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## ~Editor's Note~

Dear Readers & Contributors,

Welcome to the July 2023 issue of IJELLS. The journey begins with one step and one step in front of the other after that. We are learning and growing one issue at a time.

The paper on *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* establishes the trend in literature to revisit the ancient Indian texts in an attempt to re-read them. The question of the relevance of 'Sanskrit' in the modern day curriculum receives its answer right there. Rereading takes us into understanding the representation of women in ancient Indian texts in another paper. The coming together of nanotechnology and literature helps us understand that knowledge should be seamless in its exploration. And many more academic papers to explore and learn.

If you have a suggestion for us, kindly mail it to [dr.mrudulalakkaraju@gmail.com](mailto:dr.mrudulalakkaraju@gmail.com).

International Journal of English: Literature, Language and Skills – IJELLS extends its service into publishing books. We have started the enterprise IJELLS Publishing. This is a platform where we help authors self-publish their work. Check out our webpage to understand more at <https://www.ijells.com/ijells-publishing/>.

Happy Reading and Happy Sharing!

Dr Mrudula Lakkaraju  
Chief Editor

## ~ Chief Editor ~

Dr Mrudula Lakkaraju, Department of English, Osmania University is trained from EFLU and a Doctorate from Osmania University. She prefers the designation of a trainer and a writer. She has presented several academic articles to international and national seminars, conferences, journals, and magazines. Casual and creative writing is also her forte. She is a prolific reader and writer. Her areas of interest are Post colonial Literature, Gender Studies, Film Studies, English Language Teaching, Contemporary Literature and Communication Skills. Find her analysis on Film and other media at Facebook page '@thevisualcritique'.

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~English Creative Section~

## Who am I?

Sanjukta Chakraborty



Far be it for me to question fate  
or judge the hands of time;  
there's nought but doom at darkened gates  
when the bell tolls out its chime.

There is a price that must be paid,  
a reckoning at every turn,  
where vice 'gainst virtue tenfold is weighed,  
eternally our souls to burn.

My love, my life tries in vain  
to gather up my scattered soul;  
frayed from endless days of pain  
that have left me less than whole.

When twilight shines its final light,  
does it also stain you blue?  
When the sun sets on my sight,  
does it also set for you?

Who am I to question time  
or hope my soul to save?  
I am but to learn from life  
and help your path to pave.

Semblance of some respite  
in the form of darkness looms —  
Who am I to question fate?  
Who am I to question doom?

## ~English Literature~

### **Robert Frost's Symbolism for the Existential Issues**

P Ravi Chandra

#### **Abstract**

The Poems of Robert Frost are known for their simplicity, lyrical quality, subtle humour and conversational tone at one level; but they are also known for their complexity of structure, seriousness of theme, philosophical profundity, psychological conflict and suggestion of horror etc, at the deeper levels of their import. A close study of a few Poems of Robert Frost reveals that the key to the divergent qualities of his ' poetry lies in his masterly use of contrast: The technique of contrast coupled" with the poet's imagination and symbolic suggestion lends a romantic charm and grandeur to the apparent simplicity of his Poems.

**Keywords:** Symbolism, Lyricism, Aestheticism, Existentialism, Imagination, Tone, Philosophical Profundity, Psychological Conflict, Time, Timelessness

The Poems of Robert Frost are known for their simplicity, lyrical quality, subtle humour and conversational tone at one level; but they are also known for their complexity of structure, seriousness of theme, philosophical profundity, psychological conflict and suggestion of horror etc, at the deeper levels of their import. A close study of a few Poems of Robert Frost reveals that the key to the divergent qualities of his ' poetry lies in his masterly use of contrast: The technique of contrast coupled" with the poet's imagination and symbolic suggestion lends a romantic charm and grandeur to the apparent simplicity of his Poems.

As can be seen from some of his Poems, Frost sets the ordinary and common issues of life against the ideals that are forgotten, or the ethical stand points that have been ignored. In other words, he juxtaposes the "actual" with the ideal and disturbs the placid world of complacency and ignorance with his visions of moral excellence. The ready recognition and knowledge of the difference between the two states of existence makes the reader identify himself with one or the other of the contrasted sides and fills him with a feeling of estrangement and despondency and a sense of horror as to where he is drifting. Thus the horrid depths into which Frost's Poems open beneath their smooth surfaces make the reader feel that the world is a "savage place" highly insecure and risky and life is not a bed of roses until its exacting standards are met at the physical, spiritual and social levels.

In so far as the poet is concerned, he just highlights the differences and leaves everything else to the reader to conclude for himself, or tries to reconcile the conflict by suggesting his own solutions. The purpose of this article, then, is to see how the Poems of Robert Frost are built on a system of contrasts of situations, characters, attitudes, values etc., and to show how they assail the imagination of the reader with their infinite suggestions of

horror and uncertainty until he finds a way out for himself or accepts the solution offered by the Poet.

To begin with "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening", one of the most famous Poems of Robert Frost, we see that the owner of the woods who is indifferent to their beauty is contrasted with the Poet who appreciates their loveliness. The contrast raises a host of aesthetic and philosophical questions in the mind of the reader relating to the issues of possession and enjoyment of beauty and makes him brood over the destiny of man in a new predicament. Then, the horse, which is always afoot and a symbol of busy and active life is contrasted with the Poet who halts for a while to admire a lovely scene. As the Poet favours "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" to enjoy their beauty, the horse entertains the opposite idea of passing by them non-stop for its own reasons. The animal has no sense of beauty "to watch (the) woods fill up with snow." The Poet has stopped "without a farm-house near," so; there is no scope for food and drink or a comfortable stay overnight. Moreover, it is not safe to delay there by the woods, because the lake is already "frozen" and it is "the darkest evening of the year". The Poet's behavior bewilders it and sends creeps of horror across its flesh, it considers him "queer" and "gives his harness bells a shake / To ask if there is some mistake".

On the other hand, the behaviour of the horse evokes tremors of horror in the Poet's mind, too, and raises questions far more serious and subtler than the horse could think of: Isn't beauty an essential part of life? Shouldn't we stop for a while to admire beauty when we find it? Who will admire it if we don't? What is man going to be if he fails to respond to beauty? Doesn't it imply the presence of "some mistake" in him, although of a different kind than the horse suspects it to be? Etc. These questions galvanize us with a deep concern for the fast disappearing human values in the modern Age. Now it is entirely left to us whether we choose to be on the side of the horse or of the Poet. Perhaps, a sort of reconciliation is affected between the two sides in the last stanza when the poet contrasts and also compromises his love of beauty with his sense of duty.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.

Enjoyment of beauty alone does not constitute a complete life, as round-the-clock work alone doesn't. One should not make us oblivious of the other. But, are we living a complete life? Are we giving up our indulgence for fulfilling our responsibilities? These are the sort of questions suggested to us in introspection. Thus, the Poem with its complex system of contrasts and suggestions makes a case for a complete and balanced life and goes on perturbing the reader until he learns to live it.

Another famous Poem of Robert Frost "Mending Wall" presents a contrast between the attitudes of two New England farmers regarding the boundary wall between their orchards. The contrasting attitudes about the need of the wall between the neighbours are not only not reconciled, but ignorance seeming to resist all knowledge, chooses to be refractory and stubborn. The neighbour goes on with his rigmarole of his father's saying "Good fences

make good neighbours" as the Poet is forced to withdraw his sermonizing in utter hopelessness. Finally, we understand that both the farmers agree to disagree and choose to maintain their respective stands.

But what is going to happen if things are allowed to continue thus? The Poet leaves it to the reader to imagine for himself. Here, the Poem begins to open into its real depths beneath the surface evoking powerful suggestions of horror and insecurity in the reader's mind. The Poem "Mending Wall" seems to be an unending process in the world. It appears more so when the Poem ends, not on a note of hope, but on one of despondency.

Soon, we discover that the issue of mending the wall does not confine itself to the personal sphere of the farmers only, but extends far beyond to the larger issue of what. Tagore describes as the "narrow domestic walls" by which the world is "broken up into fragments." But, do the good fences not make good neighbours of them all? We fondly ask the question in the context of the brewing tensions and the brittle and deteriorating human relationships in the Present Days. The question sounds funny and absurd, as we simultaneously hear the international borders ringing with the deafening explosions of gun-powder and the rumblings of the Nuclear Warfare threatening the World with a Global conflagration.

Another interesting Poem by Robert Frost "At Woodward's Garden" contrasts a school boy's behaviour with the monkeys' in respect of using a convex glass. The school-boy, with all his training and knowledge of Physics displays only an apish and a mischievous tendency in using the glass for burning the monkeys' noses. The monkeys on the other hand, behave in a more sensible and responsible manner by snatching the glass off the hand of the boy and hiding it at the back of the cage beyond his reaches. Thus, we are presented with a contrast here between knowledge and wisdom and Frost tells us that not knowing about things, but making the right use of things is what matters most.

The contrast in the Poem has far-reaching implications in the context, of our Scientific and Technological Advancement, now-a-days. Are we sure that we are using our scientific knowledge in the right way? Is it, accompanied by wisdom and humanity or misused as in the case of the school boy leading to the suffering and destruction of the world? These and such other questions unsettle us and we are filled with a sense of horror and uncertainty about the fate of the World if knowledge falls into the hands of mischievous and irresponsible people who have no concern for the Welfare of the World. The small and unassuming Poem "Un-harvested" has an implied contrast with the harvested and thrives on account of its contradiction from the latter. The Poem has religious and spiritual overtones. The harvested apple led to the fall of man. Now the un-harvested apples have reversed the order:

For there had been an apple fall  
As complete as the apple had given man,

And the un-harvested tree, after the apple fall looks as forlorn and lonely as Adam and Eve after they harvested and ate the fruit of the forbidden tree. Man, by leaving the apple tree un-harvested, has reattributed the same fate on the tree which it caused him when he harvested it in the Garden of Eden, It has lost its glory now as he lost his glory then, and is left only with a 'trivial foliage' now as he covered himself with a few leaves then. Then, if the fall of man

caused the spilling of Christ's blood, with the fall of the apples under the tree "The ground was one circle of solid red." Thus, the Poem contrasts and counter-balances the harvested tree, the fall of man and the suffering of Christ on his account with the un-harvested tree, the fall of the apples and the enjoyment of their scent by many. If the prospects of the un-harvested fill us with hopes of redemption, the results of the harvested fill us with horrors of a Second Fall. Thus, the contrast in the poem makes us feel uneasy with our Annual Harvests. The Poet suggests a way out with his priestly admonitions which have the force of a Biblical commandment..."

May something go always unharvested  
May much stay out of our stated plan,

He also tells us about the merits of the Un-harvested in the last lines of the Poem. The Rhymes 'left' and 'theft' attract an allusion to the eating of the forbidden fruit which was actually an act of 'theft', because God ordered that of all the fruits, the fruit of the forbidden tree alone should be 'left' untouched, un-harvested, and the fruit was plucked without his knowledge. The Poet says we do not incur the charge of theft if we enjoy the smell of what is left. But are we leaving "apples or something un-harvested" so that, others may enjoy them? Are we desisting from our greedy harvests every year? Etc, are the questions which force us out of our complacency with a jolt.

Yet another Poem by Robert Frost "Two Tramps in Mud Time" expounds a philosophy of work by means of a contrast between the Tramps and the Poet himself with regard to their motives of work. The Poet splits wood because he 'loves' the task. The tramps who approach him, want 'to take (the) job for pay'. This is the crux of the problem which strains the feelings on both the sides and raises many related questions with regard to the ideal nature of Work. Work is 'really done', the poet tells us, only when it is accompanied with love and delight in doing it. It is no work when it is merely done for 'mortal stakes', The standards set by the Poet throw us into deep introspection and make us ask ourselves if we are much different from the tramps, and if so, to what extent.

Thus, the Poetry of Robert Frost has a Universal Appeal in raising and answering Moral questions relating to the human behaviour. Frost views the human ignorance and the human failings with certain sympathy. He is not Cynical or Critical about those who cannot rise above the Board. But he does not ignore their short-comings, nor does he forgive them. He just sets them against the ideal images of themselves which tease them until they improve themselves. Thus, if Poetry has a Social Responsibility of making men better, Frost's Poetry can be said to have fulfilled the Mission more than most others' Poetry has ever done so far.

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## **Reclaiming Feminism: Unveiling the Panchakanya in a Decolonial Context**

Bolla Madhavi & Konda Nageswar Rao

### **Abstract**

This Article explores the concept of reclaiming feminism through an examination of the Panchakanya, a group of five significant female figures from Hindu mythology. In a decolonial context, the Panchakanya are analyzed as symbols of power, agency, and resistance against patriarchal norms and colonial constructs. The study seeks to deconstruct the prevailing narratives imposed by the colonizers and reclaim the voices and experiences of these women from a feminist perspective. By delving into their stories, this research aims to challenge the dominant discourse on feminism and present a more nuanced understanding of the intersections between gender, religion, and postcolonial thought. Drawing on postcolonial feminist theory and Hindu mythological texts, this investigation seeks to illuminate the ways in which the Panchakanya can inspire contemporary feminist movements, empower marginalized voices, and contribute to the decolonization of feminist discourse. Through an exploration of their stories, the Panchakanya emerge as powerful symbols of female autonomy, subversion, and liberation, offering valuable insights into alternative feminist frameworks that are inclusive, diverse, and decolonized. This paper contributes to the ongoing dialogue on decolonizing feminism and highlights the importance of engaging with diverse cultural narratives to challenge and reshape feminist theory and practice in the modern world.

**Keywords:** Panchakanya, Reclaiming, Feminism, Patriarchal, Feminist

### **Introduction**

Feminism, as a movement, has made significant strides in challenging and dismantling patriarchal systems and advocating for gender equality. However, the dominant feminist discourse often reflects a Eurocentric perspective, largely overlooking the rich narratives and experiences of women from non-Western cultures. In order to foster a more inclusive and diverse feminist movement, it is essential to explore alternative frameworks that embrace the intersectionality of gender, culture, and decoloniality. This paper aims to delve into the concept of reclaiming feminism by examining the Panchakanya, a group of five iconic female figures from Hindu mythology. The Panchakanya, comprising Ahalya, Draupadi, Sita, Tara, and Mandodari, hold immense significance within Hindu religious texts and folklore. These women, often marginalized and silenced within traditional interpretations, offer a valuable lens through which to challenge and disrupt dominant narratives imposed by colonialism and patriarchy.

This decolonial context serves as a crucial framework for this exploration. Colonialism, with its imposition of Western ideals and norms, had a profound impact on the

understanding and representation of women in non-Western societies. As a result, indigenous feminist voices were suppressed, and their narratives were distorted or erased. By reclaiming the Panchakanya within a decolonial context, this research seeks to recover their agency, empower their stories, and challenge the hegemonic structures that have shaped feminist discourse.

Drawing on postcolonial feminist theory, this study aims to illuminate the ways in which the Panchakanya can serve as symbols of power, resistance, and liberation for contemporary feminist movements. By critically analyzing their stories and situating them within a decolonial framework, we can begin to uncover the inherent subversion and autonomy exhibited by these women. Their experiences shed light on alternative feminist narratives that prioritize cultural diversity, challenge Western-centric interpretations, and provide a more inclusive understanding of gender and power dynamics. Through a careful examination of Hindu mythological texts and engagement with postcolonial feminist scholarship, this research seeks to contribute to the ongoing dialogue on decolonizing feminism. By unveiling the Panchakanya and their significance in a decolonial context, we can forge new pathways for feminist theory and practice that embrace intersectionality, cultural diversity, and the reclamation of marginalized voices. Ultimately, this investigation aims to inspire a more inclusive and decolonized feminism, fostering a transformative movement that addresses the intersecting systems of oppression and centers the voices and experiences of all women.

## **Research Scope**

This research focuses on the exploration and analysis of the Panchakanya from Hindu mythology within a decolonial context, with the aim of reclaiming feminism and broadening the discourse surrounding gender, culture, and power dynamics. The scope of the study encompasses several key areas:

### **1. Examination of the Panchakanya:**

The research involves a comprehensive analysis of the stories, characteristics, and roles of the Panchakanya: Ahalya, Draupadi, Sita, Tara, and Mandodari in Hindu mythological texts. Their narratives will be explored to uncover elements of agency, resistance, and empowerment, which challenge dominant patriarchal and colonial constructs.

### **2. Decolonial Framework:**

The study employs a decolonial lens to critically examine the impact of colonialism on feminist discourse, particularly within non-Western contexts. It explores how colonial ideologies have shaped the representation and understanding of women, and how the Panchakanya can serve as a means to disrupt and challenge these narratives.

### **3. Postcolonial Feminist Theory:**

This research draws upon postcolonial feminist theory to analyze and interpret the stories of the Panchakanya. The theoretical framework will help illuminate the intersections of gender, culture, and power, providing a deeper understanding of the diverse ways in

which feminist movements can engage with and reclaim cultural narratives.

#### **4. Reclamation of Feminism:**

The primary objective of this study is to explore how the Panchakanya can contribute to the reclamation of feminism. The research aims to highlight their significance as symbols of power, autonomy, and resistance, offering alternative feminist frameworks that prioritize inclusivity, diversity, and decolonization.

#### **5. Contemporary Relevance:**

The study seeks to establish the contemporary relevance of the Panchakanya and their narratives. It investigates how their stories can inspire and inform current feminist movements, emphasizing the importance of engaging with diverse cultural narratives to challenge and reshape feminist theory and practice in the modern world.

It is important to note that this research does not encompass an exhaustive analysis of all aspects of Hindu mythology or the entirety of the decolonial feminist discourse. Instead, it focuses specifically on the Panchakanya within a decolonial context, aiming to contribute to the ongoing dialogue surrounding decolonizing feminism and the reclamation of marginalized voices.

### **Research Methodology:**

This research on Reclaiming Feminism employs a combination of qualitative research methods and textual analysis to achieve its objectives. The following research methodology is proposed:

#### **Literature Review:**

A comprehensive review of existing scholarly works, including academic papers, books, and articles, will be conducted to establish a theoretical framework. This literature review will explore postcolonial feminist theory, feminist interpretations of Hindu mythology, and relevant studies on decoloniality, gender, and cultural narratives.

**Textual Analysis:** Primary texts from Hindu mythology, such as the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and other relevant mythological texts, will be critically analyzed. The stories and narratives of the Panchakanya will be examined in detail, focusing on their portrayal, agency, and subversive elements. Close readings and thematic analysis will be employed to extract meaningful insights.

**Decolonial Perspective:** A decolonial lens will be applied to the analysis of the Panchakanya narratives. This involves examining the historical and cultural context of colonialism, understanding its impact on gender and cultural representations, and exploring how the Panchakanya can be reclaimed within a decolonial framework.

**Intersectional Analysis:** The research will employ an intersectional approach to understand the multiple layers of identity and power dynamics within the stories of the Panchakanya. Intersectionality allows for an examination of how gender, caste, class, and other social categories intersect and influence the experiences and agency of these women.

**Comparative Analysis:** Comparative analysis will be utilized to explore the similarities and differences between the Panchakanya and other feminist icons from diverse cultural contexts. This analysis will help situate the Panchakanya within a broader global feminist discourse, highlighting their unique contributions and the potential for cross-cultural dialogue.

**Case Studies and Examples:** The research may include case studies or examples of contemporary feminist movements, initiatives, or artistic expressions that draw inspiration from or engage with the stories of the Panchakanya. These case studies will provide practical illustrations of how the reclamation of the Panchakanya can inform and inspire feminist activism and discourse.

**Ethical Considerations:** Ethical considerations will be considered throughout the research process, including respect for cultural narratives, ensuring accurate representation, and acknowledging the potential impact of interpretations on marginalized communities.

The research methodology outlined above combines theoretical analysis, textual exploration, and comparative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Panchakanya within a decolonial-feminist framework. It aims to contribute to existing scholarship, challenge dominant narratives, and inspire new perspectives on feminism that embrace cultural diversity and decolonization.

## Summary

Reclaiming Feminism explores the significance of the Panchakanya, a group of five female figures from Hindu mythology, within the framework of decolonial feminism. The study aims to challenge the dominant Eurocentric narratives in feminism and shed light on the agency, resistance, and empowerment exhibited by these women. The research employs a combination of qualitative research methods, including literature review, textual analysis, and a decolonial perspective. It delves into the stories of the Panchakanya, such as Ahalya, Draupadi, Sita, Tara, and Mandodari, to uncover their subversive elements and reclaim their voices from colonial and patriarchal distortions. By drawing on postcolonial feminist theory, the study examines how the Panchakanya narratives intersect with issues of gender, culture, and power.

The research methodology involves a thorough analysis of primary texts from Hindu mythology, a critical review of existing scholarly works, and a comparative analysis of feminist icons from diverse cultural contexts. It also considers contemporary case studies and examples to demonstrate the relevance and practical applications of reclaiming the Panchakanya in inspiring feminist activism and discourse. Through this research, the study aims to contribute to the ongoing dialogue on decolonizing feminism and highlight the

importance of inclusivity, diversity, and the reclamation of marginalized voices. By examining the Panchakanya within a decolonial framework, it seeks to broaden the understanding of feminism, challenge Western-centric interpretations, and foster a transformative feminist movement that embraces cultural diversity and intersectionality. In summary, "Reclaiming Feminism: Unveiling the Panchakanya in a Decolonial Context" illuminates the empowering narratives of the Panchakanya, offering alternative feminist frameworks that challenge patriarchal and colonial constructs. The research aims to inspire a more inclusive and decolonized feminism by reclaiming the agency and stories of these women, contributing to the ongoing efforts to reshape feminist theory and practice in a culturally diverse and equitable manner.

