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Confluence of the Idea of Wilderness and the character of Kurtz in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*

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Abstract: With the rise of environmental concerns, the anthropocentric attitude towards nature has been subjected to severe examination to ascertain whether this philosophical construct has contributed towards the progress of civilization. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* contributes to against the discourse of seeing nature as a source of merely resources used only for the selfish interest of human beings. Through the character of Kurtz Conrad draws a painful picture of Congo region and criticizes European civilization's ruthless and callous treatment of Congo region by highlighting Kurtz's bulky greed for natural resources and even his worrisome identification with nature and the resultant ecological collapse. But towards the end of his life, Kurtz had a different vision. He found his home in the wilderness and was willing to ally himself with natural habitat. Kurtz, a human being, is identified with nature and is presented as a composite part in a non-hierarchically constructed field. *Heart of Darkness* is a journey towards the destination of understanding nature/wilderness as an entity in the composite existence of many other living and non-living beings which contributes to the sustainable development and thriving of all the beings /species of the world. The article would like to contribute to the idea of Deep Ecology where there is no firm ontological divide in the field of existence.

Keywords: Wilderness, Colonial Exploitation, Anthropocentricism, Ecology, Composite Living.

Article History

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Introduction

The idea of Wilderness basically signifies a significant part of nature which remains untouched and uncontaminated by the progress of civilization. Such construction of nature is generally undertaken/assumed to protect particular habitats/species from the mindless fury of individuals/institution. Wilderness escapes the contamination of civilization. A deeper relation

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DIMENSIONS OF EVIL IN CONRAD'S HEART OF DARKNESS

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Abstract

Written in the historical context of Belgian king Leopold's reign over the Congo basin, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is a potential exploration of the formation of evil and darkness in an atmosphere dominated by criminality towards humanity. The novella, published in 1899, is based partly on the writer's personal experience in Congo region where he went as a captain of the ship *Roi Des Belges* in 1890. In this multilayered novella the representation of evil is seen in three distinct perspectives: The base, primitive instincts like lust and greed takes a definite shape in some characters; The modern European civilization also shows its evil aspects in the African region and the banality of ordinary mankind whose willful silence and assumed denial acquiesced evil to grow portrayed in the character of Marlow. It can be argued that through the images, description of Charlie Marlow's experience of Congo, the author has more highlighted the allure of primitive evil to the detriment of more subtle manifestation of evil in civilized individuals. The article would like to contribute to the discourse on evil/crime against humanity as well as human rights.

Key words: evil, representation, instincts, civilization, banality.

Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is a highly compact novella where the blending of elements of realism and dreamlike state in a format of outer frame and inner story creates aspects of multilayered understanding. Being a part of western canonical literature, it has attracted criticism. Chinua Achebe has criticized Conrad as a "throughgoing racist" (Achebe, 1988, p.256). Achebe's criticism has ignored the perspective of layers of evil and about the problem of evil. Primitive evil inside human heart, evil thought at the heart of civilization and tendency towards banal complicity and conformity of human being dominate the essence of the novella and contributes to the discourse of evil.

Marlow, the secondary narrator, is seated aboard a yawl, Nellie, with his friends who are enjoying different position under the colonial rule: a company director, a lawyer, an accountant and an unidentified narrator who like Marlow, has much similarities with Conrad himself. This coterie of civilized and much accomplished gentleman in their respective profession are enjoying each other's company at Thames. The atmosphere is serene, benign, immense and profound. The introductory pages also hint at primitive power of cruelty dominating a less domesticated nature. They are waiting for the tide. They know well about Thames, flowing by London, first quoted as the "biggest and the greatest town on Earth" and later it was mentioned as "monstrous" (Conrad, 2008, p. 103). A "mournful", "brooding gloom" comes above the dense fog and light of London firmly setting a fissure between wilderness and man-made civilization, hinting at the probability of evil things (Conrad, 2008, p. 103). Firmly setting a sinister echo of the story at the outset of the novel that would hover in the air throughout the novel, Conrad probably hoped to bring the processing of evil before the readers.

Marlow, seated in a Buddha like posture with legs crossed, back straight, arms dropped, palm in a prostrate mode started talking about his sojourn before the group of listeners. Evening darkness descends making the story teller a mystical non-corporeal voice recollecting strange and unfamiliar incidents to a coterie of friends who are "tolerant of each other's yarns and even convictions" (Conrad, 2008, p. 103). There is a vague yet slanting remark that one or more of the audiences have been lulled while listening "one of Marlow's inconclusive experiences" (Conrad, 2008, p. 107). But strikingly our narrator who is recollecting the whole thing before us is hypnotized, like the wedding guest (i.e.-the old mariner) in Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. In fact, the narrator who has been mesmerized by the magical style of the story-telling of Marlow, is feeling compelled to disseminate Marlow's story before the readers who would be awakened to a fresh way of ethical thoughts about imperialism and evil.

Conrad's contribution to reformation and humanity lies in the understanding and depiction of the origin and nature of evil in *Heart of Darkness*: the primordial and the corrupting and self-eroding temptation of evil inside the human heart, the darkness in the so-called progress of civilization and the banal evil found in decent and ordinary people like Marlow. Although there are other sources of evil found here, the novella is more fascinated with the primordial manifestation of evil.

Primordial evil: while absorbed in story-telling, Marlow is psychologically withdrawn from his present place-aboard *Nellie*. In the outer frame we see the order, efficiency, refinement and progressive idea of European civilization, but the inner story relating to Marlow's journey into interior parts of Congo is very much conspicuous by the absence of the attributes of civilization as mentioned above. The inner story is filled with dark things like inefficiency, chaos and fertile, base, primordial power and temptation of nature. The thoughtful Marlow telling his personal experience in a distant place seems guided by the urge not only for the clear understanding of other people including the reader, but also, he speaks out from his personal need "to dream the nightmare out to the end" (Conrad, 2008, p. 178). The sinister resonance hovering in the outer frame foreshadows the inner narrative of Marlow's facing forms of evil and his personal initiatives to save Kurtz, the principal character of *Heart of Darkness* from the captivity of jungle and his obsession with his own dark self.



Are population size and diverse climatic conditions the driving factors for next COVID-19 pandemic epicenter in India?

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ABSTRACT

Although a nationwide lockdown was imposed in India amid COVID-19 outbreak since March 24, 2020, the COVID-19 infection is increasing day-by-day. Till June 10, 2021 India has recorded 29,182,072 COVID cases and 359,695 deaths. A number of factors help to influence COVID-19 transmission rate and prevalence. Accordingly, the present study intended to integrate the climatic parameters, namely ambient air temperature (AT) and relative humidity (H) with population mass (PM) to determine their influence for rapid transmission of COVID-19 in India. The sensibility of AT, H and PM parameters on COVID-19 transmission was investigated based on receiver operating characteristics (ROC) classification model. The results depicted that AT and H models have very low sensibility (*i.e.*, lower area under curve value 0.26 and 0.37, respectively compared with AUC value 0.5) to induce virus transmission and discrimination between infected people and healthy ones. Contrarily, PM model is highly sensitive (AUC value is 0.912, greater than AUC value 0.5) towards COVID-19 transmission and discrimination between infected people and healthy ones and approximate population of 2.25 million must impose like social distancing, personal hygiene, *etc.* as strategic management policy. Therefore, it is predicted, India could be the next epicenter of COVID-19 outbreak because of its over population.

