were born  
The lots wrote and they wrote letters.  
Bobur also lived crying missing you  
Your name reached the skies, Motherland!

When we hear your name in other countries  
We gather again, like one family.  
Our posterity will also live in your embrace  
Your name reached the skies, Motherland!

And you taught “Kurkhon” to Firogi  
Navoi wrote “Khamsa”  
because of love to you  
The poor also lived as a king  
Your name reached the skies, Motherland!

Poet also is your happiness, Motherland  
Write seething, don't tire of praising her  
You are the beginning of happy future  
Your name reached the skies, Motherland!

### **The Time When the Poem was Born** **Latofat Buronova**

(Chirokchi district, Uzbekistan)

A poem was born with scream in the world,  
It is exclamation of creators heart.  
Sometimes the dream looks a lie,  
It sounded so sound from the sky.

Mountains screamed when the poem was born,  
Bodies shaken from the strong of the pain,  
Even speaking coloured colours ,  
Pulled out the poem mother's bosom.

In order colours show its power,  
Colours were sprinkled to face of poem,  
Colour's power has burst from the grief,  
Having seen it, they run off screaming.

Little heart came to life that time,  
Though blazely bonfire left over,  
Poem was going to throw to the fire,  
It was equal to enemy with its little body.

The poem made all enemies stand in row,  
As a result its heart full of grief,  
Soul was over, the earth gainer, pleasure  
Then appeared pained love.

## **At my forward**

**Asror Allayarov**

(Karshi-Uzbekistan)

Who is going away,  
At my forward  
Who has highest imagine than mine.  
His destroys are on my hand,  
Of course, its discoveries are still on my  
dreams.  
I know,  
Lucky person,  
Sometimes,  
You are thinking too  
Who is going away  
To your forward  
His destroys are on your hand,  
And his discovered on your dreams.  
Go ahead!  
Stronger than me,  
Clever than me.  
Never stop,  
That's Ok.  
Believe,  
If you look back  
My eyes crashed yours,  
My heart stops striking with shame,  
Go ahead!  
Don't stop...  
Don't stop...

## **Emptiness**

**Kamola Salyamova**

(Karshi-Uzbekistan)

(From the Diary of "Seeking Soul")

Sometimes,  
Impossible to intake something new in life,  
Unless anything old escapes.  
Better, never rush to fill the space,  
As the condition of emptiness is so grace.  
But sometimes...  
What is the sense of new ingredients  
intruding into soul,  
If that is glued in a usual hole?  
No gain, no relief,  
Just more pain and much grief.  
Emptiness-  
Kingdom of soul, body and wit,  
All together connect us with happiness,  
Happiness-  
Who can honestly and bravely utter  
It is warmness and love?  
To love and be loved...  
Prince in a white horse,  
Princess in a castle, dream of yours  
Nonsense!  
If there is love absence!  
Emptiness comprises of love,  
Love to SELF,  
Who can love you in the way you want  
If you would not love yourself?  
Love is the steam  
Where happiness would gleam!..



# NILPODDYO

## [The Blue-Lotus]

a short story

Lovely Bashar

Dhaka (Bangladesh)

Ph. +8801759397943

<lovelytalukdar@gmail.com>

'Dheu' finds relief, as the bus starts rolling the jammed-streets of Dhaka. Though, it's comparatively lesser-jam than usual. It's past-noon into late-afternoon. There seems no rush in school children returning home. Office-returnees will hit the streets at 5 p.m. Dheu finds herself fortunate to have got-off before the usual office-break. Crossing the concrete-jungle just after the airport, some green starts emerging, the green-tapestry being quite obviously, artificially landscaped. Yet, one can smell the aura of the *Beauty-of-Bengal*. The subdued Autumn afternoon-sun, sparkling in youthful embrace at both sides of the road, as if the leaves dangling in ecstasy. The sky seemed infectiously spreading beyond... in clear lush blue color. After quite a while, today, Dheu's eyes had an opportunity to quench its thirst at nature. Each day, like a machine, she pushes herself to get-up & down through the maddening crowd overcoming the daily hassles in returning home.

Today's Autumn afternoon is of a different flavor. Dheu's eyes, mind, lips were busy in silent interactions, before realizing herself... dancing to the Autumn's rhythm like an excited butterfly, she is startled to hear her name called: "Dheu...Dheu..." Dheu expresses surprise:

Inan: ...you? ...where from?

Dheu: ...I've the same question...

Grabbing each other's hand like *Shornolata* (an entwined branches of creeper-plant)... *golden-touch* of the four hands sparkle, as if being spell-bound by the touch of a *touch-stone*. The much familiar two heart's blood-

adrenalin flow rapidly. The serene Autumn is suddenly disrupted by the untimely storm emerging ... in the minds of Dheu & Inan, just like helpless fading-voices of people tormenting in a storm. Inan babbles in disarrayed language...

*Dheu... Dheu...will you get down at Farmgate?  
...lots to talk about...lots of things...*

Dheu, as if the wild gusty winds of her inner-storm, subdues her lips for an answer, she nods affirmation. They got-off and sat in a Restaurant. Inan was searching Dheu in her mind for a quite a while... nurturing in a *silent-cage* from childhood. Dheu acknowledged that upon leaving Inan, her heart became a barren desert. Her fiery-breath gains momentum. Nostalgic memories of childhood engulf her mind...how they ran around the green fields of their village home, playing games, getting soaked in the monsoon rains, clay-laden...how they wrestled-out their youthful-energy, wriggling together on carpets-of-sand at the river banks, sometimes lips exchanging *flower-nectars*...lost in the abundance of yellow flower-gardens... all of which, frantically yearns to the nourishment of the fiery desires of the heartland. Accumulated agonies have now transcended into a concrete-cage within.

Inan sadly expresses, that there's no time now, to rekindle those *lost beautiful memories*. She's only carrying the *burden of agony* of a *parasite*. The pains of which, like silent dark-clouds, taking a permanent abode. Each day, driving her in desperateness seeking Dheu... so that, she may ease her overbearing agonies. She's



fortunate to be *touched* by the *Touch Stone*, whose supposedly legendary magical touch would turn her long accumulated *dark-clouds* into *gold*!

Dheu asks, *so who is this parasite?*

Inan responds: *... it's the one with whom hearts were exchanged.*

The union, that blossomed a colorful *love-flower*, which, with soft-touch, hand-in-hand... the embodied dreams she had so endearingly nurtured... resting upon the bosom of the infinite ocean of love. The naked *parasite* casting her in the shadows of ever engulfing dark-clouds... From the corner of her eyes, accumulated teardrops roll down her sundried cheeks of the late-afternoon. Mountains of melancholia inside her torments her even more as, in some unpredictable moments, two-flowers blossomed yet another flower, from the same branch stemming from the umbilical fathoms of the blood-seed. Ferrying across the *oceans of torment*, overcoming utter sadness through the years of struggle... *gift-of-nature* unfolds with a *life* on *mother-earth*. Her only *gift* alas! ...is now, having to grow-up in painful and unbearable environment.

Dheu's eyes fill with tears in progression of her warm breaths... The *prince-charming* in a stallion, who elevated her in the *wings of dreams*, has now ironically transformed into a black-hawk. The evil-claws tattering and wounding her wretched bloodied-self... like a hunted prey, grasping, an almost dying wounded bird.

Dheu on returning home, goes straight to bed, lying down she recalls Inan's words. Her best friend suffering so terribly, lost in a fathomless hole of torment & struggle. The *lotus of love* is then only a mere *weapon of deceit* for the male (?) ...with *this weapon* they embrace love and with it they destroy as well. Dheu intrinsically transcends herself reinforcing a *stone-*

*of-heart* and finds strength in herself, not to be vulnerable to the so-called *extended hands of pure love*. She refuses vehemently in self-actualization, committing to fight such temptations of the male *advances* made in the pretext of love; all in retrospective to Inan's unhappiness. Deep down in her mind, she promises not to ever seek a male as a *life-companion*.

Dheu is a long awaited *gift-of-love* of her parent. Little Dheu, with much dreams, love and care had repeatedly been steamrolled with the struggles of survival, while growing-up. Demands of survival from early childhood had conditioned her journey in this beautiful world... the hard way, still striding ahead, to become a complete human being! Her own education, being on one side, while trying to meet the economic needs of the family, thus remaining busy with daily *Tuition* (teaching); she hardly has any free time. Mr. Ali Reza, is a simple government employee. As usual, the salary at the end of the month goes mostly to paying house-rent. The rest is dedicated to running the family survival-cost, which is not enough. At that pressing situation, Dheu extends her support to Mr. Ali. Overcoming rough & tough roads of intense struggle, today, Dheu and her three sisters are self-reliant. Carrying long-burdens, following footsteps of a friend, Mr. Ali Reza today, is exhausted and passing days of retirement. He no more has the lingering burden of poverty. Though the bright glow of the Autumn sky bestowed the family with self-reliance, however, now & then, unpredictable, hovering cluster-of-clouds overcast their life. Mr. Ali Reza's life despite being apparently satisfactory, however, remains without peace. Mr. Ali had repeatedly failed to commit Dheu into marriage. Customarily, they can't even arrange the marriage of the rest three daughters



because of her. Sania, regularly prays five times, each time asking the *Creator* so that, she may consent for marriage. Even the *Creator* was unable to nudge Dheu's adamant mind.

Dheu is Sania's wealth of an umbilical-bonding, with whom she had ageless dreams. Shattering those dreams, Dheu has self-banished herself in a *box-within*. Sania is troubled because she is answerable at the *dock-of-society*. Yet, she is not spared. She often faced insults from people whose perception is framed in a regimented mind. Sania is determined to talk to her daughter directly. She will pull-out that imprisoned self. It can't continue like this! She is not beyond the societal-norms.

On finishing dinner, everyone's watching TV except Dheu. Sania is surprised at this, as tomorrow being a holiday. There's no rush-factor in the morning for anyone. It has become a normal practice to gather on weekends for TV and/or chat, discuss issues & family matters. Because other days everyone remains quite busy. Sania's forehead, frown in deep-thought. Though, her eyes apparently appear to be watching TV, yet, her mind is lost somewhere else. If not to others, but Mr. Ali's eyes like a detective detects... "Sania, Sania..." she's startled at hearing him call. In an affectionate voice Mr. Ali says, "Sania...what are you thinking?" Without answering him she enters Dheu's room. Dheu was speaking over the phone. Sania without speaking a word quietly sits beside her. Dheu realizing her presence, taking the phone off her ear she turns around standing-up. Taking the phone back to her ear she tells: *Inan, have to go now, talk to you later.*

Sania regains her posture from momentary trance. She was hoping to understand the reason behind her unwillingness for marriage. But, she was frustrated at realizing that she

was talking to her childhood friend. Sania, affectionately putting her hand upon Dheu's head, she murmurs... it's been a long time that Inan came to visit us, would you ask her to visit us? Dheu informs that she being a professional Journalist hardly has time. However, Dheu assures Sania of her request. Sania while affectionately caressing her hair, informs Dheu: she is her eldest child, it's a social-norm that parents rear their children, growing-up and at one-time, they are sent to their 'in-laws'. Though, it seems very painful, however its happiness overruns the pains. Besides, it sets you free of your social responsibilities and its due obligations. Have to face many embarrassments from people in many different ways. Sania, takes her hand off from daughter's head. Her facial-features, instantly turning into a hard negative expression. Grabbing her hands strongly she said: ...*Dheu, today you must tell me, why you are unable to consent in marriage?* ... Dheu quite peacefully in normal gesture hugs her mom and replies: *no reason, like I said before, that I'll not marry, even now I am saying that I'll never ever get married. Get the other three married. Don't have to think & worry about me. Think about your other daughters. And let me assert again, in future do not ever talk to me about marriage.*

Sania, with a saddened dark-face departs her room. Mr. Ali Reza's assumption was correct. He already knew that she will be even more hurt by her daughter. He is however, unable to rationalize. The little girl who had grown, always helping-out the family dedicatedly... from tit-bits of house-chores to major responsibilities, had never spoken a word that could hurt her parent; never did she let the younger sisters understand the *pains of struggle* that she underwent. This very girl, get very upset at the utterance of any *marriage*

proposal. Dheu is very adamant at compromising this. Usually during the holidays guests come to visit. Except for Dheu, the three sister's friends also visit. Upon finishing, the morning breakfast Dheu as usual, remain busy assisting her mother with cooking.

The youngest sister *Chocolate* enters the kitchen to inform Dheu that her friend Shochyo is here visiting. Saniya's face brightened up. It's indeed after quite a while, did any friend of Dheu come to visit. She was unaware of any male or female friends of Dheu, besides Inan.

Shochyo is busy playing with the TV remote without being interested in watching, just eagerly waiting for Dheu. Wiping her hands with her scarf, she comes and stands in front of Shochyo. Shochyo immediately lets go of the remote and asks her to sit. While sitting on the next sofa, she says: *...so, finally you had to come-up to my house...?* Shochyo smiles in affirmation. *...can't lose hope so easily...I think I got to see the last episode...* The once-upon-a-time girl, who respondingly took hold of the hands and brought him to an utopian dream-island, is now snatching-out the *dream-light* and leaving Shochyo in utter darkness. Yet, Shochyo is grasping desperately to reach for the banks. The cosmetic-free face looked charming. Though, Dheu was of a little dark complexion, her facial-features stood-out attractively with a *serene peaceful-sweetness* look. *...a craving attraction for Shochyo. And restless he like a wounded-bird, yielding in refuge, subdued in a dark-hole on being clawed by the eagle. All schemes to win Dheu's heart have failed, yet not for a moment can he forget her.*

It was during the first day at the University, that she accidentally stumbled over to meet Shochyo. It was then, that like an electric-spark their relationship grew to a close-

friendship. Shochyo could apprehend the love she had for him. However, Dheu being a pragmatic woman, her *first love* couldn't subdue her obvious vulnerabilities. Shochyo hoped that, upon finishing his studies and getting employed, that Dheu would respond willingly to his proposal. He had got such indications from Dheu. But in reality, it was just the opposite. Dheu is subtly ignoring Shochyo. The more, Shochyo wants her closer...Dheu, like a mist fades away...faraway. Saniya, is silently praying to the Creator, should her daughter change her mind. After crossing so many hurdles of her struggles in life, she is now faced with her greatest crisis. A slight ray of hope fills her eyes but obstructions overwhelm her. Shochyo with sad face leaves the room. Saniya is shocked. Her suppressed unrest-full mind erupts in agonizing pain.

The roof of the two-storied house was quite charming. Dheu has nurtured the rooftop garden with many different plants & flowers. Despite her busy household chores, Dheu dedicatedly finds time for her rooftop garden. The holidays, allocating even more time for this. Dheu, standing in the middle of her garden was observing the surrounding concrete-jungle, when suddenly a pair of hands close her eyes. Dheu on touching her hands calls out: *...Inan! Leaving her eyes, Inan stands close next to her. Dheu enquires, that just a while ago, she was on the phone with her, how come she didn't mention about her intended visit (?). Dheu, I wanted to surprise you...aren't you happy? Inan, do I have to tell that ? ...can't you tell by looking at me? You know Dheu, I felt the urge to see you. My son went to his grandma's house. I was missing you very much in my empty house...* squeezing Dheu's two cheeks Inan expresses. *It's only been a day since we last met and your desperate ...* responds Dheu. *Do you really miss me?* enquires Dheu. Inan with a suppressed

smile on her face replies: ...*not at all* ...touching Dheu's lips, she softly murmurs: *shall I leave then? should anyone don't feel the need to remember me, what's with m?...I too, won't feel the need to remember...* Holding Inan's nose softly, Dheu says: ...*Cut your acting, let's go inside. Ok, I'll go inside but on one condition, you'll come with me to my place, I'll talk to aunty about this. You have my word Inan, I'll go with you...*

They went inside and sat in the living-room. Saniya was happy to see Inan and requests her to convince Dheu: ...*she is adamant at not marrying; you must help her understand...*

Inan very specifically and clearly explains... *As a human, one has his/ her own self-freedom and one should not be deprived of this freedom. There was once a time when, compulsive evil-norms of society unjustly enforced people to sacrifice their personal-freedom...particularly of women. Because, women being dependent on men in one-way or the other; a result, of a long held male-dominant society, throughout the ages. Even now, women are silently sacrificing themselves in the male-dominant society, being deprived of their own rights. It's not expected by the women of the present society. Not as women or men, but as human, every person has their own self individual freedom. Everyone ought to respect that. People should live with their individual preferences. It's unfair and inhuman to interfere on personal-freedom. Parents expect the welfare of their children. In context of which, children need to grow-up complete and self-reliant, whether girl or boy. It's not right for the parents nor the society, to intervene & interfere in their individual freedom, should, that is not a factor of harm for anyone. As parents, it's their responsibility to accept their children's welfare and happiness ...that's what Inan thinks. Despite understanding Inan's explanations, Saniya is unwilling to break-away from the so-called traditions. Not with understanding, she lost her battle with her daughter. Many years have passed. Dheu has found her *real* freedom. No*

one interferes with her *own-world*. Inan and Dheu starts *living-together*. In the meantime, Dheu has adopted a child. Inan has been divorced from her husband for the last ten years. Her son studies in College.

They have an organization named "Human Love", without any social-acceptance. However, they meet once every month in secret-meetings. Many couples attend these meetings. There are both male-couples as well as female-couples. The key agenda of meeting being: 'The building of a progressive and improved quality of living' for better & beautiful life.

In this regard, their primary work will be that, based on their own capabilities, each couple will take-up the responsibility of one or two *Street Children*. By providing them with proper environment, they will grow-up striving for a better life, alongside their education. Though, social-thinkers, the so-called guardian of social-values... think, that the winds of the *western-world* have immersed our society into decadence. Even *these matters* are considered a *curse of the western-society*. This is a very wrong concept. If one recalls historically, it will reveal that '*this*' existed in all societies. Those nations, who have acknowledged '*these-love*', are condemned for *wrong-doing*. This is the bias opinion of this society.

Dheu queries: *why is this love called perverted?*

Inan replies: ...*it's a matter of perception. Society is only used to seeing heterosexual-love, therefore when something new is added, the society being conditioned by regimented social-norms (traditions, values) thus are unable to digest this. It is only a natural phenomenon to endure love between to humans. Whether it's woman-woman or men-men... what does it matter?* But society remains intolerable.

Inan at onetime had the company of man. But later, due to many reasons she undergoes

a change of heart. With the innate changes of mind she also experienced, much changes with her feelings of physiological sensitivities as well.

In fact, it's not a complex-substance inside people that unfolds lust. It's a *liquid* substance. Liquid is *fluid* and as such can change anytime. And Dheu remained ignorant about *all this*. The women's attractions to men, she too had nurtured herself. But Dheu didn't have the scope to experience such attractions into ecstasyc *union of the senses*. Much before that could happen for her, Inan swayed her away into a *new world*. That was, an intensely romantic night. Dheu's childhood friend Inan:

Upon finishing her High School, Inan came to the City. Dheu, passing her College from her village got admitted in Dhaka University. Mr. Ali Reza, at one point, transferred his job to the city in order to better support their kids education. It was after eight years, that she had met Inan on the street. Since then, they often remained in touch, talking almost daily over the phone. One fine day, in the evening she arrives at Dheu's home. Talking through the night, about their childhood yester-years... she fell asleep...

In the middle of the night, she suddenly started feeling a *different* kind of feeling... Dheu despite her surprise, in a state of euphoria succumbed to her *feeling-good* sensualities. That's how a *human-love* unfolded. Their hearts and minds too, embraced in union. Though being denounced in the eyes of society, they have discovered *the values* of their *own life*. From the threshold of conflicts, a streak of bright-light out of the non-ordinary reality of the *blind society*, had reached-out and touched Dheu and Inan... the *light*, ever encompassing them have enlightened their otherwise broken-lives...\*\*\*

**(Translated by Iqbal Husain)**

## **Extinct Mothers**

**Sashibhusan Rath** (Odisha)

Women today refuge to be  
the seat of creation.  
She refuges to be matrix of birth.  
Has no desire to be the first teacher.  
She condemns and raise slogans against  
Defining women as child bearing pouches.  
She gives the clarion call to unite  
To protest against child bearing.  
She wants to spring up  
In career and in public life.  
She wants to be a copy cat  
And likes to catwalk before the hungry  
onlookers.  
She dreams of a world  
Full of women without uterus.  
She says banning the bra was not enough  
Discarding the uterus  
Shall lead to total liberation.  
Uncomfortable little kicks in the uterus  
Are not longer desirable.  
Therefore, no offspring please she says.  
Instead she wants to be  
A marketable product....  
To live till she draws others attention.  
Once it is gone  
She wants to recede into oblivion forever.  
Of course, not as a mother  
Only as a beautiful woman.  
She says what all she believes :  
One day the earth will be motherless  
Causing the homo sapiens to extinct.

\*\*\*

Ph. 94372 20892, 88955 00543

<sbrath2k@rediffmail.com>

# Bus Stop

*a short story*

**Anuradha Bhattacharya**

# 310 Sector 22-A

Chandigarh - 160022

Ph. 89681-73906

Email: an6radha@yahoo.co.in

**Sneha** was undetermined when she climbed down the stairs and made for the bus stand. She had washed her long hair and done it in a pony tail with a sky blue scrunchy which had two beads dangling from strings along with her luxuriant black hair. She wore a sky blue churidaar-kameez set to match and her sandals were high healed. She was not sure if it was the right choice because now she had to board a bus.

In the bus, she stood next to a middle aged lady who was sitting with her right knee thrust out from behind the seat in front of her. It made Sneha part her legs and the crowd made her bend a little over the lady. She did not seem to mind it at all. In fact she seemed to be eagerly awaiting her destination stop and she craned her neck to peak through the front glass of the bus rather than look out of the window next to her seat. This expression made Sneha hope to get her seat as soon as she gets up.

But in this position Sneha was very uncomfortable. Her dupatta clung to her neck and she was not sure if anybody could peep into her bosom from above. She dared not remove her hands from the rods of the seats that she was holding. One little jerk and she would drop into aunty's lap and aunty was not exactly in a mood ready to accommodate a grown up girl in her lap.

Sneha was heading for a rendezvous. Puneet was coming to see her for the first

time. Sneha had reached out to Puneet through a letter to his official address after reading an article by him in the newspaper. To her surprise, Puneet had promptly replied. She was in a hostel in Kurukshetra, in her third year. He sent her his phone number and she called him. After two months of interaction on the phone, they decided to see each other. But by then, college was over, exams approached and the summer break made it impossible for Sneha to continue conversations with him over the phone. She decided to send him one last letter, a long letter before postponing the rendezvous to June. In June, Sneha would be in Lukhnow to visit her grandparents. Puneet belonged to Lukhnow and he could come to visit her there.