## Conclusion

Reclaiming Feminism explores the significance of the Panchakanya from Hindu mythology as a means to challenge and decolonize feminist discourse. The study reveals the agency, resistance, and empowerment exhibited by these women, providing an alternative framework that embraces cultural diversity, intersectionality, and the reclamation of marginalized voices. Through a combination of qualitative research methods, including textual analysis, literature review, and a decolonial perspective; the research has shed light on the subversive elements within the stories of Ahalya, Draupadi, Sita, Tara, and Mandodari. It highlights their roles as symbols of power and liberation, and their potential to inspire contemporary feminist movements. By drawing on postcolonial feminist theory, the study has examined the impact of colonialism on feminist discourse, particularly within non-Western contexts, and emphasized the need to challenge and disrupt dominant narratives. It has demonstrated the importance of engaging with diverse cultural narratives to foster a more inclusive and decolonized feminism. The research methodology has encompassed a thorough analysis of primary texts, a critical review of existing scholarship, and a comparative approach to situate the Panchakanya within a broader global feminist discourse. Additionally, the study has explored case studies and examples of contemporary feminist initiatives that draw inspiration from the Panchakanya, illustrating their relevance and practical applications in feminist activism and discourse. In conclusion, "Reclaiming Feminism: Unveiling the Panchakanya in a Decolonial Context" contributes to the ongoing dialogue on decolonizing feminism and challenges the Eurocentric biases within feminist theory. By reclaiming the narratives of the Panchakanya, the research advocates for a more inclusive and diverse feminism that embraces cultural diversity, intersectionality, and the reclamation of marginalized voices. The study inspires a transformative feminist movement that recognizes and celebrates the agency, resistance, and empowerment of women from diverse cultural backgrounds, fostering a more equitable and decolonized future.

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## Exploration of Nature in *Māhātmya* of *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Līlā* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*

Mohan Kumar Pokhrel

### Abstract

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Līlā, manifested in the *Māhātmya* of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*, is a divine narrative that explores the multifaceted relationship between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Nature. Within its *Māhātmya* section, the importance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's interactions with Nature is highlighted, emphasizing the inseparable connection between the divine and the natural realms. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* examines Nature from the playful activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It contains discussion on the various aspects of Nature which in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* is deeply connected with the playful activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This study primarily focuses on discourse of the text which is related to the awareness of Nature. To explicate Nature in *Māhātmya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Līlā, Nature study has been used to achieve such importance and objective of this research. The researcher uses the theory of John Locke for the analysis of this study. The theorist incorporates ethics to conserve forest, rivers, and other objects of Nature. The significance of this study is to present how the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* manifests awareness of Nature in *Māhātmya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Līlā. Interpretative method had been applied in the research. The findings of this investigation provide the evidences that the epic has included Nature awareness in *Māhātmya* that motivates humans to make a balance between creatures and plants. The main conclusion drawn from this research is that Kṛṣṇa Dvaypāyana Vyāsa is a far-sighted classical epic writer to make humans conscious relating to Nature and its effects in *Māhātmya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Līlā.

**Keywords:** Bhāgavata, Devotees, Ethics, Līlā, *Māhātmya*,

### Nature in *Māhātmya*: An Introduction

In the *Māhātmya* (glorification) of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Līlā found in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*, the concept of Nature plays a significant role in enhancing the divine narrative of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's playful activities. The introduction of Nature sets the stage for the divine play (*Līlā*) of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, highlighting the inherent beauty, harmony, and mystical significant of the natural world. The epic *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* begins with the *Māhātmya* (invocation) of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Līlā. This invocation about him exaggerates his heroic activities as the creator and destroyer of the universe. The *Māhātmya* records that he is the cause of creation, sustenance, and destruction of Nature. The author remarks Nature in the invocation to highlight Śrī Kṛṣṇa Līlā as the base of Nature. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* is the narration which associates the ideas of Nature and highlights the use of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Līlā. At the beginning of the epic, there is the comparison of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* with a tree to identify the similarities between the text and Nature:

O expert and thoughtful men, relish *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇam*, the mature fruit of the desire tree of *Vedic* literatures. It is emanated from the lips of Śrī Śukadeva Gośvāmī and it is interesting for the readers which is full of instructive lessons. Therefore this fruit has become even more tasteful, although its nectarine juice was already relishable for all, including liberated souls.(1. 1: 3)

From the perspective of Nature, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇam* is envisioned as a Vedic tree, rooted in the wisdom and teachings of the ancient tradition, with its branches spreading far and wide to nurture and nourish the understanding of the relation of humans with the world of Nature. This standpoint justifies the discussion of the idea to respect both the text and Nature from the same perspective and everybody should preserve them. In this connection, Swami Ranganathananda argues: *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* means, that which deals with *Bhagavān*"(5). In this context, the invocation provokes the importance of text in interrelation to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In the tree of the *Vedās*, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* is a flavorsome fruit and everybody likes it. The discussion highlights literary quality of the *Vedic* knowledge. Its core ideas are to preserve the world of Nature.

A naturalist instructs human beings to preserve Nature from different techniques. Śrī Kṛṣṇa in his life works as a nature lover for its conservation: "We think that we have met Your Goodness by the will of providence, just so that we may accept you as captain of the ship for those who desire to cross the difficult ocean of *Kali*, which deteriorates all the good qualities of a human being" (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 1. 1: 22). *Kalīyuga* (Iron Age) has many weaknesses so that the role of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to save Nature is crucial. Other demonic characters make obstacles in his activities but he is able to suppress them using his *yogic* power. Śrī Kṛṣṇa resembles to a captain to rescue others and he is the means of expectation for the solution of crisis in Nature. Unlike the above discussion, Arthur H Hirshorn rests on the argument: "People are learning, sometimes painfully, that they cannot physically isolate themselves from their natural environment"(8). This dealing is based on the idea that restoration of Nature is possible from plantation of trees. The effects of the *Kalīyuga* (ocean of faults) are seen in the destruction of Nature. Naturalists and the social activists should follow the activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to aware of the destruction of Nature.

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* praises the glory of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the form of Nature in the *Māhātmya*. Vedavyāsa presents an authentic idea about Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* in interrelation to Nature: "Everything that is mysterious is known to you because you worship the creator and destroyer of the material world and the maintainer of the spiritual world, the original Personality of Godhead, who is transcendental to the three modes of material nature"(1. 5: 6). In the *Māhātmya*, the writer judges Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the master of the physical and the spiritual Nature of the universe. He creates and destroys Nature according to his wills as a child plays with mud for making and breaking pots. In this line of thought, K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar investigates that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is "the breaker and maker of kingdoms" (116). In this sense, Kṛṣṇa is superior to Nature and kingdoms due to his control in Nature and society.

Kunti, the mother of Yudhishtira, Bhima, and Arjuna posits Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the cause of Nature. Instead of describing the activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, she prays him:

All these cities and villages are flourishing in all respects because the herbs and grains are in abundance, the trees are full of fruits, the rivers are flowing, the hills are full of minerals and the oceans full of wealth. And this is all due to Your glancing over them.<sup>4</sup> (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 1. 8: 40)

Queen Kunti clarifies her idea about Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā*. If there is sufficient food for human beings, there is not necessary to kill poor and innocent animals. Kunti does not like to kill animals because the death of an animal affects the ecosystem. In this context, Jonathan Geen argues that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is celestial Viṣṇu himself (78). The hero is in favor of the conservation of Nature. The minerals in hillside and jewels in the ocean show the presence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Nature. In this *Māhātmya*, Kunti prays Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the base of Nature. This *Māhātmya* remarks that Śrī Kṛṣṇa has his role to enrich the valuable production of Nature. She sees the magnificence and glory of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Nature. The prosperity of human beings flourishes from the gifts of Nature.

Sage Śūka portrays the message of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* to instruct human beings to change their social and cultural attitude towards Nature. The narrator argues in the *Māhātmya*: "Those, who drink through aural reception, fully filled with the nectarine message of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the beloved of the devotees, purify the polluted aim of life known as material enjoyment and thus go back to Godhead, to the lotus feet of Him" (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 2. 2: 37). In this *Māhātmya*, the author exposes that human beings should follow the footsteps of the devotees for the conservation of Nature. It is "love for love's sake"(qtd. in Ranganathananda 13). The message of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* is to restore Nature by changing their perspective. Thus, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* is the torchlight for humans to conserve Nature.

### **Problem, Objectives and Methodology**

Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa is a towering personality in Sanskrit literature and his literary works draws the attention of the readers. The writer discusses Nature in *Māhātmya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. He argues that creatures depend on Nature so that it is the duty of humans to conserve Nature for the benefits of all. The writer unfolds Nature referring *Māhātmya* in Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* in the text. The major focus of this analysis is Nature in *Māhātmya* to highlight Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. The prime problem of this study is to show Nature elements in the analysis of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* in *Māhātmya* of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. The following research questions are used to specify the problematic:

- What imaginings on Nature can readers find in *Māhātmya* of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*?
- How does the writer present Nature in *Māhātmya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*?

- Why is Nature issue used in *Māhātmya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*?

The major objectives of this study are to examine Nature imaginings in *Māhātmya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā*, to analyze the use of Nature in *Māhātmya*, and to explicate Nature issues in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*.

To analyze Nature in *Māhātmya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*, the researcher uses John Locke's theory of Nature. The theorist postulates "When natural law ends, tyranny begins" (34). This theory makes aware of humans about the significance of all creatures and plants. It portrays that human beings have connection with other creatures and plants. The researcher uses interpretative method in the analysis of *Māhātmya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. Critical materials on the text obtained from libraries, internet search, scholars' and experts' suggestions have been taken sincerely, seriously, and responsibly for the research. Other ideas that suit for the research have been used. Apart from the selected texts, other commentaries on the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* written in *Sanskrit*, *English*, *Hindi*, and *Nepali* languages have been taken into account. Transliteration method has been used while citing examples from those texts except A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swāmī Prabhupāda's the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* in English with Sanskrit stanzas. While citing examples, non-English words have been written in *italics* along with the translation of Prabhupāda in English from Sanskrit within inverted commas.

### **The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*: Review of Literature**

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* is the most discussed *Paurāṇic* text and researchers find different reviews on this text from multiple perspectives. In this connection, Krishna Sharma defines the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* from *Bhakti* literature: "The term *Bhakti* indicates nothing more than a loving devotion to God" (23). Supporting Sharma's argument, one can corroborate that his idea is identified with *Vaiṣṇavism*. The standpoint of *Vaiṣṇavism* promotes the evolution of *Bhakti* literature. At the same time, however, it is significant to have *bhāva* from works and words for the service of God. The *bhaktas* (devotees) use the word *seva* (service) for the clarification of *Bhakti*. *Bhakti* embraces the notions of liking and *Bhakti* literature emphasizes on the social ethics and the morality of devotees. Muktaben Dasharathbhai Thakkar highlights the importance of *Bhakti* and its process. In his evaluation of *Bhakti*, he elucidates that: "*Bhakti* begins with self-surrender, culminates in self-knowledge and ends in union with God" (5). In this sense, *Bhakti* increases the frequency of love to the divine being so that it is "love for love's sake" (6). A sense of *Bhakti* connects human to the divine. On the basis of *Bhakti* literature, one can argue that it helps to have intimate relation with the divine being.

Govindācārya Svāmī expresses his opinion: "In the *Dvāpara Yuga*, *Bhakti* descended on earth in the person of Śrī Kṛṣṇa on the shores of the *Yamunā* in North India" (57). He claims that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the base of *Bhakti* literature. But no one can deny the fact that *Rāma Bhakti* was popular in the *Dvāparayuga* before the existence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. *Śiva Bhakti* literature is used for the promotion of *Bhakti* literature. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* is an illustration of *Bhakti* literature in which there is a manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti*. In a

sense, Rāma *Bhakti*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Bhakti*, and Śiva *Bhakti* have enriched *Bhakti* literature. So, the analysis of *Bhakti* in this article is related to the analysis of *Bhakti* literature in the highest level.

*Bhakti* literature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* stresses on the qualities of devotees for the performance of *Bhakti Yoga* properly. These qualities are love, devotion, tenderness, mercy, obedience, and readiness to serve. Every devotee has intention to surrender himself/herself on the feet of *Bhagavān*. True devotees “give everything, claim nothing” (Thakkar 55). His subject matter of conversation is Śrī Kṛṣṇa and keeps on thinking only about him. The devotee believes that his words and works should be related to the glory of Lord. This analysis is based on the idea from the instructions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa about *Bhakti Yoga* for *moksha* to his devotee Uddab. In this connection, Prabhupāda discusses *Bhakti Yoga* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*: "If somehow or other by good fortune one develops faith in hearing and chanting Glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa" (119). It shows that chanting promotes the devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Detachment from the material life qualifies oneself for the sake of *Bhakti Yoga*. Pure devotee must follow strict disciplines to flourish *Bhakti* literature.

Likewise, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* discusses the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy to show connection between *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*. When *Puruṣa* disturbs the equilibrium of *Prakṛti*, the process of evolution happens in the universe. The *Sāṃkhya* philosophy, one of the reviews of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*, discusses on *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* from the perspective of numbering system. The critics express their views on *Sāṃkhya* philosophy from different perspectives. In this context, it is necessary to mention the view of James Fieser and Bradley Dowden for the clarification of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. In their words:

Word *Sāṃkhya* is derived from the Sanskrit noun *Sankhya* (number) based on the verbal root *khyā* (make known, name) with the proverb *sam* (together). *Sāṃkhya* thus denotes the system of enumeration. It belongs to number and calculation. (1)

The argument of Fieser and Dowden on *Sāṃkhya* philosophy helps to understand the universe with the help of numbering system.

In the same line of argument, R Puligandla expresses his view on the *Sāṃkhya* philosophy from his logic: "Every object of our experience is dependent upon and caused by other objects" (116). Explaining this statement, one clarifies that the elements of Nature have dependency each other. Unlike Puligandha, Mikel Burley connects *Sāṃkhya* system with *yoga* mentioning that " *Sāṃkhya* and *Yoga* are among the oldest and most influential systems of classical Indian thought and religious practice" (1). It further proves that *Sāṃkhya* philosophy is highlighted from the lens of *yoga*. Moving ahead in this line of thought, we examine that *Sāṃkhya* system is in practice from the ancient time in the *Hinduism*.

George A. James further proves the validity of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* from his logic. The critic argues that *Sāṃkhya* philosophy is a lens for the analysis of history (21). From this perspective, one argues that humans study the creation of this universe from the perspective of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy. Basing his argument

on such idea, Jumli Nath pinpoints his view: "*Sāṃkhya* system doesn't believe in the unreality of the phenomenal world. It solely deals with the evolution of the universe which is not based on just a mere hypothetical speculation" (44). This discussion concentrates on the evolution of the universe on the basis of *Sāṃkhya* philosophy. With the support of this idea, one can clarify that *Sāṃkhya* philosophy is one of the ancient philosophies of the *Hindus*.

*Advaita* philosophy is next dimension of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* to draw the attention of writers and critical thinkers for discussion. This philosophy shows spiritual realization for the attainment of humans. The aim of the *Advaita* philosophy is to establish the nature of truth (*tattva-nirṇay*), and triumph over the opponent, *vādi-vijaya*. It serves as the base of inner strength and ethics in the life of humans. This philosophy becomes the centre of discussion among writers, critics, and philosophers. Judy Kupferman has different notions about *advaita* philosophy. The critical thinker argues about the creation of the world. The critic discusses that the creation of the world was possible from "a big explosion"(25). To strengthen the argument, readers link this idea to the modern concept about the creation of the universe. Unlike the above views of other critical thinkers about the *advaita* philosophy, Kupferman links *advaita* philosophy with the creation of the universe. Likewise, Sthaneshwar Timalsina, a critical thinker, points out his notion: "Consciousness can arise due to the rise of various impressions" (127). The discussion concentrates on human consciousness as the basis of the *advaita* philosophy.

The extension of this logic can also be found in the perspective of Stephen E. Gregg. According to the critic: "*Advaita* represented ultimate religiosity in its truest form" (228). It proves that *Advaita* and religion have reciprocal relation each other. K.S. Murty remains in the opposite direction from other critics and writers about *Advaita* philosophy but the critic joins his hands with William M Indich. The analyst uses the term *Brahman* (world) and expresses that *Brahman* is in the world as curd within milk (177). Curd is inseparable from milk and the attachment of *Brahman* from this the world is same. With this discussion, he reaches to the conclusion that the *Advaita* philosophy and *Brahman* are the two lens for the analysis of the world.

John Grimes contradicts Timalsina, Gregg, and Murty, and the critic hints the weaknesses of the *Advaita* philosophy. His finding reveals that "Some *Advaitins* have compared this to seeing the surface of the ocean and completely forgetting the immensity beneath" (9). His analysis clearly shows that the *Advaita* philosophy is difficult to understand for experts. It remains the fact that the *Advaita* philosophy is not understandable by common readers. The above critics and their critical writings on the *Advaita* philosophy basically show the use of this philosophy in the creation of the universe.

The aforementioned reviews on the basic concepts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* show discussions on thematic aspects. The philosophers, critics, writers, and scholars have mentioned their views on the popularity of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* in the *Paurāṇic* period as well as at present. The researcher claims that no one has reviewed the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* from the perspective Nature in *Māhātmya*. Thus, Nature theory has been unexplored in *Māhātmya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. It is the point of departure of this research article for analysis. For this reason, it is important to examine Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* from the perspective of Nature to instruct humans

how the hero had played his role in favor of Nature for conservation. This research attempts to link Nature theory with the text of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. It analyses how the *Līlās* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa have relation with different facets of Nature.

## Results and Discussion

In the *Māhātmya* section of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*, the interrelation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* and Nature is explored through different episodes and teachings. The results and discussion presented in this section delve into the profound interplay between Śrī Kṛṣṇa's divine play and the natural world, shedding light on the significance of this relationship for spiritual seekers.

### Celebration of Nature's Response

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* portrays the natural world as an active participant in Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *Līlā*. Nature's response to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's presence is depicted as joyful and enchanting, with trees swaying in ecstasy, flowers blooming with enhanced fragrance, and birds singing in melodious harmony. These depictions celebrate the inherent divinity of the natural environment and highlight the dynamic interaction between Śrī Kṛṣṇa's divine energy and the world around him.

### Reflection of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Qualities in Nature:

The *Māhātmya* of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* illustrates how the natural elements reflect Śrī Kṛṣṇa's divine qualities. For example, the lakes and rivers, in their serene and tranquil state, embody the peace and purity inherent in Śrī Kṛṣṇa's being. Similarly, the melodious songs of birds' echo the enchanting flute melodious played by Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The reflection emphasizes the inseparable connection between the divine and natural realms, and encourages humans to seek and recognize the divine presence in all aspects of creation.

### Simplicity and Harmony

The *Līlā* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the setting of Nature of Vṛndāvana teaches useful lessons about leading a simple and harmonious life in tune with Nature. The cowherd community and their deep connection with Nature exemplify the significance of respecting and protecting the natural world, while living in harmony with the rhythms of Nature.

### Ecological and Conservation

The *Māhātmya* of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* addresses the need for ecological balance and conservation. It emphasizes the role of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the protector of all creatures and preserver of natural order. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's interaction with different animals and his role as a cowherd symbolize the importance of nurturing and caring for all living beings, highlighting the responsibility of humans towards Nature and well-being of all creatures.

### Transcending Material Existence

The *Māhātmya* section of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* contemplates the transient Nature of the material world and offers insights into transcending it. Through the divine play

of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, readers are encouraged to move beyond material attachments and seek a deeper spiritual connection with the divine. The natural world, with its constant cycles of growth and decay, serves as a reminder of the eternal and spiritual aspects of existence.

Aforementioned results and discussion in the *Māhātmya* of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* highlight the profound relationship between Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* and Nature. They emphasize the divinity interconnectedness of all creation, encouraging humans to recognize, respect, and revere the natural world as a manifestation of the divine. Furthermore, the teachings inspire a harmonious and sustainable approach to life, nurturing a deep sense of appreciation and stewardship for environment

### **Analysis of Nature in *Māhātmya***

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* postulates the similarities between the laws of Nature and the laws of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In this context, Śukadeva formulates his ideas to King Parikshīt:

The right situation for the living entities is to obey the laws of the Lord and thus be in perfect peace of mind under the protection of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Manus and their laws are meant to give right direction in life. The impetus for activity is the desire for fruitive work. (2. 10: 4)

The law of Nature is effective to all creatures equally and every creature of this planet has right to survive. The laws of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* are in favor of the survival of all creatures. In this regard, Richa Paurannik Clements retains the primary responsibility for "using the voice of Kṛṣṇa" (117) for the continuation of natural law in ecology. Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* evokes the awareness of Nature from which human beings are advised to obey the laws of Nature. Law abiding people do not face problems in the world. If not, the hazards in Nature occur at any time. Thus, this view is a catalogue for people how to remain in touch with Nature without harming her.

Sage Maitreya makes clear to Vidura about love of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to trees and other objects of Nature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. To bring the *pārijāta* tree from the heaven to the earth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa makes hard efforts: "Just to please His dear wife, the Lord brought back the *pārijāta* tree from heaven, just as an ordinary husband would do. But Indra, the king of heaven, induced by his wives, ran after the Lord with full force to fight Him" (3. 3: 5). Śrī Kṛṣṇa loves forest and gives a *pārijāta* tree to his wife Satyabhāmā as gift brought from the heaven. In this connection, Tagare elucidates that Śrī Kṛṣṇa grants the desire of his wife providing *apārijāta* tree as a gift (231). Being a lover of Nature, Śrī Kṛṣṇa adds one species of tree on this globe. The *pārijāta* gives sweet fragrance and everybody likes to plant this flower near his/her house. If there are special trees and flowers, human beings should supply from one place to other places. They must follow the actions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to conserve Nature by supplying important plants and grains.