Introduction

The COVID-19 epidemic reported in Wuhan, China has been caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) [19]. Higher transmissibility of this virus, mainly human-to-human, raised much concern globally. Since its outbreak from a wet market in Wuhan, it spread internationally and affected approximately 216 countries or territories [18]. Accordingly, this robust transmission internationally compelled WHO to substitute the epithet 'epidemic' with 'pandemic' [20]. World Health Organization (WHO) has recorded so far 173,674,509 confirmed cases and 3,744,408 deaths globally until June 10, 2021 [18]. Accordingly, the COVID-19 outbreaks have led to an adverse effect on the mental health in general population and healthcare staff professionals, which ultimately leading to a rise in anxiety, fear, depression, agony and associated mental illness due to implementation of emergencies and lockdowns, and healthcare regulation by governments [3]. In addition to this, the socio-economic and environmental aspects of Covid-19 outbreaks towards cleaner environments have also been documented by Bashir et al. [2].

Presently, the viral infection is spreading at high transmission rate in

India, in comparison with neighboring countries including Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Srilanka, China, Afghanistan, and Pakistan [18]. However, the occurrence of first confirmed COVID-19 case was recorded on January 30, 2020 in Kerala state. From January 30, 2020 to June 10, 2021 India has acknowledged 29,182,072 confirmed COVID-19 cases encompassing 359,695 deaths and 27,645,225 recovery cases [18]. Southern states, namely Kerala and Karnataka and Maharashtra were initially the most affected states imposed curtails on mass gatherings on March 10th, 2020. Consequently, mass gatherings in places like institutions, shopping malls and theatres were closed across the country from March 16 onwards [14]. Furthermore, the Government curtails the movement of migratory workers across the country.

Different factors could influence the survival and transmission of the virus such as climatic conditions (mainly temperature and relative humidity) [15], medical care quality [17], personal hygiene and social distance [21]. A number of studies demonstrated the role of ambient temperature (AT) and relative humidity in COVID-19 virus transmission based on epidemiological researches [5,8,22]. They reported either increase or decrease in virus transmissibility and survivability in the environment. Apart from this, population mass (PM) could play a crucial

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Article

Developmental and Neurotoxicity of Acrylamide to Zebrafish

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Abstract: Acrylamide is a commonly used industrial chemical that is known to be neurotoxic to mammals. However, its developmental toxicity is rarely assessed in mammalian models because of the cost and complexity involved. We used zebrafish to assess the neurotoxicity, developmental and behavioral toxicity of acrylamide. At 6 h post fertilization, zebrafish embryos were exposed to four concentrations of acrylamide (10, 30, 100, or 300 mg/L) in a medium for 114 h. Acrylamide caused developmental toxicity characterized by yolk retention, scoliosis, swim bladder deficiency, and curvature of the body. Acrylamide also impaired locomotor activity, which was measured as swimming speed and distance traveled. In addition, treatment with 100 mg/L acrylamide shortened the width of the brain and spinal cord, indicating neuronal toxicity. In summary, acrylamide induces developmental toxicity and neurotoxicity in zebrafish. This can be used to study acrylamide neurotoxicity in a rapid and cost-efficient manner.

Keywords: acrylamide; neurotoxicity; zebrafish; developmental toxicity; disease models; neurodevelopmental disorders



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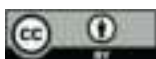
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1. Introduction

Acrylamide is a water-soluble alkene primarily used to synthesize polyacrylamide for personal care products, and is also used in various chemical industries, wastewater treatment processes, chemical grouting, and soil conditioning [1,2]. Acrylamide is a common ingredient in plant-based foods, such as potato and grain products and in roasted coffee [3,4]. Its polymeric form is non-toxic but its monomeric form is highly toxic to rats and mice [5,6], with carcinogenic [7], teratogenic [8,9], and neurotoxic [1,5] effects. Human exposure to acrylamide results in neurotoxicity that is characterized by lethargy, skeletal muscle weakness, gait abnormalities, weight loss, ataxia, numbness of the extremities, and polyneuropathy [6,10]. Acrylamide neurotoxicity has been associated with central–peripheral distal axonopathy [11,12]. Molecular initiating events of acrylamide neurotoxicity include formation of adducts with sulfhydryl thiolate sites specifically involved in synaptic vesicle recycling in vesicle docking (synaptotagmin, synaptophysin, and syntaxin), vesicle priming (complexin 2), SNARE (SNAP Receptor) core dissolution (*N*-ethylmaleimide-sensitive factor), endocytosis (clathrin), neurotransmitter re-uptake (membrane dopamine transporter), and vesicular storage (vesicular monoamine transporter) at nerve terminals [13]. The developmental toxicity of acrylamide has been characterized in laboratory animals, but developmental neurotoxicity has not, highlighting the need for validated animal models of acrylamide-induced developmental neurotoxicity for the clinical management of patients affected by occupational exposure to acrylamide [14,15].



Trophic fractionation in an integrated multi-trophic aquaculture off Tongyoung Coast: A stable isotope approach

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated trophic fractionation of fish-derived waste materials by co-cultured species in an integrated multi-trophic aquaculture (IMTA) practice off Tongyoung Coast. Additionally, this study was aimed to identify suitable extractive species based on stable isotope analysis. Red sea bream (*Pagrus major*) was cultured along with sea cucumber (*Apostichopus japonicus*), suspension feeding bivalves (*Crassostrea gigas* and *Mytilus galloprovincialis*) and seaweeds (*Ulva* sp., *Undaria pinnatifida* and *Sargassum fulvellum*). Stable isotope ratios namely $\delta^{13}\text{C}$, $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ and $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ were determined. The $\delta^{13}\text{C}$, $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ and $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ values recorded in *P. major* were $-21.50 \pm 0.20\text{‰}$, $13.18 \pm 0.17\text{‰}$ and $17.52 \pm 0.88\text{‰}$, respectively. The $\delta^{13}\text{C}$, $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ and $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ values among the extractive species were ranged as $(-19.90) - (-15.55)\text{‰}$, $6.14-10.82\text{‰}$ and $15.14-23.17\text{‰}$, respectively. The sea cucumber, *Apostichopus japonicus* was directly consuming finfish waste for their food and proved to be most important extractive co-cultured species in this IMTA system. *Crassostrea gigas* is the second most important species followed by *Mytilus galloprovincialis*. Cultured seaweeds are least responsible to reduce waste loads within IMTA system. However, the lack of isotopic consistency between IMTA and control feeders suggested that least contribution of aquaculture waste into neighboring coastal environment. Therefore, *Apostichopus japonicus*, *Crassostrea gigas* and *Mytilus galloprovincialis* should be considered as extractive organism in commercial IMTA system to reduce the waste load in ambient environment.