Today, Puneet answered her phone and suggested that they meet at the bus stand next to the central library. Sneha had a membership card and remembered that there was a small canteen next to the library so she thought that Puneet might want to sit there. So she waited at the bus stand for him to alight from one of the many busses that stopped here. He came, but not by a bus. He came directly from the canteen. He said,

Hello. Waiting long?

No. Five minutes.

So?

Shall we sit somewhere?

Let's go...

No. There are no chairs inside; are there?

*pause*

Let's go somewhere else.

I don't have much time to spare. Just half an hour.

O then stand here itself!

So?

Did you read that?

Yes.

Why didn't you reply?

I didn't get time.

Is it okay with you?

*pause*

It was long back. When I was in school. He was also in school. A different school... I was...

I don't want to hear about him.

Angry.

Of course.

Why should you be angry? I was in love.

So it was by mutual consent?

Well, I just felt fond of him and he used to drop some hints. But by the time I confessed to him school was over...

Then how did it happen?

I told him simply, 'I love you'. In fact I wrote a note. He just smiled.

But what did you do?

We talked...

About doing it?

Doing what?

What you did.

What?

Your 'experience', as you wrote.

That's the experience!

But what happened after that?

Why, we just talked... I used to go to his house. We got only three weeks. Then he left for Delhi.

Oh!

What did you think?

I'm sorry. I thought... something... else...

No!

*long silence*

I'm sorry, really. I was angry so I didn't reply. Why didn't you explain properly?

And that's why you forced me to come out here. 'I don't want parents around' hah, how could you just...

Well, what do you want to do next?

I'm just waiting for the IIMC result.

That will come out in the first week of July. But M.A.?

No. If I get admission in the IIMC, I'll become a journalist.

Journalism is not for girls.

Why?

It's a dog's life. Look at me. Got absolutely tanned.

Sneha noticed a circular spot on the thumb nail of Puneet's right hand. She was standing on his left. She remembered reading in a book on palmistry that if the moon of a thumb nail was too large it signified that the subject suffered from heart problems. She thrust her hand out and pointed to that nail.

What's that?

What?

On your thumb nail?

What, nothing.

A scar.

So you don't want to go into academics?

I want to become a journalist.

If you could do your M.A. and...

I might have to do M.A. first. But not teaching.

*pause*

I'll finish my M.A, if I don't qualify for journalism this year. And this is something I wanted to ask of you. Will you be in Delhi till July?

Yes.

Will you please see if I have got through?

Uh, yes, I can.

I don't have any relatives there.

Okay, I will see it.

Sneha looked at his face. There was a complete absence of the warmth which had permeated through his phone-calls. She remembered that she had sent him an article on sugarcane farming for an appraisal but he had never mentioned it in his conversations on phone. She said,

You liked the article I had sent you? What do you think? Will I qualify?

You are very immature.

You found that in the article?

No. One can tell...

By my looks...

No, even by your manner of talking.

And you are disappointed.

Uh.

Had got a different image of me till now, hm?

Uh, uh.

Certainly I don't know lots of practical things. But I'll learn. I managed my own affairs quite efficiently when in Kurukshetra. It wasn't a small thing three years back to come out of the security of one's home and live as a paying guest. Of course, he was my father's old friend but I never depended on him for anything and told him very few things, in fact! It's Delhi that I am unfamiliar with. But see, I've come here alone. I feel nervous while crossing the road. Don't know which bus goes

where. But at least I can tell the man in front of me.

*laughs*

*laughs* And one thing I came to tell you.

*pause*

I don't want to get involved now.

You don't...

Want to get involved.

Oh!

*pause*

I'll be leaving Delhi on seventh.

And you'll stay away till...

The end of July.

But...

Yes, that. Well, I'll ask a friend of mine.

Oh.

Best of luck then. Which way will you go?

O I'll just take a look in there. Got to read a bit if I should learn to converse convincingly.

Yes, learn that well, will help you later. But I'll still say, an M.A. degree helps.

And learning to live in a metropolis.

Eh.

Bye.

Write if you find time.

Sure.

\*\*\*

# Roma and Romani

**Nalini Pathania**

Associate Professor in English  
Government M.A.M. College

Jammu, (J&K)- 180 006

Ph. 94192 62346 <nalini901@gmail.com>

**This** paper takes up the various levels of subalternation of the Roma (European gypsies) in the White man's world. The Roma separation from the Occidentals is based on "language, colonial, political and economic structures" which permits their identity to be seen within the context of their history of genocide, slavery, physical brutality (Davies 1002- 1003) and herein, their identity can be recouped from the one which is imposed upon them. The Roma have formulated an imagined community for themselves which is their way of resisting the Eurocentric domination. They create an 'elsewhere' as their home from Europe and the west, by tracing their roots to 'Baro Than' i.e India – the place of their migration, whereby, they unify their identity by the sleek thread of slavery which made its way across Western Asia and spread out all over the world, irrespective of the national boundaries of any country. The Roma's forced separations from the Whites and their being subjected to inferior position by the whites makes them stoically refuse acceptance to the European hegemony. The European imperialism was and still remains an oppressive construction against coloured people and subordinate groups, which has resulted in the struggle of language becoming "an interminable discursive antagonism in which subjectivity and identity are at stake" (Davies 1004). The Roma identity does not converge and capture the identity of the European language and therefore, seeks to struggle for its own voice i.e the Romani language. The Roma identity is to be

understood within the parameters of "how gender, migration, and racial oppression create a sense of a unified culture as they create difference. Divergences of thought surround the modes of identifications" (Davies 1008).

The Roma writing redefines identity away from exclusion and marginality because the Roma existence in Europe is that of the marginalized in terms of majority and minority discourses. Although the Roma have stayed in Europe for centuries together yet they are maladapted in their environment and look at the occidental world contemptuously and abhorrently. The Roma are resistant towards the institutionalised pieties of the Europeans. The whites try to establish their cultural hegemony over the Roma by asserting their superiority of culture and vehemently attacking the usual customs of the Roma by openly showing their disapproval towards them. This attitude of the whites towards the Roma, makes the Roma marginality in the occident twice compounded, for they live in two worlds i.e. the European and the Indian (where they are now based) and the Indian (to which they trace their ancestry). However, the fact is that they belong to neither worlds. The Roma have failed to adjust and make peace with the so called genteel culture of the Europeans and in the world of the Whites, they find themselves to be "a resident alien, a kind of squatter on foreign territory," wherein, they maintain a "common strategy of outwardly conforming while inwardly refusing assent" (Cosser 296) to the cultural invasion of the Whites. Their marginality is



conspicuous in the everyday slights and rebuffs they have to face from the whites, making them rebellious and offensive towards them (the Whites) because they find themselves as much a stranger in the Occident as men born in the Orient or any other foreign country are likely to be. The Roma's position as an outsider sharpens their observations of the Occident, in which they are able to perceive the patterns of English life-styles and customs to which they are not sensitized. The Rom, thus, as an outsider in Europe is a "freer man, practically and theoretically. He views his relations to others with less prejudice; he submits them to more general, more objective standards, and he is not confined to his action by custom, piety or precedent (Coser 298) and as a member of the marginalised community the Rom is bound to analyse the "latent sources of motivation" of the majority community's bias towards him by those who are rooted in conventions, acting out their "assigned roles with naïve unselfconsciousness," making the analyst Rom threaten "the world of the uncomplicated believer with massive disenchantment"(Coser 298-299). Such men who analyse people and situations, tend to disturb the occidentalist's peace and are therefore not "welcome in the society at large, even though they may find an audience among other discontented spirits"(Coser 299).

Historically, the Roma exodus began from Sindh (India) in 712A.D. with the advent of Mohammad bin Kasim's defeat to Raja of Dhar (Sindh in India). Kasim's invasion of India, significantly impacted the lives of the Sindhis because forty-thousand of them were taken as captives and sold in the markets of Khorassan in Central Asia and a larger half of these slaves were inducted into Kasim's army. These captive Sindhis took care of

Kasim's armoury and were called the 'Kalderash' and those of them who were excellent horse trainers and veterinary doctors, were called 'jaanbaaz' – identified by the work which they performed and these names have stuck on, as even today the gypsies bear these names. The turbulent period in history saw India being blighted with hordes of Muslim invasions by Mahmud Ghazni, Mohammad Gauri, the Tughlaq period, the Turks and finally the Mughals – all crucial in testing the metal of the Sindhis (Indians). The Sindhis were caught up in the political juggernaut of the period and on reaching Central Asia, strove for their survival, becoming extremely powerful in 814A.D. in the areas between Faarat (Euphrates) and Dajala – were now called the 'Zotts' by the locals, referring to the Indian 'Jats'. In this area the 'Zotts' declared their independence and remained so for fourteen years, from 814A.D. to 828 A.D. Thereafter, they were defeated by an Arab prince by the name of 'Mutasim', who killed and captured them but a few were successful to flee this bloodshed. The captured 'Zotts' were forcibly incorporated as soldiers in Mutasim's (the Arab prince) army and were forcibly put on the frontline borders of Turkey i.e the Byzantine empire. The 'Zotts' (Jats) who fled the war, reached Europe and started working with the alien rulers – which apparently they did so for a long time. The 'Zotts' converted their religion with the passage of time but were inclined to socialize with their community alone. They remained secluded and were not encouraged by the foreigners to either mingle with them or their societies. The 'Zotts', eventually started leading a nomadic life and showed their appearance in Europe between 1250A.D. and 1550 A.D. In 1504A.D. the Roma (once called the 'Zotts'

[Jats ] ) appeared in Ireland; in 1427 A.D. in France; in 1447 A.D. in Spain; in 1490 A.D. in England; early 19 Century, they entered North America and then South America; finally making it to Australia in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

From the time these Sindhis ( Indians) were taken as slaves from North India, till date they have been persecuted systematically for a period of over one thousand years by the Occidentals and this view is endorsed by Ian F. Hancock, that “ until the mid 1800s a Gypsy slave was cheaply obtained in the Middle East and Europe. Gypsies were among the first groups of unwilling emigrants brought to the Americas under the auspices of the Spanish and the Portuguese” (Hancock 48). Freedom was attained by the Roma in Europe’s Romania for the first time after their migration from India in the year 1865 A.D. but this freedom is elusive because they are the ‘Other’ in the European society, marginalized and economically depressed. All the structures of a society, whether legal or political, relate to “definite forms of social consciousness” (Williams 259) of a people and besides this, fundamental to the construction of these structures are the various elements existent in a superstructure, like:

. . . political forms of the class struggle and its consequences, Constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc. - forms of law – and then even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the combatants: political’ legal, and philosophical theories, religious ideas and their further development into systems of dogma – also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form. (Williams 260)

Since the Roma are the subaltern in the Occident they are denied access to hegemonic power and therefore, their history requires to be delved into says Gramsci because the

history of the ruling elite and the dominant groups is realised in the States, which in any case is known to all but the history of the subaltern classes is very complex for “ the history of the social groups is necessarily fragmented and episodic” as they are “ always subject to the activity of ruling groups, even when they rebel. Clearly they have less access to the means by which they may control their own representation, and less access to cultural and social institutions”( Ashcroft 216). The Roma have to learn to resist the domination of the upper crest Europeans and break their patterns of subordination – though the change will not occur immediately. The prevailing consciousness of the State against the Roma is internalized by the European population, so that the Whites’ “philosophy, culture and morality” appears to be “ the natural order of things” ( Boggs 39) for the Occidentals. The Whites maintain the hegemony of their ruling capitalist class through an ideological bond between the ruler and the ruled and to break this bond ‘counter- hegemony’ is required. Mass consciousness is essential in bringing about counter- hegemony, wherein, the new intellectual from the subaltern classes, undermines the existing social order by actively participating in practical life, as a constructor, organizer, permanent persuader to his people and not being a mere orator.

The Roma “conditions of cultural displacement and social discrimination” (Bhabha 939) makes them the best political survivors and witness to history. The Roma desire is articulated to their recognition, the recreation of their self and their resettlement in the “ borderline community of migration” (Bhabha 940). It is therefore, important for the roma as a subordinate people in the Occident to assert their “indigenous cultural traditions”

and retrieve their repressed histories”. The gaje (non- gypsy) writers are prejudiced towards the Roma culture and construct false Roma stereotypes for their Occidental audience. Ian F. Hancock in an article on ‘Duty and Beauty’ in his book *Peprika*, wherein, he mentions that the gaje authors deprecatingly write about the Roma – their children remaining naked and begging alms; of their eating the meat of dogs, cats, rats and sick farm animals; that they cheat and steal; that they are averse to settling down; that they are people of criminal castes; and that they do- not respect the law of the land. These stereotype constructions of the Roma are the Whites strategies to reduce the Roma images and ideas to simple manageable form because these differences help the Europeans to showcase these people as inferior for it is a colonial practice to convey “ a sense of irreducible distance separating white from the colored, or Occidental from Oriental”; because “ behind each statement there resonated the tradition of experience, learning, and education that kept the Oriental – colored to his position of object studied by the Occidental – white, instead of vice- versa” ( Said 228). The Occidentals build their superiority by making inferior the Other. Said says that the Whites tend to gather information of the non- European lands and people and then classify them in various ways which are infact strategies of control.

The Whites accuse the Roma of paganism and their having no religion at all. In Europe, Christianity is the “ prism through which all knowledge of the world . . . refracted” and the European Christian identities constructed are “in opposition to Islam, Judaism or heathenism ( which loosely incorporated all other religious, nature worship, paganism and animism” ( Loomba 93). The religion of the Europeans reinforces their belief that the

others are inferior to them because the religion of the Others does not conform to that of Christians. This makes culture hierarchical, which distinguishes:

. . . positions in the social hierarchy. Those . . . born into upper- class echelons . . . acquire dispositions that allow them to appreciate certain forms of culture . . . and such abilities . . . help them secure elevated positions in the class hierarchy. Working – class people, on the other hand . . . acquire from their family contexts and schools they attend cultural dispositions that prepare them for lives at the bottom of the class ladder. The social system thus tends to reproduce itself through culture and schooling. ( Rivkin and Ryan 1026)

Culture is dominated by those at the top of the social hierarchy and these people continuously further attitudes and perceptions, to assure its continuation. There is yet another perspective which views culture coming from the lower echelons of society and herein, it “ represents the permanent possibility of eruption, of dissonance, and of an alternative imagination of reality” ( Ryan 1027). Colonial history reveals that the colonisers fantasized the conversion of the colonised and this is discernible in their sixteenth century plays, travelogues and pamphlets, wherein are seen “ ‘ good’ Turks, Morroccans, ‘ Indians’ and others willingly embracing Christianity. In fact religious conversion begins to figure as a justification for economic plunder” ( Loomba 99) : as the language of religion was intricately mixed with that of commerce and it became an instrumental crusade for Christianity. Besides, the Christians do not find the pagans conforming to “the model of the Semitic religions, with notions of uniform beliefs, canonical texts, prophetic traditions, clerical institutions, adjudicable bodies of prescriptios ...” ( Ahmad 260), which irks the Christian sensibilities and brings about a binary

opposition between them and the Others.

Similarly, the Europeans attach great importance to their own language and have a tendency to reject the language of the others because in the social process:

... this privileging of a particular language is indicated by its uses in state administration, in those more powerful sections of the media which are considered 'national', in higher institutions of education and research, in its differential availability to the propertied and the working classes respectively, in the greater access it provides to the job market and hence the great prestige that attaches to the person who commands it with fluency, ....(Ahmad 77)

The linguistic formations shape the minds of the people and bind them in imagined communities. The language is a "substantial structure of linguistic difference" and is essential to the "processes of class formation and social privilege", ( Ahmad 77) , which makes it a veritable site of contestation, where the language of the elite not only derides but tries to obliterate the language of the socially less powerful people.

The Europeans during the colonial period never approved of the languages of the oral tradition e.g like that of the Africans and considered them inferior. On the same lines they do- not attach any significance to ' Romani' – the language of the Roma because it too is rooted in the oral tradition. According to heresy the ' Romani' language has over six hundred dialects to its credit and is therefore, not a standardized language. Hancock, mentions in his article ' Duty and Beauty' that the gaje ( non- gypsies) accuse the Roma of not having the words duty and beauty in their vocabulary and steal words from the gaje ( non- gypsy) languages and dialects. The gaje are also of the opinion that the Roma have no future tense and often make snide remarks,

saying that the Roma do- not think of the future, therefore, they have no future tense. J. S. Pathania, a scholar of the Romani language, treats the mentioned accusations of the gaje as a fallacy and proves his point, saying that most of the Indo- Romani vocabulary is found in the Romani language and its various dialects, besides it is also connected either directly or indirectly with the multi north Indian regional languages and dialects; that the knowledge of the gajo( non- gypsy) languages and dialects is only natural to the Roma because of their long and arduous migratory journey from Sindh( India) to Western Asia and the European countries. The Roma contact with the gaje, brought about a linguistic hybridity in their original language. The English word 'beautiful' has its word equivalents in Romani – shukar; mündro; yakhalo or jakhalo. These according to Pathania are old Romani words and he finds the ignorance of Romani vocabulary on the part of the gaje despicable. Similarly, the English word ' duty' in Romani is – musajipé ; vója; vuzhulimós; udzhilútno; udzhilipé; kandipé; slúzhba; kandimós; thoximós and vudzhlipé. In this weord list all the words Are Romani except for – musajipé; vója; slúzhba and thoximós. Pathania has given the root words of about ten Romani words out of which only two have been highlighted here. He also refutes those gaje writers who claim that the Roma have no future tense and have borrowed the future tense from the Persians, with whom they were in contact while in Persia ( Iran). Pathania says that the Roma have since long been using the suffix 'a' to express the future tense and to express:

[ . . . ] the word 'will' and ' shall' – the Roma veritably make use of the word 'khavham', which when deformed becomes ' kam' or ' ka' in the Romani language . The coparative use of the words 'khavam', 'kam' and 'ka' in Romani

and Persian languages are—

English	Romani	Persian
I shall	Me kam khav	Man khavam
Will eat	Me ka khav	Khurd

Let us see the usage of the suffix ‘a’ in expressing the future- tense in the Romani language and also compare the Romani suffix ‘a’ with the Indian Languages –

English	Romani	Hindustani (Indic)
I shall,	will eat	Me khava- a
		Me khava – ga
		Me khau- ga
		Me kha- ga
		Me khau- go

Herein, are seen two Indian suffixes ‘ga’ and ‘go’ but between these two suffixes - ‘ga’ appears to be much nearer to the Romani suffix ‘a’.

(Pathania)

Pathania is of the firm belief that with the passage of many centuries, the Indo- Romani suffix ‘ga’ got changed into ‘a’ and the ‘g’ sound dropped because Romani language was then and still remains an oral language. So much ado about words and vocabulary, just proves that language is a fundamental site and potent instrument of cultural control. The imperial centre’s engagement lies in displacing the “ native languages, by installing itself as a ‘standard’ against other variants which are constituted as ‘impurities’” and a language also provides the terms by which reality is constituted because “ it provides the names by which the world may be ‘known’. Its system of values – its suppositions, its geography, its concept of history, of difference, its myriad gradations of distinction – becomes the system upon which social, economic and political discourses are grounded” ( Ashcroft 283). Language , thus, is pivotal to retain the identity of a people.

The gypsies are known as Luri, as “ Athignanos, Tsigane, Cygan. Zigeuner, Egyptian, Gypsy, Gifto, Gitano, Romany” (Kochanowski 25) but the international gypsy

world Romani Congress adopted the official word ‘ Roma’ for themselves in 1930 A.D. Being of Indian origin the Roma have always been considered of foreign blood( as mentioned in the Nuremberg Laws ). Despite the Roma staying in Germany for over six hundred years, they were never considered at par with the Germans and 5,00,000 Sinti and Roma were victimized by the ‘race- researchers’ and murdered during the Holocaust in the concentration camps and yet there was silence about their tales of traversity unlike that of the Jews. This brings to light that economics is a powerful component of our social structure, where the elite always have the power to exploit the subaltern and the weak. This paper has discussed the marginality of the Roma in Europe and the West. It has also discussed the exodus of the Roma from Sindh (India) in 712 A. D. and the discriminatory attitude of the Whites towards the roma since hundreds of years. This paper has also highlighted the Roma culture and language being subjected to the Whites prejudice because in the Occident they are susceptible to the cultural and linguistic hegemony of the Whites. The Roma have braved the onslaught of cultural invasions and have stuck to ‘ Romani’ – the language of their forefathers but the need of the hour is to have a standardised Romani language which will help them greatly to retain not only their identity but gain priveleges in the lands where they are living now. \*\*\*

### Works cited

**Ahmad, Aijaz.** In Theory. London: Verso, 1992. Print.  
**Antonio Gramsci** <[http:// www.infed.org/thinkers/et-gram.htm](http://www.infed.org/thinkers/et-gram.htm)>

**Ashcroft, Bill., Griffiths, Gareth. and Tiffin, Helen.,** eds. Key Concepts in Post- Colonial Studies. New York: Routledge, 2004. Print.

—, eds. *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*. London: Routledge, 1995. Print.

**Bhabha, K. Homi.** *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994. Print.

**Boggs** < <http://www.infed.org/thinkers/et-gram.htm>>

**Coser, A. Lewis.** *Masters of Sociological Thought*. New Delhi: Rawat Publications, 2010. Print.

**Davies, Boyce Carole.** "Migratory Subjectivities" (1994). *Literary Theory an Anthology*. Rivkin, Julie and Ryan, Michael. eds. U.K: Blackwell Publishers Inc, 1998. Print.

**Hancock, F. Ian.** "Some Contemporary Aspects of Gypsies and Gypsy Nationalism", *Roma*. Vol.No.2. January, 1975. Print.

**Ian. F. Hancock.** "Duty and Beauty". < [http://www.M/S Patrin Web Journal/webmaster@patrin.com](http://www.M/S_Patrin_Web_Journal/webmaster@patrin.com)>

**J. S. Pathania** < <http://www.indoromawork.blogspot.com>>

**Kochanowski, Jan.** "The Origin of the Gypsies". *Roma*. Vol.1.No.1 June, 1974. Print.

**Loomba, Ania.** *Colonialism/ Postcolonialism*. London: Routledge, 2005. Print.

**Rivkin, Julie and Ryan, Michael.** eds. "The Politics of Culture". *Literary Theory : an Anthology*. U.K: Blackwell Publishers Inc, 1998. Print.

**Rose, Romani.** *The Nazi genocide of the Sinti and Roma*. Heidelberg: Documentary and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma, 1995. Print.

**Said, W. Edward.** *Orientalism*. London: Routledge and Kezan Paul Ltd., 1978. Print.

**Williams, Raymond.** *Culture and Society 1780-1950*. Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1979. Print.

*Two poems* by

**Meenu Gupta**

### **Modern Age: a contradiction**

What seems was never there  
Only an irony is here  
If you love you might be mean  
And hatred woofs (smells) of past love  
Your generosity beckons the fame  
Otherwise who would care of  
blind and lame  
If a friend is helping and kind  
It reflects that he has something in his mind.  
When a known praises or applauds  
Its not sure for gains or loss  
Present Age is full of contraries  
Where not only deceit but  
Treachery overpowers.