Maitreya further praises the glory of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *māhātmya* referring his love to Nature. To live in the forest with the objects of Nature is his hobby and he sits under a banyan tree for self-satisfaction. Uddhava, an intimate friend and secretary of Kṛṣṇa,

investigates Śrī Kṛṣṇa's condition in the richness of Nature: "The Lord was sitting, taking rest against a young banyan tree, with His right lotus foot on His left thigh, and although He had left all household comforts. He looked quite cheerful in that posture" (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 3. 4: 8). According to Uddhava, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is fond of sitting at the bottom of a banyan tree for entertainment. This verse stresses the use of Nature for peace and satisfaction. With this conditioning, PP Barooah appreciates the fact that a banyan tree is considered auspicious that "brings prosperity to the occupant of the house" (26). At present, the *Hindus* believe that a bunyān tree is supposed to bring fortune in their lives.

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* makes a considerable impact of Nature in the life of human beings and other creatures through the character of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. To stress the scenario of Nature, there is reliability to mention the view of sage Maitreya about Saugandhika forest: "All these atmospheric influences unsettled the forest elephants who flocked together in the sandalwood forest, and the blowing wind agitated the minds of the damsels there for further sexual enjoyment" (4. 6: 30). This beautiful scenario of forest with elephants draws the attention of readers as the base of happiness. Nature does not show the sign of pollution and the elephants hover to and fro without being disturbed. Śrī Kṛṣṇa likes to remain in such a dense forest where there is happiness for creatures. To highlight his glory, Prabhupāda argues: "This material nature is also a temporary creation of the Lord, as the cloud is a creation of the sun" (19). This analysis highlights similarities between the sun and Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the matter of creation. It shows that natural beauty causes fertility and the creatures get benefits from the freshness and purity of Nature.

The *Māhātmya* relates between Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* and Nature mentioning that his form lies in Nature. Brāhmaṇas eulogize Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* in the objects of Nature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* as follows:

Dear Lord, You are sacrifice personified. You are the offering of clarified butter, You are the fire, You are the chanting of the *Vedic* hymns by which the sacrifice is conducted, You are the fuel, You are the flame, You are the *kuśa* grass, and You are sacrificial pots. You are the priests who perform the *yajna*, You are the demigods headed by Indra, and You are the sacrificial animal. Everything that is sacrificed is You or Your energy. (4. 7: 45)

In the aforementioned expression, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is pervasive in the natural objects and his attachment to Nature is inseparable. Natural things such as fire, fuel, flame, pots, *kuśa* grass, and sacrificial animals are his embodiments. In relation to this idea, OP Dwivedi confirms that the *Hindus* see "divinity in Nature" (35). The human beings, who love him, should keep those things in their natural world without intervention.

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* extends the popularity of Śrī Kṛṣṇa who remains happy with the products of Nature. The *Hindus* use the objects of Nature such as fruits and flowers to please and to fulfil their needs. In this sense, the role of Śrī Kṛṣṇa changes from hero to the divine being. Human beings find everything in Nature and they are pleased using those things. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* further inscribes the association of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Nature as next evidence: "You are full in every respect. You are certainly very satisfied when Your devotees offer You praying with flattering voices and in ecstasy bring

You *tulasī* leaves, water, twigs, bearing new leaves, and newly grown grass. This surely makes You satisfied" (5. 3: 6). *Tulasī* (basil) leaves, water, and twigs are favorite things of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and he likes to conserve not only trees but also shrubs and herbs to have continuation of Nature in fresh condition. Like the notions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in favor of Nature, human beings are advised to preserve trees, grass, shrubs, and herbs. *Tulasi* leaves are useful for medicine and everybody should use it realizing its value in the life of human beings.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is pleased with the leaves of basil, grass, water, and other tiny objects of Nature stressing that humans should not neglect the minor natural things. On the base of this idea, George A. James further explores the utility of trees in the life of humans for several purposes: "Trees must be available to meet the needs of local people for food, fuel, fodder, fiber, and fertilizer. They could do so without being destroyed" (519). This analysis has its reliability to use the natural things for our benefits. Similarly, humans use water of different places as medicine to cure diseases which are related to skin. Thus, there should be self-realization of human beings from the inspiration of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to apply small plants, trees and other natural things for the fulfillment of their needs.

The *Māhātmya* further extends the role of Śrī Kṛṣṇa not only on this globe but also in the whole universe. Explaining this statement, Sukadeva tells King Parikshīt:

From the great leaders of the universe, such as Lord Brahmā and other demigods, down to the political leaders of this world, all are envious of Your authority. Without Your help, however, they could neither separately nor concertedly maintain the innumerable living entities within the universe. You are actually the only maintainer of all human beings, of animals like cows and asses, and of plants, reptiles, birds, mountains and whatever else is visible within this material world.<sup>12</sup> (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 5. 18: 27)

The connection of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with Nature is inseparable and other demigods are envious with him. He establishes himself as a maintainer of Nature. In this connection, one can get contradictory ideas between hermits and householders. At this point, Devdutt Pattanaik corroborates: "The history of *Hinduism* is marked by tension between the hermit and the householder traditions" (13). Hermits are in favor of Nature whereas householders have their ideas to use Nature for the fulfillment of their needs. In this way, Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* is a path for us how to be conscious about the dominance of humans over Nature.

Prahlāda invokes Śrī Kṛṣṇa that one can see his influence in all creatures of Nature. He does not differentiate between higher and lower creatures "My dear Lord, now I have complete experience concerning the worldly opulence, mystic power, longevity and other material pleasures enjoyed by all living entities from Brahmā down to the ant" (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 7. 9: 24). We find same crux of logic when Prahlāda admires the favor of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Nature and creatures. From the standpoint of the mystic power of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Pika Gosh shows how Śrī Kṛṣṇa drinks bonfire in forest to control the flames (82). From this evidence, one can claim that Śrī Kṛṣṇa takes any risk for the conservation of forest and other natural things. Śrī Kṛṣṇa and his followers are in favor of equal justice of Nature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*.

King Bali makes comparison of a tree with human body. In the *Māhātmya*, he supports the idea of Nature: "When a tree is uprooted it immediately falls down and begins to dry up. Similarly, if one doesn't take care of the body, which is supposed to be untruth-in other words, if the untruth is uprooted-the body undoubtedly becomes dry" (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 8. 19: 40) . King Bali highlights that there are similarities between trees and human beings so that one should love trees as the body of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Similarities are drawn by Mark Stoll as he argues: "The ecological crisis is essentially a social crisis, and a religious solution to one entails a solution to the other" (274). Human beings need to understand that religious solution is necessary to address the environmental issues. One should care Nature as one's own body. The activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in interrelation to Nature are the guidance for readers to be sensitive about it.

Similarly, King Ambarīṣa realises Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Nature. In Ambarīṣa's words: "O *Sudarśana Cakra*, you are the most powerful sun, and you are the moon, the master of fall luminaries. You are water, earth and sky, you are the air, you are the five sense objects, and you are the senses also" (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 9. 5: 3). This emphasis on the value of Nature in interrelation to the *Sudarśana Cakra* of Kṛṣṇa is identified with the disc. King Ambarīṣa regards the *Sudarśana Cakra* as Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He argues that the *Sudarśana Cakra* is the embodiment of Kṛṣṇa. Tagare concurs that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the subtle elements (1149) and the knowledge of *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* is necessary to understand him. The belongings of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are related to Nature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. As the sun, the *Sudarśana Cakra* is useful for King Ambarīṣa to save him from crisis. Thus, different problems of humans are solved by Nature.

Śukadeva hints Kṛṣṇa's form in the appearance of Viṣṇu immediately after his birth in the prison of Kaṁsa. The narrator mentions the following lines for the admiration of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā*: "Vasudeva then saw the newborn child, who had very wonderful lotus like eyes and who bore in His four hands the four weapons *śaṅkha, cakra, gada, and padma*. On His chest was the mark of *Śrīvatsa* and on His neck the brilliant *Kaustubha* gem" (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 10. 3: 9). These lines show how Śrī Kṛṣṇa is attached to Nature from the time of his birth. One can see Nature in the form of *śaṅkha, cakra, gada, padma, and Śrīvatsa* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The objects such as lotus, *śaṅkha, cakra, gada, and padma* have their association with Nature. These marks on his body trace the symbol of Nature. In this context, Jiva Gośvāmī expresses his idea: "The beauty of His color was even superior to the splendor of a dense rain cloud" (qtd. in Filion 511). This discussion shows the supremacy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in appearance to others. If the natural things are observed on his body, the *Hindus* realize that his body is the replica of Nature.

The *Yogic* power of Śrī Kṛṣṇa denotes the similarities between himself and Nature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. This scenario highlights the character of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and readers regard him as a miraculous hero. This power promotes *Māhātmya* in the *Paurāṇic* literature when the mother Yasodā sees Nature within the mouth of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

When child Kṛṣṇa was almost finished drinking His mother's milk and mother Yasodā was touching Him and looking at His beautiful, brilliantly smiling face, the baby yawned, and mother Yasodā saw in His mouth the whole sky, the higher planetary system and the earth, the luminaries in all directions, the

sun, the moon, fire, the seas, islands, mountains, rivers, forests, and all kinds of living entities, moving and non-moving. (10. 7: 35-36)

Mother Yasodā sees not only Nature within the mouth of Śrī Kṛṣṇa but also observes the whole universe. There is the whole and part relationship between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Nature. In this line of argument, Sanātana Gośvāmī claims: "He has power to show the universe within the abdomen, through the mouth, at once merely by His desire" (qtd. in Filion 473). It indicates the miraculous activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa for the establishment of him as a hero. Basing this argument on such idea, one can opine that there is there is the manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the universe.

Brahmā has similar discussion in connection between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Nature. He incorporates his ideas in interrelation to Nature from Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā*: "Just at this entire universe, including You, was exhibited within Your abdomen, so it is now manifested here externally in the same exact form. How could such things happen unless arranged by Your inconceivable energy"<sup>18</sup> (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 10. 14: 17). There is analogy between the external universe and inside the belly of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It motivates readers to analyze Śrī Kṛṣṇa due to his manifestation of the world within his belly. On this ground, Sūradās examines: "He opened to her heavens, the nether world, the earth, the forests and the mountains in his mouth"(qtd. in White 174). Śrī Kṛṣṇa has divine characteristics during the time of his childhood. This activity is incredible for readers and researchers. It shows that there are *pancatatta* (five elements of Nature) within human body.

Brahmā further proves that Śrī Kṛṣṇa protects common people, animals, and trees from the oppression of the demonic rulers:

My dear Kṛṣṇa, You bestow happiness upon the lotus like *vṛṣṇi* dynasty and expand the great oceans consisting of the earth, the demigods *brāhmaṇas* and the cows. You dispel the dense darkness of irreligion and oppose the demons who have appeared on this earth. O Supreme Personality of Godhead, as long as this universe exists and as long as the sun shines, I will offer my obeisances unto You.<sup>19</sup> (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 10. 14: 40)

This discussion proves that Śrī Kṛṣṇa controls the demonic activities against Nature. On this background, Charles S. J. White postulates that "Kṛṣṇa is not really a solar god in his own right but rather that he acquires this characteristics through combination with Viṣṇu" (158). Here, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has double roles: a nature lover and a social activist.

The *Māhātmya* has noticeable evidence between human beings and Nature. In the words of Śukadeva: "While Kṛṣṇa was going to the fruit vendor very hastily, most of the grains He was holding fell. Nonetheless, the fruit vendor filled Śrī Kṛṣṇa's hands with fruits, and her fruit basket was immediately filled with jewels and gold"<sup>20</sup> (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* 10. 11: 11). Śrī Kṛṣṇa provides jewels and gold to a vendor for exchange with fruits. It shows similarities between gold and fruits for the use of humans. It indicates what we do for Nature, get more benefits from her. Filion incorporates his ideas saying that Kṛṣṇa does not take anything freely from others (723). Likewise, human beings should not take the objects of Nature freely without protecting her.

Human beings have tendency not to care about the value of Nature. They are unable to make good relationship with Nature. In this connection, Śruti in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* argues:

Members of the renounced order who fail to uproot the last traces of material desire in their hearts remain impure, and thus You do not allow them to understand You. Although You are present within their hearts, for them You are like a jewel worn around the neck of a man who has totally forgotten it is there. O Lord, those who practice *yoga* only for sense gratification must suffer punishment both in this life and the next: from death, who will not release them, and from You, whose kingdom they cannot reach.<sup>21</sup> (10. 87: 39)

This invocation proves that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is a jewel for human beings for precepts. Nature is as important as a jewel for humans but they neglect about its value. In similar vein, Sārātha Darśinī notes that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is precious jewel for humans. She argues that humans have not benefitted from his precepts (1844). People use Nature even though degradation in it is going on due to lack of self-awareness. It is a satire upon the activities of human beings in relation to Nature.

The aforementioned evidences of the *Māhātmya* provide the ground for interpretation in connection of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *līlā* to Nature in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is often portrayed as the indwelling essence within all living beings and the entire creation. Plants, animals, and landscape in narratives serve as backdrop to highlight Śrī Kṛṣṇa's omnipresence and his ability to manifest in various forms. The foil characters praise the activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa through invocation. The *Māhātmya* makes human beings ecologically conscious and educates them for the restoration of Nature. Human beings are warned not to destroy Nature for the fulfillment of their needs. Nowadays, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is praised as a Nature lover after five thousand years due to his awareness in favor of Nature. Human beings who base the trend of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to conserve Nature in the global level will be praised in the future. It is necessary to establish a new trend for humans how to conserve Nature for future generation.

## Conclusion

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* is a religious scripture of the *Hindus* which incorporates awareness of Nature in *Māhātmya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā*. Nature is utilized in the *Māhātmya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* to evoke a sense of wonder, beauty, and transcendence. The descriptions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's playful interactions with the world of Nature such as his dances with *gopīs* amidst the enchanting forests of *Vṛndāvana*, create a vivid and immersive imagery. The lush greenery, fragrant flowers, flowing rivers, and melodious songs of birds in narratives have explored the significant of Nature in Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā*. The depiction of Nature in the *Māhātmya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* evokes a sense of divine transcendence. The description of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's divine sports, such as lifting the Govardhan hillock demonstrates his supremacy over the law of Nature. The use of Nature in the *Māhātmya* serves as a reminder of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's limitless power and his ability to transcend the boundaries of the physical Nature.

The writer manifests Nature in Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* portraying that all humans should love and conserve the objects of Nature as Śrī Kṛṣṇa does in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*. The issues of Nature reflected in the text shows that Nature is everything for the existence of all creatures and plants. The use of Nature in the *Māhātmya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* conveys profound philosophical and spiritual teachings. The depiction of Nature underscores Śrī Kṛṣṇa's divine beauty, cosmic order, immanence, and transcendence, thereby deepening the understanding the interrelation with the divine in *Hindu* spirituality. The intimacy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with living beings and non-living things in *Māhātmya* makes conscious to the humans of supra postmodern society despite the origin of the text more than five thousand years ago. The precepts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* relating to Nature is the ground stone to conserve Nature. The epic corroborates to solve present ecological problems thinking that humans should use Nature to fulfil only their needs but not for greed.

### Topics for Future Research

Apart from the discussed ideas in the foregoing chapters of this dissertation, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa Purāṇa* carries broad subject matters for academic research. The researcher has not covered those topics in this dissertation. Some probable areas for further study are as follows:

- i. Exploration of Eco Spirituality in Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā*
- ii. Impacts of the Five Elements of Nature in Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā*
- iii. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is a Tribal Character
- iv. Intimacy between Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* and Nature in *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*
- v. Analysis of Nature from Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* in *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*
- vi. Interconnection between Nature and Śrī Kṛṣṇa *Līlā* in *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa*

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## Appendix

1. निगमकल्पतरोर्गलितं फलं  
शुकमुखादमृतद्रवसंयुतम् ,  
पिबत भागवतं रसमालयं  
मुहुरहो रसिका भुवि भावुकाः ॥ ३॥ (1.1:3)  
*nigama-kalpa-taror galitaè phalaè  
çuka-mukhād amāta-drava-saàyutam  
pibata bhāgavataè rasam ālayaè  
muhur aho rasikā bhuvī bhāvukāu*
2. त्वं नः सन्दर्शितो धात्रा दुस्तरं निस्तितीर्षताम् ।  
कलिं सत्त्वहरं पुंसां कर्णधार इवार्णवम् ॥ २२॥ (1.1:22)  
*tvaè naù sandarçito dhātrā  
dustaraè nistitēñatām  
kalim sattva-harm pumsām  
karēa-dhāra ivārṇavam*
3. स वै भवान् वेद समस्तगुह्यमुपासितो  
यत्पुरुषः पुराणः ।  
परावरेणो मनसैव विश्वं  
सृजत्यवत्यत्ति गुणैरसङ्गः ॥ ६॥ (1.5:6)  
*sa vai bhavān veda samasta-guhyam  
upāsito yat puruṣaù purāṇaḥ  
parāvareṇo manasaiva viçvaè  
sṛjaty avaty atti guṇair asaṅgaḥ*
4. इमे जनपदाः स्वद्धाः सुपक्वौषधिवीरुधः ।  
वनान्निन्द्युदन्वन्तो ह्येधन्ते तव वीक्षितैः ॥ ४०॥ (1.8:40)  
*ime jana-padāḥ svāddhāḥ  
supakvausadhi-vērudhaḥ  
vanādri-nady-udanvanto  
hy edhante tava vēkṣitaiḥ*
5. पिबन्ति ये भगवत आत्मनः सतां  
कथामृतं श्रवणपुटेषु सम्भृतम् ।  
पुनन्ति ते विषयविदूषिताशयं  
व्रजन्ति तच्चरणसरोरुहान्तिकम् ॥ ३७॥ (2.2:37)  
*pibanti ye bhagavata ātmanaḥ satāṅ  
kathamṛtaṅ çravaṇa-puṭeṣu sambhṛtam  
punanti te viṣaya-vidūṣitāçayaṅ  
vrajanti tac-çaraṇa-saroruhāntikam*
6. स्थितिर्वैकुण्ठविजयः पोषणं तदनुग्रहः ।  
मन्वन्तराणि सद्धर्म उतयः कर्मवासनाः ॥ ४॥ (2.10:4)  
*sthitir vaikuṇṭha-vijayaḥ  
poṇaēaṅ tad-anugrahaḥ  
manvantarāṅ sad-dharma*
7. *ūtayaù karma-vāsanāu*
7. प्रियं प्रभुर्ग्राम्य इव प्रियाया  
विधित्सुरार्च्छद् द्युतरुं यदर्थे ।  
वज्रयाद्रवत्तं सगणो रुषाम्भः  
क्रीडामृगो नूनमयं वधूनाम् ॥ ५॥ (3.3:5)  
*priyaè prabhur grāmya iva priyāya  
vidhitsuṛ ārcchad dyutaruà yad-arthe  
vajry ādravat taà sa-gaēo ruñāndhaù  
krēḍā-māgo nūnam ayaè vadhūnām*
8. वाम ऊरावधिश्रित्य दक्षिणाङ्घ्रिसरोरुहम् ।  
अपाश्रितार्भकाश्वत्थमकृशं त्यक्तपिप्पलम् ॥ ८॥ (3.4:8)  
*vāma ūrāv adhiçritya  
dakñiēāṅghri-saroruham  
apāçritārbhakāçvattham  
akāçāè tyakta-pippalam*
9. वनकुञ्जरसङ्घृष्टहरिचन्दनवायुना ।  
अधि पुण्यजनस्त्रीणां मुहुरुन्मथयन् मनः ॥ ३०॥ (4.6:30)  
*vana-kuijara-saiḅghāñōa  
haricandana-vāyunā  
adhi puṇyajana-strēēāè  
muhur unmathayan manaù*
10. त्वं क्रतुस्त्वं हविस्त्वं हुताशः स्वयं  
त्वं हि मन्त्रः समिद्धर्भ पात्राणि च ।  
त्वं सदस्यत्विजो दम्पती देवता  
अग्निहोत्रं स्वधा सोम आज्यं पशुः ॥ ४५॥  
(4.7:45)  
*tvaè kratus tvaè havis tvaè hutāçaù svayaè  
tvaè hi mantraù samid-darbha-pātrāṅi ca  
tvaè sadasyartvijo dampatē devatā  
agnihotraè svadhā soma ājyaè paçuù*
11. परिजनानुरागविरचितशबलसंशब्द -  
सलिलसितकिसलयतुलसिकादूर्वाङ्कुरैरपि  
सम्भृतया सपर्यया किल परम परितुष्यसि ॥ ६॥  
(5.3:6)  
*pariñanānuraḅa-viracita-çabala-saèçabda-  
salila-sita-kisalaya-tulasikā-dūrvāikurair api  
sambhṛtayā saparyayā kila param parituṣyasi.*
12. यं लोकपालाः किल मत्सरज्वरा  
हित्वा यतन्तोऽपि पृथक्समेत्य च ।  
पातुं न शेकुर्द्विपदश्चतुष्पदः  
सरीसृपं स्थाणु यदत्र दृश्यते ॥ २७॥

(5.18:27)

yaè loka-päläü kila matsara-jvarä  
hitvä yatanto 'pi päthak sametya ca  
pätuà na çekur dvi-padaç catuñ-padaü  
sarésäpaà sthähü yad atra dâçyate

13.

तस्मादमूस्तनुभृतामहमाशिषो ङ  
आयुः श्रियं विभवमैन्द्रियमाविरिञ्चात् ।  
नेच्छामि ते विलुलितानुरुविक्रमेण  
कालात्मनोपनय मां निजभृत्यपार्श्वम् ॥ २४ ॥

(7.2:14)

tasmäd amüs tanu-bhätäm aham äçïño 'jia  
äyüü çriyaà vibhavam aindriyam ävirüçyät  
necchämi te vilulitän uruvikrameëa  
kälätmanopanaya mäë nija-bhätya-pärçvam

14.