1. Introduction

Integrated multi-trophic aquaculture (IMTA) is a modern-day aquaculture farming technology that combines fed-and-extractive aquaculture components from different trophic levels to remove waste loadings (Irisarri et al. 2013, 2015; Alexander et al. 2016; Park et al. 2018). More specifically, in an IMTA system, the organic wastes from fed organisms such as finfish and shrimps, are utilized by sea cucumbers, mussels, oysters and sea urchins (Lander et al. 2013), and the inorganic nutrients are taken by seaweeds (Barrington et al. 2009; Yu et al. 2014; Kim et al. 2015). Moreover, the IMTA system can accelerate the higher production of aquaculture animals and seaweeds, reduce water column eutrophication, etc. (Ren et al. 2012; Silva et al. 2012; Kim et al. 2017). The extractive aquaculture species, generally, are used as bio-filters to reduce finfish-derived wastes such as particulate organic waste and

inorganic nutrients as well. Accordingly, the success of IMTA system depends primarily on how the extractive aquaculture species bio-remediate the fed-aquaculture derived wastes (Kim et al. 2013; Corey et al. 2014; Park et al. 2015, 2018). Therefore, the knowledge of trophic relationships would be the basic insights to understand the trophic transfer among the organisms.

Stable isotope technique has widely been considered to analyze the trophic relationship and/or interactions among different trophic levels organism and nutritional source identification (Vander Zanden et al. 1999; Redmond et al. 2010; Layman et al. 2012; Kim et al. 2014, 2015; Samanta et al. 2019). Additionally, stable isotope technique helps to analyze the food web pattern and energy flow in aquatic environment (Vander Zanden and Rasmussen 2001). Furthermore, the basic idea of using stable isotope technique is to identify the trophic position of a consumer, as lighter isotopes are generally assimilated either through

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Time-Dependent Naphthalene Toxicity in *Anabas testudineus* (Bloch): A Multiple Endpoint Biomarker Approach

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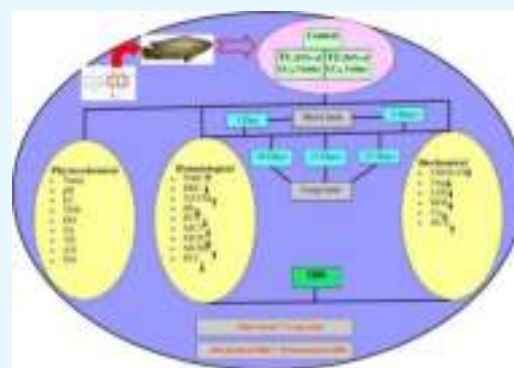


Article Recommendations



Supporting Information

ABSTRACT: Polyaromatic compounds are the major, widespread contaminants in the aquatic environment. However, the adverse impacts of these compounds on blood pathophysiology (hematological profiling and serum biochemical responses) are poorly understood. As a consequence, this study was intended to evaluate the toxic effects of naphthalene, one of the polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, on the blood pathophysiology of *Anabas testudineus* using multiple end-point biomarker approach. *A. testudineus* was exposed to short-term (1 and 5 d) and long-term (10, 15, and 21 d) naphthalene concentrations, that is, T1 (0.71 mg/L indicates 25% of LC₅₀) and T2 (1.42 mg/L indicates 50% of LC₅₀ value). The results disclosed significant decrease in red blood cells, hemoglobin (Hb), packed cell volume, and platelet levels, while other blood parameters, namely, white blood cells, percent lymphocyte, mean cell volume, mean corpuscular Hb, and mean corpuscular Hb concentration showed enhanced levels under naphthalene intoxication. Results were more detrimental under T2 concentration. Cholesterol, glucose, calcium, high-density lipoprotein, and low-density lipoprotein levels gradually increased throughout the different exposure periods under T1 and T2 concentrations, while the triglyceride level gradually decreased during exposure periods. Finally, integrated biomarker responses (IBR) analysis indicated that serum biochemical parameters are more powerful than hematological parameters for determining the naphthalene-induced fish health status. Additionally, the IBR study clearly identified that long-term (>5 d) exposure was more harmful than short-term (<5 d) naphthalene exposure. So, these responses may be derived as biomarkers for monitoring naphthalene pollution in an aquatic ecosystem.



1. INTRODUCTION

Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) are generally organic pollutants containing two or more condensed aromatic rings.¹ They are considered as the ninth most threatening compound to human health.² Contamination of environment by PAHs is now becoming a serious problem worldwide because of massive and irregular extraction of natural resources from the earth. PAHs are widely distributed in aquatic environment including sediments, benthic invertebrates, fish, sea birds, and mammals.^{3,4} In particular, the naphthalene concentration in sediments ranges between 440 and 264,000 pg/g, in water, it ranges from 0.1 to 10 ng/L, and in biological samples, it ranges from 0.030 to 1.004 μg/g.^{5,6} Naphthalene addressed here is a PAH that is widely distributed in soil, water, air, and aquatic environments.^{7,8} Generally, in aquatic environment, PAHs originated from four different sources: petrogenic fuels, incomplete combustion (pyrogenic), organic metabolism (biogenic), and diagenetic transformation in sediments.⁹ Among these, petrogenic and pyrogenic sources are the major contributors of aquatic pollution by PAHs.¹⁰

However, the major cascading aspect of PAHs is their mutagenic and carcinogenic properties.⁵ First, the hydrophobic

nature of PAHs induces gene expression of cytochrome P450 (CYP) family after its entry into cells.^{11,12} In the next step, the expressed CYP enzyme family metabolizes PAHs to produce either intermediate or final metabolites, which bind directly with DNA to become mutagenic/carcinogenic.¹⁰ The International Agency for Research on Cancer classified the PAHs under three major categories and grouped under carcinogenic chemicals (group 2A): benzo[*a*]pyrene, dibenz[*a,h*]anthracene, and benzo[*a*]anthracene. Additionally, the United States Environmental Protection Agency identified 16 major representatives of PAHs as priority one from different sources of emissions. Naphthalene, among them, is the very simplest one which has very low photo-oxidation capability and is highly persistent in aquatic environment.¹³

Different studies regarding developmental toxicity, oxidative stress, carcinogenicity, immunotoxicity, mutagenicity, and