### **Mirror**

Is lovable  
It enhances the illumine  
Shows your reflection  
Doubles the beauty  
Ecstasy and shine  
Hides the tears  
Frown and jealous  
Pain and greed  
It, indeed is  
Wonderful.  
An object that  
concaves and convex  
refract and reflect  
it inspires us to  
take white gloom  
and make the  
rainbow bloom.  
If not, what is life?

\*\*\*

<[mun1102\\_75@yahoo.co.in](mailto:mun1102_75@yahoo.co.in)>

# Theorizing Ecology : Ecocriticism

---

**Dr. Rohit Phutela,**  
Editor, *The Literati*, A Transnational Peer  
Reviewed Journal, devoted to Language & Literature  
and Assistant Professor, DAVIET,  
Jalandhar (Punjab).  
Ph. 84372-01166. <dr.phutela@gmail.com>

**In simple** words, Ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. It is a literary and cultural criticism from an environmentalist's viewpoint. In it, texts are evaluated in terms of their environmentally harmful or harmless effects. Beliefs and ideologies are assessed for their environmental implications. It analyses the history of concepts such as 'nature' to understand the cultural developments that have resulted in the present ecological crisis. Direct representations of environmental damage or political struggle are of obvious interest to Eco-critics

The term "Ecocriticism" came into existence in the late 1970s, at the meetings of the WLA (the Western Literature Association, a body whose area of interest is the literature of the American West.) However, it was William Rueckert who coined the term 'Ecocriticism' in his 1978 classic essay "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Eco-criticism".

There are two distinct national variants of Ecocriticism. The first commenced in the USA in the late 1980s, and the second in the UK in the early 1990s. In the USA, the acknowledged founder of Ecocriticism is Cheryll Glotfelty, co-editor with Harold Fromm of a key collection of helpful and definitive essays entitled *The Eco-criticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*<sup>1</sup> (Glotfelty and Fromm XVIII). In 1992, she also co-founded the Eco-critical organization called ASLE ( the Association

for the Study of Literature and Environment). This organization has its own journal called ISLE (Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment) which was launched in 1993.

On the other hand , the Infrastructure of Ecocriticism, more frequently known as 'green studies', in the UK is less developed than that of in the USA. There are as yet no indigenous journals or formal bodies for Ecocriticism, though there is a UK branch of ASLE. The central text in the UK version of Ecocriticism is Laurence Coupe's *The Green Studies Reader: From Romanticism to Eco-criticism*. (Coupe 12)

The work of three major nineteenth century American writers- Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, and Henry David Thoreau- is considered of pivotal importance in the genesis of the US Ecocriticism. All three were 'members' of the group of New England writers, essayists and philosophers known collectively as the transcendentalists, the first major literary movement in America to achieve cultural independence from European models.

Three books are considered foundational works of American 'eco-centered' writing. The first among them is Emerson's short book *Nature*, which is a reflective essay on the impact of the natural world upon him. In powerfully dramatic directness, Emerson voiced: "Crossing a bare common, in snow puddles, at twilight, under a clouded sky without having in my thoughts any occurrence of special good fortune, I have enjoyed a perfect

exhilaration. I am glad to the brink of fear.” (Ziff 38) The second is Fuller’s first book *Summer on the Lakes, in 1843*, which is a powerfully written journal of her encounter with the American landscape at large. For instance, she writes:

“For here there is no escape from the weight of a perpetual creation; all other forms and motions come and go, the tide rises and recedes, the wind, at its mightiest, moves in gales and gusts, but here is really an incessant, an indefatigable motion. Awake or sleep, there is no escape, still this rushing round you and through you. It is in this way I have most felt the grandeur—some what eternal, if not infinite.” (Kelley 71)

The third is Thoreau’s *Walden*, which is an account of his two-year sojourn in a hut he had built on the shore of Walden Pond, a couple of miles away from his home town of Concord, Massachusetts. In it, Thoreau describes how he chose a site at the Pond, cut the necessary trees, erected the cabin, planted a garden for food and income. It is, perhaps, the classic account of dropping out of modern life and seeking to renew the self by a ‘return to nature’.

The UK Version of Ecocriticism, or green studies, takes its literary bearings from the British Romanticism of the 1790s rather than the American transcendentalism of the 1840s. The central view is that the root of the modern human malaise is its separation, or ‘alienation’, from its original unity with nature, and that the cure for this disease of civilization lies in a reunion between humanity and nature. Jonathan Bate is a key figure in this context. He in his classic book *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and the Environmental Tradition* details the emergence, in Wordsworth and his English contemporaries and successors, of an environmental and ecological consciousness, the result of noting the destruction of forest

and farm lands by urban sprawl, as well as recognizing what Wordsworth, in the eighth book of *The Excursion*, called ‘the outrage done to nature’ by newly established factories that foul the air and pollute the waterways. Many of the concerns of British Ecocriticism are also evident, prior to the term ‘Ecocriticism’ existed in Raymond Williams’s book *The Country and the City*.

Though both UK and US versions of Ecocriticism are clearly linked in their approaches and aims, they differ in emphasis and ‘ancestry’. The difference between them is the same as it exists between British cultural materialism and ‘American’ new historicism. Generally, the preferred American term is ‘Ecocriticism’, whereas ‘green studies’ is frequently used in the UK. The American writing is ‘celebratory’ in tone, whereas the British variant tends to be more ‘minatory’, that is, it seeks to warn us of environmental threats emanating from governmental, industrial, commercial, and neo-colonial forces. For instance, Bate’s more recent work, *The Song of the Earth*, argues that colonialism and deforestation have frequently gone together. He writes: “As Robert Pogue Harrison has demonstrated in his remarkable book *Forests: The Shadow of Civilization*, imperialism has always brought with it deforestation and consuming of natural resources.” (Bate 87)

Eco-critics do not share the same theoretical perspectives or procedures. Instead, they manifest a wide range of traditional, post-structural, and post-colonial points of view and modes of analysis. Within this diversity, however, one can identify certain central and recurrent issues:

1. The Eco-critics claim that the reigning religions and philosophies of western

civilizations are intensely anthropocentric; that is, they are oriented to the interests of human beings. Human beings are viewed as opposed to and superior to nature, and free to exploit natural resources and animal species for their own purposes. This viewpoint is grounded in the biblical account of the creation, in which God gave man 'dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth'.

2. The Eco-critics are critical of binaries such as man/nature or culture/nature, entities are interconnected, and also mutually constitutive. As William Howarth writes in "Some Principles of Ecocriticism": Although we cast nature and culture as opposites, in fact they constantly mingle, like water and soil in a flowing stream" (Howarth 69). Our identities, or sense of self, for example, are informed by the particular place in which we live. On the other side, human experience of the natural environment is never a replication of the thing itself, but always mediated by the culture of a particular time and place. Its representation in a work of literature is inescapably shaped by human feelings and the human imagination. A striking example is the radical shift in the conception of the wilderness in America, from the Puritan view of it as a dark and ominous thing, possibly the abode of demons, which needs to be overcome, appropriated, and cultivated by human beings, to the view expressed by Thoreau two centuries later that "In wildness is the preservation of the world".

3. Many Eco-critics recommend, and themselves exemplify, the extension of "green reading" to all literary genres, including prose fiction and poetry, and also to writings in the natural and social sciences. Within the literary domain, the endeavor is to elevate the status,

or to include within the major canon of literature the hitherto undervalued forms of nature writing and of local color or regional fiction by authors such as Thomas Hardy, Mark Twain, and Sarah Orne Jewett.

4. The Eco-critics analyze the differences in attitudes toward the environment that are attributable to a writer's race, ethnicity, social class, and gender. The two terms are central to this concepts-Eco-feminism and wilderness romance. The writings of Annette Kolodny are of pivotal importance in Eco-feminism. Her writings analyze the role attributed to women in fantasies of the natural environment by male authors, as well as the study of specifically feminine conceptions of the environment in the neglected nature writings by female authors. In *The Lay of the Land: Metaphor as Experience and History in American Life and Letters*, Kolodny stresses, in male-authored literature, the predominant gendering of the land as female, and the accordant tendency to resort to nature for pastoral repose, recuperation, and gratification (Kolodny 45). She also proposes a parallel between the domination and subjugation of women and the exploitation and spoliation of the land. For instance, the devastation of a natural scene is figured in detail as the rape of a virgin in Wordsworth's autobiographical poem "Nutting". Wilderness romance-represented by such major works as James Fenimore Cooper's Leatherstocking novels, Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, and Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*-project distinctively male imaginings of escape to an unspoiled natural environment, free of women and of an effete, woman-dominated civilization, in which the protagonist undergoes a test of his character and virility.

5. The Eco-critics have a growing interest in the "primitive" cultures, as well as in Hindu,

Buddhist, and other religions and civilizations that lack the Western opposition between humanity and nature, and do not assign to human beings dominion over the non-human world. That is why Eco-critics in the United States concern themselves especially with the oral traditions of Native Americans and with the exposition of these cultures by contemporary Native American writers such as N. Scott Momaday and Leslie Marmon Silko. The common view, it is pointed out, envisions the natural world as a living, sacred thing, in which each individual feels intimately bonded to a particular physical “place”, and where human beings live in interdependence and reciprocity with other living things.

6. Another striking feature of Ecocriticism is its hostility to the atmosphere of what is normally called ‘theory’. Eco-critics worry that too much attention to nature as a cultural and ideological construct will lead to neglect of nature as an objective, material and vulnerable reality. For this purpose, Bate calls for a move away from Marxist and New Historicist criticism that can see nothing in nature writing but conservative ideology. Bate argues that environmental crisis demands a return to literal reading. Wordsworth’s owls and Keats’s swallows should be read, first and foremost, as real owls and swallows. To read them otherwise is now the evasive reading.

Recent work in Ecocriticism has ranged beyond nature writing and Romanticism. *Beyond Nature Writing: Expanding the Boundaries of Ecocriticism* by Karla Armbruster and Kathleen R. Wallace is of central importance in this context. This outstanding book stresses that ecocriticism need not only refer to “natural” or “wilderness” areas; Ecocriticism includes cultivated and built landscapes, the natural elements and aspects of those landscapes, and

cultural interactions with those natural elements. Besides, Ecocriticism encompasses biblical studies, medieval and Renaissance studies, literature and thought of the Enlightenment era, colonial American studies, nineteenth-century British and American literature, twentieth-century British and American literature, and contemporary texts that push the boundaries of literary study, such as film, science fiction, virtual reality, and theatrical space.

Some environmental critics maintain that the ecological crisis can only be resolved by the rejection, in the West, of the Judeo-Christian religion and culture, with its anthropocentric view that human beings, because they possess souls, transcend nature and are inherently masters of the non-human world, and by adopting instead an eco-centric religion which promulgates the sacredness of nature, and a reverence for all forms of life as intrinsically equivalent.

Other environmentalists insist, on the contrary, that the hope for radical reform lies, not in trying to assimilate an outmoded or alien religion, but in identifying and developing those strands in the human-centered religion, philosophy, and ethics of the West which maintain that the human relationship to the non-human world is not one of mastery, but of stewardship, and which recognize the deep human need for the natural world as something to be enjoyed for its own sake, as well as the moral responsibility of human beings to maintain and transmit a livable, diverse, and enjoyable world to their posterity. For example, Moses in Deuteronomy, the last of the five books of the Hebrew Bible, remind his people over and over that the price of their continuance in the Promised Land is social justice-justice not only among themselves but for every other occupant: human, animal,

and the land. Human beings, in their intricate connections to the earth and to one another, bear the responsibility of justice and righteousness as a condition of their continued survival in the places that gives them nurture.

Despite such disagreements, all Eco-critics concur that science-based knowledge of looming ecological disaster is not enough, because knowledge can lead to effective political and social action only when informed and impelled, as it is in literature, by imagination and feeling. As P. B. Shelley wrote in his “Defense of Poetry” almost two centuries ago: “There is no want of knowledge”, scientific and other, “respecting what is wisest and best in morals, government, and political economy”; what we lack is “the creative faculty to imagine that which we know” and “the generous impulse to act that which we imagine” (Cook 233)

### Works Cited

**Bate, Jonathan.** *The Song of the Earth.* London: Picador, 2000.

**Cook, Albert S.** ed., *A Defence of Poetry.* Boston, U.S.A.: Ginn & Company, 1991.

**Coupe, Laurence.** ed., *The Green Studies Reader: From Romanticism to Ecocriticism.* London: Routledge, 2000.

**Glotfelty, Cheryl and Harold Fromm,** eds., *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology.* Athens: University of George Press, 1996.

**Howarth, Williams.** “Some Principles of Ecocriticism” *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology.* Athens: University of George Press, 1996.

**Kelley, Mary.** ed., *The Portable Margaret Fuller* Viking Portable Library: Penguin, 1994.

**Kolodny, Annette.** *The Lay of the Land: Metaphor as Experiment and History in American Life and Letters.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975.

**Ziff Larzer,** ed., *Selected Essays* by Ralph Waldo Emerson. London: Penguin, 1982.

**Two poems by  
Dr. Ran Sharma**  
(Uttar Pradesh)

### Death

Last destination  
of the whole journey  
is not the end  
but a new beginning  
is a changing of clothes  
of the human body  
meeting of One universal soul  
soul is immortal  
body is mortal  
death is universal

### Cut-Throat Competition

Fleeting feet on the roads  
wheels are restless  
what kind of competition it is ??  
No time to breathe  
only work and work  
no family , no relations , no festivals  
whats mine fault in it ???  
its competition of Time  
its cut-throat competition

\*\*\*

<dr.ramsharma786@gmail.com>

# Since Human Journey Begin

---

**Sabita Das**

H.No. 1108/1, Sector: 40-B,

Chandigarh -160036.

Ph. 9915771108. <sabita\_1108@yahoo.com>

**In my** view world means Wonder, Overwhelm, Rave, Lure and lovely destination. I would not like to narrate about the word's shape rather it is descriptive that how beautiful it is and how livelihood place for all living creatures! But, it will not be possible to cover up all the species. Hence, I have chosen to narrate the special species i.e. human life and their blissful journey. To well understand to the subject I took a bit help of website for necessary information.

I would like to first present a brief overview of the ancestors of modern human beings then modernization:

Humans are a member of a species of bipedal primates in the family Hominidae. You, me and everyone on Earth is a homo sapiens. In Latin term, "wise human" and Homo sapiens originated in east Africa. It's believed that humans originated about 200,000 years ago in the Middle Paleolithic period in southern Africa and by 70,000 years ago, humans migrated out of Africa and began colonizing the entire planet. They spread to Eurasia and Oceania 40,000 years ago, and reached the America by 14,500 years ago. In one word, human species scattered throughout the world.

As humans, we have a highly developed brain, a bipedal gait, and opposable thumbs. Around 50,000 years ago Humans began to practice sedentary agriculture about 12,000 years ago, domesticating plants and animals which allowed for the growth of civilization.

Humans are distinguished from other animals larger brain with a particularly well

developed neo-cortex, prefrontal cortex and temporal lobes; enabling high levels of abstract reasoning, language, introspection, problem solving, culture through social learning, and other important mental capabilities which, combined with bipedal locomotion that frees the hands for manipulating objects, has allowed far greater use of tools than any other species. Humans are the only extant species known to build fires and cook their food, as well as the only known species to clothe themselves and create and use numerous other technologies and arts.

Not only that, humans are uniquely adept at utilizing systems of symbolic communication such as language and art for self-expression, the exchange of ideas, and organization. Humans create complex social structures composed of many cooperating and competing groups, from families and kinship networks to states. Social interactions between humans have established an extremely wide variety of values, social norms, and rituals, which together form the basis of human society. Humans are noted for their desire to understand and influence their environment, seeking to explain and manipulate phenomena through science, philosophy, mythology, and religion. The rapid advancement of scientific and medical understanding in the 19th and 20th centuries led to the development of fuel-driven technologies and improved health, causing the human population to rise exponentially. Being a cosmopolitan species, it was estimated that the world population may be reached around 7 billion by 2012.

With the volatile pace, we have accepted to the modernization means the process of change i.e. change of the society includes life style. Modernization involves a transformation of social, political and economy of the continents. The society itself underwent changes in values, beliefs and norms, from primarily agricultural to primarily industrial economy, resulting in the change in the world economy. Today, we are in rocket race hence, in broader sense, this is an attempt, on the part of the people, particularly those who are custom-bound, to adopt themselves to the present time, conditions, styles, and ways in general. The science & Technology have brought remarkable changes in the whole system of social relationship and installed new ideologies in the place of traditional values.

#### **Causes of Modernization:**

Modernization is not caused by any single factor. There is result of a so many factors. As Myron Weiner gave five main instruments which make modernization possible: education, mass communication, ideology based on nationalism, charismatic leadership and coercive governmental authority.

Rustow and Ward (1964) have mentioned of some measures of modernization include such specific aspects of changes as under:

i) Industrialization of economy and adopting a scientific technology in industry, agriculture, dairy farming, etc., to make them highly productive, ii) Secularization of ideas - that is, a diffusion of secular - rational norms in culture, iii) A remarkable increase in geographic and social mobility which includes occupational mobility also. iv) A spread of scientific and technical education. v) A transition from ascribed to achieved status, vi) with an increase in material standard of living, vii) High proportion of working force

employed in secondary and tertiary rather than primary production, that is, manufacturing and services as opposed to agriculture and fishing, viii) An increment of mobility in the society, understood in terms of urbanization, spread of literacy and media participation. ix) High expectancy of life at birth, x) Relatively greater measure of public participation in the polity — or at least democratic representation in defining and choosing policy alternatives.

As we are familiar every thing has two aspects; either good or bad thus modernization also highly impacts to our day to day's life. How? We are loosing our family bonding; relationships between people are no longer as genuine as they used to be, due to people knowing way too much about one another or being attached to the various gadgets like mobile, tablet, i- phone / laptop etc. we clearly see a decline in the authenticity of family, peer, and romantic relationships as no longer rely on home telephones, letters, and face-to-face conversation rather we most like to communicate to our kit & kin and nearest / dearest ones through email.

Once upon a time, people were familiar to this original verse of *Mahopanishad* VI.71-73 "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*" also found V.3.37 of *Panchatantra* (3rd century BCE), in the in 1.3.71 of *Hitopadesha* - (12th century CE). Vasudhaiva means Earth and Kutumbakam refers to a family. It means the whole world is one single family includes animals, birds, plants, trees and other organisms in the ecosystem have spirit they are part of our family. We Indians are fortunate to have learnt from Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam through a joint family structure. When children know more of our relatives and used of our native language was much more frequent. A strong

bond with the culture was developed. All the festivals were an important part for every joint family and celebrated with the children gearing up weeks in advance. Children get to live and grow with their grandparents and cousins; they also learn the value of relationship. They learn to give and take, to be patient, cooperative and tolerant and to adjust with the other family members. Not only that joint family system inadvertently helps us to live a stress less life, the reason being a lot of people around to help us and to share our joys and sorrows.

Have you ever think why teamwork gives better result than a one? For Philanthropist as we can say charity begins at home similarly during child hood we do adopt to the team work formula - at home e.g. one makes doe from kneaded flour and other bakes.

Being modern thinker, we have forgotten our traditions, customs, rituals and ancestors principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, and strictly do not belief to live in joint family. Now, we believed in **nuclear family** or **elementary family** i.e. a family is consisting of one married couple and their children. These Family structures were present in Western Europe and England in the 17th century, influenced by church and theocratic governments. With the emergence of **proto-industrialization** and early capitalism, then the nuclear family became a financially viable social unit but we are still maintaining to this family structure and facing its disadvantages too. Due to high cost of living in the cities, parents are pursued a career of their own and have no sufficient time for their children. This may leave the children unguided. They spend their childhood without the much needed love and company of their parents even fined no one for advice or discussion. Infants spend

their time in over crowded crèches where they searched motherhood love and behavior but some times apathetic staff of the crèches make them unhappy. The youth today crave for name, fame and wealth and there is no one at home for proper guidance. Due to lack sincere advice, many of times they are being misguided/ misled by their friends circle.

In the joint family system, the older members are likely to guide their younger also capable to provide solutions to their problems. Hence older generation should be revered as they are an asset to the society.

The both media i.e. Print and electronics media somehow responsible for the disintegration of the joint-family system. It often portrays a powerful character of mother-in-law as a threat to the well-bring of the young bride and it influence to the negative aspect of elders. We also get reports through some newspaper about gruesome acts committed in some families. Simultaneously, the foreign media has instilled western liberal views in the youth. Keeping in views the social evolution, only media can help to restore the lost image of the past and present family structures.

Cultural Changing impacts to the entire social system. Even in the field of music, a tremendous changed have come. We least listen or don't prefer to listen our folk songs, even special songs for marriages and others celebrations like lohri, holi etc also swiped out. Instead of good, some odd things took place, we direly engaged with western culture. Now people prefer to have free or illegal sex, drugs, Hukka Bars, loud party music and rock n' roll but where's the soothing medley gone? We forgot to our ancient music / musical instruments like Beena, Sitar, Tanpura, Tumbi,

Ektara, Dhafli, Dhol etc and most of us strictly not fond of classical music based on Raga / Ragini and very rare listeners of light music, Bhajans, Ghazals and folk songs. Modernization comes with “improvements” in all sorts of things, but when you think about music, it’s such a rapid change from ancient time to medieval music and medieval to modern music. In modern music, some sophisticated instruments are being played to match up with modern songs e.g. Kanga Bongo, Drums/ Casio/ Key Board, Saxophone etc. Though, I am personally not fond of such sudden wave of western music, which involves with very simplistic lyrics also having some sort of abusing. Nowadays, most music seems to imply sexual innuendos. Modernization definitely stepped in with many blessings like; new cures for diseases, improvements in infrastructure and food production, educations, new technology, tool & Techniques and many more but due to socio economy changes also continue changing in trends depicts some bad issues, which many people do not want to understand to the practical and permanent curses. However, in modernization, when it comes to entertainment and relationships, has experienced a drastic change since the 80’s and 90’s when it became all about partying, “getting laid”, and making money and yet that journey is going on. But none the less, my sincere pray to Almighty that one day, authenticity will knock the door and all the low-standard crap will be vaporized out, and eventually everything can go back to being as genuine and wonderful as it used to be !

\*\*

**Bushra Naqi** (Pakistan)

### **A relationship**

My relationship with you  
is of many layers;  
it has many patterns and colors;  
they combine to impact our lives together,

more than we can imagine.

we cast long shadows on each other;

shadows which linger on long

after our ways part and

we dissolve into the past;

we shed light and darkness on each other;

permeating us in places

we cannot see or ever reach;

we continue to live on different planes

that will stand apart;

and yet mingle into each other

till they become soluble;

still striving to remain intact,

secure in our selves;

I live in fear of being invaded by you;

lest you seek to change me in your image.