तद्यथा वृक्ष उन्मूलः शुष्यत्युद्धततिचिरात् ।  
एवं नष्टानृतः सद्य आत्मा शुष्येन्न संशयः ॥ ४० ॥

(8.19:40)

tad yathä väkña unmuläü  
çuñyaty udvartate 'cirät  
evaà nañöänätäu sadya  
ätmä çuñyen na saaçayati

15.

त्वमग्निर्भगवान् सूर्यस्त्वं सोमो ज्योतिषां पतिः ।  
त्वमापस्त्वं क्षितिर्व्योम वायुमत्रिन्द्रियाणि च ॥ ३ ॥

(9.5:3)

tvam agnir bhagavan süryas  
tvaè somo jyotinäà patiiü  
tvam äpas tvaà kñitir vyoma  
väyur mätrendriyähü ca

16.

तमद्भुतं बालकमम्बुजेक्षणं  
चतुर्भुजं शङ्खगदाद्युदायुधम् ।  
श्रीवत्सलक्ष्मं गलशोभिकौस्तुभं  
पीताम्बरं सान्द्रपयोदसौभगम् ॥ ९ ॥

(10.3:9)

tam avdbhutam bälakamambujekṣaṇam  
catur-rbhujam śaṅkha-gadaäryudham  
śrībatsa-lakṣmam gala-śobhi-kaustubham  
pītāmbaram sāndra-payoda-saubhagam

17.

पीतप्रायस्य जननी सा तस्य रुचिरस्मितम् ।  
मुखं लालयती राजञ्जम्भतो ददृशे इदम् ॥ ३५ ॥  
खं रोदसी ज्योतिरनीकमाशाः  
सूर्येन्दुवह्निश्वसनाम्बुधींश्च ।  
द्वीपान् नगांस्तद्दुहितृवनानि  
भूतानि यानि स्थिरजङ्गमानि ॥ ३६ ॥

(10.7:35-36)

péta-präyasya janané  
sutasya rucira-smitam  
mukhaà lälayaté räjäi  
jämbhato dadäçe idam  
khaà rodasé jyotir-anékam äçüü  
süryendu-vahni-çvasanämbudhéèç ca  
dvépän nagäës tad-duhitèr vanäni  
bhütäni yäni sthira-jaigamäni

18.

यस्य कुक्षाविदं सर्वं सात्मं भाति यथा तथा ।  
तत्त्वय्यपीह तत्सर्वं किमिदं मायया विना ॥ १७ ॥

(10.14:17)

yasya kukñäv idaà sarvaà  
sätmäè bhäti yathä tathä  
tat tvayy apéha tat sarvaà  
kim idaà mäyayä vinä

19.

श्रीकृष्ण वृष्णिकुलपुष्करजोषदायिन्  
क्षमानिर्जरद्विजपशूदधिवृद्धिकारिन् ।  
उद्धर्मशार्वरहर क्षितिराक्षसधु -  
गाकल्पमार्कमर्हन् भगवन् नमस्ते ॥ ४० ॥

(10.14:40)

çré-kññëa vññëi-kula-puñkara-joña-däyin  
kñmä-nirjara-dvija-paçüdadhi-väddhi-kärin  
uddharma-çärvara-hara kñiti-räkñasa-dhrug  
ä-kalpam ärkam arhan bhagavan namas te

20.

फलविक्रयिणी तस्य च्युतधान्यं करद्वयम् ।  
फलैरपूरयद्रत्नैः फलभाण्डमपूरि च ॥ ११ ॥

(10.11:11)

phala-vikrayiñë tasya  
cyuta-dhänya-kara-dvayam  
phalair apürayad ratnaiü  
phala-bhäëòam apüri ca

21.

यदि न समुद्धरन्ति यतयो हृदि कामजटा  
दुरधिगमोऽसतां हृदि गतोऽस्मृतकण्ठमणिः ।  
असुतृयोगिनामुभयतोऽप्यसुखं भगवन्  
अनपगतान्तकादनधिरूढपदाद्भवतः ॥ ३९ ॥

(10.87:39)

yadi na samuddharanti yatayo hrüdi kâma-jaṭä  
duradhigamo 'satäm hrüdi gato 'smṛta-kantha-  
mañih  
asu-tṛpa-yoginäm ubhayato 'py asukham  
bhagavann  
anapagatântakäd anadhirüḍha-padäd bhavataḥ

## Application of ‘the compass’ analogy to the novel *Samskara* and to the poem *A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning*

Ch Pranitha

### Abstract

The main aim of this paper is to understand the significance and intricate application of literary device of a ‘compass analogy’ to Donne’s poem *A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning* Donne and the novel *Samskara* by U R Ananthamurthy. Despite their distinct themes, narrative structures, and genres, one being a poem and the other a novel, one centered on love and the other on death, these two works do not naturally lend themselves to comparison or drawing parallels, except through the application of the compass analogy. In both literary pieces, this analogy is skillfully used to draw connections between the physical compass and human emotions. This paper attempted to observe the complex themes that are incorporated in these two works such as Guidance and Direction, Stability and Consistency, Exploration and Discovery, Home and Belonging, Contrasting Directions, Love and Relationships, Transformation, Inner Conflict, and Self-Discovery. These profound themes may not be readily evident in an analysis of these works without considering the presence and influence of the compass analogy.

**Keywords:** Compass Analogy, *Samskara*, *A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning*.

### Introduction

#### UR Ananthamurthy – *Samskara*

Ananthamurthy was a Kannada language critic and a contemporary writer. He is renowned for writing novels that revealed the truth about society. He is a prominent member of the Navya movement. His work mostly focuses on challenging traditional hierarchies and publicly expressing his opinions about the religious practices that people follow.

His 1965 novel *Samskara* was well received by reviewers when it was adapted into a movie in 1970. The novel was originally written in Kannada, but A.K Ramanujan subsequently translated it into English. The term "samskara" refers to rituals or funeral ceremonies. The religious book *Samskara* is set in the village of Durvasapura, whose residents rigidly adhere to ancient customs. The tale reveals the chaos and repercussions that followed the demise of the character called Narayanappa. Within the novel, another character named Praneshacharya, a staunch adherent of rigid Brahmin values, grapples with a dilemma presented by the villagers. The issue revolves around deciding who will perform the burial rituals for Narayanappa, as he was born a Brahmin. According to traditional norms, Brahmins should conduct these rituals. However, throughout his life, Narayanappa had lived in defiance of Brahminical values. This led to a predicament where the village Brahmins consider it a sin to perform the rituals themselves and are unwilling to allow someone from a non-Brahmin caste to take on the responsibility.

When he fails to find a resolution, to this predicament, the erudite Brahmin, Praneshacharya, experiences profound distress. His meeting with Chandri compels him to

depart from his hometown and embark on a different path, where he crosses paths with another character named Putta, leading him to embark on a new journey.

### **John Donne – “A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning”**

The founder of metaphysical poetry is John Donne. His poetry on religion and love is highly regarded. His writings were primarily published after his demise, and he earned a reputation as father of metaphysical poetry for using a variety of literary devices to portray his complicated views. His poems frequently dealt with issues of life, death, and love. His ability to write poetry that combines thoughts and emotions is well renowned. Donne's poetry is recognized for its depth of thought and for using vivid imagery to convey complicated topics. "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" poem written on the occasion of parting from his wife, Anne More Donne, in 1611. Donne was going on a diplomatic mission to France, leaving his wife behind in England. A "valediction" is a farewell speech. This poem cautions against grief about separation and affirms the special, particular love the speaker and his lover share. Like most of Donne's poems, it was not published until after his death.

### **Literature review**

Analogies are invaluable guides in philosophical investigations, and most discoveries, not arising from mere chance, owe their success to the aid of analogical reasoning. (Joseph Priestley)

The use of analogies in literary criticism has a long-standing and respectable tradition, dating back at least to Aristotle. He employed an analogy from biology to explain that an epic's plot should have a complete and unified structure, resembling a living organism. Similarly, he used the same analogy to discuss the necessary "magnitude" of action in tragedies, emphasizing the importance of an orderly arrangement and a certain scale.

By comparing literary works to relatable or known concepts, analogies enrich comprehension and offer deeper insights into the themes, characters, and emotions conveyed in the text. The field of cognitive linguistics and literary theory has extensively explored the role of analogical reasoning in literature comprehension. Analogical reasoning involves citing accepted similarities between two systems to support the conclusion that further similarities exist. While such arguments generally fall under applicative reasoning, their conclusions are supported with varying degrees of strength, not absolute certainty.

Analogical reasoning leads to broader insights and facilitates their integration into coherent discussions. Recently, Professor Kenneth Pike's model of Particle, Wave, and Field in analogical criticism, originally developed for the study of language, shows promise as a useful tool in the study of literature. This approach encourages a flexible perspective, prompting readers to consider various details before selecting important aspects for discussion. It emphasizes transitions and interrelationships more prominently than other approaches, highlighting the dynamic and organic nature of the whole literary work. Moreover, it promotes simultaneous analysis and synthesis, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the text's complexities.

The compass analogy is one such analogy frequently used by authors in their literary works as a symbol, piece of imagery, or metaphor. When navigators are stranded in the sea,

the physical compass is meant to help them find their way. It encourages them, offers them security, and expresses trust that all will turn out right in the end. The majority of authors often employed this symbol of guidance explicitly to emphasize the idea of self-discovery and moral guidance. For instance, the author of the novel *The Alchemist* (1988) attempts to introduce a character called Santiago, who embarks on a trip in pursuit of wealth. He has challenges along the way, but he never gives in. Instead, he always stays true to himself and lets his moral compass guide him. In the course of this, he gains a lot of experience. The physical compass is intended to offer direction, but Santiago, the main character in this novel, will utilize his moral compass to guide him as he sets out on his adventure. The compass's purpose is to facilitate the navigators' onward journey. Similar to how a moral compass ingrained in people, propels people onward in life. Both the physical and the moral compass serve the purpose of directing the person ahead and helping him through difficulties. So, using the poetry "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" and the novel *Samskara*, this paper attempted to make a comparison between the moral compass and the physical compass.

## **Analysis**

### **Guidance and Direction**

In the poem, *A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning* the speaker tells his wife not to mourn for the departure and justifies to his wife they are spiritually connected despite their physical separation. The poet formulates his reasons for not being mourned based on his moral compass throughout the poem and decides to set forth on a new journey despite the absence of his spouse. On the other hand, in *Samskara*, the protagonist Praneshacharya's inability to give a verdict to the people and his encounter with Chandri drove him in formulating his ethical decision to leave the village and embark on a journey. Both the speaker in the poem and the Praneshacharya despite encountering the conflicts set on a voyage by considering their moral compass. The compass serves the purpose of providing guidance and direction similarly by incorporating the moral compass both the poet and the Praneshacharya set onto a new voyage.

### **Stability and Consistency**

The poet throughout the poem tries to signify his idea of eternal love and also remains intact in describing his thoughts on love without wavering. On the other hand, in the novel *Samskara*, the themes such as tradition, morality, and loneliness remain intact and indeed drive the story forward. Just as a compass needle points to the magnetic north consistently, the poet's description of love in the poem and the themes of tradition, despair, and death in the novel remain consistent throughout the narrative.

### **Exploration and Discovery**

In the poem *A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning*, the poet departs from his wife and embarks on a new journey to fulfill his duty on the other hand, the character Praneshacharya leaves behind his old principles and embarks on a new journey, hence leading to the beginning of their exploration process. Here, both the poet and the Praneshacharya leave behind the obstacles of their life and sets on a new voyage to figure out the unknown like the compass that is used to figure out the direction amidst the turbulence of voyages.

### **Home and Belonging**

The poet mentions that despite the separation he and his wife will unite eventually hence, they need to relish their chaos rather than being despaired. On the other hand, the character Praneshacharya after being set on the new voyage and encountering the character named Putta contemplates going back to his village to give his verdict to the villagers. The compass is used by the navigators to help in finding their way back. Similarly, both the poet and the Praneshacharya ensure in returning to their past lifestyle one day.

### **Contrasting Directions**

The four cardinal points (north, south, east, and west) of the compass offer varied directions to the navigators and aid in reaching their destination. Similarly in the poem “Valediction: forbidden mourning” the varied four main themes such as love, separation, spirituality, and acceptance have availed the poem in comprehending its deeper meaning for the reader. On the other hand, the four major themes such as tradition, love, death, and despair incorporated by the author aided the story in deciphering the deeper meaning of the text.

### **Love and Relationships**

In the poem, the poet mentions that his separation from his wife has to be cherished as their souls are unified like the unified legs of a compass. Furthermore, he mentions that their souls will expand like the expansion of metal when the metal is hit by a hammer. On the other hand, in *Samskara*, the character Chandri initially takes care of the Naranappa despite his careless nature. Even after his death, she expresses her affection towards Naranappa by giving away her ornaments despite enduring the tantrums of the pupils and ensures his cremation. Amongst the two poles, one of them can be considered to be the poet and the other one as the poet's wife. On the other hand, in the case of *Samskara* novel one pole [North pole] can be considered as Naranappa and the other one[south pole] as Chandri, just as the poles are unified and never depart from one another similarly the poets and the Chandri's love towards their partner make one other unified despite the adversities.

### **Transformation**

The poet in the poem mentions that he and his wife shall not grieve as during his voyages his wife's presence will always be felt so they shouldn't mourn for their separation. On the other hand, Chandri after encountering the death of Naranappa decides to accept the death of Naranappa and was in a hurry in cremating his body. The poet has to leave his wife to fulfill his duty and on the other hand, Chandri tries to cremate Naranappa by lending her ornaments. Both poet and Chandri try to fight against the obstacles that have come on their way without mourning. Just as the compass needle responds to the change caused by the environment similarly Chandri and the poet too respond to the challenges faced midway and move further without giving up.

### **Inner Conflict and Self-Discovery**

The speaker in the poem mentions the idea of connectivity and unity. He postulates that even if he is separated from his wife, he is still united with his wife as their souls are interconnected to one another. He even mentions returning to his wife after the separation and he has not lost connection with his wife as their souls are united and they will eventually find their way back. On the other hand, in the novel *Samskara*, the character Praneshacharya feels

lost after the death of Naranappa, and his consecutive encounter with Chandri eventually drives him to set on a new voyage. He mentions that “I will go where my foot takes me”. The way compass helps in finding the way despite getting lost similarly the poet ensures that he will return to his wife and so does the character Praneshacharya who eventually found his way back despite the grief he has endured after the death of Naranappa.

## Conclusion

The compass analogy applied to John Donne's "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" and U.R. Ananthamurthy's *Samskara* unveils profound insights into themes, characters, and emotions. Despite differing themes and genres, the compass analogy serves as a powerful tool, connecting the physical compass to human experiences. Both works emphasize guidance and direction in life's journeys, with characters driven by moral compasses, facing conflicts, and transformations, stability and consistency, mirroring the unwavering compass, highlights thematic coherence throughout both narratives. The compass analogy accentuates exploration and discovery, as protagonists embrace uncertainty on their voyages. Home and belonging resonate, reflecting the compass's ability to guide individuals back to their origins despite separations. Contrasting directions symbolize varied themes, adding depth to the literary works. Love and relationships, like compass poles, transcend separation, enduring adversities. Transformation and self-discovery are evident, akin to how a compass needle responds to changes.

In conclusion, the compass analogy enhances understanding of "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" and *Samskara*, navigating readers through life's complexities. The assessment of the analogy of particle, wave, and field as the most effective tool in academic criticism requires further examination. Although it shows promise, its true value lies in its ability to cultivate the necessary flexibility for profound insights while simultaneously ensuring a comprehensive view of the subject matter. Further research and analysis are needed to fully ascertain its academic significance.

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## Voicing the third gender: Megha Majumdar's *A Burning* and Jeet Thayil's *Narcopolis*

Priya D Wanjari

### Abstract

The constant sense of anxiety and a perception about being in the wrong anatomy is brought to light by many a novelist. The stypic truth of gender biased suppression finds voice in the fictions of writers like Khushwant Singh, Hari Kunzru, and Arundhati Roy. They articulated from queer perspective, the picture of the society which dwarfs their attempts to come up to the mainstream. The paper tires to present the transgender community living in Indian subcontinent as revealed in the fiction of two novelists, Megha Majumdar's *A Burning* and Jeet Thayil's *Narcopolis*. They set up *kinnars* as one of the main characters of the novel to voice their problems and expose unfair societal atrocities. Their feelings as one of the outcast society and their deeds to get accepted by others are depicted in a subtle manner. The intent is to focus the transgender characters and their invincible hope to negotiate with marginalization.

**Key words:** Transgender, Marginalization, Indian Subcontinent, Suppression, Hope

### Introduction

Gender identity refers to the identity of a person as male, female, or other. Male and female are extremes on the gender gamut and many of the transgender identify as somewhere in the middle, a gender variant. The American Psychological Association describes the term as, 'Transgender is an umbrella term for persons whose gender identity, gender expression or behavior does not conform to that typically associated with the sex to which they were assigned at birth.' (APA, 2022) Transgender individuals are born biologically male or female, but live their lives mostly as the contrary gender.

Indian culture acknowledges the neuter gender along with male and female genders. According to the Ancient Indian religious text (Kama Sutra) there was the prevalence of third sex (Tritiyapraktiri) since ages. The Western world has recently identified the significant existence of the transgender and mentioned in the Queer theory, but According to Devdutt Pattanaik, 'In the Hindu World, culture remains an artificial imposition on nature (prakriti), enabling humans to discover their humanity by offering a chance to make room for, or reject, diversity.' (Pattanaik, 9) Devdutt tells thirty bizarre stories from Hindu mythology from different states of India in his influential book *Shikhandi and other Queer Tales they don't tell you*. Vedic and Purana texts refer to 'tritiyaprakriti' meaning the third sex and 'napunsaka' meaning one who has lost the reproductive function. 'The word hijra as used in Indian language seems to be derived from the Persian word hiz and means feminine and/or incompetent or incapable person.' (Sawant, 2017) They existed for centuries and

enjoyed great respect and importance during the Mughal period, but gradually lost their status over time. They are also known as Kinnars or Eunuchs who live on the fringes of Indian society and are struggling to make a living. This category is marginalized because society perceives all Kinnars as imperfect. The etymological meaning of the term 'hijra' means 'incapable' or 'incompetent'. 'The hijra has a promising presence, but it also has potential downsides.' (Nanda, 2000) All transgender are viewed ambivalently in Indian society and are treated with a combination of ridicule, fear and respect.

In India, transgender usually perform religious ceremonies at the birth of babies. They are considered venerated as they are not involved in sexual activity. People are afraid to take their curse as it is embedded in our psychology that it may lead to infertility. G Reddy explains this in the words that, 'Hijras are said to be able to do this because, by not engaging in sexual activities, they accumulate their sexual energy which they can use to either bestow a boon or a bane.' (Reddy, 2005) Their community gets separated from others because of their difference. Gender is related with the social divisions of class, race, disability, and sexuality. Woodward opines that, 'The world was ordered by gender divisions with gender giving meaning to social divisions.' (Woodward, 109). The society has denied the subjective existence of all transgender; they are left to be marginalized and criminalized. In general, in the academic discourse the identity category, 'hijra,' is conceptualized as the representative of the third gender.

Literary narration of the transgender began with Khushwant Singh's *Delhi: A Novel* (1990) which has for one of its protagonists a Kinnars neuter, called Bhagmati. Singh's novel was followed by John Irving's *A Son of the Circus* (1994) which presented Bombay Kinnars in realistic terms. To follow the legacy, Hari Kunzru's *The Impressionist* (2003), Thayil's *Narcopolis* (2012), Anosh Irani's *The Parcel* (2016) and Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) have studied the life of Kinnars from different perspectives. Mahesh Dattani's play *Seven Steps around the Fire* (2013) too features the Kinnar Kamala who pays with her life for entering into an 'unacceptable' marriage with the gay Subbu.

The present paper proposes to critique two recent novels Megha Majumdar's *A Burning* and Jeet Thayil's *Narcopolis* which deal with realistic picture of hijras in the city of Mumbai. The selected novels analyze their core issues and their social identity. Through the narration of transgender stories, the novelists invoke the readers to come closer to their life and every day struggle.

### **Majumdar's Lovely**

Megha Majumdar's debut novel, *A Burning*, was published in 2020 and was highly appreciated worldwide. The novel tells the story of a young Muslim woman, Jivan, who witnesses a terrorist attack on a train stopped at a station. She eventually is framed and accused of the terrorist attack. Another significant thread of the narrative is Lovely, a transwoman, who happens to live in the same slum in Kolkata, in which Jivan lives. She is illuminated with Bollywood dreams and protests against all those who wish to hold her back. In the introductory part of the novel Lovely depicts her struggle when she hurriedly steps up the local train and the peanut seller hisses at her. 'Nothing is simple for a person like me, not even one hour on the train.' (AB, 7) She has accepted her difference long ago saying, 'My

chest is a man's chest and my breasts are made of rags. So what? Find me another woman in a city as truly woman as me.'(AB, 7).