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Blood Biochemical and Erythrocytic Morpho-pathological Consequences of Naphthalene Intoxication in Indian Teleost, *Anabas testudineus* (Bloch)

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PAHs

ABSTRACT

Anabas testudineus (Bloch) was exposed to 0.71 mg/L and 1.42 mg/L (25 and 50% of LC₅₀ value respectively) naphthalene, a polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH), for 21 days. Blood biochemical parameters and erythrocytic morphological alterations were assessed to describe the naphthalene toxicity. Biochemical analysis showed a significant increase in glutamic pyruvic transaminase, GPT (576.7 ± 11.79 and 608.9 ± 12.08 U/L, respectively) and alkaline phosphatase, ALP (12.9 ± 0.69 and 13.4 ± 0.64 U/L, respectively) activities under two doses compared with control. Protein and albumin (ALB) content in blood decreased significantly, in comparison with control value in the tune of 22.67 ± 1.04 and 23.97 ± 1.24 g/dl, respectively and 10.7 ± 0.79 and 11.1 ± 0.67 g/dl, respectively. Erythrocytes showed varied symptomatic morphological changes under naphthalene exposure, which included severe denaturation, swelling in cells, appearance of sickle and tear drop cells, and cellular vacuolation. In particularly, the changes were more prominent under higher naphthalene exposure. Following the results, it has been able to establish that GPT, ALP, protein and ALB, and the morphological manifestations of erythrocytes would be good tools of biomarker in monitoring toxicological paradigm, especially to naphthalene exposure in aquatic bodies.

1. Introduction

Worldwide massive and irregular extraction and exploration of natural resources from the earth, unplanned anthropogenic forest fires, uncontrolled oil-spills, etc., invite subconscious natural environmental degradation causing a serious conflict between man and environment (Bautista et al., 2019). Accordingly, contamination of aquatic resources has been recognized as a concern for augmenting vital awareness for 'save water quality' programme worldwide (Petersen et al., 2017; Bautista et al., 2019). Naphthalene addressed here is a polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAHs) that are widely distributed in soil, water, air and aquatic environments (Slezakova et al., 2013; Nakata et al., 2014). It is an important constituents of petroleum fuels (Honda and Suzuki, 2020). Abundance and ubiquitous distribution of naphthalene due to different man-made activities, such as oil-spillage, deposition in different media, terrestrial discharge and runoff, effluents from domestic and industrial sources, etc., recognized as one of the important contributors of water

pollution (Alderman et al., 2020). Aquatic organisms suffering from different type of lesions, viz., tissue damage, cellular lesions, ulceration, and necrosis, etc., mainly due to presence of lipophilic xenobiotics mainly PAHs in aquatic environment (Kennedy, 2014; Madison et al., 2017; Alsaadi et al., 2018). Generally, the impact of these xenobiotics is concerned with specific toxicity (Philibert et al., 2016; Honda and Suzuki, 2020). However, the toxic outcomes are evaluated based on their structural and functional damage intensity/potentiality within the biological system (Agamy, 2013; Medeiros et al., 2017; Alderman et al., 2020). PAHs undergo subsequent bioaccumulation in bottom dwellers, including mollusks and fish species (Barhoumi et al. 2016) due to their non-degradability and persistent nature in the medium. In case of filter feeders and fish, intake of food directly through gill (Cheikyula et al., 2008) is the easy entrance which leads to disturbance in the vital physiological functions (Elumalai and Balasubramanian, 1999) that ultimately affecting the total aquaculture production. In addition, PAHs and their metabolites are recognized as carcinogenic and mutagenic

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Editorial

COVID-19 and Its Consequences among Medical Workers

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DEAR EDITORS,

The COVID-19 (coronavirus disease) was first reported in Wuhan, PRC China and spread globally. The rapid spreading of COVID-19 disease, since its first outbreak in India, has forced many people to admit into the hospital; simultaneously, affected different aspects of people's lives including front-line workers such as medical workers. COVID-19 pandemic also triggered a wide variety of mental and psychological problems (namely panic disorder, irritability, anxiety, muscle aches, tiredness and depression) as well as generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) symptoms. Present study is the first nationwide report of COVID-19 associated consequences among medical workers during COVID-19 epidemic with particular emphasis on mental and psychological distress.

The COVID-19 (coronavirus disease), which is characterized by a series of unidentified pneumonia, was caused by β -coronavirus and was first reported in late December 2019 in Wuhan (Hubei Province) of PRC China. Initially it was named as novel coronavirus pneumonia, NCP by PRC Centers for Disease Control experts [1]. Simultaneously, the World Health Organization (WHO) named the disease as 2019-nCoV (2019-novel coronavirus) on 12 January 2020. Later on, WHO declared the disease officially as COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) on 11 February 2020. COVID-19 pandemic is one of the most rapid spreading diseases in 21st century. It has arisen a series of symptoms and posed the threat to human civilization. As a result, firstly, the most notable clinical symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, dry cough, body pain, head ache, dyspnea, viral infection in lung and respiratory failure.

Different Asian country viz., India still now facing the issue of spreading the COVID-19 transmission in over-populated areas. Till March 15, India recorded 1,14,09,831 covid cases and 1,58,856 deaths. The large-scale transmission among public health imposed the continuous pressure on India government and also the frontline worker viz., doctor, nurse, pharmacist, student, sweepers, guards, analyst, technician and medical representative. This epidemic not only risks caused the death of populations from viral infection but also posed tremendous psychological pressure to the frontline worker in India and also the rest of the world [2,3]. Additionally, the tremendous transmission of the COVID-19 epidemic has posed threats to people's psychology and

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mental health including students. But the front-line workers are providing their best service beyond the regulated service time during the COVID-19 pandemic situation. Accordingly, they are simultaneously expected to disturb their normal psychological and mental health. Therefore, the major purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of COVID-19 pandemic situation on frontline worker mainly medical workers work there won work place in the COVID-19 pandemic situation. Finally, integration of frontline worker COVID-19 outbreaks (preventive and adaptive measures), is another prime objective of this study.

This study is the first survey-based study on psychological distress and mental health status in the medical sector frontline workers during the tumultuous time of the COVID-19 pandemic. A well-structured online questionnaire-based survey method was adopted to obtain the data from the medical sector frontline workers. Additionally, randomized double blind methodology was followed for this pilot study. The questionnaire (google feedback form) was composed of 24 questions considering the above-mentioned objectives. The survey form was distributed among all age group people through mail, WhatsApp and telegram. Data collection was beginning from September 14, 2020. SPSS v26 (IBM Corp) was used to analyze the obtained data.