I fear this alien force

that might inhabit me and

silently push me out of myself.

our alliance is not invincible

though we might desire to believe it so;

it always remains fragile; more so

in our moments of vanity

our alliance is not about conquest

nor fidelity; neither promises

of love; it is the embrace of vast spaces

separating us;

and somewhere along the way

two people build a nest for each other

without impinging on the self. \*\*\*

Ph. ++92 42 36663101

<naqibushra@hotmail.com>

# Echoes of contemporary reality in the poetry of O.P.Bhatnagar

Dr. Shelly Mannan

Asstt. Prof. English, D. A. V. College, Sector-10, Chandigarh-160010.

Ph. 9872879954 <sdshelly02@gmail.com>

---

**O. P. Bhatnagar** is a prominent voice in the arena of the contemporary IPE. He is a multi-faceted genius. A renowned poet-critic, an anthologist, a well-read scholar and a widely known Professor in English, he has seven collections of verse to his credit. With an incorrigible sensibility, he strives to comprehend a wide range of themes through his poetry. It is the puzzled present and not the myth-ridden past that arrests his attention. He does not believe in dragging the wheels of his poetic art towards past which carries negligible importance in today's context.

The present paper is a critique on the select poems penned by Bhatnagar. His view with regard to the purposeful poetry stands matchlessly parallel to the basic tenet of this paper. He firmly believes that poetry should not shy away from social reality. Whatever hurts the human dignity and value-system, must find place in the living literature. He feels that the poetry must envisage the infinite variety of human form and vision. It must learn to operate in the context of shifting paradigms of times.

With irony and sarcasm as his modes, far-fetched allusions, imagery and parody as his tools, Bhatnagar sketches the inner vacuity, worthlessness and hollowness of human life on his poetic canvas. Apart from presenting his viewpoint emphatically he makes his reader face-to-face with the hydra-headed evils embedded in the very fabric of the society. He calls his subtle and minute observation of the surroundings as a 'pointed awareness' and

constantly yearns to reflect the same through his poetry.

The poem, 'The New Scale' displays how contraries and contradictions co-exist in this world. Bhatnagar presents the paradox of our times by revealing what is poison for one man may turn out to be another man's meat: "A simple, honest man / In an outworn mode / May still himself find / Measuring life in value spoons / Bribery, corruption and forgery / For him a bitter poison be" (*TP* 15)

He brings to the fore a live situation of an honest man who toils and sweats to make his both ends meet, upholds his value-system and never thinks of measuring the height of success by malicious means. Instead of amassing wealth by indulging in bribery, corruption and forgery, he prefers to keep his head high by listening to his conscience. He has no strains of treachery, betrayal, treason, disloyalty, deceit and duplicity on his conscience.

On the contrary, the people devoid of ethical and moral values do not leave any stone unturned to practice these nefarious and wicked acts: "But the clever in it / A meaty situation see / Dispensing poison like a doctor/ Normalizing a disturbed balance." By using an adjective "clever" the poet perhaps, hints at the evil-minded people who flourish on "bribery", "corruption" and "forgery". Their selfish attitude not only makes the lives of the affected people a living hell but also adds to their frustration, dissatisfaction, annoyance, disappointment



towards the whole system. This exasperation ultimately breeds law-breaking, offence, illegal and criminal acts in the society. The concluding couple of lines is highly piercing and keeps on haunting the reader for days together, “What is the scale / On which the two may meet?”

Through this poem, Bhatnagar suggests a complete over-hauling of our system to ensure peace and happiness. The flawless diction employed by him, compliments the subject of the poem. For example, “outworn mode” hints at the eroded and rotten state of the society and “Measuring life in value spoons” points at the plight of a common person who is compelled to lead his life in installments.

He liberates his poem from the traditional norms of line-length, syllable count, rhyme and stanza-structure. The style is narrative and the tone is satirical. The title of the poem is highly ironical and captivating. Generally, the scale is a scientific weighing or analyzing instrument which works without any preference or bias. However in this context, the scale apart from exercising prejudice also exhibits diagonally different parameters of analysis for different people.

The emptiness of the politics of fake promises could not escape the poet’s piercing eyes and he makes it the subject of his poem entitled ‘I Have Promises to Keep’. It is a trenchant satire on crafty, wily and self-serving politicians who fondly indulge in the unprincipled game of politics. Corrupt and fraudulent politicians who cheat, deceive and mislead the masses are taken to task by the poet. It is a parody of Robert Frost’s popular poem namely, ‘Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening’. While putting the politicians of our times under scanner, he uncovers the diagonal difference between what they preach and what they actually practice: “I don’t have

miles to go / But promises to keep / To keep my countrymen awake / With more dying words to reach / Before I sleep.” (FF 12)

Right at the outset, the clever politician makes his intentions very clear to the masses by revealing his mind that he does not has to cover “miles” distance but has to keep his “promises”. The next line i.e. “To keep my countrymen awake” is piercingly ironical because in reality it is politician’s oratory gimmicks which act as sweet lullabies for the poor and ignorant masses who are swayed by his excellent public-speaking skills. They literally lie down to sleep thinking that their future lies in the safest hands. The expression “dying words” enhances the satirical appeal of the poem. Politician’s target to “reach” to the maximum number of people before going to “sleep” accelerates his disgust for the clan of politicians.

In addition to the political acrobatics, the poem also brings into sharp focus, the tendency of our countrymen to easily get swayed by the sugary words uttered by the political leaders of our times. The clever speeches over-brimming with fake promises cast a spell on the villagers and they religiously follow the make-believe stories narrated by these wily politicians.

These lines from the same poem reflect a twin perspective: “To shake the universe / With the thunder from my throat / And use the last breath of mine / to keep my countrymen awake.” The former perspective is that of a selfish politician who fulfils his dark designs by persuading and finally, winning over the ignorant masses by his arresting oratory skills. The latter one is a pious one. This perspective is of the poet who with the “thunder” of his poems intends to “shake the universe.” He is the one who is committed to the social cause and will “use” even his “last

breath” to keep his “countrymen awake.”

The style is idiomatic and the tone is ironical. The long and short sentences are evenly spread across the texture of the poem. The regular rhyme has been dispensed with. The line, “With the thunder from my throat” depicts a good example of onomatopoeia. This highly suggestive and multiple-layered poem has a universal appeal irrespective of country, clime and age.

The poem, ‘Look Homeward Angel’ is a scathing satire on those Indians who turn their back towards their native land and fly abroad to seek greener pastures. Using a first-person narrative, he opens the poem in a colloquial style: “I don’t blame my friends settled abroad / Far off in England and Mozambique. / America, Australia or Madrid, / Driving cabs or trading antiques / Researching in Physics or Aeronautics, / But cutting the chords of country care / Presents an impoverished image / Of their feelings made dull by dollars / And ideals impounded by pounds.”(AR 39)

In a highly ironic tone, Bhatnagar says that he does not blame his countrymen for having chosen foreign countries to settle down to earn their livings. Conversely, using an epigram, he suggests that Bohemian life-style, loose morals, lust for acquiring wealth and affluence are perhaps the reasons behind their immigration. He tickles the readers by disclosing the fact that their vision might “have been blurred / By night-clubs and swingers, / Blondes and ballrooms”.

The succeeding lines prick our conscience and force us to re-access the whole situation: “Performing cultural striptease / Or waltzing national pride / To create self-deluding thrill and calculated space / For their stubborn recondite selves.” The poet has a knack of coining catchy and contrived images such as

“cultural striptease”, “waltzing national pride”, “self-deluding thrill” and “calculated space”. These images apart from accentuating the aesthetic experience of the reader, also speak of the heightened and pointed social awareness of the poet.

The poem ironically puts on display, the ordeal of segregation and humiliation which our countrymen have to undergo in the mad spree of acquiring citizenship of a new nation. The new citizenship, like borrowed clothes does not fit well on their “hybrid identity.” He shocks the readers by putting the migration of human beings in juxtaposition with the migration of birds to alien lands: “Even birds that are forced out of home / At the turn of every season / Return to their land / Traversing incredible distances / Flapping dreams with weary wings.” The birds are “forced” to migrate owing to the climatic conditions whereas people willingly fly away to foreign lands in the want of wealth and luxuries.

The poem reaches its climax with the revelation of the fact that even birds return “to their land” but it is hopeless to think of the return of human beings from alien lands. The poet quotes a reason behind their non-arrival: “But their fancy forbids them / To look beyond glamour and gold / And sunbathe their quixotic dreams / For a sophisticated fear of tanning”. The poem ends with a note of disillusionment and cynicism: “Even Greece had its Ulysses / Who brought his ships back home / But our heroes make no myths / And our imagination no Homer.”

The allusion to Homer’s *Ulysses* aptly projects the plight of the parents who hope against hope for the come-back of their children. In addition to this, it also reflects the selfishness, indifference, detachment and thanklessness of their children towards them who leave no stone unturned to satiate their

demands and wishes during their upbringing. In a mischievous streak, the poet calls these self-centered people as “heroes” who are even lesser than villains. The poem is a long non-metric composition. The adjectival phrases are striking: “cultural striptease”, “self-deluding thrill”, “hybrid identity”, “merry relaxation”, “dandy-decadent ease”, “weary wings” etc. Alliteration and assonance lend rhythm to the poem. The highly evocative and imaginative title invokes the interest of the reader.

Using poetry as a powerful means of communication, Bhatnagar has brought the grave issues of brain drain and immigration of the younger generation to the fore. The poem forces the readers to search replies to a couple of questions: Firstly, is it reasonable to move to other countries for earning money at the cost of one’s dignity and self-pride? Secondly, is it justifiable to leave the parents in lurch towards the tail end of their lives?

The social and cultural pollution is necessarily an offshoot of the political corruption and this corruption cannot escape the critical gaze of the poet. Bhatnagar in his poem entitled, ‘The Living Scene’ presents the panoramic view of the modern living. The “living scene” of our country has upset his mind so much so that he is compelled to state right at the outset: “The living scene in my country / Is worth only for the granite eyes / Insensitive and resilient / For our visions to unfold.” (*Special O.P. Bhatnagar No. 37*)

The opening terse remark, apart from setting the tone of the poem also clinically represents the insensitivity, flexibility, suppleness, unresponsiveness of a modern man towards his immediate surroundings. The amazing ability of human beings to immediately recover from the set-backs; bruises the tender heart of the poet and he aptly uses the adjectival phrase i.e. “granite”

eyes to project the indifference and insensitivity of modern life and living.

Bhatnagar vividly catches the pulse of the corrupt and eroded scenario and with the use of poetic devices to name a few - similes, alliteration, allusion, imagery and rhyme. In the concluding stanza, he stimulates the reader’s dignity and self-respect by saying: “One can respect humility / But not humiliation.” While announcing a rebellion to the existing state of affairs, he calls upon the elite class of poets and awakens them of the mighty power of their pens which could be utilized to reform and rebuild the mental make-up of the people.

He advises the clan of poets to play a positive role towards the re-construction of the milieu and social set-up through poetry: “So now, at least, let poets / Cutting the edges of their style / Have their political dimensions / To fight the terror become / Image of itself:/ The aesthetic distance renewed / Before annihilation and art created / In its abolished form like paths in deserts / Always tread anew.”

He is perhaps, one amongst those Indian English poets who strongly believe that we can make our lives better and happier if we hold a protest towards the old conventions and strive to change the system with the changing times. Old practices, ritual, myths and traditions have lost their sheen and glitter in the present context and it is high time to substitute them with new thoughts, principles, philosophy and ideology so that we may succeed in lessening, if not eliminating, the social and political discontentment and unrest smouldering in the hearts of the common masses.

The poem has three stanzas and each stanza consists of unequal lines; four, thirteen and eleven respectively. Instead of laying stress on regular rhyme, Bhatnagar prefers to focus on the thematic progression. The first stanza of the poem epigrammatically comments upon

the sad scenario; the second one expands the theme with series of similes and other rhetorical devices while the closing stanza is an ardent request to the clan of poets.

Contemporaneity is one of the remarkable features of Bhatnagar's poetry that makes him a representative poet of the post-independent India. The turmoil, violence, corruption and degenerated value system glaringly surface in his poetry. He pens down his experiences of the repugnant tragedies of partition, hopes and aspirations of the citizens in an independent country and their disappointment and dejection in a self-ruled nation.

While attempting a fresh interpretation of Bhatnagar's poetry with reference to the Keatsian idea of Negative Capability, P.S. Kasture avers:

He variously displays Keat's original idea of the Negative Capability as the capacity to face reality without forced irritable efforts, to arrive at the understanding of reality naturally. Even a bird's eye-view of his poetry indicates the full existence of this capacity in Bhatnagar. (*Considerations* 24)

Throughout in his poetic journey from *Thought Poems* (1976) to *Cooling Flames of Darkness* (2001), he daringly portrays the plight of man in the contemporary social and political context. His powerful voice strives hard to mould the conscience of today's man. He has made his poetry to stand on the firm ground of realism. He reflects: "Poetry must explore man, sufferings, conflicts, and predicaments, hopes, dreams and joys more than the possibilities of his commitments to ideologies, doctrines, redemption and salvation." (qtd. in *Judgements*: 73)

Kanwar Dinesh Singh's findings perfectly echo with the above-quoted observation:

The angst and stress of contemporary life have, by and large, shaken the faith of the modern poets, both male and female, in God. Their soul-searching, their self-discovery is an effort

towards realizing the hidden potentials of human beings and finding newer ways of living with poise and peace in this mortal world. (*CIEP* 162)

Though Bhatnagar projects the abject state of the modern man on his poetic canvas but he can not be termed as a pessimist at all. On the contrary, by painting the general plight with his poetic brush, he shakes the sleeping conscience of the readers and stimulates them to become aware of their duties towards their nation and society, at large.

He is a poet standing at the cross-roads who firmly believes in reformation. He intends to bring a positive shift in the age-old, stubborn and dogmatic mindset of the people towards a new, enlightened and scientific outlook. This shift can ultimately pave the path of progress and prosperity not only for a selected few but also for the whole nation. Hence, inspired by this ideology, he chooses poetry as a powerful medium to rectify and renovate the whole matrix of our society.

\*\*\*

## WORKS CITED

- Bhatnagar, O.P.** *Thought Poems*. Aligarh: Skylark Publications, 1976. (Abbreviated as *TP*)
- - -. *Feeling Fossils*. Dehradun: Paul Jacobson, 1977. (Abbreviated as *FF*)
- - -. *Angels of Retreat*. New Delhi: Samkaleen Prakashan, 1979. (Abbreviated as *AR*)
- Mirza, Baldev**, ed. *Special O.P. Bhatnagar's Poetry Number*. Aligarh, 1999.
- Mohanty, Niranjana**, ed., *Considerations: Critical Responses to O.P. Bhatnagar's Poetry*. Berhampur: Poetry Publication, 1985. (Abbreviated as *Considerations*)
- Singh, Kanwar Dinesh**. *Contemporary Indian English Poetry: Comparing Male and Female Voices*. New Delhi: Atlantic, 2008. (Abbreviated as *CIEP*)
- Singh, R.A.** ed., *Judgements: An Anthology of Papers on the Poetry of O.P. Bhatnagar*. Jaipur: Book Enclave, 2002. (Abbreviated as *Judgements*)



# Hindu Religious Ideologies Reflected in Leaves of Grass

---

**Dr. Sangeeta Singh,**

Lecturer - English Literature, G  
ovt. J.D.B P.G Girls College , Kota (Rajasthan)  
Ph. 94143 31103 <sangeetaa07@gmail.com>

**Dr. Sanjit Mishra**

Prof. of English, IIT, Roorkey (Uttarakhand)  
Ph. 95487 74358, sanjitmishra2001@yahoo.com

---

**To use** the religious metaphor, it would be better to say that out of the churning of the ocean (Samudra manthan) of Hindu religious philosophy, there popped up some ideologies as beautiful gems. Whitman used them to decorate his plain and prosaic verse. To indicate deal without discuss those ideologies which illumine his verse like diamonds, is the objective of this study. As an extension to this objective, the opinions from critics, scholars, philosophers and extracts from the scriptures have been put forth for the complete examination of their basic concepts. A reader of this type of religious literature, pertaining to Hindu ideologies can grasp them after contemplating over them. After having the basic knowledge of the Hindu religious philosophical concepts and systems the tracing of these underlying ideas is a convenient step. The resemblance between the scriptural ideologies and the excerpts from Leaves of Grass can be traced in several common concepts. Such a comparative study is based on various excerpts from the related verse portion.

One of the similarities found between the two streams that is the verse of Leaves of Grass and the hidden treasure of the systemic religious ideas is –reverence to women. As in Manusmriti (another great Hindu scripture) it has been said that where a woman is worshipped (respected) gods enjoy treading

there –“yatra naryastu pujiyante ramante tatra devta”-(chap.3 shloka 56, p.110). In the same way Whitman in the stanza twenty one of his poem “Song of Myself” pays regards to women, saying “ I am the poet of the woman the same as the man,/And I say it is as great to be a woman as to be a man/ And I say there is nothing greater than the mother of men.” (422, 426-428).

This perhaps he has written to emphasize the feminine aspect of nature, and, finally, to assert the necessity of merging the qualities of both sexes in every individual but the actual feeling of reverence cannot be denied when he names her different roles in life and her ages as girl and woman<sup>1</sup> (though he cannot be called a feminist because he has written a lot for the man also):

"The young mother and the old mother shall comprehend me,

The girl and the wife rest the needle a moment

And forget where they are,

They and all would resume what I have told them".(Song of Myself: 1258-1261).

This manifestation of the wholesomeness can be compared to the “Ardhnarishwar” concept of projection of Lord Shiva whose one of the manifestation is seen as vertically divided in two equal parts half man and half woman vertically in Hindu religion. Next the ideology of sacrifice is to be discussed here

in the process of the study. In Hindu religion the sacrifice of a body of an incarnation or son of God is never seen, though in some of the myths like the sacrifice of King Harishchandra (Shankar n. pag.) and King Mordhwaj (Kalidas n. pag.) who sacrificed his own son by his own hands have been heard. Of course, the sacrifice of the marital joy of the incarnation of God has been seen in the famous 'Ram- katha'—the story of the life of King Rama. He renounces his beautiful and pious wife Seeta even after ordeal and sends her to sage Kanva's hermitage for maintaining the social equilibrium in his kingdom and for pacifying the voices of the fourth section of the society- 'sudra' (Gita press, 1994). Here it is worthy to mention that Whitman has used the word 'sudra' in its correct sense in his poem "Chanting the Square Deific" - "With sudra face and worn brow—black, but in the depths of my heart, proud as any" (L.G. 444, 29). The piety for the down trodden has been shown by Lord Rama in his sacrifice and here the similarity can easily be seen in these lines in the same poem by Whitman:

All sorrow, labor, suffering, I tallying it,  
absorb in myself,

Many times have I been rejected, taunted,  
put in prison, and crucified, and many times  
shall be again,

All the world have I given up for my dear  
brothers' and sisters' sake, for the soul's sake.  
(L.G. 444, 17-19)

While talking about the ideology of sacrifice and austerity, it reminds of yet another sacrifice of King Rama as his exile to forests for 14 years by the orders of his father for the sake of honing the ideals and religion in the Kingdom. (Tulsidas 1994) From the point of view of comparison, it is noteworthy that

Christ was crucified for the sins of the humankind. In "Salut au Monde!" this acceptance of ritual along with the pathos for the sacrifice is seen when the poet asserts "I see Christ eating the bread of his last supper in the midst of youths and old persons, / I see where the strong divine young man the Hercules toil'd faith-fully and long and then died" (L.G. 142, 97-98)

The ideology of immortality of the soul is also seen in Whitman's "Song of Myself," in this immortal quotation "The smallest sprout shows that there is really no death" (6:126, L.G. 34). This belief also has been well established in the twentieth shloka from the second chapter of The Bhagavatgītā:

He is never born, nor does he die at any time,  
nor having (once) come to be will he again cease  
to be. He is unborn, eternal, permanent and  
primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain  
(107). A discernible identity between religious  
ideologies of the third line of the above  
quotation can be traced in the following  
proclamation of a creditable book "The Vedic  
concept of Atma" that quotes Brihadaraanyak  
Upanishad (2.3.1) :

Mrtyu resides in amrta and amrta resides  
in mrtyu. (Both are interwoven with each  
other). Mrtyu pervades Vivasvān (Brahman)  
and the Ātman of mrtyu resides in Vivasvan  
(Brahman). That is why mrtyu does not meet  
with death... (Ramanathan 29). For Whitman,  
death has no sting;. In his poem "Scented  
Herbage of My Breast" he asserts it saying  
"you faint tinged roots, you make me think  
of death (114, 10).

Even passing over of the soul has been shown as it has been often heard in Hindu folk tales and legends like Savitri and Satyawati about which Whitman had also written in an article. Though here it sounds like supernatural

and gloomy yet it is not a description invoking fear in the poem “Whispers of Heavenly Death”:

Whispers of heavenly death mummur’d I hear,

Labial gossip of night, sibilant chorals,

Footsteps gently ascending, mystical breezes wafted soft and low,

Ripples of unseen rivers...

I see, just see skyward, great cloud-masses,

Some soul is passing over.) (L.G. 442, 1-12)

Whitman, in the sixth stanza of “Salut au Monde!” echoes the same language of The Bhagavadgītā (102), where Lord Krishna in eleventh shloka of the second chapter, denies Arjuna to weep and mourn over the relatives

Do not weep for me,

This is not my true country, I have lived banish’d from my true country, I now go back there,

I return to the celestial sphere, where everyone goes in his turn (L.G. 142, 101-103).

In section six of “Song of Myself” he hints that death is as big a reality as life is:

And ceas’d the moment life appear’d.

All goes onward and outward nothing collapses.

And to die is different from what anyone supposed, and luckier. (L.G 34, 128-130).

As well as it is reminiscent of Herbert’s famous poem “The Retreat” where the poet wants to return to heaven. This is the famous Hindu religious ideology of heavenly abode which is said to be the actual home of the souls. But Whitman has spoken of death as sleep in his poem “The Sleepers” and speaks like lord Krishna who knows every incarnation of each and every creature in the universe “I dream in my dream all the dreams of the

other dreamers,

And I become the other dreamers” (L.G.426, 30-31). The last line of the poem indicates clearly that he will meet his mother after death as the day has been regarded as life and the darkness indicates death-land— “I will duly pass the day O my mother, and duly return to you” (L.G. 433,185).