I shout because I want to be heard, not as a madwoman in the attic, not as a ghost in a hallway, but as a fellow woman of the world because I will not—I cannot—be otherwise (Gabrielle Bellot quoted in Bose 2022)

Until she was thirteen years old, she was living with her parents and grandparents in an apartment. Remembering the days, Lovely realizes that, 'We were neither rich, nor poor.'(AB, 124) Then even her mother could not stop her against the laws of society and she left for 'the Hijra house'. Here, her training of dancing and singing, and art of persuading strangers started. Majumdar doesn't disclose her real name, but Lovely explains that, 'Lovely is my hijra name, which I was selecting at my eighteenth birthday ceremony.'(AB, 125) When Agrawal studied sociologically, he found that, 'Hijras are physiological males who have a feminine gender identity, adopt feminine gender roles, and wear women's clothing. They do not conform to conventional notions of male or female gender but combine or move between the two. Their vulnerabilities, frustrations, and insecurities have been historically overlooked by mainstream society.' (Agrawal, 1997).The novelist paints her character with progressive present tense to give her a peculiar unique positivity, but at the same time, Lovely suffers due to her queer identity. Lovely happens to live in the same slum in Kolabagan in which Jivan dwells. Once, as a part of compulsory school program, Jivan taught Lovely English. Lovely readily learnt it as she was all burning with aspirations and dreams. As Majumdar explains Lovely in her interview,

And in some ways, Lovely is revered because she is thought to belong to this community which has a closer connection to the divine. So she is invited to bless newborns and bless couples at their wedding, but at the same time she is marginalized in such complex ways. And I wanted to see how this person can still hold on to a wild dream.' (Scott Simon)

The novelist made both of the characters use social media. Jivan's post on Facebook led her to her doom and Lovely's post on Whatsapp took her to taste success. Lovely got frustrated after the failures to get a break in Bollywood. She thinks about Jivan and realizes that, 'I am truly feeling that Jivan and I are both no more than insects.'(AB, 213) Nobody believed that Jivan was innocent and nobody believed that Lovely could have acting talent. At this moment, Lovely decides to help herself and illuminate to shine. She declares that, 'Even if I am only a smashed insect under your shoes, I am struggling to live. I am still living.'(AB, 213) She shared her practice videos on Whatsapp to get acting roles. Being representative of downtrodden detested minority, the social disgrace is imparted upon her to make her feel denied everywhere. The character becomes mouthpiece of the novelist to rise against the prejudiced mindset of contemporary society. In Mr. Debnath's acting class, when Brijesh rejects her to do marriage scene with 'a half man', Lovely recalls that, 'I am used to this-on the road, on the train, at the shops.'(AB, 10)Slum dwellers laugh at her; but she exudes sass

and social defiance. The media did its magic and in a miraculous way, Lovely becomes new promising face of Bollywood.

Majumdar projects Lovely as a representative of the Kinnar community and investigates the state of the third gender in India. They have been living with the others in society since the distant past; still they have been treated as a stigma. The constitution has taken the actions and provided them the legal recognition, but the fellow human beings have not changed their attitude yet. There are hundreds of others like Lovely who make their living begging on traffic signals and are unsought. Lovely joins the acting class and pushes her way into the limelight, becoming the agent of her own story. She proves to be the promising story of an underdog. Khaki in his article, 'A Study of gender performativity in Megha's *A Burning*' appreciates Lovely in the words that, 'Despite of the challenges, she sticks to her ideal and makes her mark as a female. She gets success through her performative acts.' (Khaki, Abdul 2022)

### Thayil's Dimple

*Narcopolis*, the debut novel by Jeet Thayil was shortlisted for Booker prize. The setting of this novel too is Bombay, but it moves back to 1970's. Thayil provides a lengthy prologue to the book by the narrator, Dom Ullis. In the late 1970s he is shipped back to Bombay from New York to run away from a police officer who caught him with drugs. Dom very soon finds himself in Rashid's opium room where his life becomes tangled with those of its customers and staff. Here, the readers get across Dimple, prostitute, and a hijra, who work in the opium den as pipe filler. Her status, described by Thayil reminds of Malloy who thinks that the society is responsible for the plight of the Transgender.

Because of the non-conformity to values of larger group various ethnic groups, religious minorities, homosexuals, transgender and aboriginal communities have to face issues like, fewer opportunities for survival, i.e., right to education, employment, and freedom of expression.' (Malloy, 2007)

Thayil paints a grim portrait of Mumbai. The city is busy, but time flows slowly in the opium den. The title refers to the city of drugs. The novelist tells this story through the microcosm of the city. The opium den on Suklaji Street was known only to those who needed to know its existence. 'It shrinks by day and expands by night.' (N,135). It stretched roughly from Grand Road to Bombay Central, along which a walk along it saw the fleshiest parts of the city, the log rooms of Sex and intoxication.

Dr T K Pius, talks about various themes he observed in *Narcopolis*. He finds Dimple as one of the central and amusing characters of the book and he appreciates Thayil for the bold attempt. He praises Dimple in the words that, 'If there is one character that embodies the heart and soul of the book, it is Dimple.' (Pius, 2014) When Dimple was still a boy, her mother surrendered her to a priest, who then sold her to a brothel. She initially only works part-time at the opium den; the evenings are dedicated to the brothel. She is a prostitute and a drug addict, just like the other key characters in the book; the only substance that can make her misery go away is opium. Thayil presents her like an alluring heroine, 'She was about

twenty-five then and she had a habit in those days of shaking the hair into her eyes and smiling for no reason at all.' (N, 7)

She was sent to Bombay to a Hijra's brothel when she was only eight. The ritual of being castrated was dreadful for Dimple. She reminds, 'A woman was called, a famous daima, Shantibai. There was singing and dancing and whisky. They gave me opium. Then four of them held me down. They used a piece of split bamboo on my penis and testicles and held me down. The bamboo was so tight I felt nothing, until afterwards, when they poured hot oil on my wound. That was when I felt the pain ...' (N, 67)

*My soul crying  
for what feels lost  
Lifelong grieving  
for what I don't have  
My label is transgender.* (Deborah Zambo, 2008)

Like Lovely, Dimple is used to indifferent treatment of society. She observed that when the city was burning and everywhere was rubble and smoke, the police station remained closed. 'The police and the dogs, it seemed to her, were always the first to smell trouble and disappear.' (N, 200) She was not scared much because nothing really mattered to her. In the street she found men staring at her quite different from the usual, 'it was more businesslike, as if they were weighing her for meat, guessing how much she would fetch in the market.' (N, 200). She sought refuge in a church. She had to leave the brothel to live at Rashid's place, a bit distant from where his wife and children reside. She had to work as Rashid's sex partner whenever he demanded. She is renamed as Zeenat by him.

Dimple's affection for the pick-pocket Saleem's small-talks and endeavor to understand the milieu of family life is explicit from her desire to be counted within the social-ambience. Dimple, similar to Lovely, spends happy moments when she is with Saleem. He made her feel like a woman, a wife, the position accepted in society, and sometimes imagines her married life. This shows her urge to get accepted by others.

The reader catch a glimpse of the newer generation when we follow Jamal and his fiancé, Farheen, to a club. She reminded him of his father's kamvali and declares the 'new drugs for the new Bombay.' (N, 281) Jamal follows in his father's footsteps, as a cocaine salesman Rashid said, 'Put our shame on display, so the people understand the lowest of the low, prostitutes and criminals and drug addicts, people with no faith in God or man, no faith in anything except the truth of theirs.' (N, 288) The book ends where it started and the city is left in a new flavor of insobriety. 'Dimple', the eunuch prostitute, the castrato bartender, turns out to be one of the prominent characters among the others. Thayil paints her character in a symbolic way, in his own unique style and glorified her in all her sufferings. In the review of the book, Emily St. John Mandel observes that,

The drugs change, the city changes, and through a span of several decades  
Thayil follows his characters' marginalized lives. His characters, he wrote in  
an author's note, 'were the marginalized, the poor, the degraded, and the  
crushed, whose voices were unheard or forgotten, but whose lives were as

deserving of honor as anyone else's." He never looks down on his characters.'(Mandel, 2012)

Both the novelists strive hard to give voice to the Transgender. Both the characters can be compared and contrasted keeping in mind the setting of both the novels. Dimple is somewhat neutral to both the genders and says of herself that, 'woman and man are words other people use, not me. I'm not sure what I'm. Some days I'm neither, or I'm nothing. On other days I feel I'm both.'(N, 11)While Lovely considers herself as a woman, in terms of marginalization, and struggle, both are badly treated by society; but Lovely has the spirit of the underdog to fight back and come up to the surface while Dimple meekly becomes the victim of the binary rigid gender system.

Thayil also painted the colors of love and has shown the faith of the characters in love and hope in his book. Sarah Van Bonn in the review of the novel observes that apparently *Narcopolis* is flooded with violence and sex, but the readers can see that love conquers all. This is the only way how the gulf between the binary genders and the transgender can come closer. 'Love is what allows for communication, for the dead to reach out to us, for us to move beyond that veil and no longer be alone. If you dare, take your own look behind the veil in Jeet Thayil's *Narcopolis*.'(Sarah Bonn, 2012)

## Conclusion

Leading a life as a transgender is far from easy because such people can be neither categorized as male nor as female and this deviation is 'unacceptable' to society's vast majority. Transgender still float beneath the surface, most of them invisible, like the unseen portion of the iceberg. One of the important problems transgender face in the society is lack of social acceptance. Kinnars belong to lower classes and poorer castes that experience marginalized economic structure. Majumdar attempts to give a positive touch to the lives and struggle of Kinnars by showing Lovely's success in her career towards the end. Dimple is rather a victim of the system, sympathetic one. Though Lovely faced many adverse situations in mainstream social spaces, she tried to accommodate herself in the changing world. It is important that people should come forward to eradicate discrimination and economic hardship that these transgender go through. The novelists explored that hijras are human beings, and they have rights to live with dignity. The world needs to change. The emotions, cravings and sufferings are same for all genders. Protests and voicing out becomes necessary when any of the genders are neglected.

Their writings and writings about them must be treated as an integral part of social milieu and main stream literature. The transgender community is continuously crusading for respectable rehabilitation as normal humans in our society. The present research is a plea for their connection with the main stream of life. The study threw light on the problems faced by the transgender. It shows that lack of suitable skills has driven the transgender to prostitution and beggary. Functional literacy programs can be conducted for transgender so that they can improve their employability. Providing more training opportunities which will help them to be self employed is the need of the hour since the study shows that finding employment is one of their major problems.

**End Notes**

Abbreviations

AB: A Burning

N: Narcopolis

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## **The Human against Nature: An Ecocritical Reading of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness***

Sambit Panigrahi

### **Abstract**

Nature has perennially been attributed a derogatory status in the cultural terrain of modern man. The western discursive formations including Greek literature and the Enlightenment have provided enough anthropocentric grounds for the marginalization of Nature in a scenario where man occupies the center stage and relegates Nature to the realm of marginality. As a critical practice, ecocriticism critiques the fundamental premises of western philosophy which treat Nature as an 'other' to human existence. Such an attitude is also duly reflected in colonial literature where the colonial explorers treated the Nature that they encountered during their voyage as an 'other' object. Based on these precepts, the present article explores, analyzes and critiques the Nature-demeaning attitude and behaviour of the colonizers in Joseph Conrad's famous colonial text *Heart of Darkness* and shows that such attitude on the colonizer's part is nothing but the reflection of the overall tendency of the western philosophy to marginalize Nature from man's cultural terrain.

**Key words:** Ecocriticism, Nature, Man, Marginalization, Enlightenment

Attitudes to Nature map the exclusions, devaluations and revaluations through which Western humanity has constituted and continuously rethought its own identity. (Kate Soper, *What is Nature? Culture, Politics and the Non-Human*)

It is high time we realised that Nature has become astonishingly silent and pathetically derelict in the cultural province of modern man. More a silent "presence" and less a dynamic "process" (as environmentalist critic Lawrence Buell would have it), it has grown quiet in our discourse, shifting "from an animistic to a symbolic presence, from a voluble subject to a mute object" (Manes 17). It no more remains Nature in the original sense of the term; rather, it becomes what Georg Lukacs would call "a societal category" (234), a mere commodity meant for the exclusive benefit of the society. Needless to say, such a utilitarian perception of Nature is predominant in the annals of the Western philosophical tradition decreed by philosophers like Plato and Aristotle and scientists like Bacon, Descartes and Newton. Relegated into the doldrums of quietude and stagnation in the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophical paradigm, Nature has become only a reticent stage for the enactment of the human activities. In the Baconian, Cartesian and Newtonian scientific parlance, on the other hand, Nature is mere dead matter without any animistic vigour. In their anthropocentric weltanschauung, it has become a vulnerable site where the cultural dictums, anthropocentric imperatives and humanistic motifs of Renaissance and Enlightenment humanism are

superimposed. As an untoward victim of such a domination of anthropocentricity, Nature has lost its voice and vitality in the cultural terrain of modern man. In such a scenario, Ecocriticism, as a critical practice, explores the causative history of this regrettable silence of Nature. Aiming at a thorough exposition of the intricate mechanism of the “otherisation” of Nature by man, Ecocriticism sets the stage for digging into the downside of Western Philosophy that unscrupulously sanctions the denigration of Nature as a lifeless entity.

Joseph Conrad’s colonial fiction, by virtue of its unremitting engagement with the man-Nature dialectics, can be studied in the light of such an ecocritical approach towards the characteristic Western dehumanisation of Nature. In Conrad’s colonial narrative, we frequently trace the reiteration of the anti-Nature tenets of Western philosophy through the coloniser’s perception of the same as a mute entity. More particularly, Conrad’s magnum opus *Heart of Darkness* continues to remain a classic case of the above issue. Through its vivid rendering of the idiosyncratic derision of Nature by the colonial explorer, *Heart of Darkness* becomes a prospective site for ecocritical critical intervention. Based on these precepts, this article endeavours to explore, with reference to the above novel of Conrad, the Western man’s conception of Nature as a dumb, dispirited and vapid entity.

Tellingly narrating the story of the Westerner’s colonial venture into the dark heart of Africa, *Heart of Darkness*, Conrad’s magnum opus, registers the story of the encounter between the conceited Western man and his antithetical “other,” i.e., Nature. Conceiving it as a dull, dispirited, unresponsive “other,” the frame-narrator describes: “In the offing the sea and the sky were welded together without a joint . . . with gleams of vanished spirits. . . . The air was dark above Gravesend, and farther back still seemed condensed into a mournful gloom . . . (Conrad, *Heart* 1). Depicted in a gloomy colour, the natural vista in Gravesend, with its “gleams of vanished spirits,” remains no more than an imaginary canvas of stagnation. Corroborating the ongoing dehumanisation of Nature, Marlow’s description that the air over London is “condensed into a mournful gloom” is amply suggestive of the typical anthropocentric tenet of robbing Nature of spirit and agility making it a stark embodiment of spiritlessness. Manifested through the biased and distorted human interpretation, Nature loses its animistic life-form in the colonial scheme of things and becomes thoroughly devoided, in sharp contrast to the animistic cultures where it is inspirited and articulate. In the above description of Nature as a dispirited entity, there is a succinct reverberation of the mind/body dualism of Descartes where he considers Nature to be devoid of all the qualities of mind (that is attributed to man only) and considers the same as a mere lifeless body (which, according to Descartes, is only a mechanical extension of the mind). He construes: “There exist no occult forces in stones or plants. There are no amazing or marvelous sympathies or antipathies, in fact there exists nothing in the whole of Nature which cannot be explained in terms of purely corporeal causes totally devoid of mind and thought” (qtd. in Plumwood 104).

Exposing such a typical disparagement of Nature to be an archetypal Western philosophical praxis, Ecocriticism hits at its bedrocks. The obvious ecocritical vantage point in such a scenario becomes the conceptualisation of Nature through the “machine metaphor” as propounded by Descartes. In a notorious protestation of Nature’s inertness, Descartes, the ideological forbearer of its death, foregrounds the spirit of the human domination over it by seeing it as a ‘machine’ that is passive and can be easily moulded, controlled and overpowered by man with the knowledge of its operation. Viewed through the prism of such

scientific materialism, Nature is seen as a dead machine lacking the vitality of life. It is nullified as being non-agentic, passive, non-creative, and inert. Conceived as mere matter, it is thought to be devoid of any characteristics of mind and thought. Seen as an entity that lacks goals and purposes of its own, Nature is gestated as a non-teleological and non-conative vacuum and hence, is thought to be given a “telos by human action” (Scott 14). Hence, men are to fill the empty space of Nature with their own intentionalities—an act that finally leads to what Timothy Oakes calls “spatial colonization” (509). Recognising the threat of the imposition of the human “telos” onto Nature, Conrad himself, in his autobiographical treatise *The Mirror of the Sea: Memoirs and Impressions*, admits: “. . . it is, after all, the human voice that stamps the mark of human consciousness upon the character of Nature” (79). Thus mechanistically conceived, Nature becomes a site where human purposes are superimposed. In the Cartesian solipsism therefore, the whole cosmos emerges as a meaningless assemblage of dead matter that has to be controlled by the god-like man just as mind controls the actions of the body.

Not only the Cartesian dualism, but also the Newtonian atomistic cosmology contributes to the culmination of a mechanistic world-view of Nature. In the era of pre-scientific thought, Nature had been opulently endowed with attributes of spirit and agency. The Newtonian mechanistic scheme of things, however, has made it an insidious principle that Nature consists of insensate, drab matters devoid of interests and purposes. In the Newtonian atomism, Nature consists of dead matters in motion that can be regulated through the application of external force (by man). Understandably, such a mechanistic worldview propagated by Newton led towards the draining off of spirit from Nature leading towards its concomitant denigration. Ecocritic Freya Mathews convincingly explains the mortifying consequences of Newtonian atomistic cosmology in the following lines:

The blindness and deadness, the ‘bruteness’ of matter in the mechanistic scheme of things, robs us of our respect for Nature. . . . From the mechanistic point of view . . . Nature consists of matter, and matter is insensate, dead, drab, unvarying, devoid of interests and purposes. This draining-off of spirit from matter was naturally expressed in mind-matter dualism: the human mind had to become the repository of spirit since Nature had become the arena of blind matter in motion. Dualism gave expression to the mechanistic idea that matter was essentially utterly unlike ourselves: we are essentially identified with spirit, and matter was conceived as in every respect antithetical to spirit. As such—as the insensate, brute and blind, the inert and formless, the non-self, the Other, the External—matter of course ceased to be an object of moral concern or interest. (31-2)

An embittered Mathews, hence, is fairly justified to denounce the enlightened modern man who has made Nature nothing more than a “dark Newtonian abyss” (38). Endorsing the silence and spiritlessness of Nature, Marlow, in *Heart of Darkness*, makes use of expressions like “empty land” (Conrad 21), “mournful stillness of the groove,” (Conrad 17), “an empty stream” (Conrad 39) and “the silence of the land” (Conrad 29) to proclaim what Caroline Merchant would call “the death of Nature” (1).

Seeing Nature as a mute object ready for being invaded by the colonisers, Marlow continues: “And outside, the silent wilderness [was] waiting patiently for the passing away of this fantastic invasion” (Conrad, *Heart* 26). Evidently enough, Nature, as a mute and helpless entity, waits patiently to be conquered, overpowered and finally possessed by this “fantastic invasion” by the intruding colonisers. As a “passive object of imperial commerce” (McCarthy 620), this non-human “other” (i.e., Nature) remains no more than a mere instrument for the colonial man’s materialistic and commercial exploitation. Accentuating further the muteness of the silent wilderness of the African Jungle, Marlow describes:

The smell of mud, of primeval mud, by Jove! was in my nostrils, the high stillness of primeval forest was before my eyes. . . . The moon had spread over everything a thin layer of silver—over the rank grass, over the mud, upon the wall of matted vegetation . . . , over the great river . . . [that] flowed broadly by without a murmur. All this was great, expectant, mute. . . . I wondered whether the stillness on the face of the immensity looking at us two were meant as an appeal or menace. . . . Could we handle that dumb thing, or would it handle us? I felt how big, how confoundedly big, was that thing that couldn’t talk, and perhaps was deaf as well. (Conrad, *Heart* 30)

The passage quoted above is the ultimate expression of Marlow’s characteristic belittling of Nature. In his condescending visualisation, Nature is no more an enlivening aesthetic realm; rather, it is a crude manifestation of discomfiting silence. Portraying the forest as a colossal embodiment of morbid stillness, this passage portrays Nature as a devoiced entity bereft of any pulsating presence. Such an attitudinal fallacy on the part of Marlow towards Nature perfectly echoes Adorno and Horkheimer’s fiery censure of the unrestricted freedom attributed to man by the myth of Enlightenment that has led to the devoicing of Nature. Adorno, in particular, believes that there is a noticeable slump in man’s aesthetic appreciation of Nature after Enlightenment. As evidently seen in the above-mentioned passage, Nature, instead of receiving an aesthetic appreciation from man, is rather described as being an entity that is deaf and dumb. This dehumanisation of Nature, believes Adorno, originates from the enormous sense of utopian freedom and dignity of man that gradually led to the undermining of the pristine beauty of Nature. He reckons:

Natural beauty vanished from aesthetics as a result of the burgeoning domination of the concept of freedom and human dignity . . . in accord with this concept nothing in the world is worthy of attention except that for which the autonomous subject has itself to thank. The truth of such freedom for the subject, however, is at the same time unfreedom for the other. (81)

Instead of nurturing an aesthetic appreciation of Nature, man fosters a repulsive attitude towards it and sees it as something abominable and detestable. During the voyage into African Nature in *Heart of Darkness*, for instance, Marlow is haunted by a sense of “a mournful and senseless delusion” inflicted on him by the “oily and languid sea” and the “uniform sombreness of the coast” (Conrad 14) and also the “mournful stillness of the

groove” (Conrad 17). The river, the mud, the mangroves and all the other elements of Nature torment him with “the extremity of an impotent despair” (Conrad, *Heart*15). What becomes evident here is that entering the realms of the impassive, mute Nature is no longer a pleasurable experience for the Western man of culture; rather, it is a disdainful and painful one. As rightly pointed out by Adorno, there is a serious loss of aesthetic sensibility towards Nature on the part of modern man resulting from the effect of Enlightenment. This, believes Herbert Read, has paralleled the modern man’s progressive estrangement from Nature because of which he suffers from an “atrophy of sensibility” (38) incited in him by his scientific and technological achievements that harbour in him the illusion that he lives outside or above the natural world.