This study received a total of 48 valid responses from 36 states and union territories of India. Among the respondents, 77.1%, were males and 22.9% were females mainly dominated by pharmacist (29.2%), followed by doctors (22.9%), and nurses (22.9%). Most of the respondents are worked in state-level hospitals (33.3%), followed by private practitioner (25%), and district-level hospitals (20.8%), predominantly West Bengal origin (85.4%). Additionally, the most of the participants (56.3%), were aged between 18 and 30 years. Those who were aged between 31 and 45 years made up 22.9% of the participants. The participants who were between 46 and 60 years and above 61 years older made up only 10.4% each of the participants. The participants were divided into five categories based on their scientific qualification. The most common scientific qualification was a UG or equivalent [B.A., B.Sc., B. Com or B. Tech, Diploma, (52.1%)], followed by PG or equivalent [M.A., M.Sc., M.Com or M. Tech, (29.2%)], while the least responses were

Editorial

Recurrence Possibility of COVID-19 in India

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Editorial

Although nationwide lockdown was imposed in India amid COVID-19 outbreak since March 24, 2020, the COVID-19 infection is increasing day-by-day. India became world's second most affected country. By 13th May, 2021 India recorded 23,703,665 cases with 258,351 deaths and 19,734,823 recovered cases. Here, we described the possibility of COVID-19 reactivation and disease recurrence through horizontal transmission in individuals after recovery from COVID-19 infection, in particularly in India. Additionally, the study will demonstrate how COVID-19 reactivation/reinfection could play a dominant role in disease burden.

WHO (World Health Organization) recommended two times RT-PCR swabs test in discharged patients after clinical recovery from COVID-19 infection to confirm the disease recurrence globally. As per global data, the virus changing the molecular configuration and fluctuating time-by-time mainly because of viral load, occurrence of false-negative results at molecular test, inefficiency of sampling operator, even sampling procedure etc [1]. Recently, Ye et al. [2] mentioned that about 9% reactivation in COVID-19 patients occurred after discharge from the hospital. Further, they demonstrated host status, virologic features and steroid-induced immunosuppression as prime risk factor for the incidence of COVID-19 reactivation. Lombardi et al. [3] recommended domicile quarantine of 14 days after hospital discharge for safety purposes, but clear information about infectiousness time and virus shedding duration is still lacking. Rothe et al. [4] demonstrated that both pre-symptomatic and asymptomatic carriers might be responsible for COVID-19 reactivation, while Chen et al. [1] reported that convalescent might transmit the virus for further re-infection. Therefore, further investigations are needed to define appropriate quarantine period, to avoid transmission.

Recently, COVID-19 reinfection among COVID-19 patients has dazed scientific community, but uncertainty exists whether this second wave is due to reinfection or new virus strain. Till now 64 cases of reinfection has been reported globally in individuals, recovered from COVID-19 with an estimate ranging from 7.35 to 21.4% [5]. Immunological analysis in this regard plays an important role to determine viral reinfection properly as traditional diagnostic

methods like RT-qPCR, high through put sequencing, CT scan; blood sample analysis has some limitations. Additionally, different swab sample source, improper sampling, and variable sensitivity/specificity of nucleic acid tests can lead to false negative results implying disease persistence rather than recurrence. Generally, immunoglobulins alone are not enough for long-term immunity. Evidences showed that virus specific CD4⁺ T cells and CD8⁺ T cells plays a crucial role in long-term COVID-19 reactivation due to their persistency up to 6 years after SARS-CoV-1 virus infection [6]. Accordingly, Zhang et al. [7] observed lower concentrations of monocyte ACE2 (Angiotensin Converting Enzyme 2) in COVID-19 patients than healthy individuals, which necessitate further study to distinguish between reinfection and new infection. Further, the COVID-19 reactivation duration after first infection may vary between different virus clades of SARS-CoV-2 virus (e.g., A2a, B1), resulting distinct virulence as well. Accordingly, the nature of protective Neutralizing Antibodies (NABs) varies for different strains and this indicated that NABs of primary infection are not able to protect re-infection by other strains, resulting lower concentrations of NABs during reinfection [6].

More recently, virus latency period is considered as potential factor to determine virus reactivation. Wang et al. [8] observed viral latency period 24 days for reinfection. In another study, Ye et al. [2] reported maximum latency period 17 days among 5 patients, but reactivation characteristics were not properly demarcated. They opined that virus is getting reactivated from a latent stage to a lytic stage with similar symptomatic manifestations. Additionally, SARS-CoV-2 virus can survive and replicate in neuronal cell lines [9], which indicated that there is possibility of reactivation through neuro-invasion of virus at later stage. In India, till now, three re-infection cases, one in Ahmedabad and two in Mumbai were brought under ICMR scanner, ICMR Director General Prof. Balram Bhargava said. Tillet et al. [10] demonstrated that individuals recovered from SARS-CoV-2 may not guarantee future immunity and second infection, if happens, was more severe with higher clinical symptoms than the first attack, the report says [10]. Whether the criteria to define a re-infection case is 90 days or 100 days, WHO is still not decided yet the cut-off point, says ICMR Director General Prof. Balram Bharagava. Further, Prof. Balram Bharagava demonstrated that India is considering cut-off about 100 day. But, till now ICMR did not revealed any data regarding those re-infected persons.

Viral shedding is another potentially undetermined factor, which might cause reactivation or disease transmission from an apparently recovered individual or asymptomatic individual to healthy people [11]. Generally, viral shedding begins 2-3 days before symptoms appearance and it happens through non-respiratory or non-classical tract routes such as fecal-oral route, tears and conjunctival secretions etc. Virus remains unrecognized in all these non-respiratory or non-classical routes during patient's discharge, who are tested negative (nasopharyngeal RT-qPCR). But there is possibility of containing highly active viral titers in non-classical transmission sites of recovered patients, indicating that they not only reactivate themselves

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The Colonial Evils Depicted in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*

Md Masihur Rahman

Abstract

Written in the colonial context, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is a potential exploration of the nature of colonial evils and hypocrisy. Set in an atmosphere of gloomy darkness dominated by criminality towards humanity the narrator reveals his agonising experience and realisation regarding organised plunder of the colonial human/natural resources. The novella published in book format in 1902, is partly based on the writer's experience in the Congo basin where he was appointed a captain of a river steamer named *Roi Des Belges* in 1890. The novella published during heyday of European colonialism represents in its multi-layered capacity some distinct forms of evils associated with Colonialism. As part of postcolonial study this article would like to explore forms of such colonial evils. Three distinct forms of evil are prominently found in the novella: the base, primitive instincts like lust and greed associated with individual take the shape of evil in some characters; the banality of ordinary mankind whose wilful silence and assumed denial helps the evil to grow; and the colonial European hypocrisy and trading secrets shows its evil aspects in Congo. Although *Heart of Darkness* has highlighted more the primitive and base evil, the other colonial evils have been depicted in its ugly shape through the images, metaphor and phrases in the novella. Going through these colonial evils this article would like to contribute to broader understanding of inclusive humanism.