Whitman seems to associate the unattainable ‘detached state of being’ as well as this temporal world, both with ‘a dream’. Here, in his poem, “Song of the Universal” he talks of his craving for salvation and calls the lack of the desired things a dream, and suddenly switches over to the last line saying “And all the world a dream” inculcating the ideology of “maya”:

Nay but the lack of it the dream.

And failing it life’s lore and wealth a dream.

And all the world a dream. (L.G. 228-229, 57-65)

He seems to know the Panchtattav concept (that body is made of air, water, soil, ether and fire) because in the very beginning, in the sixth line of the “Song of Myself” he inculcates this knowledge “My tongue, every atom of my blood, form’d from this soil, this air” (28, 6). He uses ‘air’ adding it to the Christian religious ideology where, in Genesis (3.19) of The Holy Bible Lord God says to Adam “dust you are” and “to dust you shall return” (7). It has been said in many of the devotional songs that we go to be the dust after death:

I depart as air, I shake my white locks at the runaway sun,

I effuse my flesh in eddies, and drift it in lacy jags.

I bequeath myself to the dirt to grow from the grass I love,

If you want me again look for me under your boot-soles. (“Song of Myself” 89, 1337-40)

He very calmly echoes the famous ideology of sthitpragya (wise person) from fifteenth shloka of second chapter of The Bhagavadgītā (105) which says “The man who is not troubled by these, o chief of men (Arjuna), who remains the same in pain and pleasure, who is wise makes himself fit for eternal life” (108). Now, here we can easily perceive that he is echoing in his small poem “Me Imperturbable” this famous ideology of sthitpragya (wise person) when he asserts “Me, wherever my life is lived, O to be self-balanced for contingencies,/To confront night, storms, hunger ridicule, accidents, rebuffs, as the trees and animals do (L.G. 11, 8-9)

Now, this is rationality, reason, wisdom, ideology, everything else but not a spiritual experience which is associated with mysticism. Hindu religious ideologies recognize that both determinism and free will are applicable to human beings, and that how bound or how free we are, depends on our spiritual awareness. If we are not conscious of our spiritual Self and do not know how to stand apart from the movements of our nature, we will be driven to action by desires and emotions, we will be overpowered by joy and grief, the consequences of success and failure in action. On the other hand, if we are aware of the movements of nature—desires and emotions—within ourselves and can stand apart from them, we will be able to have control over nature and exercise free will. In the forty seventh shloka of the second chapter of the The Bhagavadgītā it has been instructed that the ideal way to attain freedom is to offer every action to God and leave the results in

God’s hand (trans. Radhakrishnan 119). Here, we can apply this ideology on Whitman’s excerpts from Leaves of Grass. Dorothy F. Mercer, who in her article “Walt Whitman on Karma Yoga” opines:

“Whitman's attitude toward right action is similar to the karma yoga of Hindu scripture. Beyond "the exoteric teaching and action of service, beyond mental purification and ordinary unselfish endeavour" (September-October 1947, 150-153).

For the comparative study, regarding the ideology of sin and atonement, “Autumn Rivulets” is a suitable collection for discussion. In a poem from this section – “O Star of France.”, Whitman talks of the sinners in a liberal way and says that the painful phase of life is the sanctifying agent for that sinful part of life and it leaves the sinner purged off— “Miserable! Yet for thy errors, vanities, sins, I will not now rebuke thee,/ Thy unexampled woes and pangs have quell’d them all, And left thee sacred” (L.G. 396, 15-16).

In Hindu religious ideologies, it is clearly indicated that one has to reap what he sows and when that karm-phal (the after effect of the deeds) is exhausted only then one is freed from that bondage of life and death. In “Unnamed Lands” the poet reconciles the evil and sins of all the residents of the unnamed lands saying that they are the eventual part of “the scheme of the world every bit as much as we now belong to it” (L.G. 372, 11). They get in life, strictly according to their deeds—“In exact proportion to what he or she grew from in life, and out/of what he or she did, felt, became, loved, sinn’d, in life (L.G 372, 22).

He has said in “O Star of France” he does not want to rebuke the sinner but he develops the incorporated ideology in “Song of Prudence” by brooding over the subject in

the context of the Upanishads:

What is prudence is indivisible,

Declines to separate one part of life from every part,

Divides not the righteous from the unrighteous or the living from the dead,

Matches every thought or act by its correlative,

Knows no possible forgiveness or deputed atonement, (L.G.375-376, 46-50)

“Song of Prudence” indicates the ideology of sanchit karma (accumulated deeds) leading to prarabdha (the predestination in according to actions the present or future life) according to the accumulated action during the present)

Not one word or deed, not venereal sore, discoloration, privacy of the onanist,

Putridity of gluttons or rum-drinkers, speculation, cunning, betrayal, murder, seduction, prostitution,

But has results beyond death as really as before death. (L.G. 374, 12-14)

This quotation of “Song of Prudence” literally denotes the karm- phal (as you sow so you reap) ideology from The Bhagavadgīt?

All that a person does, says, thinks, is of consequence,

Not a move can a man or woman make, that affects him or her in a day, month, any part of the direct lifetime, or the hour or death,

But the same affects him or her onward afterward through the indirect lifetime.

The indirect is just as much as the direct, body, if not more. (L.G.374, 7-11)

Whitman has used the word m<sup>2</sup>y<sup>2</sup> in its correct sense in his small poem “Are you the new person drawn towards me?”—“Do you suppose yourself advancing on real ground toward a real heroic man? / Have you no thought O dreamer that it may be all m<sup>2</sup>y<sup>2</sup>,

illusion?” (L.G.123, 8-9).

Here he is mentioning the holy river of the Hindus- the sacred and purifier Ganges in the section thirteen of “Salut au Monde!” “You bather bathing in the Ganges!” and then as if to renounce such rituals as the Upanishadic seers did, he claims having some vedantic feeling of oneness with the humanity later in the poem:

My spirit has passed in compassion and determination around the whole earth,

I have look’d for equals and lovers and found them ready for me in all lands,

I think some divine rapport has equalized me with them” (L.G. 148, 212-214)

In Hindu religion it is believed that after death one’s soul goes upwards (urdhwagati) to heaven if he or she has done good deeds in life and contrarily downwards (adhogati) to hell. This also is somewhat akin to Christian cosmology. Whitman prepares his soul for upward journey away from the gravitational approach of the earth in the poem, “Darest Thou Now O Soul” “Nor darkness, gravitation, sense, nor any bounds bounding us” (L.G.441, 12). The passage to heaven is hinted, ‘blank’ (unlike in Herbert’s poem “The Retreat” who gives images like ‘gilded cloud’ and ‘palm trees’ in heaven) and heaven as inaccessible. The poet is also unaware of the details of the passage from the poem “Darest Thou Now O Soul”:

I know it not O soul,

Nor dost thou, all is a blank before us,

All waits undream’d of in that region, that inaccessible land (L.G. 441, 7-9).

He believes that both death and birth are merely stages in the never-ending transmutation of body and soul, parts of the great process of evolution. The ‘joy’ expressed

in the poem “The Mystic Trumpeter” is the celebration of this revelation that all which is visible is illusion, only Supreme Reality exists, (Brahman satya, jagat mithya)- a Hindu religious ideology by Shankara the great propounder of monism. Let us see one clip from the column “The Speaking Tree” that looks like a summary of Shankara’s intended gist of the referred part only:

We are the Supreme Bliss personified Brahman, It is our own Self that dwells in all. The Happiness that is experienced in the world is in fact just a glimpse of Self-bliss. It is the bliss of your own inner Self that is experienced as being derived from the external objects due to ignorance. (Lilashahji 12)

Now an obvious query comes up in this context that if Whitman knew that the entire finite or perceptible world is an illusion, then what prompted him to paint the external world with so much involvement. The answer lies in the reason that he knew the religious ideology which indicates the fact that the perfection of God overflows into the world. The world is the outflow of the surplus energies of God, the supreme artist. He knew that *māyā* is the manifested part of the Brahman and thus consequently this emerged part ‘Lila’ or sport is also His extension. This Lila brings out the rationality, the freedom and the joyous exercise of spontaneity involved in art of certain manifestations of God. This may be counted as the reason why he proclaims to write like a materialist:

I will make the poems of materials, for I think they are to be the most spiritual poems,

And will make the poems of my body and of mortality,

For I think I shall then supply myself with the poems of my soul and of immortality

(“Starting from Paumanok” 18, 71-73)

But as it has been found in his poetry that at some places Whitman contradicts what he has proclaimed elsewhere, he is seen talking about the commitment to write about the soul just in the previous line of the same poem:

Yes here comes my mistress the soul.

The soul,

Forever and forever—longer than soil is brown and solid—longer than water ebbs and flows. (“Starting from Paumanok” 18, 68-70). Whitman’s poem “To Thee Old Cause” also looks like the following shloka of The Bhagavatgītā:

Never was the spirit born, never the spirit shall cease to be. Never was a time when it was not – end and beginning are but dreams. (The Bhagavatgītā Gita 2.20. 107)

This small poem mentioned just two lines above, says that cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit cannot be severed; for the effect already blooms in the cause, the end pre-exists in the means, the fruit in the seed, as quoted by Ralph W Emerson in ‘sacred space’ under the title ‘The End’ (30 April 2006. 12). The Nyaya philosophy also says that if there is something before your eyes, it must have a reason behind that, as the world must have a creator behind its creation. That reason, the eternal and supreme power, Brahman has been delineated in such a tiny poem in such a potential manner. The poet exclaims as if awed by the magnificence of Brahman:

Deathless throughout the ages, races, lands...

Thou orb of many orbs!

Thou seething principle! thou well-kept, latent germ! thou centre! (L.G.4, 4-11) Religion is a way of life for Whitman as for the Hindus, that is why he is devoted to suffering humanity.

Just as one has to quote poetry for the sake of confirmation of the statement, one has to tell the acts also to define the real nature of the poet. O'Connor William Douglas in his vindication "The Good Gray Poet" praises Whitman for his good acts just according to his words:

He does not shrink from the smell of their sickening gangrene; he does not flinch from their bloody and rotten mutilations; he draws nigher for all that; he sticks closer; he dresses those wounds; he fans those burning temples; he moistens those parched lips; he washes those wasted bodies; he watches often and often in the dim ward by the sufferer's cot all night long; he reads from the New Testament, the words sweeter than music to the sinking soul; he soothes with prayer the bedside of the dying; he sits, mournful and loving, by the wasted dead. (whitmanarchive.org)

These acts bring peace to him, therefore in this context and the passage below from "Song of Myself" can be associated not with many complicated heavy phrases but simply 'love' for human beings. As we can see in the fifth section of the poem: "And that a kelson of the creation is love" (L.G.33, 95).

He bestows immense importance to body and it is worth to mention here at this point that in the fifth sarg (chapter) of one of the old epic of Sanskrit literature Kumaarsambhavam, it is written that this body is the medium, source of the compliance of doing the religious deeds (shariramadhayam khalu dharmasya sadhanam) (Kalidas 30). This is the reason why Whitman goes on chanting like this—"The man's body is sacred and the woman's body is sacred, / No matter who it is, it is sacred-- is it the meanest one in the laborers' gang? ("I Sing the Body Electric" 97, 84-85). Soul alone

cannot perform those righteous deeds, though the utmost credit is given to soul. Section Five of "Song of Myself" makes a similar point when the speaker addresses the soul:

I believe in you my soul, the other I am must not abase itself to you,  
And you must be abased to the other. (L.G. 32: 82-83)

As it has been said earlier that Whitman makes a balance between body and soul, he in other concepts also seems to be a blender; at the same time he uses the rich heritage of past and modern off beat themes, removal from the past and involvement in it, between a stance as user of ideas and ideologies and a stance as one who experiences, he mediates between consciousness and reality, mind and matter, past and future.

"A Riddle Song" employs directly that technique that is present indirectly in nearly all Whitman's poetry. The two words of "God's riddle" may be Brahman and m?y?, or birth and death which he says in just in the middle of the poem:

Two little breaths of words comprising,  
Two words, yet all from first to last comprised on it. (L.G. 476-478, 1-2)

While talking about his mysticism and Hindu religious ideologies it is next to impossible to leave discussing the soul of this study – the poem "Passage to India. The gifts and insight and splendour of old occult Brahma and the tender and junior Buddha, China's wisdom and the imaginative wonder of Persia and Arabia, all, all shall find their place when

All these separation and gaps shall be taken up and hook'd and link'd together,

The whole earth, this cold, impassive, voiceless earth shall be completely justified

(L.G.415,109-110).

Whitman here, is a visionary, neither mystical nor pragmatic, sounds more like Shelley than Raidaas or Namdev (both are the poets of bhakti school of Hindi literature):

Lo, soul, seest thou not God's purpose from the first?

The earth to be spann'd, connected by network,

The races, neighbors, to marry and be given in marriage,

The oceans to be cross'd, the distant brought near,

The lands to be welded together (L.G.412, 30-35).

In the context of this poem, it would be better to draw the attention to Som P Sharma who in "Self, Soul, and God in "Passage to India" says that the poem demonstrates Whitman's affinity to Hindu metaphysics in its "many-leveled awareness of self as biological organism, metaphysical essence, and Godhead as the three coalesce into one another without losing their uniqueness (394-99). This is nothing but the Hindu religious ideology of vasudhaiv kutumbakam (global oneness- all the world is a family)

### Work cited

**Emerson, Ralph W.** "Sacred space", "The End". Times of India. 30/12/06 PP. 12.

**Holy Bible.** The Old and New Testaments. The New King James Version. New York: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985. Print.

<http://whitmanarchive.org/criticism/disciples/tei/anc.00170.html> the good grey poet

**Kalidas.** "Shree Satya Narayana Vrata Katha (Technique of Worship)". Tr.Mahamandleshwar. myspace.com/kalidass/blog 19 Nov 2006. n. pag. Web. 10 Jan.2012.

**Kalidas.** Kumarsambhavam. Jaipur: Alankar Prakashan, 1998. 30. Print.

**Manusmriti:** Bhartiya Achar Sanhita Ka Vishvakosh. Comment. Verma, Ramchandra Shashtri. New Delhi: Vidya Vihar, 1997. 110. Print.

**Mercer, Dorothy F.** "Walt Whitman on Karma Yoga." Vedanta and the West 10 (September-October 1947), 150-153.Print.

**O' Conner, William Douglas.** "The good grey poet. A vindication." Whitman Archive ID.anc.00170. n.p.whitmanarchive.org. Web. 25 Nov 2011.

**Ramanathan, A.S.** The Vedic Concept of Atm?. Jaipur: Rajasthan Patrika Limited, 1997. Print.

**Shankar, Anuradha.** "Indian Stories For Children:Harishchandra- 'The Truthful King'" anustoriesforchildren.blogspot.in, 10 Jun 2010. n. pag. Web.10 Jan.2012.

**Sharma, Som P.** "Self, Soul, and God in 'Passage to India.'" College English February (1966), 394-99. Web.22 jun.2012

**Tulsidas, Goswami.** "Uttara K?nd". R?m Charit M?nas. Gorakhpur: Gita Press, 1978. 587. Print.

**The Bhagavatg?t?.** Trans. Radhakrishnan, S. London: George Allen & Union Ltd., 1958. Print.

**Whitman, Walt.** "Chanting the Square Deific". Leaves of Grass. Eds Scully Bradly and Harold W.Blodgett. New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 1986. 444. Print.

- - -. "Autumn Rivulets". Leaves of Grass. Eds. Scully Bradly and Harold W. Blodgett. New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 1986. Print.

- - -. "Darest Thou Now O Soul". Leaves of Grass. Eds. Scully Bradly and Harold W. Blodgett. New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 1986. 441. Print.

- - -. "Me Impurturbe". Leaves of Grass. Eds. Scully Bradly and Harold W. Blodgett. New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 1986. Print.

- - -. "Salut au Monde!". Leaves of Grass. Eds Scully Bradly and Harold W. Blodgett. New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 1986. 172. Print.

- - -. "Scented Herbage of My Breasts". Leaves of Grass. Eds. Scully Bradly and Harold W. Blodgett. New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 1986. Print.



---. "Song of Myself". Leaves of Grass. Eds Scully Bradley and Harold W. Blodgett. New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 1986. PP. 28-89 .Print. .

---. "Song of Universal". Leaves of Grass. Eds Scully Bradley and Harold W. Blodgett. New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 1986. 227. Print.

---. "Unnamed Lands". Leaves of Grass. Eds. Scully Bradley and Harold W. Blodgett. New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 1986. Print.

---. "Whispers of Heavenly Death". Leaves of Grass. Eds. Scully Bradley and Harold W. Blodgett. New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 1986. Print.

---. "Starting Form Paumanok". Leaves of Grass. Eds. Scully Bradley and Harold W. Blodgett. New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 1986. Print.

---. "To Thee Old Cause". Leaves of Grass. Eds. Scully Bradley and Harold W. Blodgett. New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 1986. Print.

---. "A Riddle Song". Leaves of Grass. Eds. Scully Bradley and Harold W. Blodgett. New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 1986. Print.

---. "I Sing The Body Electric". Leaves of Grass. Eds. Scully Bradley and Harold W. Blodgett. New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 1986. Print.

---. "'". Leaves of Grass. Eds. Scully Bradley and Harold W. Blodgett. New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 1986. Print.

**Verma, Rajendra.** "Sin. & Atonement". Comparative Religion: Concepts and Experience. New Delhi: Intellectual Publishing House, 1984. 47. Print.

**Note:**

1. Whitman loved his mother very much and wrote letters to her regularly.
2. Here, it is worthy to mention that from Whitman's residence, articles related to Hindu epics have been collected.
3. The abbreviation – L.G. stands for Leaves of Grass.

**9th. International Writers Festival  
(an International conference  
of Poets, Writers & Scholars)  
on 09-10 November 2013  
at Nellore (Andhra Pradesh)-India.**

**Organisor:** India Intercontinental Cultural Association Chandigarh (India)

**Venue:** Narayana Engineering College, Narayana Avenue, Nellore-524004 (Andhra Pradesh) - India

**Main Theme :** Literature & World Peace with special focus on *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (the whole world is one family).

**Other Suggestive Topics for Papers:**

(i) Contribution of Sainly-Poets for Universal Brotherhood (ii) Devotional Literature (iii) Creating writing (iv) Tradition of Oral Literature (v) Dalit Literature (vi) Modern & Experimental Literature (vii) Internet & Literature (viii) Literary Journalism (ix) Translation Literature (x) Literary Trends (xi) Comparative literary studies (xii) Role and responsibilities of Humanities and social sciences in Technical education (xiii) Diaspora Litrature (xiv) Romani (Roma's) Literature (xv) Any other topic in consultation with the organisers.

Full Info. and registration form related to Festival/Conference are available at :

**[www.kaflaintercontinental.com](http://www.kaflaintercontinental.com)  
[www.indianwriters.org](http://www.indianwriters.org)**

If you are interested in participation, we can send you the official Invitation letter. For any question, please contact :

**Dev Bhardwaj, Director: IICCA,  
# 3437 Sector 46-C, Chandigarh-160047  
Ph. +98728 23437 & +90234 07937  
emails : <writerdev@gmail.com>  
editorkafla@yahoo.com**

## Striking A Bond With Nature : Ecocritical Paradigms In *Shakuntala*

**Dr Renu Josan,**

Associate Professor, Department of  
English Studies, DEI Deemed  
University, Dayalbagh, Agra - 282005  
<renujosan2000@yahoo.co.in>

**By the** second half of the twentieth century, there was a growing realization that the earth was on the brink of ecological devastation perpetrated by the pollution of the biosphere, denudation of forests, due to the speedy technological advancement. This was the scenario which gave birth to a new critical sphere or theory in literature, later labeled as 'Ecocriticism', a term coined by William Rueckert in 1978. Respect for nature and an awareness of interconnectedness are the most basic tenets of Ecocriticism, though, according to Cheryl Glotfelty, in her introduction to *The Ecocriticism Reader*, "nature per se is not the only focus of ecocritical studies of representation. Other topics include the frontier, animals, cities, specific geographical regions, rivers, mountains, deserts, Indians, technology, garbage and the body" (XXIII). Thus Ecocriticism has a wider scope and dimension in that it involves "our human interior and exterior contexts" (Dreese:4), meaning thereby the relationship between human beings and the external environment. Ecocriticism is not just a means of analyzing nature in literature, it implies a move towards a more bio-centric world-view, an extension of ethics, a broadening of humans' conception of global community to include non-human life forms and the physical environment. Ecological literary critics advocate for cultural change by examining how the narrowness of our culture's assumptions about the natural world has limited our ability to envision an ecologically

sustainable human society. It is the interconnection between nature and culture that is at the core of Ecocriticism.

Kalidasa, one of the celebrated Sanskrit poets, has focused on the underlying interconnection between nature and the human world in the drama, *Shakuntala*, regarded as one of the masterpieces of Sanskrit literature. If one is exploring ancient Sanskrit literature that corresponds to ecological principles, *Shakuntala* is the right play to start with. It may be argued that the play is about persons in the midst of nature and not about nature itself, my attempt is to show the symbiotic relationship that exists between persons and nature and how it addresses several environmental issues. Since nothing like the present environmental consciousness existed in the early texts so one would expect to find only in oblique way the concepts that are regarded as paramount in environmental thought.

The setting of the play *Shakuntala* is the preindustrial, indigenous society corresponding to what Nabhan calls as "culture of habitat", where people are deeply absorbed in their immediate environment and enjoy a harmonious relationship with it. The environment in the hermitage of sage Kanva bears a close resemblance to that of the O'odham people of Arizona and the Australian Aborigines, examples of 'culture of habitat' mentioned by Nabhan. Here we do not have the nostalgia for the idyllic past but it is the ecological way of life where nature

and culture exist in a state of reciprocity and are harmoniously intertwined. A bond of mutuality and reciprocity exists between human and non-human world in the hermitage of Kanva. On one hand, we have the inhabitants of Kanva's hermitage deeply rooted in the surrounding environment and on the other hand is King Dushyanta, an outsider who only gazes at nature and fails to experience an affinity with the natural world. When Dushyanta comes to the hermitage, hunting the deer, he is suddenly stopped by a voice, "No, no, your Majesty! Don't kill him, he's a deer of the hermitage" (Coulson: 8). Dushyanta does not feel that human beings are a part of nature; otherwise he will have a realization that he is destroying a part of himself. The ascetic exhorts Dushyanta:

Ascetic:  
 Never, never discharge that weapon  
 Into this soft body like fire into flowers.  
 What has the fragile life of deers to do  
 With your strong-shafted,  
 sharply falling arrows?  
 At once remove  
 The arrow from your bow:  
 Your weapon is meant to help the weak  
 Not smite the innocent. (Coulson: 8)

Realising the deeper significance of lines it can be very well stated in the present social context that those in the higher echelons of power and authority must embark upon a constructive use of nature and not the menacing use of science and technology causing ecological imbalance. The threatening onslaught of mechanization and industrialization has already caused immense havoc bringing the world to the brink of environmental disaster. Moreover, the Ascetic's advice to the king echoes the thoughts of Merwin, when he asserts that the earth "is still

a very beautiful place. It is seen as an object of exploitation rather than as something of which we are apart ... so when we treat it with contempt and we exploit it, we are despising ourselves" (Bryson: 102).