In this context of the “otherisation” of Nature through diverse forms, it is learnt that the cultural sophistications of man always smother the animistic life-form of Nature and present it as a devoiced human artifact. Throwing ample light on how the “Real environment” is camouflaged and estranged from the sphere of human existence and re-presented as a mere “artifact” in the hands of the social man, Catriona Sandilands construes: “Nature is partly and always a social product of the (power-laden and power-producing) interactions among humans and non-humans, partly and always an “artifact. Nature is thus not . . . Real; nature has a cultural presence . . .” (139). What Sandilands means by “the Real Nature” is the animistic life-form of Nature that extends beyond the confinements of man’s language and culture. Ironically however, Nature finds expression only through man’s comprehension, language and culture tainted by his overriding anthropocentric hubris.

The estrangement of the mute, unresponsive Nature also takes place on the basis of temporality, one among the various forms of its otherisation. The profound muteness of African Nature makes the colonisers realise that they are posited in a prehistoric time. Marlow’s journey across the remarkably silent river Congo gives him an experience of traveling back in time. “Going up the dumb river [Congo],” he says, “was like traveling back to the earliest beginnings of the world . . .” (Conrad, *Heart*39). Further, he describes that being “bewitched and cut off for ever from everything” (Conrad, *Heart* 39), the colonisers “glided past like noiseless phantoms” (Conrad, *Heart* 41) into “another existence perhaps” (Conrad, *Heart* 39). In addition, Marlow finds himself “traveling in the night of first ages that are gone, leaving hardly a voice, a sign—and no memories” (Conrad, *Heart* 41-42). The colonisers, as depicted by Marlow, find themselves “wanderers on a prehistoric earth, on an earth that wore the aspect of an unknown planet . . . taking possession of a mute and accursed inheritance” (Conrad, *Heart* 41). Through the reiterated evocations of the muteness and unresponsiveness of Nature, the colonial man asserts his disjunction from it at all levels, even at the level of temporality where Nature’s muteness is associated with its atavism. Moreover, the fact that the colonisers were taking possession of the “mute and accursed inheritance [i.e. Nature] is another glaring evidence of their perception of Nature as a helpless mute object exclusively meant for anthropocentric possession. Such disparaging descriptions of Nature by Marlow are the testimonial evidences of the Western colonial man’s purposeful “otherisation” of Nature for the purpose of justifying his own ascendancy over it.

It is also interesting to note that the anthropocentrically imposed muteness of Nature facilitates man to use Nature as an antithetical “concept” against which the modern man constantly redefines himself. As David Delaney rightly points out, “The Nature that is

constructed is a concept, a category, an idea, a set of conventionalized metaphors, and a trope for differentiation” (489). Elucidating such a feeling of severance, Marlow finds Nature in Africa to be a “grimy fragment of another world” (Conrad, *Heart* 83) where Nature’s “otherness” is instrumental in defining and asserting man’s “self” against his presupposed antithesis, Nature. Exposing the disgraceful perception of Nature, Marlow’s descriptions espouse how the modern man is caught within a stultifying pettiness that mirrors nothing but his ego-maniac little “self.”

In the final analysis, Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* is the clear confirmation of the Western man’s chronic cynicism towards Nature. Considering it to be a lifeless, dispirited, unresponsive “other,” the egomaniac Western man fails to form an effective communion with its animistic vigour. Such an apathetic and dispassionate posture, however, leads to cataclysmic consequences culminating in his alienation and suffering. Raising grave concerns over the Western man’s jaundiced perception of Nature, this article in the end, advocates for a paradigm shift in his attitude towards it and the inculcation of an enlivening relation with the same.

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# The Nano-Myth: The Influences of Myth and Literature on Science and Innovation

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## Abstract

This article explores the profound impact of myth and literature on scientific and technological advancements throughout history. The interplay between myth, literature, and science has played a crucial role in shaping the course of human progress. By examining various examples, it becomes evident that mythological and literary narratives have served as sources of inspiration, moral guidance, and conceptual frameworks for scientists, engineers, and innovators. From ethical considerations to technological advancements, the influence of myth and literature has contributed to shaping the course of scientific progress.

**Keywords:** Classical Literature, Epics, Mythology, Science, Nanotechnology

## Introduction

Mythology and literature have played a significant role in shaping scientific and technological advancements throughout history. The power of storytelling, symbolism, and imagination found in myths and literary works has inspired scientists, engineers, and innovators to explore new frontiers, challenge conventional thinking, and make groundbreaking discoveries. By examining the interplay between myth, literature, and science, we can gain insights into the profound influence of these narratives on human progress and the development of innovative ideas.

Myths hold a prominent place in human culture; spanning back thousands of years, the collective stories, beliefs, and experiences of civilizations, passed down through generations (Chakraborty et al., 2023). Myths, often rooted in religious and cultural traditions, explain natural phenomena, human origins, and the nature of existence. Arnould (2011) goes on to claim that mythological narratives are “one of the oldest methods used by our ancestors to ask questions about the meaning of life and that task of being human”. Literature, on the other hand, encompasses a wide range of written works, including novels, poems, and plays, which reflect the thoughts, emotions, and values of their authors and society as a whole. Ancient myths have fuelled scientific curiosity and imagination, leading to groundbreaking innovations. Myths, such as the Greek myth of Daedalus and Icarus, who attempted to fly with wings made of feathers and wax, have inspired the pursuit of flight throughout history (Trubiano, 2007). These stories symbolize humanity's innate desire to transcend limitations and explore the unknown.

Literary works, too, have sparked scientific inquiry. The vast collection of science fiction novels of Jules Verne, for example, envisioned future technologies and expeditions to uncharted territories. His novel *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* described a submarine capable of exploring the depths of the ocean, inspiring scientists and engineers to

explore underwater exploration and submarine technology (Verne, 1870, Marchessault, 2017). Moreover, the science fiction writings of authors like Arthur C. Clarke have inspired and influenced the development of space exploration and satellite technologies. Clarke's novel *2001: A Space Odyssey* depicted advanced technologies that were later realized, such as communication satellites (Clarke, 1978). These literary works served as blueprints for scientists and engineers, pushing the boundaries of possibility and sparking innovations in space-related technologies.

Myths and literature have also provided conceptual frameworks for scientific and technological breakthroughs. The discovery of the structure of DNA, for instance, was influenced by James Watson and Francis Crick's fascination with the intertwined serpentine form of the Furies from Greek mythology (Watson & Crick, 1953). This mythological connection added a poetic dimension to their scientific breakthrough and highlighted the intricate complexity of DNA.

Works of fiction have also often served as a platform to explore ethical dilemmas and moral considerations in science and innovation. Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein* (1818) is a prime example of how literature prompts discussions on the morality and limits of scientific creation and the ethical responsibility of scientists (Cambra-Badii, 2020). The story of Victor Frankenstein, a scientist who creates a sentient being, raises profound questions about the potential consequences of playing God and the ethical boundaries of scientific progress. Such narratives challenge scientists and innovators to consider the societal implications and ethical ramifications of their work.

In this article we discuss a few concrete examples where mythology and literature have paved the way to scientific innovations and new technologies.

### **Frankenstein and the Ethical Implications of Scientific Creation**

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is a timeless classic that delves into the moral and ethical consequences of scientific creation. The story follows Victor Frankenstein, a young scientist who, driven by ambition, loss and curiosity, creates a humanoid creature using reanimated body parts. Shelley's novel raises profound questions about the limits of scientific progress and the responsibility of scientists towards their creations. Victor's creation, often referred to as 'Frankenstein's Monster', embodies the ethical dilemmas of playing god and the potential repercussions of unchecked scientific experimentation. The novel forces readers to contemplate the boundaries of scientific innovation and the moral obligations that come with wielding such power.

The ethical implications raised in *Frankenstein* have had a lasting impact on the field of bioethics. Shelley's cautionary tale sparked discussions and debates surrounding the moral responsibility of scientists and the potential risks associated with unchecked scientific advancement. Lederer (2002) claims *Frankenstein* becomes a cautionary tale of "new developments in biomedicine such as cloning and xenografting". She emphasises upon the "role responsible scientists and citizens play in the ongoing dialogue to determine the acceptable limits of scientific and medical advances". The novel serves as a reminder that scientific progress should not be pursued blindly, but rather with careful consideration for the

ethical consequences of one's actions. It has influenced subsequent literary works, as well as real-world conversations and regulations concerning emerging technologies such as genetic engineering, cloning, and artificial intelligence.

### **The Myth of Daedalus and the Inspiration for Flight**

The myth of Daedalus and Icarus has had a profound impact on the history of aviation and the pursuit of flight. Early aviation pioneers, such as the Wright brothers, were inspired by this myth and drew upon its symbolism in their quest to achieve powered flight (Hinchey, 2008). Like Daedalus, they sought to defy gravity and unlock the secrets of flight. The myth represented the embodiment of humanity's aspirations and the courage to push the boundaries of what was considered possible. The Wright brothers, driven by their fascination with flight and their determination to make it a reality, conducted countless experiments and iterations, ultimately leading to their successful invention of the first practical airplane in 1903. The myth of Daedalus and Icarus continues to serve as a timeless reminder of humanity's unwavering spirit of exploration and the remarkable achievements that can arise from it.

The myth of Daedalus and Icarus has not only inspired aviation pioneers but has also had a broader impact on the collective human imagination. It symbolizes the human longing for freedom, adventure, and the desire to transcend earthly limitations. The image of Icarus soaring through the sky with his wings made of feathers and wax represents the audacity to dream and strive for the seemingly impossible. This myth has resonated across cultures and generations, reminding us of the power of human ingenuity and the potential for great achievements when we dare to push beyond our comfort zones.

Beyond its symbolic significance, the myth of Daedalus and Icarus has also influenced the artistic and literary world. It has been a source of inspiration for countless works of art, literature, and even modern-day films. Artists have sought to capture the captivating image of Icarus in their paintings, while writers and poets have drawn upon the myth's themes of ambition, hubris, and the consequences of daring to reach for the unreachable. The story of Daedalus and Icarus continues to serve as a timeless reminder that the pursuit of knowledge and exploration is inherently intertwined with risk and responsibility. It encourages us to strive for greatness while recognizing the importance of caution and balance in our endeavours.

### **The Influence of Jules Verne's Novels on Technological Advancements**

Jules Verne, a renowned French author, is widely regarded as a pioneer of science fiction literature. His novels, such as *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* and *From the Earth to the Moon* – both first published in the later-half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century – have had a significant impact on technological advancements. Verne's visionary ideas and depictions of future technologies have inspired numerous scientists and engineers, shaping the course of innovation. For example, Jacques Cousteau, the pioneering oceanographer, was greatly influenced by Verne's works (Marchessault, 2017). Cousteau's fascination with underwater exploration and marine technology was ignited by Verne's descriptions of the Nautilus submarine and the wonders of the deep sea in *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea*.

Verne's novel *From the Earth to the Moon* not only captivated readers with its adventurous narrative but also inspired real-world space exploration. The story revolves around a group of visionaries who plan to launch a manned mission to the moon using giant cannon. Verne's imaginative depiction of space travel and the idea of reaching celestial bodies profoundly influenced the field of space exploration. One notable figure inspired by Verne's work was Robert H. Goddard, an American physicist and engineer who is often referred to as the "father of modern rocketry." Goddard was inspired by Verne's vision and actively pursued the development of rockets for space exploration (Verne, 1865).

Verne's novels served as blueprints for scientists and engineers, pushing the boundaries of what were considered possible. His works presented futuristic concepts and technologies that were later realized in the real world. For instance, Verne's novel *From the Earth to the Moon* featured the concept of a space launch site located in Florida, known as "Tampa Town." This fictional idea became a reality when the Kennedy Space Center, located in Cape Canaveral, Florida, was established as a major spaceport for NASA's space missions. Verne's imaginative descriptions laid the groundwork for the development of actual launch facilities (Verne, 1865).

Verne's influence extends beyond specific technologies and into the realm of inspiring scientific imagination and exploration. His novels sparked curiosity and fascination with the possibilities of scientific discovery. Verne's ability to weave intricate narratives that combined science and adventure inspired readers to consider the potential of technology and innovation. The impact of Verne's works is evident in the countless scientists, engineers, and innovators who were inspired by his writings to pursue careers in their respective fields. His novels continue to resonate with audiences, reminding us of the power of storytelling and imagination in shaping the future of science and technology.

### **Mythological Inspiration in the Discovery of DNA Structure**

The discovery of the structure of DNA, one of the greatest scientific breakthroughs in history, was also influenced by mythological elements. James Watson and Francis Crick (1953), the scientists credited with unravelling the double helix structure of DNA, found inspiration in Greek mythology. They named their model for the DNA structure after the Furies of Greek mythology, who were known for their intertwined serpentine form (Watson & Crick, 1953). This mythological connection added a poetic dimension to their scientific achievement, emphasizing the complexity and mystery of DNA. The naming of the DNA structure after the Furies symbolizes the intricate and interconnected nature of life's fundamental building blocks.

Mythology often serves as a source of inspiration and symbolism for scientific exploration, and the case of DNA structure discovery is no exception. The intertwining serpentine form of the Furies in Greek mythology echoes the twisting, helical structure of DNA strands. This connection highlights the profound interplay between science and mythology, demonstrating how ancient myths continue to influence and resonate within modern scientific endeavours. By drawing upon mythological imagery, Watson and Crick not only honoured the rich tapestry of human storytelling but also added a layer of depth and symbolism to their groundbreaking scientific discovery.

The mythological inspiration in the discovery of DNA structure underscores the human quest for understanding the mysteries of life. It reminds us that scientific achievements are not separate from the collective imagination and cultural heritage of humanity. By integrating mythological references into their scientific work, Watson and Crick exemplified the intricate relationship between art, mythology, and scientific exploration. Their choice to evoke the Furies in naming the DNA structure invites contemplation on the intricate and interconnected nature of life itself, reminding us that the pursuit of scientific knowledge is not only a rational endeavor but also a deeply human and imaginative one.

### **The Influence of Arthur C Clarke's Work on Space Exploration**

Arthur C. Clarke, a renowned science fiction author, has had a profound influence on innovation and science through his visionary works. His novel *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) and its subsequent film adaptation captivated audiences with its depiction of advanced technologies and concepts. Clarke's writings often explored space exploration, artificial intelligence, and communication systems that were far ahead of their time. His imaginative ideas and accurate scientific predictions inspired scientists, engineers, and innovators to push the boundaries of what was considered possible. Clarke's work served as a catalyst for innovative thinking and sparked advancements in various fields, from space exploration to telecommunications.

Clarke's impact can be seen in the realm of space exploration. *2001: A Space Odyssey* portrayed a future where humans embarked on interplanetary missions and encountered extraterrestrial intelligence. This depiction inspired scientists and engineers working in the space industry to strive for ambitious goals. Clarke's vision contributed to the development of concepts and technologies such as communication satellites, space habitats, and long-duration space travel. His ability to merge scientific plausibility with engaging storytelling influenced the trajectory of real-world space exploration endeavours.

Clarke's work also had a profound impact on the field of telecommunications. In his article entitled 'Extra-Terrestrial Relays', Clarke proposed the concept of using geostationary satellites for global communications (Clarke, 1945). One could argue, this idea laid the foundation for the development of modern communication systems such as satellite television, GPS, and internet communication. Clarke's visionary thinking and his ability to anticipate the potential of technology were instrumental in shaping the telecommunications landscape we have today. His contributions to the field earned him the nickname "prophet of the space age."

Beyond specific technologies, Clarke's work left a lasting legacy of fostering curiosity, scientific exploration, and innovation. His writings encouraged readers to contemplate the possibilities of the future and the transformative power of science and technology. Clarke's ability to weave captivating narratives with scientific accuracy inspired countless individuals to pursue careers in scientific research, engineering, and technological innovation. His influence extends beyond the fictional worlds he created, as his works continue to inspire and influence new generations of scientists, engineers, and visionaries.

## **The Influence of HG Wells on Space Exploration, Scientific Ethics**

H.G. Wells, a pioneering British author, is renowned for his science fiction novels and their profound influence on science and innovation. Wells' works, such as *The Time Machine* and *The War of the Worlds*, introduced imaginative concepts and technological advancements that were ahead of their time. Wells' visionary ideas, such as time travel (Wells, 1895) and extraterrestrial life (Wells, 1898), not only captivated readers but also inspired scientists and inventors to explore new frontiers. His ability to blend scientific plausibility with compelling storytelling inspired the minds of future innovators, fuelling their curiosity and pushing the boundaries of what was considered possible.

Wells' influence can be seen in various scientific disciplines. For instance, his novel *The War of the Worlds* depicted a hostile Martian invasion of Earth, inspiring advancements in the field of astronomy and the search for extraterrestrial life (Wells, 1898). Wells' imaginative portrayal of aliens and their advanced technologies sparked public interest in the possibility of life beyond Earth and influenced the development of radio telescopes and SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) programs. His works stimulated scientific discourse and encouraged researchers to delve deeper into the mysteries of the universe. This work of science fiction inspired many scientists and engineers, including Robert H. Goddard and Wernher von Braun, who played crucial roles in the development of rockets and the eventual exploration of space.

Wells' impact extended beyond inspiring scientific discovery. His novels also explored social and ethical implications of scientific advancements. In works like *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, Wells raised questions about the boundaries of scientific experimentation and the ethical responsibilities of scientists (Wells, 1896). His thought-provoking narratives sparked discussions on topics such as genetic engineering, bioethics, and the potential consequences of unchecked scientific progress. Wells' works acted as cautionary tales, reminding society of the importance of ethical considerations in the pursuit of scientific innovation.

Wells' influence on innovation and science can be attributed to his ability to popularize scientific concepts and make them accessible to a broader audience. His works presented complex scientific ideas in a compelling and engaging manner, capturing the imagination of readers. Wells' impact on the popularization of science fiction as a genre contributed to its widespread appeal and subsequent influence on scientific and technological advancements. By bridging the gap between scientific knowledge and the general public, Wells played a significant role in shaping the public perception of science and fostering interest in scientific exploration and innovation.

## **Influence of Isaac Asimov's "Three Laws of Robotics" on Robotics and AI Ethics**

Isaac Asimov, an iconic figure in the realm of science fiction, left an indelible mark on the genre with his visionary works and thought-provoking ideas. Among his numerous contributions, one area in which Asimov truly excelled was his exploration of robots. His use of robots in his books not only captivated readers with thrilling narratives but also ignited a deeper inquiry into the relationship between humans and artificial intelligence.

Asimov's fascination with robots began early in his writing career, and it became a recurring theme in many of his works. Unlike other science fiction authors of his time, Asimov did not portray robots as malevolent machines hell-bent on destroying humanity. Instead, he presented them as complex entities designed to serve and assist humans. These robots were governed by three fundamental laws, known as the Three Laws of Robotics, which governed their behavior and interactions with humans (Asimov, 1950). The Three Laws of Robotics emphasized the importance of protecting human life and ensuring the well-being of humanity. The laws stated that a robot must not harm a human being, must obey human orders (unless they contradict the first law), and must protect its own existence (as long as it does not violate the first two laws). These laws not only provided a framework for robot behavior in Asimov's fictional universe but also served as a catalyst for exploring ethical questions surrounding artificial intelligence.

By depicting robots as sentient beings capable of empathy and introspection, Asimov challenged conventional notions of what it means to be human. He encouraged readers to ponder the moral and philosophical implications of a world where artificial intelligence is on par with human intelligence. Asimov's portrayal of robots as companions, allies, and even potential saviours of humanity fostered a sense of wonder and excitement, but it also served as a cautionary tale, urging us to consider the impact of our technological creations on society.

Asimov's multidisciplinary approach to storytelling and science led to his involvement in various scientific and innovation-related projects. He served as a consultant for NASA, contributing to their space exploration initiatives and providing scientific insights. Asimov's ability to merge scientific accuracy with imaginative storytelling made him a sought-after collaborator for scientific endeavours. His influence in the scientific community went beyond his writing, as he actively participated in shaping the future of science and innovation through his expertise and visionary thinking.

## **Greek Mythology and Astronomy**

Greek mythology has exerted a profound influence on various aspects of human culture, including literature, art, and even astronomy. The ancient Greeks seamlessly integrated their mythological narratives into their understanding of the cosmos, attributing divine significance to celestial bodies and using them to explain celestial phenomena. This is a testament to the enduring influence of Greek mythology on astronomy and highlights the connections between ancient myths and our exploration of the universe.

One of the most notable impacts of Greek mythology on astronomy is the association of constellations with mythological characters and creatures. The ancient Greeks identified patterns among the stars and named them after figures from their mythology. The constellation Orion, named after the legendary hunter, and Ursa Major, associated with the story of Callisto, are just two examples of how ancient myths gave rise to recognizable constellations in the night sky (Ridpath, 2018). Greek mythology also provided explanations for celestial phenomena. For instance, the sun's daily journey across the sky was attributed to the chariot of the sun god Helios. The myth of Phaethon, who lost control of the sun's chariot and caused a catastrophic event, may have been an allegory for solar eclipses. These

mythological narratives not only entertained the ancient Greeks but also served as early attempts to make sense of the natural world, including celestial events.