Keywords: Evil, Colonial Site, Hypocrisy, Torture, Humanism.

Introduction

This section should be concise and define the background and significance of the research by considering the relevant literature, particularly the most recent publications. When preparing the introduction, please bear in mind that some readers will not be experts in your research field. While undertaking journey to visit a place of his childhood dream and fascination Conrad discovered how the place and its inhabitants are fast losing its lustre and it was transformed into a devil's playground. Congo was a childhood dream and its shocking revelation prompted him to write down and unmask the evils of colonial enterprise. The multi-layered text is rich in its depiction of Colonial evils manifested in multiple ways. Charles Marlow, the primary narrator, is seated aboard a yawl, *Nellie*, with his friends who are enjoying different position under the colonial rule: a Company Director, a Lawyer, an Assistant and an unidentified narrator who like Marlow, has much similarities with Conrad himself. They are enjoying each other's company. The atmosphere is gloomy. The narration of Marlow's strange and unfamiliar experiences made it gloomier. Firmly setting a sinister colour of the story at the outset of the novel that would hover in the air throughout the novel. Conrad's plot is shaped to being the processing of evil before the readers. Marlow, seated in a

History, Self-Alienation and A Study of Cultures: Studying Nirad C. Chaudhuri's *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*

Saptarshi Mallick

Abstract

The literary creations of Nirad C. Chaudhuri have often rendered him to be an anti-Indian, pro-British individual and a writer as atavistic as was India during the nineteenth century when literary London often considered the writers from the colonies as 'exotic outsiders, solitary figures and objects of curiosity' (Ranasinha 68). These authors were considered to be able to communicate the intricacies of their native culture, embody newness, and possessed the entelechy to describe the colonies as well as the British from an exotic perspective. This essay studies Nirad C. Chaudhuri's attempt to write history through an autobiographical mode in his *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* establishing his views and position detached from his countrymen, and thereby express his views regarding the West and the East from a self-detached point of view.

Key words: History, Indian, British, West – East, Alienation, Emancipation.

Introduction

The literary creations of Nirad C. Chaudhuri have often rendered him to be an anti-Indian, pro-British individual and a writer as atavistic as was India during the nineteenth century when literary London often considered the writers from the colonies as 'exotic outsiders, solitary figures and objects of curiosity' (Ranasinha 68). These authors were considered to be able to communicate the intricacies of their native culture, embody newness, and possess the entelechy to describe the colonies as well as the British from an exotic perspective. However, different writers from the colonies interrogated this preconceived dominant cultural assumption in their own manner to facilitate the process of an aesthetic translation. Nirad C. Chaudhuri published his memoir, *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* (1951) with Macmillan while he was working as a commentator of All India Radio in New Delhi. Though critics have critiqued him for several justifiable disturbing elements in his work, there are certain tendencies like his evoking the sense of place, his humour, his independence of judgement in the teeth of opposition and his phenomenal ability to keep working which are commendable. As one of his best known books, *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* embodies an impassioned detail description of 'the conditions in which an Indian grew to manhood in the early decades of the twentieth

century' (*The Autobiography* Preface). Eunice de Souza is of the opinion that Chaudhuri's *The Autobiography* is 'more of an exercise in descriptive ethnology than an autobiography' ("Nirad C. Chaudhuri" 209). Chaudhuri details the four environments which had an important impact upon his life: Kishorganj, his birthplace and where he lived till he was twelve, Bangram, his ancestral village, Kalikutch, his mother's village and the England of his imagination. There are also references to Calcutta, the Indian Renaissance, the beginning of the nationalist movement, the author's experience of the colonial English arrogance in India which are all presented in contrast to the idyllic constructions of civilization as 'the greatest civilization on earth' ("Interview" 7). The author's opinion regarding history, politics and culture that binds a civilisation are all based on certain thematic constructions which seem to pervade his work. In this context we have to remember that Chaudhuri had not visited Britain till he was 57, when he came with the sponsorship of the BBC. He moved to Britain at the age of 73 and settled in Oxford for the rest of his life with his wife. Besides *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*, the second volume of his autobiography, *Thy Hand, Great Anarch! India: 1921 – 57* (1987) is a historical document of his life as a student in Calcutta and as a secretary to the Congress leader, Sarat Chandra Bose. Writing an autobiography is a literary endeavour whose national significance bears witness to contemporary history. As such, Babur's *Autobiography*, Jahangir's *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Mahatma Gandhi's *My Experiments with Truth*, Jawaharlal Nehru's *An Autobiography*, Rabindranath Tagore's *My Boyhood Days* and Rathindranath Tagore's *On the Edges of Time* to name a few works whose 'retrospective prose [facilitated towards] the development of [author's] personality' (Lejeune 202). Nirad C. Chaudhuri's personal history and experiences have also been documented in his books on Indian culture and national history, worth mentioning in this context, as they are a witness to and account of the decline of Bengal, which he considered

as matched by the failure of British imperialists to bequeath a lasting cultural legacy in India (Ranasinha 71).

This has enabled him to assert his autonomy and disinterest from his milieu, as autobiography is associated with the idea of the potency of self-identity and separate selfhood (McClintock 313), and it further facilitates the possibility of self-creation, masking the agency of cultural institutions at work in the life history that determines our stories and our selves (*On Autobiography* 192).

History through an Autobiographical Vein

'The creative clash of two civilisations' (Walsh 52), *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* tells the story of the early period of Nirad C. Chaudhuri's life and documents the condition 'in which an Indian grew into manhood in the early decades of this century' (*The Autobiography* Preface). Though Chaudhuri's presentation and interpretation of the

history of India establishes his critical insight in association with his subjective approach to the problems of Indian history, society, politics and culture, yet his self-Westernization remained static and lifeless throughout his long career. It is due to his self-Westernization that his sharp and merciless views of post-Independent India in *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*, and his hallowing of the ‘Timeless England’ in *A Passage to England* were received with favour in Britain, however in due time by associating to the ‘obsolete notions of ‘Englishness’ and subscribing to largely discredited imperial ideas’ (Ranasinha 72), Chaudhuri progressively subscribed to a system of prolepsis. *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* is an Indian’s self portrait, mirroring the tortured assertiveness of a scholarly spirit who embraced in his life a uniquely extreme dislocation. *The Autobiography* embodies the perspectives of the author along with the truth to the text, facilitating a direct access to a clearly visible self – ‘an intention to honour the signature’ (Lejeune 202) by being true to his experiences and their respective honest documentation in his *The Autobiography*.