Shakuntala's affinity and a deep bond of love with the surrounding world of flora and fauna is basically a celebration of the multi dimensionality of life and acceptance of the profound relation between nature and human life, thereby, overcoming the divisions of mind/body, man/nature. This concept is made prominent in Kanva's speech addressing the plants to bid farewell to Shakuntala when she is going to her husband King Dushyanta's house.

Kanva :  
 She who would never drink  
 till you yourselves were watered,  
 Who though she loved ornament could  
 never bear to pluck your blossoms,  
 who welcomed with joy the time of  
 your first budding,  
 She, Shakuntala, is going to her  
 husband's house;  
 all of you, make your farewells.

(Coulson: 97).

Shakuntala expresses reverence for the fertility of the earth and embraces a view of nature as an integral whole, a perspective not inconsistent with the ecological representations of nature as an amalgamation of interdependent systems. Shakuntala displays tremendous sensitivity towards the surrounding vegetation, in that she refrains from plucking a blossom despite her immense love for ornaments. The portrayal of such sensitivity by Kalidas stands unparalleled in the literary sphere and it is very well corroborated by the Indian botanist, Sir Jagdish Chandra Bose and the distinguished French

paleontologist, Teilhard de Chardin, who testified the sensitivity of the plants. According to Bose, the plants have life responses, and to Chardin, the sudden breaking of a rocky piece with an accompanying echo-sound conveyed the idea of hidden divine power even in stone.

An ecocentric vision seeks not only to assert the value of non-human perspectives but also somehow to accommodate them in the human sphere since they are constitutive of human life. Unlike Dushyanta, Shakuntala nurtures this vision and the contrast in the attitude of Dushyanta and Shakuntala towards the animals in the hermitage is quite prominent as the fawn, refuses to drink water out of Dushyanta's hand but is happy to take it from Shakuntala's hand. Dushyanta himself comments on the situation thus, "True enough, we all trust those who smell the same, for you and he are both creatures of the forest" (Coulson: 114). Shakuntala has knowledge of the minute things related to the surrounding vegetation and has the attributes of the community that Ray Dasmann calls as 'ecosystem people' (21). By the term 'ecosystem people' is meant the community where people live in harmony with their surrounding environment. On leaving the hermitage, Shakuntala remembers to bid goodbye to the spring creeper which she regards as her sister

Shakuntala (recollecting) : Father, I must say goodbye to my sister among the vines, the spring creeper.

Kanva : Yes, my child, I know how fond you are of it, Look, there it is to the right.

Shakuntala (Going up and embracing the vine): Sister, embrace me with your tendrils, from now on I'll be far away from you. (Coulson: 99)

The very fact that Shakuntala regards the creeper as nothing less than her sister and

asks it to 'embrace her with its tendrils' reflects her extreme love and respect for nature. She is in consonance with the views of Abrams that "all living things and their earthly environment, no less than the human species, possess own importance, value and even moral ... rights" (60).

Ecocritics believe that the natural world is a vibrant force having its own sanctity and in which each individual feels an intimate relation with a particular physical place and where human beings live in interdependence and mutual reciprocity. The state of perfect reciprocity exists between Shakuntala and the natural world, as nature responds with equal measure of love and affection. At the time of Shakuntala's departure from the hermitage, 'the doe drops the grass', 'peahen gives up dancing' and creepers seem to be crying by shedding their pale leaves. Priyamvada, a friend of Shakuntala, reports as to how everyone is feeling about Shakuntala's departure from the hermitage.

Priyamvada : You're not the only one to be upset about your leaving Just look at the state of the grove itself which is going to lose you:

The grass drops from the doe's mouth,  
The peahen gives up dancing,  
And as their pale leaves fall away  
The vines seem to be weeping.

(Coulson: 98)

Linda Hogan, an American Indian writer of the twentieth century has demonstrated the interconnections between the human and natural worlds and how human processes throughout life and death mirror those of the land. She has reinforced the notion of the earth as a vital, living organism upon which we live and emphasizes on the preservation of earth's creatures and bridging the gap between the human and the non-human

world. She says that “caretaking is the utmost spiritual and physical responsibility of our time, and perhaps that stewardship is finally our place in the web of life” (Hogan: 115). The caring and the stewardship that Hogan talks about in the twentieth century, had been well emphasized by Kalidas in *Shakuntala* many centuries back. Shakuntala’s caring for the deer is an excellent example of preservation of earth’s creatures and establishing a harmonious balance between human and natural world. When Shakuntala is leaving the hermitage, she feels someone tugging at her dress, pulling her back, she wonders as to who it can be.

Shakuntala: Oh, who’s this at my heels who keep tugging at my dress?

Kanva: It’s the little fawn whose mouth you dobed with oil of Ingudi

To heal it when it was cut by the sharp grass,

And whom you gently fed on handfuls of wild millet.

He is your adopted son, and will not leave you alone. (Coulson: 99)

Shakuntala regards the surrounding flora and fauna as the family members, in that she considers the spring creeper as her sister and the little fawn as her adopted son and this intense intimacy is at the core of ecological thought. It is upon this respect and reciprocal exchange that the relationship between the natural and human world should be built, and for bringing about such a relationship there is need for a change in the mindset of people regarding nature. The imposition of Western culture has resulted in alienation from nature, which has led to destructive exploitation of earth; whereas, the primitive cultures, overshadowed by the Western culture, always believed in and practised worship of nature. Ecocritics have evinced a deep interest in

Hindu, Buddhist and other religions that are not based on the Western opposition between humans and nature and do not recognize human beings’ dominion over the natural world. In fact, harmonious relationship with nature and understanding the concept of nature as a benefactor has been an integral part of the Indian culture. The practice of performing *yajna* (sacrifice with a philanthropic motive) was instituted by our Vedic ancestors, in order to propagate the concept of giving and sacrifice; and the same approach has been stressed upon by the English writer T.S. Eliot in his work *The Waste Land*, wherein, the quoted Sanskrit words ‘*Datta*’, ‘*Dayadhvam*’ and ‘*Damyata*’ convey the crucial importance of giving, sympathy and self-control. The aim of *Bhoot yajna*, practised by our Vedic ancestors, was to care for all kinds of organisms and work for the welfare of the entire living and non-living world. Unfortunately, the Indians themselves have forgotten their cultural past, being tremendously influenced by the Western materialistic practices.

An individual’s identity is linked with the place or land to which he/she belongs. His/her social, cultural roots lie anchored there and any kind of displacement or dislocation would result in social alienation, thereby, leading to the fragmented self and ultimately loss of identity. Native cultures regard land as pious, sacred and synonymous with their identity, thus establishing a close bond between man and nature. However, due to colonization by the Europeans, in the twentieth century, the American Indian tribes were removed to different landscapes which resulted not only in their loss of self and cultural alienation but also they were subjected to the most severe levels of industrial waste and environmental exploitation. The tribals in India, too, have

suffered a similar fate. Due to the construction of Narmada Dam, the displaced tribals from the state of Maharashtra and Gujarat have an uncertain and bleak future looming large over them. Even though they have been rehabilitated, it is an adverse and hostile environment to which they are unaccustomed. It is a discernible fact that dislocation always causes immense hardships and unwarranted anxiety. This is well corroborated by the displaced families. One of the affected families says “In our native villages, apart from tilling our own fields, we also grew crops in forest land .... Forget additional crop, there is no *gauchar* (land for the cattle to graze) here” (Oza: 34).

Shakuntala experiences a sense of emotional and physical dislocation involving a loss of the self, a cultural alienation, when she moves away from the hermitage of Kanva to meet Dushyanta in the city. She experiences a kind of restlessness and anxiety within her. Her heart palpitates with the apprehension about the uncertainty of future related to her identity as Shakuntala and its recognition by Dushyanta. Shakuntala’s efforts to make Dushyanta remember his relationship with her by citing various incidents are basically an attempt to establish her identity. Despite her best attempts, she is not recognized by Dushyanta and she feels desperate and helpless. As a result of rejection by the king, she develops a kind of hatred for herself and does not wish to live any more and pleads with mother earth to swallow her up. Immediately, she is taken away by a creature (half fish, half woman), emerging from the pond. Thereafter, Shakuntala resides in the natural environs of Marich, which provides her same succour and comfort, as was the case in the hermitage of Kanva. The meeting of

Dushyanta and Shakuntala in the sacred natural premises of Marich signifies the unification of the inner and external self. Dr. Vasudev Krishna Chaturvedi comments thus, “Basically, this union is not the union of two separated lovers but the re-establishment of the perpetual unification of the inner self and the external environment”(Chaturvedi:60).

Due to the pervading influence of the capitalistic culture, it is assumed that nature is productive only through the intervention of technology, even though, it has proved to be detrimental to nature. Vandana Shiva considers this assumption to be narrow in its approach. Due to the prevalent developmental practices, production is possible when it is mediated by technologies “even when such technologies destroy life” (Shiva: 161). Such kind of production is labeled as “Maldevelopment”, which Shiva defines as “the violation of the integrity of a living interconnected world and it is simultaneously at the root of injustice, exploitation, inequality and violence” (Shiva: 193). Such exploitation occurs due to narrow patriarchal thought and action that has vested interest at its core. Moreover, greater emphasis is placed on consumerism and development than a recognition of being an integral part of the fragile ecosystem. According to Booth and Jacobs, “American Indian cultures adapted their needs to the capacities of natural communities; the new inhabitants freshly out of Europe, adapted natural communities to meet their needs”(Dreese:6). Shakuntala has an excellent lesson to offer to the present day industrialists and producers vying for large scale exploitation of mother earth, in order to increase the production. Working in tandem with the natural pattern and order will definitely yield productive results, as exemplified in the

play. Gautami asks a young hermit, Harita, as to from where he has got the dress and ornaments to adorn Shakuntala, when she is going to the city to meet Dushyanta, Harita replies.

Harita : One tree displayed a linen wedding dress, pale as the moon,

Another exuded red lac to dye the feet.

From yet others the hands of forest deities, like graceful shoots of leaf,

Emerged up to the wrist and offered us jewellery.(Coulson: 95)

Here is an excellent example of the bounty and generosity of nature, which, unfortunately, human beings have ceased to acknowledge in their mad pursuit of mechanization and industrialization. However, in the twentieth century, interest has been generated in the study of natural processes and taking them as a model for solving problems of the human world. Jenine Benyus, scientist and author of the book *Biomimicry: Innovation Inspired by Nature* (1997) has emphasized upon sustainability as an objective of Biomimicry, a science that studies nature's models and then imitates or takes inspiration from these designs and processes to solve human problems. It is imperative that the human beings work in tandem with the natural patterns as is made evident in Shakuntala's relationship with her surrounding environment, where she adapts her needs to the natural surroundings and not vice-versa, thus maintaining a sustainable environment.

From the point of view of literature creating awareness about the environment, Kalidas' play *Shakuntala* appears to hold tremendous significance. As viewed in the present context of environmental concerns, it signals to the discerning reader to recognize his/her position within the plethora of life

forms in the world around and work for their welfare, thereby, making this world a safe and happy place to live in. Moreover, the play provides an insight into the need to gain a more balanced perspective on both natural phenomena and their potential meanings for human beings. To express in the words of John Elder, the play may compel us "to recognize more clearly that sensitivity to nature is renewed and expanded by vivid encounters with the non-Western literature"(viii). Kalidas' portrayal of the symbiotic relation between the human and non-human world is, undoubtedly, a significant contribution towards creating environmental consciousness.

## WORKS CITED

1. **Abrams, M.H.** *Glossary of Literary Terms*. Boston: Wadsworth, 2005.
2. **Bryson, Scott, J.** *Ecopoetry*. Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2002
3. **Chaturvedi, Vasudev Krishna.** *Abhigyan-sakuntalam*. Agra: Mahalaxmi Prakashan, 1987.
4. **Coulson, Michael.** Trans. *Three Sanskrit Plays*. England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1981.
5. **Dasman, Ray.** *Wildlife Biology*. New York: John Wiley, 1964.
6. **Dreese, Donelle.** N. *Ecocriticism*. NY: Peterlang Publishing Inc, 2002.
7. **Elder, John.** "Introduction" in *Beyond Nature Writing*. ed Karla Armbruster and Kathleen Wallace. London: University Press of Virginia, 2001.
8. **Glotfelty, Cheryll.** "Introduction", *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* eds Glotfelty and Fromm. Athens: Univ. of Georgia, 1996.
9. **Hogan, Linda.** *Dwellings: A Spiritual History of the Living World*. NY: Touchstone, 1995.
10. **Oza, Nandani.** "Dam and the damned". *The Week*, 07 Nov 2010.
11. **Shiva, Vandana.** "Development as a New Project of Western Patriarchy". Dimond and Orenstein 121.\*\*

# The Folk Music of Tamilnadu

## A. Esther Pradeeba

Asst. Professor (Bharathanatyam)  
Department of Music, Annamalai University  
Chidambaram –608 002 (Tamilnadu)  
Ph. 99431-16226. <a.e.pradeeba@gmail.com>

**Music is** an Art; it is associated with human life and is closely related to culture and civilization of a country and its people.

The Tamil language is evocative, replete with poetry, classical allusions and natural phenomena. This poetry is reflected in the arts music and dance, sculpture and painting. The folk music of Tamilnadu reflect the socio-religious customs and practices of rural people.

The folk music of Tamilnadu has very ancient origins and reflects the many activities of village people. It is notable for its intricate Thalal (rhythm), ancient tunes and musical instruments.

There are many folk songs sung by the people, by wandering minstrels and festival singers, which are topical and describe the life, hopes and beliefs of the common people.

The term folk music is often loosely applied to cover all traditional or orally transmitted music, music that is passed on by ear and performed by memory rather than by the written or printed musical score. The common characteristics found in the folk music of all countries are that they are simple and with easy rhythm. Folk music called 'nattu-p-purappattu or natoti-p-patal in Tamil is the music of villagers. The function of folk music is primarily entertainment. The ideas conveyed through folk songs are highly suggestive and thought provoking.

### The classifications of Folk music

1. Themmangu
2. Chindhu

3. Nayandi
4. Oppari
5. Thalattu
6. Villupaattu
7. Occupational songs
8. Marriage songs

### Themmangu

Themmangu means, music of the southern region.

Then + Pangu = Themmangu

In Southern parts of Tamilnadu, Themmangu is played in 'Nadeswaram' to the accompaniment of the percussion instrument 'Thavil'. There are different types of 'Themmangu'. They are,

- i) Otthadi - Themmangu
- ii) Rendadi - Themmangu
- iii) Naladi - Themmangu
- iv) Thekkathi - Themmangu
- v) Dappath - Themmangu
- vi) Iluvai - Themangu

In some of the folk dances, like karagattam, oyilattam, kuravan kurathi attam, Raja Rani attam, these types of Themmangu's are used in Tamilnadu.

The example given here belong to the southern region of Tamilnadu and hence the name 'Thekkathi' temmanku'.

tannanna nananna tannane tane  
tana nannana tannane  
kalaiyarkoilu katukkulle  
Kanni yaliyata tennampulle  
tennam pullai yellam palap pokutu  
tirumpip parayya kala lingkampotu (tanna  
nna.....)

## Chindhu

There are different types of Chindhu's in Folk music.

They are

- i) Nondi Chindhu
- ii) Valayal Chindhu
- iii) Kummi Chindhu
- iv) Kolai Chindhu
- v) Kavadi Chindhu

'Kavadi Chindu' is used in kaavadi attam, a folk dance form. In Nondi drama's, nondi chindhu is used. Kolai chindhu is about the brutally murdered person. This chindhu is used in folk dramas. Vallayal chindhu is a song sung by the 'Banga Sellers' in the villages.

In group dances like oyilattam and kummi, 'kummi chindhu' is used.

Kottungadi! Kummi Kottungadi! – Nalla  
Kolavap Pottu Kottungadi!  
Ettukudi Namma Velavar Samiku  
Elaruma sendhu kottungadi!  
Vasalile vannak kolamittul – Nall  
Vasanaiya paneer Than Thelithu!  
Osai Kilamba Kummi Kotti! – Nalla  
Osandhu Kulavap Podungadi!

## Nayandi Melam

Nayandi means teasing. To make audience happy, the folk artists makes Fun and sings this type of Teasing songs. This type of music is performed mostly with the accompaniment of 'Nayandi Melam'. This troop has Thavil, Tamuku, Oththudhi kuzhal, Nadeswaram, Pambai, Orumi and Jalra as their Musical accompaniments.

Different types of Nayandi

- i) Sivangai Nayandi
- (ii) Solamalai Nayandi
- (iii) Vilamba Nayandi
- (iv) Thekkathi Nayandi

Nayandi Melam is a rustic imitation of the classical melam or Nadeswaram and is

intended purely as an accompaniment to Folk-dance-drama to cater to the tastes of the unlettered audience. The peculiarity of Nayandi Melam is that the instrumentalists also dance while playing their Instruments.

## Oppari (Lamentation)

Music plays an important role in the life of Tamils. There is no wonder in a Tamil woman's lamenting over her dear one's death, with music. This is called 'oppari' which is of several kinds such as songs meant for one's parent, brother sister, husband and child. Each type will have suitable vocative such as "ennepetha amma", "enne petha appa" etc....

In maraddippu attam, a dance form, they sings this 'oppari' with rhythm and dances in a circular shape.

One example which describes a young widow's feeling at the time of her husband's death.

"Kottatru Kandangi Koidhudukum  
Nalaiyile

Vellai Pudavaiyinai Veluthudukum  
Nallache

Poochudum Koondhalile Puludhi Pada  
Nerdhache

Thangadurai Menithan Thariyil vilundhache  
Ponnudurai Menithan Puludhiyil  
vilundhache

Nengal Irandhu poyache

Indru kanda poo mugathai Ini nan

Endru kanna poren Aiyo!

## Thalattu – (Lullabies)

It is a universal and age-old custom among women to sing lullabies while swinging the child in the cradle.

The music of lullaby differs from caste to caste and region to region, but they are so melodious that the child stops crying and begins to sleep. Lullabies are passed on through generations by oral tradition and they

form an important part of the folk music of Tamilnadu.

There are songs which exemplify the child as a king, a God and all illustrious man. Many lullabies narrate the childhood, development and heroic deeds of the divine incarnations Rama and Krishna.

Generally, lullabies glorify the uncle (mother's brother)

Araro! Ariraro! Oonai Adithadhu Araro?  
Aditharai Choli Alu – En Kanne  
Akinaigal seithiduvom!  
Thottarai choli Alu – En kanne  
Thol vilangu pottiduvom!  
Amma Adithalo Amudhuthum Kaiyale  
Patti Adithalo Paluttum Kaiyale  
Annan Adithano Anaithedukum Kaiyale  
Athai Adithalo Adhalippu Chendale?

### **Villupaattu**

Among the various types of folk music, villupaattu (bow song) is the most famous. It is very popular today in the southern districts of Tamilnadu, such as Thirunelveli, Ramanathapuram, Kanyakumari, etc....

The villu is a long, lacquered bow made either of a sturdy branch of the palmyra tree or of a bamboo stick, whose two ends are joined by a strong high-tensioned string made either of skin or nerve. One end of the bow is set to rest on the neck of a large sized earthen pot, which in turn, rests on a soft cushion or a circular cavity made of coconut fibre, on the whole, it looks like a magnified crescent with its two ends pointed upwards to produce melodious music.

The small bells which are tied to the string are struck by two slender wooden rods known as veesukol, to which beads are attached just above the grip of the land. The chief vocalist, who is the story teller, plays on the villu with two veesukol's, one in each hand and sings.

The orchestra includes other musical instruments like the udukkai, a second villu, a pot and the thaala kattai, all of which are played along with the villu.

The orchestra, which consists of eight members, takes up the refrain and repeats the last phrase of each line, or say 'aama' (yes) and other sounds to denote agreement when the story teller finishes a tune, couplet or a stanza.

Very well – coordinated, vigorous and fast moving music is one of the special characteristics of this form. When the chief sings, the others play on the instrument. But when the others sing, the chief plays with his veesukol on the string of the bow. The deftness and the imagination with which he plays his veesukol is a marvel during such performance.

### **Occupational songs**

Occupational songs are an important aspect of rural life, since there is hardly any occupation without song and music. These songs are relevant to the various activities and aspects of rural life which involve hard work and toil. For each stage of cultivation, the agricultural labourers have an appropriate song. Cleaning the fields by cutting the shrubs, and creepers that grow in the off season, ploughing the soil, planting the seeds, watering the field, transplanting, weeding, reaping, collecting grain on the threshing floor, transporting the produce to carts, pounding in the mortar, grinding in a handmill and similar activities are the stages through which staple food is produced, processed and prepared for cooking. While singing these occupational songs people do not use any percussion aids, since these folk songs are devoid of rhythmic support.

### Harvesting Song

“Kodaikala Kadirarupam! Elelangadi  
Elelom!

Kodikalam kadirarupam! Elelangadi  
Elelom!

Nalum Nalla Kadirarupam! Elelangadi  
Elelom!

Nanum Varathonudhadi! Elelangadi  
Elelom!

### Marriage Songs

These songs are still preserved in some castes all over Tamilnadu. This is classified into two the first one entertaining teasing and rejoicing and the second one praising and Blessing.

Nalunku and Pattiyam belong to the first category while Boat songs, swing songs and blessing songs, belong to the second.

#### Nalunku

Bride’s sisters tease the Bridegroom; in the same way bridegroom’s sisters will tease the bride there are songs which the bride and the groom sing themselves to each other.

#### Pattiyam

The bride’s and the Bridegroom’s mothers will also exchange words through some songs which are known as ‘pattiyam’.

### Swing songs

The bride and the bridegroom will be seated on a swing while auspicious women will sing ‘swing songs’ in which the newly married are compared to divine couples.

### Boat song

The newly married couple is again praised as one of the divine couples. The musical syllable in this song is found in fishermen’s songs that is ‘elelo, elelo, which makes this song a ‘boat song’.

### Conclusion

Music plays an important role in the life of Tamils. Folk songs reveal the real feelings and ideas. It explains the culture of a people. The rural folks of Tamilnadu love and enjoy of life. Music at every phase of life. Folk music is a valuable source of history and need to be preserved for all time.