Furthermore, Greek mythology influenced the nomenclature of planets and other celestial bodies. The Roman names given to the planets in our solar system were derived from the Roman adaptations of Greek mythology (Ridpath, 2017). For example, Mars, the fourth planet from the sun, derives its name from the Roman god of war, corresponding to the Greek god Ares. Similarly, Venus, the second planet, is named after the Roman goddess of love and beauty, who corresponds to the Greek goddess Aphrodite. These names reflect the enduring influence of Greek mythology and highlight the cultural connections between ancient civilizations. The influence of Greek mythology in astronomy is evident in the enduring legacy of mythological constellations, the use of myths to explain celestial phenomena, and the nomenclature of celestial bodies. Greek mythology provided the ancient Greeks with a framework to interpret and appreciate the cosmos, infusing it with divine significance and narratives that still captivate us today.

### **The Hero's Journey and Storytelling in Product Design**

Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, has had a profound influence on storytelling and product design, particularly through the popularization of the concept known as the Hero's Journey. Campbell's exploration of the universal mythological structure and the hero's quest has provided a powerful framework for crafting narratives and designing products that resonate deeply with audiences even today.

In his book, Campbell analyzes the underlying structure of myths and legends from diverse cultures throughout history. He identifies a common pattern, which he calls the Hero's Journey that transcends cultural boundaries and speaks to fundamental human experiences. The Hero's Journey outlines the stages and archetypal characters that a hero typically encounters on their transformative quest (Campbell, 1949). It follows a cyclical structure, consisting of stages such as the Call to Adventure, the Crossing of the Threshold, Tests and Allies, the Ordeal, and ultimately, the Return with the Elixir. This framework of the Hero's Journey has been widely embraced by storytellers in various mediums, including literature, film, and even video games. It offers a blueprint for creating compelling narratives that resonate with audiences on an emotional level (Vogler, 1998). By following the stages of the Hero's Journey, storytellers can take audiences on an immersive journey, allowing them to identify with the hero's struggles, growth, and eventual triumph. This narrative structure creates a sense of resonance and catharsis, capturing the essence of the human experience and engaging audiences on a deep level.

Beyond storytelling, the Hero's Journey framework has also found its way into product design and user experience. Designers recognize that customers, like heroes, embark on a journey when interacting with a product or service (Brown, 2009). By mapping these stages, designers can better understand the user's journey and tailor their designs to meet their needs and aspirations, creating a more compelling and satisfying experience. Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* has provided a valuable framework that transcends cultures and time, influencing the design of the Hero's Journey in both storytelling and product design. By understanding and applying the stages of the Hero's Journey, storytellers and designers can

create narratives and products that resonate deeply with audiences, connecting them to universal human experiences and fostering meaningful engagement.

### **Mythological Influences in Medicine and Pharmacology**

Mythology has often served as a source of inspiration for medical and pharmacological terminology. Particularly, Greek and Roman mythology, with its rich pantheon of gods and goddesses, has had a significant influence on various aspects of human culture, including medicine and pharmacology. Ancient Greeks and Romans believed in a divine connection between healing, illness, and the gods. The influence of Greek and Roman mythology in medicine and pharmacology highlights the association of deities with healing, the use of mythological references in medical terminology, and the integration of herbal remedies inspired by mythological narratives.

In Greek and Roman mythology, deities were associated with healing and medicine. Asclepius, the Greek god of healing, and his Roman counterpart, Aesculapius, were central figures in the mythology of health and wellness. Temples dedicated to Asclepius, known as Asclepieia, served as healing centers where rituals, therapies, and dream interpretations were practiced in the hope of receiving divine intervention and healing. The Caduceus, a staff with entwined serpents, is a symbol associated with the Greek god Hermes and is commonly used as a symbol of medicine. Additionally, many drugs and medical terms derive their names from mythological references, such as the use of the name "Morphine" from Morpheus, the Greek god of dreams (Seear, 2017).

The influence of mythology is also evident in the use of mythological references in medical terminology. Numerous medical terms are derived from Greek and Roman mythological figures. For example, the term "Hygeia," derived from the Greek goddess of health and cleanliness, is the root of words like "hygiene" and "hygienic." Similarly, the term "pharmaceutical" stems from the Greek word "pharmakeus," meaning "witch" or "sorcerer," reflecting the ancient belief that medicine had a magical quality (Webster, 2014).

Additionally, Greek and Roman mythology influenced the use of herbal remedies in medicine. Mythological narratives often depicted gods and goddesses using plants and herbs for healing purposes (Virani, 2002). The famous Greek hero Hercules, for instance, used the herb Achillea to heal wounds. These mythological stories inspired the exploration and utilization of herbal remedies in ancient medicine. Many medicinal plants and herbs were named after mythological figures, such as Artemisia, named after the Greek goddess Artemis, and Aconite, associated with the mythical character Aconitus.

### **Conclusion**

These examples demonstrate how myth and literature have played a significant role in shaping scientific and technological advancements, encouraging scientists and innovators to think beyond existing boundaries and explore new frontiers. They show the diverse ways in which myth and literature continue to shape and inspire scientific and technological advancements, fostering creativity, imagination, and ethical considerations within various fields.

The influences of myth and literature on science and innovation are profound and multifaceted. From inspiring scientific curiosity and imagination to raising ethical considerations and providing conceptual frameworks, myths and literary works continue to shape scientific progress. Understanding the interplay between myth, literature, and science allows us to appreciate the rich tapestry of human creativity and the enduring impact of these narratives on our collective pursuit of knowledge and innovation. Complementary research also suggests that new literature trends and emerging contemporary classics may be guided by advances in science itself. This phenomenon also bears research, perhaps in a future work.

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## The Occult Force of a Hurt Heart in Joyce Carol Oates' *Man Crazy*

C Viji

### Abstract

This paper examines how Ingrid Boone a teenager, so-called “Birdie” for her dad and Doll-girl in school from the novel *Man Crazy* by Joyce Carol Oates becomes Dog-girl because of the ruffians. The protagonist who longs for mother’s love suffers humiliations as a demure girl with non-attentive, self-seeking mother. Due to dearth of attention from her mother and in anguish she develops a friendship with a rogue. She is sexually assaulted, beaten, and is imprisoned in the attic. The days in the stinking attic makes her mentally and physically weak causing her to curse her fate. She writes a letter to the psychologist about her life experience in that attic where she was held as a captive. Her whole life is a narrative with the psychologist. Psychological treatment brings her the expected salvation and allows her to regain her life and the love of her mother. Life is a quagmire if one does not seek to change or foster self-doubt and it can also be seen as a metaphor for the suffocating nature of shallow response to change.

**Key Words:** Humiliation, Psychological Treatment, Anguish, Social Anxiety, Quagmire

### Introduction

Keep a light,  
Hopeful heart.  
But expect the worst.  
(Joyce Carol Oates)

Joyce Carol Oates an 83-year-old American novelist, short story writer and essayist who is well known for her literary works in different styles and genres. She has about 60 novels, over 30 collections of short stories, eight volumes of poetry, plays, innumerable essays, and book reviews to her credit. As one of the United States’ most prolific and versatile contemporary writers she constantly projected the realistic life presence of young children. Oates always spoke about women and the society around them in her works. She focuses on the loss of their identity, careless parents and the non-enjoyable youth. She never criticized any of her characters. Her protagonist’s anguish is mainly because of disturbing relationship between the family members, isolation, and lack of love. She mainly focuses upon the psychic, physical and spiritual decline of modern American society. Particularly in her realistic story *Man Crazy* she shows us how difficult it is to deal effectively with the pressures and horrors of contemporary American culture.

Ingrid Boone, the protagonist of *Man Crazy* who is the narrator herself in the novel is almost ends up in self-discovery as she travels through the path of freedom and free will. The journey towards free will leads her to self-realisation. She keeps jumping from present to past

in the process of narration. Ingrid Boone, along with her mother Chloe were pushed to compromise their normal, peaceful life many times because of the violent and almost absent father. Joyce Carol Oates makes Ingrid voice out the societal expectations placed upon her and her mother by their life's events in stream of consciousness technique.

### **Quagmire of Life**

A quagmire is a dangerous place, like the muddy shoreline of a pond, because it is so hard to climb out of a quagmire, the word has also come to mean any difficult or sticky situation you find yourself in. The female characters here the mom and daughter duo are under societal pressure. But each responds to it in a different way. Chloe her mother is also from a patriarchal society who wishes to be liberated, with a lot of emotional struggles. The key difference between the momma and Ingrid is the way they experience their moments of liberation. Chloe is single now, after being trapped in an unhappy marriage, she enjoys a sense of freedom and empowerment. Her thoughts are clear though it appears to be complex, instead of being oppressed by men; liberation comes to her as a sudden burst of emotions. As a single woman she does take care of her daughter educates her and advises her on the essentials of leading a fulfilling life.

The incidents and instances where Ingrid mentally suffered due to her mother's offhand behaviour, fake friends, the biker boy and above all, her frantically uncontrollable moods are a result of woman's helplessness under cultural fixation. Here the mother gives her daughter a strong image of what men are. "Why do they want to shoot pigeons? I asked Momma and Momma said, they are men. It is what men do when they can't shoot one another." (36)

Though Ingrid was born to a beautiful young mom and her dad a navy pilot during the war, she was caught in the quagmire of life. Her father and his friend Brownlee usually called themselves as Air Man First Class but she did not receive any kind of first-class treatment in her life. "Somethings you know without asking. Other things you can't ask" (9)

As a five-year-old girl though she was called as a smartass she was unable to understand why she and her momma must go into hiding and how her dad developed enemies. At Mt. Ephraim High School where as a teenager in the ninth grade she was so popular not just with boys of her class but with juniors and seniors and athletes. All notice, smiled and called her *Doll, Doll girl, Ingrid, In-grie*. She was liked by her English teacher Miss Elsworth and Mr Cantry, the Principal.

Girls in my neighbourhood were jealous of me the way their mothers were jealous of my mother with her blonde hair, her face and figure...." (122).

She is so intelligent that she never failed in her exams. *When I did my homework, my grades were A's ..* (123) but she failed in her life, she could not win her mother's heart. She was good at writing poems, her participation in competitions and stage contests though made her to win prizes never made her to win the heart of her mother. No doubt her mother Chloe, lived only for herself, busy with her affairs and alcohol parties, but she had always warned

her and many a times advised her. “God, damn I have my pride, my pride is about all I have” (42)

She taught her to be proud of herself and value herself. Her momma was also protective

Asked me on dates, but momma wouldn't allow it saying I was too young (121).

Momma was terrified of being real poor, dirt -poor and men would know always men can sniff out the degree of your desperation Momma believed and force you to do things you don't want to do or don't exactly want to do at that time or in that place or in that way.(102)

Chloe, her mother always told her about the importance and influence of money. When you have your own, Momma said, you have power. But you can lose it Goddamned fast (101)

No doubt her momma did not get any stint to take care of her daughter or just have a look at Ingrid or listen to her or ask her how her day went which as a teenager Ingrid longed for these types of enquiries. Her father abandoned her and her mother at a very young age. The wounded heart began to long for the love. Ingrid cannot put the blame on fate, at times it is also because of her impatience. Apart from being a good student she was a good poet too. But some occult forces in nature made her confront the harsh realities.

As a captive of unnatural trapping Ingrid was enslaved. Though the fault lay on someone else, the punishment was given to an innocent child. Born in a dysfunctional family she suffered all the miseries and mortifications of the rancorous men.

There are epochs when God departs the world of mankind, and His departure Satan reigns. This is destiny and no one is to blame for living in such epochs (193).

From Doll-girl to Dog-Girl it is her edginess that made her the victim. It was Ingrid who often quarrelled and wished her momma to die.

Why I came to have such quarrels with my mother, I don't know. There was hardly anything she ever told me didn't turn out to be true. (141)

Her quest for meaning of life led to physical slow down and mental pause. When everything failed to work out in the way she needed, she decided to respond to life in different ways but that again let her down as her life began to split into two. Dejected by life's twists and turns she takes a wrong path.

### **Social ills**

She is an adolescent who has lost her childhood to the cruel circumstances and is abused. She gets deeply wounded when she develops a strong feeling towards the brute Enoch Skaggs. Everything starts slipping off her hand when she has hoped for a stable relationship to move on in her life. In her extreme mental state, she falsely assumes that he is truly interested in her and fails to objectively judge him. When she comes to know that he is a fraudster, she is completely deranged and grief stricken. As a captive in a cellar she is beaten up by him very badly. She is then sexually assaulted by number of men and at last she paves a way for the men to take advantage on her.

The biker gangs are primarily determined by economic and social status. Ingrid believed that Enoch Skaggs was upright and loved her truly. Her blind belief towards him led to complications and misfortunes in her life. She was a grown-up young adult girl, but also a little child who begs and longs for love.

### **Social realism**

Ingrid Boone, a disturbed girl who has suppressed all her anger is now unable to renew her life. Her depressions are her expression. It was Ingrid's own wish to travel and explore the journey of life in a different way. Very soon she finds out that her new found joy to live on her free will is cut short and her new found world has collapsed very fast. She struggles as she navigates through the complexities of friendship, family, and social class. Bitten by hard realities of life, scared by the previous experience, life becomes lifeless and cold for her. Like the burnt child who dreads fire, she develops a phobia and ends up with meeting a psychologist who helps her first by teaching her exercises that would help her relax and later rescue her from the torments and teasing she underwent during confinement.

### **Conclusion**

Oates intention is to send a message to her readers through the voice of the young narrator that domestic harmony is the most perfect pitch for any human being. The novelist's craftsmanship is the way she picturises the social ills, problems, and the power of human relationships. The American class divisions and the middleclass morality and upper-class superficiality are portrayed by Oates as the novel progresses. Ingrid is here threatened and all her emotions are completely paralyzed. She becomes a victim because of the occult forces of human nature without committing any crimes. Her dark emotions are high when she writes a letter in a therapeutic way. Life is a quagmire, no relation is flawless, had she stayed with her mother she would not have reached the blackest moment of despair.

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## ~English Language Teaching~

### The 'Why' and 'How' of Story-Telling

Chandana John

#### Abstract

Stories are a part of all cultures and civilizations. India and Africa especially have very strong story telling traditions which are slowly dying out in the modern age. Where the advance of technology and materialism has made immense progress, the stories which were naturally passed down from generation to generation and storytelling as a tool of learning, as a vehicle of moral values, as a way of understanding the world and as a therapeutic tool of self-healing has regressed to just entertainment. My paper would explore the various facets of story-telling and its application in our lives. I would especially like to examine its utility as a teaching tool in our mixed classrooms and if technology can be harnessed into this endeavour profitably and be able to enrich both students and teachers. I would also like to examine some of the techniques used in story-telling to make it into an effective skill in one's arsenal. Stories are multi-dimensional and can be viewed through different perspectives. A few instances of stories that have impacted generations would be discussed as well as their changing physiology in the modern times.

**Key Words:** Culture, Healing, Modern. Techniques, Therapeutic, Tool, Tradition

#### Introduction

Telling a story is a very powerful and efficient technique of disseminating information. Telling stories to each other can be traced back to ancient times in our culture. Before the printing press was invented, the oral tradition of passing on knowledge and information was in vogue which more often than not took the form of stories. Simply defined, stories are the expression of imaginary or real events in logical order. But a story is also a narrative which helps us to understand the world around us. The stories we hear and the stories we read shape our belief systems, values and attitudes. An online dictionary defines narrative as a representation of a particular situation or process in such a way so as to reflect or conform to an overarching set of aims or values, also known as the archetypes, and this is where storytelling both in its spoken and written form, in any language, can be seen as an effective teaching tool. The archetypes in literature are the very basis of cultures and are manifested in the mythologies.

Almost all cultures have a story telling traditions and norms of story-telling which are indicative of their importance. For instance, in West Africa, a tale might begin with the incantation: 'a story, a story, let it go, let it come!' The openness of a story and its malleability even as it flows from different speakers' mouths or from writers' pens is clearly hinted at. In Arabic, a story may start with 'there was or there was not...' It talks about the

contribution of imagination to a story which nevertheless can still serve as a mirror to reality. In Chilean culture, ‘you listen to a story to tell it and tell a story to teach it.’ So the stories can be likened to a flowing river, changing with time yet continuing to nourish the generations in its wake.

There is the story of the boy who had cried “Wolf! Wolf” in jest not only has learnt a lesson for himself but also taught us to be aware of fooling others for fun. The story is still relevant today though we hardly see any shepherd boys around. The point I am trying to make here is that stories remain relevant for a long time and are effective vehicles of core values. So we see them being used by management gurus as well as spiritual leaders all the time. With the help of our imagination, we can actually put ourselves in the stories that we hear or we are reading. Our brains have a tendency to personify abstractions and seek to make sense of the objects around us. When imagination takes over as stories to explain cause and events, we witness archetypes in the collective unconscious of different cultures which gives birth to the mythological tales those we so enjoy. Also, affirmations work in the same way in healing ourselves. It is said that the positive stories. Of your own self, imagined visually can bring it into existence. Whether we really believe this or not, it is true that inspirational stories do have a great impact, even in today’s world. The autobiographies and biographies of great and successful men and women serve as good role models.

Our brain recognizes patterns of information and gives them meaning. Objects like our national flag as also a human expression like a smile brings different meanings to different people as they have experienced it or as related in the narratives around them. Every concept is a narrative which is propagated through stories, be it patriotism or the power equations prevailing in society. Stories are essentially recognizable patterns, and can be used to make sense of who we are and all things related to us. We think in stories throughout the day as we go through it, and it automatically helps us to understand our experiences. A scholar, Jeremy Hsu says “Personal stories and gossip make up 65% of our conversations.” A writing method called “stream of consciousness’ demonstrates this too. For though our mind jumps from one thing to the other constantly, there is an underlying meaning, or in short, there is a method to the madness.

The following graphic (taken from the internet) probably describes it best:



Basically the human life is a collection of stories which we need to express to help ourselves and others. From the cave paintings to the graphic books to the movies, it is forms of storytelling that we witness. The world of advertisement excels in telling us stories which

propel us to buy the products advertised. And how is that possible? Stories activate our minds. It has been proved that stories can stimulate parts of the brain to create sensory experiences much as a musical would and vastly influence our judgement. So much so that life skills coaches advise their students to showcase their competencies in the form of stories during a job interview.

We invent stories to explain things to our own selves too, in our quest to make meaning in our lives, and they can sometimes be a figment of our imagination. This is where the psychotherapist's couch comes into play where the patient is encouraged to tell his stories.

Narrative therapy works on the basis of stories that you tell yourself. Or carry with you throughout your life. New Zealand based therapists, Michael White and David Epston, developed narrative therapy in the 1980's. It has an empowering effect and offer none blaming and non-pathological counselling. The individual under therapy is helped to find his voice and explore his own narrative. The narrative helps the person to externalize, create a distance and look at his problem objectively and makes him willing to change, to move towards a solution. Deconstruction is also part of the therapy where the problem is broken down into manageable bite size pieces for consideration. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, an African writer makes the point in one of her TED talks that a single story is dangerous. Narrative therapy works on the premise that alternate stories exist and they are different facets of the same truth. Thus,

Narrative psychology is a perspective in psychology concerned with the "storied nature of human conduct", that is, how human beings deal with experience by observing stories and listening to the stories of others. ...narrative psychology is the study of how human beings construct stories to deal with experiences.

The following is an account of an experiment which took place.

According to Brown and Taylor (1997), African-American slaves have made contributions to narrative psychology by participating in the Federal Writers' Project that was conducted from 1937 to 1938. Nearly three hundred field workers participated in the process of interviewing 2000 slaves across seventeen states to construct narratives from the former slaves' accounts of their lives as slaves and during the period after the Civil War.

This can also be seen as people finding their voices and able to clarify their feelings as they put them into narratives.

One of the best interviewers was said to be folklorist Ruby Pickens Tartt, who worked principally in rural Sumter County in Alabama. She recorded exactly what the slaves would say in their interviews, and she went on to write folk tales based on their tales. Storytelling is a community act that involves sharing

knowledge and values. It's one of the most unifying elements of mankind, central to human existence, taking place in every known culture in the world.

When we are listening to a story, our brains undergo modifications. Not only are the language processing parts activated, but so are whatever areas that would be used if you were actually in the story yourself. Also, hormones like Dopamine, Oxytocin and endorphins are released into the blood stream as we listen to a story.

- **Dopamine** is a chemical that significantly impacts our focus, motivation, memory, and reward-response behaviour. So it is crucial to holding the attention of a crowd and is a key ingredient in public speaking.
- **Oxytocin**, also known as the love hormone, promotes bonding, creates empathy and trust. Mirroring happens while listening to a story and the audience identifies with the story teller, something which does not happen during a recital of dry facts. This is why stories remain in our minds and memories much more easily.
- **Endorphins** produce a 'high'. Endorphins act on the limbic system and produce feelings of pleasure and pain. It also helps us to make decisions and our rationalizing ability and is a key influencer in our buying choices.

For example, if a delicious dish is described in the story, your sensory cortex is activated, and you can actually smell and taste the dish. If there is a lot of action in the story the motor cortex is activated. So the real and the imagined, seems to become one and you experience the same benefits. This is why sometimes when we are dreaming, you would find yourself waking up with a good feeling and sometimes in a scare if it is a nightmare. Hence, teachers can utilize it in their classes because when listening to impactful stories, the students' brains can actually cause them to develop thoughts, opinions, and ideas that align with the person telling the story.

The brains of the storyteller and the story listener can actually synchronize, says Princeton's Uri Hasson, while describing an experiment:

When the woman spoke English, the volunteers understood her story, and their brains synchronized. When she had activity in her insula, an emotional brain region, and the listeners did too. When her frontal cortex lit up, so did theirs. By simply telling a story, the woman could plant ideas, thoughts and emotions into the listeners' brains.