Verdict on the British and the Indians

The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian presents us coherent and imaginative portrayal of India’s history since all the chapters focus on social and cultural perspectives. Chaudhuri believes that it is the ‘unity in diversity’ of India that has urged the British to consider the Indians with an attitude of esteem and honour. Indian civilization is a history of past achievements along with a single community in spite of being ‘endowed with multi-racial and multi-lingual culture’ as the author puts it, ‘...the same species as the Homo sapiens historicas of Europe’ (*The Autobiography* 442). Chaudhuri’s real purpose is to document history through the autobiographical exercise solely as an avenue to get the history inaugurated. Since his early college days he was fascinated with history (Iyengar 591). *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* has defied all the vignettes of biography, only to be ‘the story of one’s life written by one’s self’ (Mulgan 27). Chaudhuri’s aim is neither to depict an autobiographical document, nor to reveal on the surface the various facets of his own self. The book is the author’s verdict on the British Raj as well as a virulent attack of the Indians practising poor mimicry of the notion of Western materialistic culture whom Bhabha has described as ‘mimic men’ and established by Naipaul in his novels. Historical in motive, Chaudhuri points, ‘My intention is thus historical...the book may be considered as a contribution to contemporary history’ (*The Autobiography* Preface). Clash between the cultures of the natives and the foreigners took place at mundane levels of existence. Chaudhuri brings in the reference to the incident of 1916, stating how the boys of the matriculation class bowed down to the locomotives as if they were Gods. His interaction with the West was chiefly concerned with the spiritual realm of existence, ‘My westernization is of the older pattern, concerned more with the mind than the material things’ (Swain 80). In spite of the impact of the West upon him, the

occidental influences upon his psyche were expressed through his consciousness and were manifested through 'culture'. Chaudhuri is of the opinion that the British Empire conferred subjecthood (*The Autobiography* 171) on us at the same time it withheld citizenship (Fanon 38), and the cultural contact was psychologically and imaginatively experienced by him. In Chapter IV of Book I, the author with a perceptive eye has presented the spirit of England as a place agitating the birth of a space out of the mytho-geography from books read and pictures seen and circulated. In his accounts England has been conjured up as one of the shaping forces of his life (Sharma 1066). Chaudhuri states, 'the chiaroscuro of our knowledge of England was extremely sensational' (*The Autobiography* 101), as he aimed to revisit history and the autobiographical overtones become the means to have the matter started, as Iyengar comments

The places that held an influence on Nirad's boyhood, the family antecedents, the cultural milieu, the nationalist Bengal, the cold war between the ruling and the subject races, the city and the University of Calcutta, the coming of Gandhi and the eruption of the new politics of the twenties these many environmental layers receive as much attention as the quirks and quiddities of Nirad's own temperament or the vicissitudes of his childhood, boyhood and youth (*Indian Writing In English* 591).

The 'Dependence Complex'

Chaudhuri's voluntary affiliation to English culture and history, especially his passionate support of the British Raj, and his affirmation of India's need for English rule, recalls Octavio D. Mannoni's theory of 'dependence complex' (*The Intellectual* 26). Mannoni states that some races feel the cognitive urge to be dependent and be under imperial rule and this is due to their endurance of an unanswered dependence complex as colonization was 'expected – even desired by the future subject peoples' (Mannoni 86). Chaudhuri's reading of Indian history is biased and it manifests itself in these terms. He emphasizes that India can only progress through British rule. After the Indian independence when the British left India it resulted to a repudiation of their duty towards the Indians they had ruled before the official declaration of the Indian independence (*Thy Hand* 26). Chaudhuri's observations can be re-viewed from Fanon's criticism of Mannoni's theory and theorization of hostility. Mannoni claims colonial xenophobia to be the result of paltry officials, small traders and colonial ineffectual people, not European civilization and its foremost agents. Three possibilities have been observed for natives as a ramification of colonization. The first is assimilation, which also consequences the natives to be unable to connect with their own roots. Secondly, a native can encounter a half-way assimilation where psychological antagonism take place usually concluding in malice directed at Europeans. Finally, no assimilation can take place (Mannoni 24). Fanon emphasizes that if

there is any evidence of this complex, then it is the ‘pathology of the colonized representing the effect and not the cause’ (Ranasinha 80). Fanon states that the colonized subject lives in a society that allows his ‘inferiority complex’ to evolve and paves the way towards firmness from the bolstering of this complex: ‘it is the racist who creates his inferior’ (*Black Skin* 84, 85, 93). Chaudhuri ironically vindicates the detraction of imperialism and as Naipaul states with regards to Chaudhuri’s *The Autobiography*, ‘no better account of the penetration of the Indian mind by the West – and by extension, of one culture by another – will be or can now be written’ (*The Overcrowded* 59).

Chaudhuri divides the entire span of Indian civilisation into Indo-Aryan, Indo-Islamic and Indo-European periods and establishes the fact that Indian civilisation in all the three periods has been strongly influenced by foreign civilization stating that,

three of the greatest historical movements have forced their way into India in successive ages and created three different types of civilization;...the civilizations have remained essentially foreign even at the highest point of their development within India and have ceased to be living as soon as they have been cut off from the source,...neither political order nor civilization has come into being in India when a powerful external force has not been in possession of the country (*The Autobiography* 513).

Due to his zeal for a foreign culture’s influence on Indian civilisation, Chaudhuri goes on to say that he expects, ‘either the United States singly or a combination of the United States and the British Commonwealth to re-establish and rejuvenate the foreign domination of India’ (*The Autobiography* 519). However, Chaudhuri’s quest was not for a search of own’s identity, as he never lost it or had any doubts regarding it (*Thy Hand* xxviii). His was an assimilation of Western traditions within a Bengali heart to emerge as Bengali humanist.

The Modernizing Tradition

Chaudhuri refers to William Shakespeare, John Webster, Charles Lamb and even Jane Austen and establishes their work as lucid, inviting a comparative study. His obvious parallelism is noted in his statements regarding *The Iliad* and *The Ramayana*. However, it must be considered that Chaudhuri’s lucid prose at times degenerates into hyperboles parading his insular sentiments as, ‘if any whole hearted Bonapartist were to be found anywhere in the world at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century they were to be found in Bengal’ (*The Autobiography* 105). Though there is an attitude of love for the Bengali intellectuals and literary calibres, yet the author bears a curious mixture of the feelings of love and hatred towards the English people. On the one hand he admires Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who argues for English education in India from 1823 and Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay and Swami Vivekananda due to their objective criticism

of the conservative Hindu culture. On the other hand his account of European history is an epitome for man's struggle for freedom, '...fertilizing freedom had been enlarged in ever widening circles in the course of modern history' (*The Autobiography* 111). It is therefore important to locate him in the context of modernizing tradition within India, and not just as an eccentric Anglophile (Ranasinha 79). Chaudhuri sees himself as an object in a landscape or an impulse in a more inclusive and controlling rhythm and his whole presentation of the self is impressively tranquil and objective ("The Meeting of Language" 115); an intellectual's self that was shaped by the classical ideal of Greece and Rome. As a historian, Chaudhuri was of the opinion that he was an impartial judge of men and events. He is a man who speaking to men about ideas on religion and politics. As objectivity is a significant breakthrough towards a fundamental idea from the historical perspective which is the fountain of the idea of change, Chaudhuri establishes the loss of the distinguished past of India by stating that 'we shall never again achieve anything like the greatness and individuality of the Hindu civilization [as] that civilization is dead forever, and cannot be resuscitated (*The Autobiography* 521). He then goes on to praise the British Raj stating, 'None of the poems gave my brother and me greater amusement than those in the dialects including two in the Dorset dialect' (*The Autobiography* 199). This fortifies that Chaudhuri was a different individual by then, someone who had a psychic change through an internalizing of orientalist images by extolling India's past along with the ideas of India's present decay, and consequently the positive force of an imperial civilizing mission (Ranasinha 79).