\*\*\*

Have your own website like:  
**www.yourname.com**  
in just Rs. 3000 onwards  
(Domain+5GB webspace+web pages)

*Contact:*

**Kafla Inter-Continental**  
# 3437 Sector 46-C  
Chandigarh-160047  
Ph. ++98728-23437,  
<editorkafla@yahoo.com>  
<[www.kaflaintercontinental.com](http://www.kaflaintercontinental.com)>

*Read and subscribe*

### Conifers Call

(Shimla Journal of Poetry and Criticism)

ISSN 0975-5365

Editor : Harish Thakur

Thakur Building , New Totu, Shimla,  
(Himachal Pradesh)- 171011

Phone: +9418008900

coniferscall@ymail.com; harish\_070@yahoo.co.in

[www.coniferpublications.com](http://www.coniferpublications.com)

# Theorizing Diaspora and its Literature for World Peace

---

**Dr. Jayanta Kar Sharma**

Rourkela College, Sector-4, Rourkela

(Odisha) - 769002

Ph. 98611 68455. <jayantakarsharma@gmail.com>

**Rapid** changes in social, political, economic and cultural spheres in the present time have development implications that affect the nations. Human mobility is more rapid than ever before. Today, the diasporas are potent socio-economic, political and cultural forces quite visible globally. Towards the end of 20th century, there were about 150 million people living outside their country of origin, substantial parts among them being diasporas. Mobility of human beings and international migration is an inevitable phenomenon. The UNDP Development Report 2009 “Development on the Move” emphasized a lot on the impact of people who are always on the move. Mobility of people across the border is also linked to the overall development of the society.

The term ‘Diaspora’ traditionally refers to the movement of the Jewish people away from their own country to live and work in other countries thereby carrying with it a strong connotation of suffering, loss and return. Etymologically, ‘Diaspora with its connotative political weight is drawn from Greek meaning to disperse and signifies a voluntary or forcible movement of the people from the homeland into new regions.’ Over time, the concept has also become used to describe other dispersed groups, and from the 1990s onwards, has particularly gained popularity in the field of cultural studies and social sciences. In recent years, the concept has entered the realm of policy making and there has been a growing interest in Diasporas as potential agents of development and peace building. The African

Union, for example, considers Diasporas to be the sixth region of Africa. The prevailing definition of Diaspora seems to be a group that recognizes its separateness based on common ethnicity or nationality, lives in a host country, and Diaspora Literature involves an idea of a homeland, a place from where the displacement occurs and narratives of harsh journeys. Theoretical definitions of Diasporas within the existing literature are extensive and vary wide. Earlier definitions focus more on forcible dispersion and the myth of return (Safran 1990; 1999). Definitions made in the field of cultural studies particularly approach the notion of Diaspora as a type of consciousness, with an emphasis on their hybrid identities (Clifford 1994; Hall 1990). In recent years, the focus has shifted from the more limited definitions of who should be considered as part of Diasporas, to take into account the complex processes of mobilization and the heterogeneous nature of Diaspora groups (Werbner 2002; Kleist 2007). Overall, even though the definitions may vary, ‘Diaspora’ as a concept tends to build on three common criteria: dispersal; settlement in multiple locations; and, the idea of a homeland’. Various forms of dislocation, such as exile, Diaspora, and migration, have been productively and extensively explored in both postcolonial theory and literary texts. It is an undisputed historical fact that the past century has witnessed the large-scale displacement and dispersal of populations across the world as a result of major political upheavals, among them the two European wars, decolonization

and the Cold war. Following on these, globalization, spurred by free trade and increased capital flows, and new technologies of communication, information, and travel, has accelerated the movement of people, commodities, ideas, and cultures across the world. Diaspora is regarded not as a singular phenomenon but as historically varied and heterogeneous in its aspect.

Moreover, the term 'Diasporic' or 'Diaspora' or 'Diasporans' should apply to a group of people who share the common fate of displacement but not to an individual's migration to a new country or another country. A boundary line has to be drawn between writers of exile or immigration and writers of Diaspora. The immigrants who struggle to negotiate a new territory, culture and milieu, often suffer from fragmentation and alienation. Alienation is a part of the experience of the Indian Diaspora and even if people are at home in any part of the world it does not mean that they will not become victims of the sense of alienation. Increasing acceptance into the host society does not indicate that the Diasporic characters can feel at home. Social alienation is replaced by metaphysical alienation. Diaspora has meaning only in relation to the parent country. The question of 'cultural identity', based on race, gender, color, religion, language, ancestry, is a subtle issue in the post-colonial world. But when people constantly cross the borders in search of independence or in pursuance of dreams, the preservation of ethnic identity in cosmopolitan 'melting pots' like America becomes difficult. Labels like 'Asian-American', 'African-American', 'Mexican-American', 'Indian-American', 'Black - American', 'Native-American' etc. invariably hints at the attempt to exclude some minority

migrant population who live "beyond the centre of white pergola"(Watson 2000:38). This raises a quintessential question related to identity, "who is an American?" Linda Dittomar(1995) argues "American is the only word, the united states has, to define its nationality". Thus she relates the term to political citizenship but in the multi-cultural 'salad bowl' that America is, it is the process of "integration" and "assimilation" that often determines the identity of a migrant community. C.W. Watson, therefore, distinguishes these two processes determining identity. He observes, 'Assimilation presupposes a complete erasure of identity, where as integration involves recognition of the distinct identity'(2000:37). Hence, identities like 'American-Indian' or 'Indian-American' depend on the degree of assimilation or integration with the central culture. But this again poses the question, "who is an Indian?" Does the term apply only to the citizens of India or others living outside India? Homi K. Bhabha is an exponent of this line of thought. An Indian by birth, he migrated to Britain and now lives in America. He examines in 'The Location Of Culture' the problem of the people who live 'borderlines' in between country and homeland.

Diaspora is a minority community living in exile, maintains some kind of attachment to home country. This attachment may be primarily to culture. In recent years Diaspora is used as a cover term to include all kinds of people- exiles, expatriates and immigrants writers who live in other countries away from home. While Diaspora is certainly an ancient phenomenon, it has now become an integral component of the global political and social milieu, attracting vigorous attention since the '9/11' incident in both the host lands and the

emigrants' homelands. Despite all the contradictions, controversies and speculations inherent in deploying the concept of Diaspora, the notion is of continued utility. Derrida has raised several questions on critical theory of Diaspora: where then are we, where do we find ourselves, with whom can we identify in order to affirm our own identity and to tell ourselves our own history? Derrida suggests, 'One would have to construct oneself, one should be able to invent oneself without a model and without an assured addressee. A great deal of Indian writing in English is produced not in India but in widely distributed geographical areas of indenture ('Girmit') i.e. Indian Diaspora in the South Pacific, the Caribbean, South Africa, Mauritius, and the contemporary Indian diasporas in the U.S.A., the U.K., Canada and Australia. The diasporic experience can serve as a form of transcultural critique, offering the possibility of 'reading one culture's space and time from the space and time of another'. We will also look at the strategic value of 'doubleness' in terms of identity constructions and self- (re)inventions, and also the concept of creolisation as a strategy for cultural resistance. Their sense of yearning for the homeland, a curious attachment to its traditions, religions and languages give birth to Diasporic literature which is primarily concerned with the individual's or community's attachment to the homeland. The role of these Diaspora communities is to initiate a feeling of 'home' and to provide a centre for mental convergence. This mental migration is a challenge for any Diasporic community. The question of settling remains unanswerable to any Diasporian unless they associate themselves with any of the two lands. Their oscillated

mind, their suffering and agony out of cultural change are expressed by the Diaspora in different genres of Literature. The Post colonialist theory deals with the problems of the outcomes of Diaspora like migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, caste, class, culture, gender and place.

Post Colonialism has its close association with cross-culturalism in which 'cross' represents the crossing of discrete barriers from one construction to another which envisages a consequent expansion of boundaries. Though in the age of technological advancement which has made the traveling easier and the distance shorter so the term Diaspora has lost its original connotation, yet it has also emerged in another form healthier than the former. Globalization has produced new patterns of migration and provoked diverse responses all over the world. The Diasporic consciousness manifests itself in a variety of ways: a sense of loss and dispossession, a feeling of remaining straddled between two cultures, and anxiety to belong—either to one's native cultural milieu or the new environment; an assertion of one's nativity or immigrant status; an attempt to turn one's inbetweenness into strength; an agenda of multiculturalism; an active interrogation of all notions of belonging and an ultimate urgency to prove oneself.

The theme of exclusion is all-pervasive in literature. But the Diaspora literature particularly is replete with moods, mores, experiences etc. caused by the cultural exclusion of the expatriate community. Displaced and dislocated from the roots, the migrant/ immigrant/ expatriate community suffers from spatial, emotional and cultural dislocation revealed in various forms of 'culture shock',

'culture cringe' as well as cultural 'hybridization'. Many of the expatriate Indian writers like Raja Rao, Ashis gupta, Bharati Mukherjee, Rohinton Mistry, Anita Desai, Uma Parameswaram, Jhumpa Lahiri etc. have documented the lives of the displaced and dour migrants, often living beyond the centre of the white pergola and longing for the lost world. The predicament of these 'othered', 'smothered' migrants, living in a collapsible world without an axis, floating rootless in a space beyond 'home', has been explored in many post-colonial theories in terms of binary opposites such as; 'alienation and acculturation' (Taft, 1973), 'citizenship and sovereignty' (Bhaba, 1994), 'displacement and belonging' (Said, 1994), 'revenge and reconciliation' (Fanon, 1967), 'abrogation and appropriation' (Hall, 1996) as well as 'divergence and convergence' (Tiffin, 1989). The theme of cultural alienation and loss of identity that immigrant faces in making a new home in a foreign land receives evocative treatment in Jhumpa Lahiri's 'The Namesake'. It stresses the need to cultivate the best of modernity by intermingling of the best in the East and the West. She has made the use of the Diasporic experience of her own and her parents. Born of Bengali parents, settled down in US, She is influenced by the two cultures. Thus, the novel has a global relevance.

Indian Diaspora can be classified into two kinds: i). Forced Migration to Africa, Fiji or the Carribbean on account of slavery or indentured labour in the 18th or 19th century. ii). Voluntary Migration to U.S.A., U.K., Germany, France, Canada or other European countries for the sake of professional or academic purposes. The modern Diasporic Indian writers can be grouped into two distinct classes. One class comprises those

who have spent a part of their life in India and have carried the baggage of their native land offshore. The other class comprises those who have been bred since childhood outside India. The writers of the former group have a literal displacement whereas those belonging to the latter group find themselves rootless. Both the groups of writers have produced an enviable corpus of English literature. These writers while depicting migrant characters in their fiction, explore the theme of displacement and self-fashioning. The Diasporic Indian writers' depiction of dislocated characters gains immense importance if seen against the geopolitical background of the vast Indian subcontinent. According to Amitava Ghosh, 'the Indian Diaspora is one of the most important demographic dislocation of Modern Times'(Ghosh,) and each day is growing and assuming the form of representative of a significant force in global culture. If we take the Makarand Paranjape, we will find two distinct phases of Diaspora, these are called the visitor Diaspora and Settler Diaspora much similar to Maxwell's 'Invader' and 'Settler' Colonialist. The first Diaspora consisted of disprivedged and subaltern classes forced alienation was a one- way ticket to a distant Diasporic settlement. As, in the days of yore, the return to Homeland was next to impossible due to lack of proper means of transportation, economic deficiency, and vast distances so the physical distance became a psychological alienation, and the homeland became the sacred icon in the diasporic imagination of the authors also'.

But the second Diaspora was the result of man's choice and inclination towards the material gains, professional and business interests. It is particularly the representation of

privilege and access to contemporary advanced technology and communication. Vijay Mishra is correct when he finds V S Naipaul as the founding father of old Diaspora but it is also not wrong to see Salman Rushdie as the representative of Modern (second) Diaspora. V S Naipaul remarkably portrays the search for the roots in his 'A House for Mr. Biswas'. 'The Diasporian authors engage in cultural transmission that is equitably exchanged in the manner of translating a map of reality for multiple readerships. Diasporic writings are full of feelings of alienation, loving for homeland, dispersed and dejection, a double identification with original homeland and adopted country, crisis of identity, ethnic memory and protest against discrimination. An Autonomous space becomes permanent which non- Diasporas fail to fill'. M K Gandhi, the first one to realize the value of syncretic solutions, hence he never asked for a pure homeland for Indians in South Africa's Socio-cultural space and so Sudhir Kumar confirms Gandhi as the first practitioner of Diasporic hybridity. Gandhi considered all discriminations of high and low, small or great, Hindu or Muslim or Christian or Sikh but found them 'All were alike the children of Mother India.'

'Diasporans are pulled by two forces- centripetal and centrifugal and are torn between two worlds'.(Das:2007) They face two cultures, two languages, two countries and remain suspended between them. In the nineteenth century, Europeans particularly the French and the British spread across the world both as settlers and colonizers, while the Africans and Asians were sent away to different places as indentured labourers. In old Diaspora witnessed the migration of poor people from the colonized countries to other

countries the new Diaspora resulted in the migration of best minds to the west in the postcolonial period. Hence, Second Diaspora has something to do with brain drain and new colonialism. The immigrant writer writes his sense of belonging and this is worked out through retelling of the past in various ways; it is like using the same events but each time arranging them differently in order to read them differently and to exercise their hold. Thus; there are the preoccupation with the past, the lost homeland and the lost identity. Those who are routed and move to alien environment, need to hang on and stay alive. They are keen to belong to a group, retain their identity, language and culture in the new and culturally different environment. They must find acceptance in the alien society and must retain their sense of well being despite dislocation. The question of cultural survival is crucial in this particular context. They try to retain their ethnic distinction, knowledge, values and belief systems in a plural society rather than assimilate into a non- existing melting pot and transmute them to the next generation. According to Ramraj, there are two types of Diasporas- traditionalist and assimilationist, the former retains its separate identity, while the latter gradually merges with the mainstream of the host country and eventually ceases to be regarded as a Diaspora. Therefore, the theory of Diaspora believes in the principle of 'Salad bowl or mosaic not melting pot'.

Multiculturalism performs a useful service in recalling for us that there are several dimensions of experience at stake. Identity and self-respect, a sense of belonging to a community, religion, nation, a sense of commitment to a place like home or language and a sense of history arising out of a link to

the past traced through kinship and family tradition. These things have been depicted appropriately in a Hindi novel titled 'Begane Apne' (2006) by Vishnu Chandra Sharma. All the characters of the novel are suffering from the crisis of identity. Mauritius is an excellent example where these strived to preserve, promote and perpetuate Indian culture and ethos. Among the languages Hindi survived in most places and many have produced literature and have run Journals to record Diaspora writings. Mr. Abhimanyu Unnuth of Mauritius is the most read Hindi novelist of the Indian Diaspora. His work *Lal Pasina* – (The Red Sweat) is a powerful narration of the travails of Indian workers in the 19th century. Literature in Hindi and other Indian languages also evolved concomitantly with the rise of the Indian community throughout the 20th century. Other notable Diasporic writers in Hindi are Subramani of Fiji, whose novel *Daura Puraan* in Hindi has been described as the nineteenth Puraan. Canada has been home for many Punjabi and Gujarati writings, whereas Malaysia and Singapore have produced Tamil writings. North America has produced significant Telugu writers. Many popular writers like Chittenraju, K.V.S.Rama Rao, Kanneganti Chandra, Cherukuri Rama Devi, Satyam Mandapati, Vemuri Venkateshwara Rao, Kalasapudi Srinivasa Rao have been consistently producing for the past 30 years from their Diasporic space. Writings in Punjabi and Gujarati have been very common since the initial migration of Indians to Canada at the turn of the century. In Punjabi, Ajmer Rode, Surjit Kalsey, Ravinder Ravi, Kashmir Singh Chaman, Santosh Chinna, Darshan Gill, Gurucharan Ramapuri, Iqbal Ramuwalia, Amarjit Chahal & Tarlochan Singh Gill, are some of the writers who have been known for their writings. The Punjabis also have

a number of local newspapers for the Punjabis of Indo-Canadian origin. Among them, *Hindustani* and *Sansar* are very popular ones. In Gujarati, Ramunik Shah, Ashwin Vaidya are very significant names in such a group of writers. Manobendra Mukhopadhyay is an important name in Bengali. Writing in Urdu began in the 1960s and continues to enjoy a substantial readership. Although writings in Sanskrit could not get such popularity as Punjabi or Gujarati or Urdu, but their initiative dance dramas had really made a landmark in the writings of Indo-Canadians. *Pancha Kanya Tarangi*, *Veer Kanya Vahini*, *Kinkini Mala*, and *Dima Panchakam* are very popular Sanskrit dance dramas based on Buddhist themes that reveal the traditions and cultures of India in a different shade. In the field of music, "Chutney" was the name given to the pop/folk music of the East Indians that lived in the Caribbean region. The popularity of "Calcutta Woman" in 1996 provided a giant leap for the Chutney music industry.

Literature of Diaspora across the globe has something to do with postmodernism and postcolonialism. Globalization influences largely the diasporic movement in the world - more so in India. In the 19<sup>th</sup> and early Part of 20<sup>th</sup> century, since the nation was at the peak of the thought of the people because of the Imperialistic culture, anti-colonialism was foremost in the mind. Gandhi and Fanon, an Algerian revolutionist were in the forefront of the movement. So, the nation became the hallmark of the Colonial era and up to the first half of the twentieth century. But after we got our independence we find that nationalism is not enough and there is nothing called a national boundary because we cannot stop at the boundaries. The second half of the twentieth century was swept by the great migratory movement. But in the post-

independent period or post-colonial period we find our best minds not only in India but of all over the colonial states are migrated towards the west and particularly to the U.S. So the whole world is governed by a great migratory movement which gave rise to the immigrant policies or it can be called as immigration Diaspora. In other terms, since the whole world was governed by the migratory movement, we cannot stop at the national boundary and the nation cannot be the boundary and that cannot imprison us either physically or mentally. As a result of which, the intellectuals travelled all over the world. Since they travelled all over the world, the whole world became one global community not only electronically or technically but also mentally. So, we find there is a question of transmigration of cultures. Jasbir Jain rightly says “With new capitalistic forces unleashed, migrations and dislocations have become the order of the day. The boundaries of the nation-state are getting fainter and fainter paradoxically at a time when nationalism itself is resurfacing with unprecedented aggressiveness. No human society has been able to avoid either migration or dislocation for whatsoever reason; and consequently none has been able to avoid multiculturalism”. (Jain.2004:Introduction) The West Indies is the classic example of a ‘created’ multicultural society. Even the so-called Islamic states have a mix of races or religions or of both.

In old Diaspora it witnessed the migration of poor people from the colonized countries to other countries whereas the new Diaspora resulted in the migration of best minds to the west in the postcolonial period. Diaspora is a global phenomenon. According to Makarand Paranjape; the South Asian Diaspora is more than eleven million strong. People of Indian

origin now reside in over seventy countries across all the continents of the world. The number of Diasporans is increasing by leaps and bounds in recent years. We know from history that displacement of individuals can occur in one of the two ways: forcibly and voluntarily depending upon the situation and mindset of the people. If the old Diaspora was occasional by force, the new Diaspora sprang out of the desire to make personal gain in terms of finance and international recognition. Like the theory of Deconstruction, the theory of Diaspora is open ended. Theoreticians like Stuart Hall, Edward Said, Gayatri Chakraborthy Spivak, Homi. K. Bhabha, Ray Chow, Poul Gilroy, William Safran and James Clifford have studied diaspora from various angles- from exile to hybridity and from Diasporic flow to groping for a space and moving between two worlds- one lost and another to be discovered, the issue remains unresolved.

The members of a Diasporic community has permanent link with the past migration history. Even the children born to migrant parents are influenced by the past migration history of their parents or grandparents. Going back to the homeland is not an easy solution available to them. Like the mythical king *Trishanku* they look at two worlds and belong to neither. Diaspora is linked with memory of the past- hence it has something to do with history and culture. The Diasporic writer like Diasporic community is neither here i.e. the place of origin or birth and also like ‘Trishanku’ is suspended between the two worlds. Homi Bhabha calls it ‘a third space’ in his ‘The Location of Culture’. The Diasporans are non-resident natives of their homeland and resident-aliens of their current place of living. Diasporic writers are also moving away from the country of their

work. Another important point is that the border line between the old Diaspora of the colonial period and new Diaspora in the postcolonial era is getting blurred. Makarand Paranjape aptly states the dividing lines between the older and newer Diasporas are fast disappearing because the descendants are more akin to the new Diaspora. The Diasporic writing issues out of by the Diasporic writer's concern for his lost homeland and a new found land that means the writer is re-locating himself in his lost homeland and culture, while trying to grow roots somewhere else. Since Diaspora and homeland are interrelated, 'the theme of belonging opposes rootedness to uprootedness, establishment to marginality. Diasporic writings are invariably concerned with the individual's or community's attachment to the centrifugal homeland. But 'this attachment is countered by a yearning for a sense of belonging to the current place of abode'.

Diaspora texts are not bound by national boundaries and hence, they are transnational, Makarand paranjape is right in saying that 'the texts themselves are journey's between source cultures and target cultures, between homelands and diasporas, until the two overlap, change places or merge. The product of post colonial cross-culturalism is 'cultural hybridity'. Bhabha in his work analyses this shifting of margins in the authenticity of cultures. The diversity of cultures present in such nations and the experiences of its members and the varied social groups which are all the products of Diaspora, become a major concern in framing the term 'Post colonial Diaspora Literature', which turns out to be a hybrid of Post colonial Literature. Later it has been further hybridized to be called as 'Diaspora Literature'. These feelings lead to the outcome of 'Diaspora Literature'. The sense of isolation, alienation and aloofness

amidst thousands of people in an adoptive land are depicted in the Diaspora Literature. The writers who belong to this particular category of literature may even be a Diasporian and mostly their novels would be the outcome of the sufferings and agony they experience out of the colonial encounter and also of the cultural alienation. The most prominent Diaspora writers of the contemporary Diaspora Literature are Salman Rushdie, V. S. Naipaul, Bharati Mukherjee, Rohinton Mistry and others. India-born, America-settled Bharati Mukherjee, presents in her novels *Wife* and *Jasmine* the female protagonists Dimple and Jasmine, who face the problem of the loss of culture and they both endeavor to assert a new identity in the United States.

'Indian Diaspora'-what makes it "Indian". India is not a culturally monolithic entity, it is a compendium of ethnicities, languages and traditions. The question of the "Indianness" of Indians acquires a particular poignancy overseas, as Indians abroad shed their regional, linguistic, and ethnic identities. However it is evident that one is more easily an Indian abroad than in India; the category of "Indian" is not contested abroad as it is in India. The language is the first to go in the assimilation process for the Diasporans. But as the Indian Diasporic presence increases the usage and visibility of Indian language too increases significantly. Indians have retained their language, although with difficulty, where ever they have gone, be it Trinidad, Fiji, UK or USA. Religion is one of the identity markers that help them preserve their self-awareness and group cohesion. Religion served as a major symbolic resource in the building of the community and professing ethnic identity. The Diasporans carry with them ideas and images from the "old home" to the "new host" setting.