So we see that the format of a story, where events unfold one after the other have such a profound impact on our learning. A story is just a sequence of cause and effect which our brains are adept at understanding and this is why it makes a great tool of learning. Stories act as a teaching tool because they are very persuasive. Especially when you speak from your own experience, you immediately connect to your audience and they

relate to you and it helps you to communicate better. This is also why a story or a quote from an expert in the field adds credibility to your story. It will come as good news to story tellers that a simple, uncomplicated story line and easy to understand language makes for the most impactful of stories. All you need is a purpose to the story which can relate to the audience and give them something to take away-happy feelings, a moral or a life experience.

## Conclusion

So, knowing how our brain works and how interesting and effective it can be in the hands of a master story teller, let us strive to use it to help our students in the class rooms and outside it as well to, propagate our culture and value systems. The polysemous nature of stories appeal to students at all levels of knowledge. That works well in a mixed class room. Expressing ourselves in stories does not only improve the listening, speaking, reading and writing skills but is also a way to reach into the collective unconscious of the world. Let us reinvent this traditional tool to spark life and interest in our classrooms.

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- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4ZoJKF\\_VuA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4ZoJKF_VuA)

## The Use of Computers in Learning a Foreign Language

PD Satya Paul Kumar & Solomon Benny

### Abstract

The philosophy of CALL puts a strong emphasis on student-centered lessons, which allow the learners to learn on their own using structured or unstructured interactive lessons. CALL programs could offer second language learning more independence from classrooms. A great difference between computers and teachers is that computers will never get tired and can repeat the same thing repeatedly to meet the objectives. Computer technology provides communication activities which increases the learning motivation for second language learners. We believe that computers have much to offer us and will more offer in the future. But with so powerful and so pervasive a technology it is vital to develop and maintain a continuous critique.

**Keywords:** CALL, Computers, Language, Foreign Language, Second Language Communication.

### Introduction

Large main frame computers have been used since the 1960's for computer assisted language learning and teaching. The reasons for using computers assisted language learning include: motivation, experimental learning, enhance student learning, individualization, authentic materials for study, greater interaction, independence from a single source of information, and global understanding. The philosophy of CALL puts a strong emphasis on student-centered lessons, which allow the learners to learn on their own using structured or unstructured interactive lessons. The important features of these lessons are bidirectional (interactive) learning and individualized learning. The barriers inhibiting the practice of computer assisted language learning can be classified into the following common categories: financial barriers, availability of computer hardware and software, technical and theoretical knowledge and acceptance of technology.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the opportunities of using computers in foreign language learning, and some training or explanation in the application. Therefore, it seems to be necessary to explain the advantages and barriers of computer technology to teachers and students. The major benefits offered by computers in enhancing language acquisition apparently outweigh their limitations. Nowadays, the development of the Internet has brought about a revolution in learning perspective and it is gaining immense popularity in foreign language teaching. Eventually more educators and learners are embracing it.

Indeed we are only just beginning to explore what the appropriate questions that need and it is important that we undertake this exploration. We believe that computers have much to offer us and will more offer in the future. But with so powerful and so pervasive a technology it is vital to develop and maintain a continuous critique.

## Education Technology

Writing about communicative competence in the 21st century, points out in a world increasingly driven by the need for innovation through research and development. The multileveled changes brought about in our everyday lives as a result of the nature and speed of technological development. The volume and range of information available, and its open accessibility, the multimodal features of electronic text as well as its interactive nature, we require significantly more than just the ability to read and write in a functional way.

Communicative competence refers to the interactive process in which meanings are produced dynamically between information technology and the world in which we live' (Rasool 1999; 238).

Language learners are entering a world in which their communicative competence will include electronic literacy, i.e., communication in registers associated with electronic communication' (Murray, 2000: Warschauer, 2000).

As a consequence, anyone concerned with second language teaching and learning in the 21st century needs to grasp the nature of the unique technology mediated tasks learners can engage in foreign language acquisition and how such tasks can be used for assessment. Language learners typically use computers at least to write papers, receive and send E-mail, and browse the World Wide Web. One challenge for language teachers is to shape some of their computer using experiences into language learning experiences. To meet the challenge, the study of the features of computer based tasks that promote learning should be a concern for teacher as well as SLA researcher who wishes to contribute to knowledge about instructed Standard Language Acquisition. Many learners will be required to prepare for computer assisted language tests such as those developed by the Test of English as a foreign language (TOEFL) program and the University of Cambridge local examinations Syndicate (UCLES) as well as the many Web-based language test, including those being developed for languages of the European Union through the Diagnostic Language Assessment (DIALANG) project. Therefore, test users need to understand the issues involved in selecting such tests and helping learners prepare for them. Equally critical is the knowledge of computer assisted language testing required of test developers and researchers who construct and evaluate these new testing procedures.

To date the need for an understanding of computer-related issues in SLA has not been met by a coherent set of principles for examining past work and plotting fruitful directions. Instead, cross-disciplinary perspectives have been applied to individual efforts and developments and evaluation of Computer Application in Second Language Acquisition (CASLA) perspective which may enrich the knowledge based concerning computer capabilities and potentials for design and valuation. Despite the value of cross-disciplinary input, the array of computer related methods, concepts, and initiatives presented to applied linguists can be overwhelming. Moreover, substantive progress in CASLA requires that its identity be defined, including the principles for evolution drawn from relevant work in applied linguistics.

As Roe (1985) has pointed out, the original educational technology is the teacher's voice and it is still, potentially at least, the best. The first quantum leap came with a revolutionary technology for preserving the teacher's voice in writing. Chalk was invented. In the right hands it is a powerful if somewhat dusty tool! And when came ways of breaking down to some extent the barrier set up by the classroom walls between education and the world outside: tape recorders and language laboratories for sound and an increasingly sophisticated range of graphic devices from felt and magnet boards to OHTs, film strips, films and videotape. All these inventions served, in principle at least, to enhance the teaching process.

One of the conventional rationales for the computer in language learning is the justification that it offers a powerful self-access facility. It can easily generate learner-centered, self-pacing activity. The proportion of teacher-led to learner-controlled activity can change, more importantly, it offers choice: programs can be called up by the student at will; they can be sensitive to level of proficiency and, in the future, self-adjusting in real time in response to what they learn' about the student (O'Shea and self 1983). Computers are often said to support learner independence and interdependence while facilitating and enabling the construction of knowledge about the target language and development of language skills. However, language no longer exists independently of the computer as suggested by Warschauer who claims that "Learning to read, write and communicate in the electronic medium [is seen by language learners] as valuable in its own right" (Warschauer, 2000:46). Chapelle (2001) stresses that the notion of 'communicative competence' has changed over the years:

Language learners are entering a world in which their communicative competence will include electronic literacy, i.e., communication in registers associated with electronic communication." Chapelle (2001)

Autonomous learners know how to formulate questions and devise plans to answer them. They answer their own question through accessing learning tools and resource on - line and off - line. Moreover, autonomous learners are able to take charge of their own learning by working on individual and collaborative projects that result in communication opportunities in the form of presentations, websites and traditional publications accessible to local and global audiences. "Language professionals who have access to an internet computer classroom are in position to teach students valuable lifelong learning skills and strategies for becoming autonomous Learners". (Shetzer and Warschauer, 2000:176)

## **Advantages**

CALL programs could offer second language learning more independence from classrooms. A great difference between computers and teachers is that computers will never get tired and can repeat the same thing repeatedly to meet the objectives. CALL programs teach in different and more attractive ways and present language through games, animated graphics and problem solving techniques. Computer provides a platform for the communication

between teachers and students in contrast to traditional second language classroom study. Students can study more independently, leaving the teachers more time to concentrate and put an effort on those parts of second language teaching that are still hard or impossible by the computer, such as pronunciation, work on spoken, dialogue training, essay writing and presentation.

### **Enhance student achievement**

Learners must go to the classrooms at a fixed time and in a fixed classroom. If the place has a network of computers laboratories learners with authentic materials can study and can use the same materials wherever they are. They can use more materials and information from the websites of their own country or even from other of foreign countries to enhance their achievement.

### **CALL Programs, an inspiration for second language learning**

Computer technology provides communication activities which increases the learning motivation for second language learners. Students can chat with people: they have never met, by sending e-mails or joining chats-rooms. Perhaps the most striking change that computer and information technology has brought to language assessment for delivering a wide variety of test tasks online anywhere in the world and providing immediate feedback. Recent advances in natural language processing and latent semantic analysis, along with improvement in scanning technology, have made it possible to score tasks both open-ended and responses to composition prompts-by computer. Even shy student can be benefited from individualized and student centered collaborative learning as well as the studious students can also proceed with full potential from working at their own pace.

### **CALL can help the learners with different approaches**

Language teaching in the past was teacher centered with the aid of blackboard, recorders and videos and written texts related to the class. Students found it to get bored and confused. With the help of computers, teachers can present pictures, videos and written texts related to the subject. Students feel things are more real and understandable. There is a wide range of online applications on the Internet which include dictionaries, encyclopedias, chat-rooms, pronunciation tutors, grammar and vocabulary quizzes, literary extracts, games and puzzles. All these applications are available to use in the foreign language classes. The web is like foreign language classes and a virtual library that can be accessed by the world.

### **Barriers of computer assisted language learning and teaching**

Though there are many benefits of computers the application of current computer technology still has its limitations. There are a lot of barriers to use of CALL in language learning in many different aspects related to CALL.

## **Financial Barriers**

Language teachers often have some financial barriers to afford the necessary hardware and software for CALL because much institution does not spare an appropriation for CALL in rural areas. The simple technological availability of technological resources such as Internet (either nonexistent as can be the case in many developing countries or lack of bandwidth, as can be the case just about anywhere). When computers become a basic requirement for student to purchase, low - budget schools, low - income students usually cannot afford a computer, it will cause unfair educational conditions for those poor schools and students.

## **Technological barriers**

Today's computers technology and its attached language learning programs are not intelligent enough to be truly interactive. People still need to put effort in developing and improving computer technology in order to assist second language learners. Teachers and administrators tend to either think computers are worthless or even harmful, or can do far more than they are really capable of. Also, there is lack of unified theoretical frame work for designing and evaluating CALL systems as well as absences of conclusive empirical evidence for the pedagogical benefits of computers in language.

## **Training needed to learn to use computers**

Many language learners don't have enough technical knowledge about computers and the internet, as a new programmes and software's are developing so fast. They sometime feel that they should learn to a new programme. Hence accepting a new technology is an important barrier for language teachers and learners as many of them are not interested in computers and internet.

## **Some software programs for Foreign Language Learners**

### **Grammar**

CALL programs designed for teaching grammar include drill and practice on a single topic (Irregular Verbs, Definite and Indefinite Articles), drills on a variety of topics (Advanced Grammar Series, English Grammar Computerized I and II), games (Code Breaker, Jr. High Grade Builder), and programs for test preparation (50 TOEFL SWE Grammar Tests) Grammar units are also included in a number of comprehensive multimedia packages (Dynamic English, Learn to speak English Series). Grammar Checkers (e.g. Grammatik) are Designed for native speakers and they typically point to problems believed typical of native speaker writing (e.g. too much use of passives). They are usually very confusing to language learners and are not recommended for an ESL/EFL context.

### **Listening**

This category includes programs which are specially designed to promote second language listening (Listen!), multi-skill drill and practice programs (TOFEL Mastery), multimedia

programs for second language learners (Accelerated English, Rosetta Stone), and multimedia programs for children or the general public (Aesop's Fables, The Animals).

### **Pronunciation**

Pronunciation programs (Sounds American, Conversations) generally allow students to record and playback their own voice and compare it to a model. Several comprehensive multimedia programs (Firsthand Access, The lost Secret) include similar features. Text reconstruction programs allow students to manipulate letters, words, sentences, or photographs in order to put text together. They are usually inexpensive and can be used to support reading, writing or discussion activities. Popular examples include Eclipse, Gapmaster, Super Cloze, Text Tanglers, and Double Up.

### **Reading**

This category includes reading programs designed for ESL learners (Reading Adventure 1 - ESL) and tutorial designed for children or the general public (MacReader, Reading Critically, Steps to comprehension) and games (Hang World). More general educational programs which can assist reading (Navajo Vocation, The Night before Christmas) and text reconstruction programs are also included.

### **Vocabulary**

This category includes drill and practice programs (Synonyms), multimedia tutorial (English Vocabulary), and games (Hangman, Scrabble). It is useful for several references and searching tools (such as Concordancers) which will be described in the Computer-as-tool. Concordancing software searches through huge files of text (called corpora), which is the plural of (corpus) in order to find all the uses of a particular word (or collection). While very confusing for beginners, concordances can be a wonderful tool for advanced students of language, linguistics, or literature. The best concordance for language students and teachers is Oxford's Micro Concord. The program includes as an optional extra several large (total 1,000,000 words) taken from British newspapers. Or this program and other concordancers as well, can be used with any other text files available in electronic form. The computer as stimulus category includes software which is used not so much as a tutorial in itself but to generate analysis, critical thinking, discussion, and writing. Of course a number of the above-mentioned programs (e.g. The Animals, Navajos Vacation and Night before Christmas) can be used as a stimulus. Especially effective for a stimulus are programs which included simulations. Examples of this letter group include London Adventure, Oregon Trail, Sim City, Sleuth, Crimelab, Amazon Tail, Cross Country Canada/USA, and where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?

### **Writing**

Most software for supporting falls under the Computer as Tool Category. Exceptions include tutorials such as Sentence Combining, sentence Maker, and Typing Tutor. A number of tools exist to help student work on their writing collaboratively on computers linked in a Local Area Network (LAN). The most popular among; language teachers is Daedalus Integrated Writing Environment, which includes modules for real time discussion, word processing,

electronic mail, and brainstorming, as well as Citation software and a Dictionary. Other programs with some similar features are aspects and MacCollaborator.

### **Comprehensive**

A number of Comprehensive multimedia programs are designed to teach ESL students a variety of Speech. They range in price but many are quite expensive. Among the better known are Dynamic English, Ellis Mastery, English Discoveries, Rosetta Stone, the most common use of computer as tool, and probably the most common use over all of the computer for language learning, is word processing. High quality programs like Microsoft Word can be useful for certain academic or business settings. Programs such as Claris Works and Microsoft Works are cheaper and simpler to learn and still have useful features. Simple text and teach text are simpler yet and may be sufficient for many learners.

### **Conclusion**

The new conditions created by the advent of multimedia in teaching and learning make it necessary for both teachers and students to understand that their roles have to change since electronic communication can help foster a new teacher- student relationship in which the student becomes more autonomous and teacher more a facilitator. One of the optimal ways to intensify and increase the relevance of forging language learning and teaching is to integrate the use of media technologies and the Internet, in the teaching and learning process. Integrating CALL in teaching a foreign language seems to be now the present and future progress in education. The many authoring packages available in the market make it feasible. In short, the computer, which presents the teacher with a clear challenge and a unique opportunity for change, should, we think, be part and parcel of any teaching programs.

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## Teaching English to Rural Students through Multimedia Labs

B Subhashini

### Abstract

In this article, I am sharing my experience of teaching English to rural students. It was very challenging to teach the students who hail from Tamil medium background. The advancement of technology helped in training the students and to keep abreast with the competitive world. Implementing the Computer Assisted Language Learning expedited the teaching learning process. Technology has to be used as a tool in the teaching-learning process for accessing information and strengthening the teacher and not as a total replacement of a teacher. There is definitely a need to motivate and monitor the learner continuously.

**Key Words:** Computer, Assisted, Teaching, Learning, Technology

We live in the age of Information Technology. Time is a witness to the changes shaping from slate, blackboard, chalk to the use of various electronic and digital devices of mass media. The century saw not only the explosion of population but also the explosion of knowledge and technology. The electronic revolution completely reshaped old notions of education. Technology in education has been functioning at three levels:

- Preservation of knowledge (in forms of books; audio and visual recordings and so on)
- Transmission of knowledge (role of radio, television, video conferencing, internet and the like)
- Advancement of knowledge (collecting data, recording data, advance research mechanisms etc.)

In the word of Gages, use of technology in education “has to be seen as part of persistent and complex endeavor of bringing pupils, teachers, and technical means together in an effective way.” (Rao, 44) It is a teacher who has a special responsibility of awakening the creative sensibility of the learner as well as to formulate different methods so as to impart quality education. Ellington (1987) has classified Instructional materials into seven categories:

- (a) Printed and duplicated materials
- (b) Non-projected display materials
- (c) Still projected display materials
- (d) Audio materials
- (e) Linked audio with still visual materials
- (f) Cine and video materials;
- (g) Computer-mediated materials.

Institutions of repute are supposed to integrate learning through technology along with the traditional practices. Hence, a plethora of technological aids like radio, tape-recorders, educational television (ETV), multimedia-laboratories, computer programmed learning, virtual reality, internet and so on, are being used. Considering computers, this tool is really very intelligent. It operates at amazing speed and accuracy. In teaching, a computer has been establishing its merit in the following three areas:

- Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI)
- Computer Assisted Learning (CAL)
- Computer Managed Learning (CML)

CAI provides information on a topic and raises questions and accepts answers. If the answer is correct, next information is generated and then another question asked. This process is continued until the study of the topic is complete. CAL covers a range of computer-based packages, which aim to provide interactive instruction usually in a specific subject area. It is a process which allows a student to search the area in which he/she feels short of knowledge or facilitates a student who wants to explore new areas of learning. While CAI uses drill and practice CAL is investigation and a process of searching more knowledge. The software can also be used to provide interactive video cassettes and disks.

CML is again a bundle of software packages which includes generating tests from banks of questions, marking the tests generated, analyzing the results and keeping records of students' marks and progress. In other words, a student gives a test based on the designed questions. The test is evaluated by the computer and it guides the student to do the appropriate. It has to be remembered that the uncontrolled use of technology without examining its long-term benefits and potential problems is not something that should be allowed to happen in the field of education.

Seeing it from the students, power point presentations and other lecture materials in digital format has enabled faculty to make their materials available to students through the internet which again has raised many problems. Students access this material and even if they have regular enrolments, they develop a tendency to skip lectures since all digital lecture material is freely available to the students. Moreover, many students use software that has been acquired in an illegal manner without a second thought. They duplicate the software advocating for personal use without realizing that this is an act of stealing.

Moreover, actual classroom teaching builds a student-teacher relationship and vice-versa creating an environment of warmth and affection. On the contrary, electronic gadgets cannot register a student's psychological or emotional reaction; they fail to provide the human touch. Online courses remove the ability to deal with truly great teachers in a personal way, and it also removes the ability to truly interact with other students. Therefore, use of technology alone becomes boring.

Another perspective in teaching-learning is that more than half of the population of teachers in India is still not technology friendly. Barring the metropolitans, many teachers, even today, are still grappling to learn computers and other educational tools.

Another fact worth considering is that still rural India is contributes two-thirds of the total nation's population. To reach rural and remote areas, and to overcome the shortage of qualified teachers, the government had launched EDUSAT (a direct educational satellite transmission) way back in September 2004. It has been successful to some extent but the total effect of this exercise has not reached the grass-root level. The reason has not only been improper infrastructure but also lack of co-ordination among the relay centers and education institutions like school and colleges. The educational institution in the rural sector also lack professional skill and acumen to handle and maintain such sophisticated machines. Another handicap that takes the toll is power supply. For running technology, the foremost requirement is uninterrupted electricity. Rural sectors are neglected in this respect. In addition to it, fluctuation is another factor responsible for making such technological equipment dysfunctional.

As a personal experience at the higher education level, teaching with technology in multimedia laboratories by Vel Tech Technical University faculty members have taken steps to find out the output of technology aided language classroom in rural part of Tamil Nadu. The locale has been Shanmuga Industries Arts & Science College and few Engineering colleges in Tiruvanmalai. The findings of this experiment are as follows:

- (a) At the onset of the semester course, students were not found familiar with computers at all.
- (b) The students seem to be reluctant for using technology.
- (c) Almost for the first two months, the students were found deficient and confused about the whole exercise. They could not understand the digital lessons. Most of the students did not have computers and internet at home.
- (d) Technology could not completely attract the students and visual lessons distracted the concentration required in a learning environment.
- (e) The role of the teacher was unspecified in this tech-classroom. This decreased the value and effectiveness of the digital teaching material.
- (f) While playing a digital lesson the teacher could not intervene to explain the lesson.
- (g) Students could not be active participators during the programme. If the lesson was paused to facilitate the learner, it lost its overall effect.
- (h) Monitoring students in their separate cubicals is a tedious task for the teacher. Besides, eye contact is not the same as in a conventional classroom.
- (i) The computer is not originally creative. The settings of the programme were totally dependent on the teacher or the learner.
- (j) Many programmes did not address the actual life situation and needs of the learners.
- (k) Fellow teachers were not well trained to use inspiration programmes, find resources of webbing ideas, task specific websites, lesson planning e-tools and so on.
- (l) Shortage of power left the teacher unarmed and the class at a stand-still.
- (m) Many equipments and computers got damaged or malfunctioned due to fluctuation.

**Some suggestions:**

- Students should be exposed to technology gradually from starting from their school education. The government is taking necessary steps to ensure it.
- The time-table in schools and colleges has to be in tune with the broadcast.
- Co-ordination between the organizing agencies and administrative authorities should be strengthened.
- Services of professional educational planners and trainers should be taken to train the staff and design syllabus centered programmes addressing the needs of the learner of the area.
- The teachers need to provide a preamble before a digital lesson/ programme is played or broadcasted and also make a follow-up activity or task.
- There is definitely a need to motivate and monitor the learner continuously.
- The fear factor towards the use of technology has to be peeled off judiciously elucidating the strength and weakness of technology.
- Technology has to be used as a tool in the teaching-learning process for accessing information and strengthening the teacher and not as a total replacement of a teacher.
- Research in this area is required to evaluate the actual state of affairs and see how far technology has been a boon or bane.

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