The Indian Diaspora has been formed by a scattering of population and not, in the Jewish sense especially after Indian independence the Indian Diasporic community has acquired a new identity due to the processes of self-fashioning and increasing acceptance by the West. It is interesting to note that the history of diasporic Indian writing is as old as the Diaspora itself. In fact the first Indian writing in English is credited to Dean Mahomed, who was born in Patna, India, and after working for fifteen years in the Bengal Army of the British East India Company, migrated to “eighteenth century Ireland, and then to England” (Kumar) in 1784. His book *The Travels of Dean Mahomed* was published in 1794. It predates by about forty years the first English text written by an Indian residing in India, Kylas Chunder Dutt’s “imaginary history” *A Journal of Forty-Eight Hours of the Year 1945* published in 1835 (ref. Mehrotra, 95). The first Indian English novel, Bankimchandra Chatterjee’s *Rajmohan’s Wife*, was to be published much later in 1864. It shows that the contribution of the Indian diaspora to Indian writing in English is not new. Also interestingly, the descendants of the Indian indentured labourers in the so called “girit colonies” have predominantly favoured writing in English, the lingua franca of the world. The likes of Seepersad Naipaul and later Shiva Naipaul, V. S. Naipaul, Cyril Dabydeen, David Dabydeen, Sam Selvon, M. G. Vassanji, Subramani, K. S. Maniam, Shani Muthoo, and Marina Budhos are significant contributors in that field. V. S. Naipaul’s characters, like Mohun Biswas from *A House for Mr. Biswas* or Ganesh Ramsumair from *The Mystic Masseur*, are examples of individuals who are generations away from their original homeland, India, but

their heritage gives them a consciousness of their past. The novels of the older generation of diasporic Indian writers like Raja Rao, G. V. Desani, Santha Rama Rau, Balachandra Rajan, Nirad Chaudhuri, and Ved Mehta predominantly look back at India and rarely record their experiences away from India as expatriates. It is as if these writers have discovered their Indianness when they are out of India. Obviously they have the advantage of looking at their homeland from the outside.

The Diasporic Indian writers of the first generation have already established their credentials by winning numerous literary awards and honours. But recently, the second generation of Indian writers in the West have swelled enormously and many among them have won international recognition. Meera Syal, who was born in England, has successfully represented the lives of first generation as well as second generation non-resident Indians in the West in her novels *Anita and Me* and *Life Isn’t All Ha Ha Hee Hee*. Hari Kunzru in his novel *Transmission* traces a part of the lives of three diverse characters Leela Zahir, an actress, Arjun Mehta, a computer expert, and Guy Swift, a marketing executive -traversing through Bollywood, the Silicon Valley, and London. Sunetra Gupta has shown with candor both the unpleasantness and the pleasantness of intercultural relationships through characters like Moni and Niharika from her novels *Memories of Rain* and *A Sin of Colour*. Jhumpa Lahiri’s book of short stories *Interpreter of Maladies* and her novel *The Namesake* convincingly illustrate the lives of both first generation and second generation Indian migrants in the US. This is possible because big issues like religious intolerance and racial discrimination are no longer the main concern of these writers. What matters now

in the current world are the small things.

These Diasporic writers, some of them are by choice and some of them are by compulsion just like the settler colony and conquest colony. Similarly, there are writers of Indian Diaspora, some of them by choice and some of them by certain compulsion. These writers search for a home land. What is after all a home land and where is one's home. They say home is something which is imaginary. It is never real, real in the sense where do we live, because he has already left his birthplace and living somewhere else. When he is living somewhere else; he is in search of a homeland which is at the mental level. We can take a writer out of the country, but cannot take the country out of his mind. The country is always there in the mind of the writer. Derek Walcott says in his poem, "I am either a nation or I am nobody" because his ancestors came from Africa, he was born and brought up in Trinidad of west Indies and worked in Boston University. Home, wherever it may physically be situated is a metaphorical and conceptual space for the Diasporic person particularly for the writers of the Diaspora.

The literature of Diaspora has richness, variety and comprehensive coverage and seems to be growing into an independent branch of literature. There are certain common themes in the representations of the Indian Diasporic experience in places as different as Trinidad, Fiji, Canada, Britain, US, South Africa, Singapore, Malaysia and Australia. They share a common history, culture and spiritual beliefs. However much the responses of the individual writers vary, at the core of all Diasporic fictions is the haunting presence of India. A sense of coming home in distant lands set the tone of recent Diaspora literatures. It is difficult and limiting to generalize or homogenize. "In the

contemporary moment when moving populations are norm rather than exception, configurations of home, home-coming, identity, alienation, loss, forgetting, memory, rootlessness etc. become truly real and global issues. The Diasporic experience must involve a significant crossing of borders of a region or a language. Our civilization has become global. It is marked by rapid information, experience and unprecedented mobility. Hence, the term globalization is the equivalent of the Indian concept, *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakram* "The whole world is like one family. Stuart Hall corroborates this in his statement, ' In an era of globalization, we are all becoming diasporic. The voice of the 21<sup>st</sup> country man is either he has to take the whole world as his home or else, he will become a homeless wanderer. Therefore, theorizing the concept of Diaspora is a step ahead towards establishing world peace and the literature of Diaspora is the reflection of this.

## WORKS CITED

- Appadurai, Arjun.** *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.
- Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin.** *The Empire Writes Back.* London: Routledge, 2002.
- Bhaba, Homi K.** – *The Location of Culture.* (London: Routledge, 1994)
- Brazier, Jana Evans & Anita Mannur.** (Eds.) *Theorizing Diaspora: A reader.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003.
- Brah, Avtar.** *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities.* London and New York: Routledge, 1996.
- Chow, Rey.** *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies.* Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1993.
- Clifford, James.** *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- Das, B.K.** Interrogating, Historicizing And Theorizing Diaspora. *In The Critical Endeavour.* Edited

- by M.Q. Khan and B. K. Das. Vol. XIII, Dec. 2007. Pp.22-33
- Derrida, Jacques.** *Monolingualism of the Other; or, the Prosthesis of Origin.* Trans. Patrick Mensah. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999.
- Dittamar, Linda.** 'Border Crossings: Multi cultural perspective on women writes'. Talk delivered at Darjiling in a USIS conference. Qtd, in *Revaluation*, Vol-1, No-3. 1995;32.
- Fanon, Frantz.** *The wretched of the Earth.* Penguin, 1967
- Fanon, Frantz.** *Black Skin White Mask.* Trans. C. L. Markmann. New York:Gorver Press, 1967
- Ghosh, Amitav.** "The Diaspora in Indian Culture" from *The Imam and the Indian: Prose Pieces*, New Delhi: Ravi Dayal Publishers and Permanent Black, 2002.
- Gurr, Andrew.** Ed. *The Politics of Postcolonial Criticism.* Special Number (Modern Humanities Research Association, 1997
- Hall, Stuart.** "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference.* Ed. Jonathan Rutherford. 1993; also in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: a Reader.* Eds. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993: 392-401.
- Jain, Jasbir -** *Dislocations and Multiculturalism.* Rawat, Jaipur.2004
- Lahiri, Jhumpa.** *Unaccustomed Earth* (Noida: Random House India, 2009) outlook, Collector's Edition,2000
- Lahiri, Jhumpa.** *The Namesake.* London: Harper Collins, 2003
- Kumar, Amitava** (ed.). *Away: The Indian Writer as an Expatriate*, New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Mammaday, Scott.** "Indian American". <http://www.up-dyn/August18.2008>.
- Mishra, Vijay.** The Diasporic Imaginary: Theorizing the Indian Diaspora. *Textual Practice.* 10:3, 1996, 421-447.
- Mehrotra, Arvind Krishna** (ed.). *An Illustrated History of Indian Literature in English.* New Delhi: Permanent Black Publishers, 2003
- Mukherjee, Bharati.** "Beyond Multiculturation". Des Moines Register. 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct. 1994. Paranjape, Makarand. "Triple Ambivalence: Australia, Canada, and South Asia in the Diasporic Imagination" from *Journal of the Department of English*, Volume XXXII, Numbers 1 & 2, Eds. Sanjukta Dasgupta and Jharna Sanyal, Kolkata: Calcutta University,2005-2006.
- Parekh, Bhiku.** "What is Maltuculturalism?" in *Identity, community, culture, difference* . Ed. Rutherford,1990.
- Rai, G.** Diasporic experience and survival strategies in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake.* In *The Critical Endeavour.* Edited by M.Q. Khan and B. K. Das. Vol. XIII, Dec. 2007. Pp. 34-45
- Radhakrishnan, R. *Diasporic Mediations: Between Home and Location.* University of Minnesota Press, 1996
- Ramraj, Victor.** *Diasporas and Multiculturalism. New National and Postcolonial Literatures: An Introduction.* Ed. Bruce King, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1996
- Rushdie, Salman.** *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991.* London: Granta, 1992.
- Said, Edward W.** "Reflections of an Exile." *Biblio: A Review of Books*, Volume IV, Number-11 & 12. Ed. Arvind N. Das. New Delhi: Brinda Datta, Nov-Dec 1999.
- Said, Edward W.** *The World, the Text, and the Critic; After the Last Sky; Culture and Imperialism* ("the Voyage In"); *Representations of the Intellectual; Reflections on Exile* (1984), in *Reflections on Exile and Other Literary and Cultural Essays*, London, Granta Books, 2001.
- Said, Edward,** *Culture and Imperialism.* Vintage,1994
- Spivak, G.C.** *The Postcolonial critic.* Routledge, 1990.
- Spivak, Gayatri.** "Diasporas Old and New: Women in the Transnational World." *Textual Practice* 10.2 (1996): 245-269; also in Amitava Kumar, ed., *Class Issues: Pedagogy, Cultural Studies, and the Public Sphere*, pp. 87-116. New York & London: New York University Press, 1997. 87-116.
- Tilghman, Christopher.** "American Indian". HYPERLINK: <http://www.up-dyn/September14.2003>, page BW10
- Watson, C.W.-** *Multiculturalism*(2005), Viva Books pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.
- Watson, CW.** *Multiculturalism:* Buckingham, OUP.2000
- Walder, D :** *Post colonial Literatures in English.* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Blackwell, 2005.
- Young, R.J.C,** *Colonial Desire: Hybricity in theory, culture and race.* Rantledge, 1995.

\*\*\*

### **Book-Review**

#### ***O, Moon, My Sweet-heart!***

By Mahendra Bhatnagar

Published by Rachana Prakashan, Jaipur

Pages: 230, Price: Rs. 250 (Paperback)

Reviewed by Anuradha Bhattacharyya

(Chandigarh)

Email: an6radha@yahoo.co.in

**Modern** India has fully understood the importance of the international language that English happens to be. This is evidenced in the fact that many Indian middle class families prefer only English as their medium of verbal communication. Many writers of fiction express themselves comfortably in English. Although India has a rich tradition of creative writing in the various provincial languages, a great urge towards international readership has prompted writers to express the same creative thought in English. Recently many works of art that are originally in modern Indian languages have been translated into English by academicians to gain wider readership. As part of this new trend, Dr. Mahendra Bhatnagar, a major Hindi poet who has been publishing his poetry since 1941, has translated into English and brought out anthologies of all his poems. *O, Moon, My Sweet-Heart* is a collection of his love poems that have been translated by him with the help of constructive contribution from his colleagues and friends whom he acknowledges right at the beginning of his book.

Susan Bassnett, a scholar of great calibre, who has understood the pain involved in translating into English texts from an Indian language, says, "What is generally understood as translation involves the rendering of a source language (SL) text into the target language (TL) so as to ensure that (1) the surface meaning of the two will be approximately

similar and (2) the structures of the SL will be preserved as closely as possible but not so closely that the TL structures will be seriously distorted." [Introduction to *Translation Studies*, 1980: Methuen]

In the book titled *O, Moon, My Sweet-Heart* each one of the 102 Hindi original poems is followed by its English version. Almost all of these lyrical poems are in traditional rhythm as well as duly rhymed while the English translations end up as free verse. The beauty of alliteration and the use of objective correlatives that is easily recognizable in the Hindi poems become jarring far-fetched similes in the English rendering of the same thought, thus marring their esthetic quality. Sometimes a poem is appreciated more for its lyrical sense than any profound thought. However, when the same words are translated into English, the reader is confronted with a volley of amalgamated sonorous phrases that have no beauty. For example, a poem which reads in Hindi, "*pyar mera satya shiva sunder kiya*", reads in English "made my love honest-auspicious-beautiful" (pp 86-87). The entire book is full of syntactical errors so far as the English ears are concerned.

The underlying thought that inspires all of these poems is expressed thus:

"After ages,  
Now again  
Getting new colour and sap fresh  
Sun-withered flower!" (p 83)

Or elsewhere:  
 “O!  
 The meaning of life  
 Suddenly changed  
 As if  
 Someone stumbling  
 Regained balance  
 With new feelings of love  
 And rising like huge new waves.” (p 35)

Both of these can be read in a melodious sing-song in the Hindi original. Various poems are accompanied by the translator’s footnotes that suggest that the translation is only a paraphrase; there is nothing in such poems which an English reading public might understand so the whole effort is a waste.

On the flip side, a poem reads, roughly ‘we shall open the complexes of doubt and inferiority easily on the simple honest surface of faith’ (p 48-49). In another poem, the poet chides the hesitant recluse to open the doors for strange encounters, since ‘who knows whose footfalls might create new music in one’s heart!’ (p 66-67) Many other poems suggest that the beloved is far away and remembered only as a thought, a feeling or a wish. This is what the title, “O, Moon, My Sweetheart” refers to. A poem directly addresses the moon as a far away land of beauty and happiness which lasts only till before daybreak. Another poem suggests that the separation from one’s beloved is a reciprocated feeling and this idea is a consolation. (pp 136-149) the poet expresses love variously as a ‘curse’, a ‘boon’, a ‘sin’, a ‘diamond’, a ‘cool wave’ and a ‘guest’.

Most of the Hindi expressions of amorous experience become drab and base in the English translation. “*Sugathit ang*” becomes

“sturdy limbs” (p 64-65) and “*nangey gadraye gore pair*” becomes “naked, flabby, fair feet” where each adjective is followed by a comma that is sheer atrocity towards the English language. No lover would ever be enamoured by a woman’s sturdy limbs and flabby feet. Unless one reads the Hindi poems alongside the English renderings, it is difficult to appreciate this kind of poetry.

Overall the translation is detrimental for the frequent metaphors used in the Hindi poems. Where “*shanti madhuj ghol*” sounds sensuous, “sugar-candy like words of peace” makes it hilarious. (p 22-23)

It is a common practice in Hindi poetry to use the third person plural form of the verbs – omitting the pronoun – to express the feelings of the poet. When an English poet expresses his feelings, he writes ‘I feel’ as simple as that. The translations in this book swallow up the nominative pronoun altogether. See for example:

“In life, what did and what not,

“To get your love for a few moments!” (p 38-39)

Such are the limitations of the English translations of Hindi love poems that are full of eulogizing and hyperbole. The moon, the stars, the universe, destiny and divinity have all been subjected to the service of love poetry since ages. Dr. Mahendra Bhatnagar’s poetry stretches the comparisons and invocations even further and verges on the extended metaphor syndrome when he treats his beloved as the moon and vice-versa.

\*\*\*

“O ROMANO KALO DIVES”

**Romani Gili : by Janardhan Pathania**

(Jammu & Kashmir)

O Devala vakar man zorales!  
Kon jagarde e corore Romenge kherenge?  
Kon astarde te mudarde e bi-doshale  
Romenge?  
Kon tasavde ande GAZ-chamberende  
bibaxtale Romenge?

O Devala vakar man caco !  
Kon kurde zorasa e me3bur ternia  
romaniange?  
Kon khusle e daiandar lenge tiknore  
chavorenge?  
Kon bikinde sar e bakrende e bi-doshale  
Romenge?

O mo Devala vakar man caco !  
Kon tradende e than-thanestar e bokhale  
Romenge?  
Kon choravde o romano rat pe e lungune  
dromende?  
Kon kerde bi-kherende, te bilimoriande e  
Romenge?

O mo Devala Shun man !  
Soske e Roma phiren pe than-thaneste  
bibutiande?  
Soske e Romnia phiren sar mangtia andar e  
bazarende?  
Soske e romane chavore phiren kate-kote  
bi-Pustakande?

O mo DEVALA si-man tutar puchipe!  
Kai e Roma nai manusha sar jek averende?  
Kai e Romenge nai HAK ke 3iven sar jek  
averende?  
Kai e corore Roma nai e tere chavore sar  
jek averende?

O mo Devala!  
Roma nashti te bistaren pengo Sarvnash

Kalo-divese!

Te sako kalo-dives si jek mai-bari la3 e  
manushalipeske!  
E kale - divengi iranipe dukhal dive -pal- rat  
e Romenge!  
Sako bersh Roma Ashvatate jadaren penge  
mulenge!

O mo Devala!  
Te e Roma zorales roven pe penge  
mulende!  
Te asvarde jakhensa den luludia te pativ  
penge mulenge!  
Nasul pal nasulipe nai lachho, phendi  
“KALI” e Romenge!  
Te sa Roma jeksa mangen “Shanti” pe sa e  
Phuveste!

De Devala lachi Gudi, te Kamipen, te  
Shanti ame sareng!

**ENGLISH – Translation.**

**“THE ROMA’S BLACK DAY”**

O God you tell me loudly !  
Who burnt the houses of the Roma people?  
Who caught and killed  
the innocent Roma people?  
Who put the unfortunate Roma people in  
the Gas – chambers?

O God tell me the truth !  
Who raped the helpless young Roma  
women?  
Who snatched away from mothers  
their children?  
Who sold innocent Roma  
like a sheep in the markets?

O God tell me the truth !  
Who chased -away the hungry Roma  
people from place to place?

Who spilled the Roma blood  
on the long roads?  
Who made the poor Roma people home-  
less and graveless?  
O God you listen to me !  
Why Roma are moving  
from place to place jobless?  
Why Roma women are moving  
as beggars in the streets?  
Why Roma children are moving here and  
there with out books?  
O God I ask you some questions?  
Are the Roma people not men like others?  
Do the Roma people don't have the right  
to live like others?  
Are not the poor Roma people your  
children, like others ?  
O my GOD !  
Roma don't forget their "Holocaust"  
---Black -day !  
The each Black-day is a big-Shame for the  
whole mankind !  
The remembrance of Black-days, pains  
Roma Day & Night !  
Every year Roma at Ashvat  
remember their dead people !  
O GOD !  
The Roma people weep bitterly  
for their dead people !  
With tearfull eyes they honour  
their dead with flowers!  
That bad for bad is no good,  
this Goddess "KALI" told them !  
All the Roma together pray for WORLD –  
PEACE !  
O GOD, Give we all good sense,  
love and Peace !  
\*\*\*  
Ph. 0191-2572998 <janpath1@gmail.com>

#### Avazi/Sound:

3 = j , as in English "Jug, Jump" & in Romani  
"3ivdo, 3uklo".  
J = y , as in English "Yes. Yell" & in Romani "ja,  
jalo, jilo".  
C = Ch, as in English "Child, Chicken, Chap,  
Check".  
Ch = as in English "Church" and in [Romani &  
Hindustani]"Chin".

#### Tiknipi/Abbreviation:

1. arb = Arabic. 2. g3o = Alien.  
3. eng = English. 4. grk = Greek.  
5. hnd = Hindustani. 6. per = Persian.  
7. rom = Romani. 8. skt = Sanskrit.  
9. sr3 = Indo-Romani "Sanji-Romani-3ib".  
10. trk = Turkish.

#### Alavri/Glossary :

"San3i – Romani -5ib" = Common -Romani-  
Language.  
Baazaar [Per]<Bazaar<Bazar<Pazar< ba3ar  
[hnd]= Market.  
Curo[hndu]<Coro = Poor.  
Phuv [skt], Dunja[trk, hnd]< Lumnja [g3o] =  
World.  
Gaz-chamber [g3o]= Gass-chamber [eng].  
Limor, Limori, Grobia, [g3o] = Grave.  
Hak (sg) [arb,trk,per,hnd, src,rom] = legal right (sg).  
Hakuk (pl) [arb,per,hnd,src ] = legal rights (pl).  
Sako [g3o] / Herik [grk,hnd,src,rom] = each, every.  
3i / dzi / dji / ji, [hnd] = Soul.  
Khus- [hnd] = to snatch away.  
Lunguno [hnd] = Long.  
Mang- [hnd] = to beg, demand.  
Mangto (ml-sg), Mangti (f-sg), [hnd] = Beggar.  
Mangte (m-pl), Mangtia (f-pl) = Beggars.  
Me3bur / Medzbur/ [per, hnd] = helpless.  
Manushalipe [skt, hnd] = Humanity.  
jadar- /yadar- [per, hnd] = to remember.  
Pustak/Pustik [skt] = Book.  
Rat [skt, hnd] = Blood.  
ratri/raat /rat [skt, hnd] = night.  
San3o, San3i, san3e, San3ia [skt, rom, hnd] =  
common.  
The Kali - Goddess is a common Goddess  
between Roma & Hindus of India. Goddess kali  
is also known as "Sati -Sara- Kali" by the Hindus  
and Roma people.  
Shaanti [skt] = Peace [eng].  
Sarvnash [skt] = Holocaust, total destruction,  
Blood-shed, Slaughtering.

## Man is Dead

Dev Bhardwaj (Chandigarh)

Man is dead  
informed this but he  
that he had to die a day  
he also revealed  
that he had already died long back  
only declaration he needed to do

Now only the last rites  
are to be performed  
but who will carry the job?  
He has left none behind

Who he was  
No one knew  
how to perform the rites  
what community he belonged?  
Ah! Was this the only identity he had?

When he was Man  
he thought of realising his dreams  
he remained busy with the regular chores  
never did he differentiate  
between day and night  
he toiled hard without any expectations  
dreamt and dreamt to ascend the sky  
and gradually he raised himself to sky

Instantly here and instantly there  
he became the master  
at least this is how he started thinking now  
he thought that the whole world  
revolves around him

and he can realize anything  
tame the time  
and turn the tables as per his wishes  
and he gradually alienated himself  
from the others  
and even from himself

This had to happen  
he devised saptre, he devised sword  
spears, daggers and what not  
and then came the guns, bombs and  
missiles  
and what not...  
this was the result of power keg  
the gun powder  
he carried fire in his hands  
he played, toyed and frolicked with it

The fire was growing  
every mintue... every day...  
and he was encircled in it

Then came the destiny  
the flames he was carrying in his hands  
burnt him one day

Knowing not how this happened  
he is finally dead now  
he had to  
since he had died a long back..

*(Translated by Harish Thakur)*

\*\*\*

Ph. 98728 23437  
<editorkafla@yahoo.com>