The Synthesis of West and East

Chaudhuri's admiration and love for England and English literature makes him call Shakespeare 'the epitome, test and symbol of literary culture' (*The Autobiography* 197). His idea of England was that of 'a country of great beauty...which possessed beautiful spots...' (*The Autobiography* 113) which is an effect of a self-conscious detachment from his own culture, time and space, as the early twentieth-century European modernist writers. *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* is dedicated to 'The Memory of the British Empire in India' that describes all that was noble and ideal within as moulded and transformed by the Raj in India. Chaudhuri's argument is established 'from the personal standard point, the historical thesis has emancipated him from the malaise that has haunted me [him] throughout the life' (*The Autobiography* 526). In his view, India has remained static in its appearance in spite of mimicking all that is 'Western'. Chaudhuri demeans that Indian endeavour and this he does vehemently in his text in order to carve out a new culture of the stereotyped East which may be an answer to the binaries that the West constructs and thereby bring in a cultural synthesis. In this context he brings in the reference to the literary creations of Michael Madhusudan Dutta, Raja Rammohan Roy and Bankim Chandra who all contributed to bringing up an East – West cultural

assimilation. Chaudhuri's attitude towards the decline of Bengal springs from 'an anxiety of an entrenched but now somewhat beleaguered literati about the effects of democratization'. This decline of Bengal has been critiqued as one that

easily lends itself to a social conservatism that justifies class privilege by dressing it up as a meritocracy and a celebration of the nineteenth-century 'synthesis' of West and East' (Chatterjee vii)

and Chaudhuri becomes an extreme proponent of this view. Chaudhuri critiques the English for their hostile outlook in comparison to the orthodox Hindus who are believers of bigotry and false practices. In 1951 Mortimer in the *Sunday Times* commented:

If Mr Chaudhuri sees nothing good in his country do not imagine that he is indulgent to the English. He speaks with loathing of our superciliousness, cruelty and despotism in the days of the Raj; he is equally severe upon those English who now – always from the lowest motive – express sympathy with India ("The Square Peg" 3).

John Squire wrote,

Chaudhuri, a realist, is certainly no indiscriminate belauder of British rule; he has some damning things to say about the attitude of the British communities...towards the native inhabitants of India ("A Bridge Between" 706).

M. K. Naik and R. Parvathy are of the opinion that Chaudhuri cannot be considered as an 'anti – Indian' because he has entertained no ambition of hobnobbing with the English in India. Chaudhuri has condemned Indian society when he states that

the Hindu civilisation was created by a people who were actively conscious of their fair complexion in contrast to the dark skin of the autochthons and their greatest preoccupation was how to maintain the pristine purity of the blood-stream which carried this colour. The Hindu regards himself as heir to the oldest conscious tradition of superior colour and the carrier of the purest and most exclusive stream of blood which created that colour. When with this consciousness and pride he encounters a despised Micchchha, an unclean foreigner, with a complexion fairer than his, his whole being is outraged. The creature tries to console himself with the illusion that if in this world there is a foreigner fairer than him, it is only because that foreigner is a leper (*The Autobiography* 129, 130).

William Walsh attempts to refute the charges put against Nirad C. Chaudhuri's Anglophilia by referring to his stringent attacks upon the colonial impertinence of the local British Raj ("The Meeting of Language" 119). Though Chaudhuri had a special fascination for the beauty which is associated with English life – an unmistakable Romantic impression on his mind (Agarwal 29 – 39), but he could never think of England as he had perceived of Bengal and of India. We remember Chaudhuri's humorous

presentation of the Indianization of the text books that are in English for an easy comprehension for the Indian masses. He sarcastically adds that the British falls from its glory due to 'the bankruptcy of European civilization, its spiritual poverty and its moral in its inequity.' C. D. Narasimhaiah dismisses him, 'he seeks...to placate his western readers...' (*Moving Frontiers* 24). A reader for Macmillan observed,

It would seem to us difficult to doubt the nationalist feeling of the author of the *Autobiography*, but he has been criticized in India for being too partial to the West, and too critical of his own countrymen (Watson).

As a result we can deduce that Chaudhuri's criticism arises from a 'desperate concern, rather than from professed and perceived detachment' (Ranasinha 91).

Conclusion

Chaudhuri's presentation of India as a moribund culture which has become stagnant due to the lack of dynamism makes him debunk the Hindu culture, which for him is 'dead forever and cannot be resuscitated and to hope to create a second civilisation of the same order is for us today a superannuated piece of folly' (*The Autobiography* 521). Chaudhuri is of the opinion that all Indian endeavours in imitating the West have been a failure and what one sees is nothing but an immense expense of an Europeanization which has been debased in nature along with the Hindu and Muslim traits for which we are still not in a position to assume ourselves as modern in terms of spirit and temper. Chaudhuri's thesis in *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* epitomizes Indian history as consisting of three cycles during each of which 'a strong and creative foreign influence provided by a primary motive force, viz., the mid-European Aryan, the Muslim and the British respectively...appears very much like an intellectual extension of the wish fulfillment of self-confessed Anglophile alienated from his own culture' (Naik 265). Therefore, Chaudhuri eulogizes the British love for the actual which he found lacking in Indian civilisation. Through his intransigent severance from his countrymen, Chaudhuri entreats his 'location as an intellectual outside the dominant group' facilitating him 'to be free from ideological constraints or allegiance to any particular national constituency' (Ranasinha 88). Therefore, as a colonial one needs to dissociate one's own self from the amicable and concentrate upon the personal achievement before undertaking the authority for others, which involves endeavouring towards an honest dialogue with her/his own 'undeveloped' society (Rowe-Evans 27). In spite of all the allegations regarding the various biased arguments of the author, it cannot be denied that *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* has several merits which outweigh the faults in terms of logic, eloquent style, intellectual overturns and outspoken arguments which make the text a canon in Indian Writings in English. William Walsh considers *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* as

one of the finest examples of this genre to appear in English in this century and the most significant, single discursive work to be written by the love and hate of Indian-British relationship (*Indian Literature in English* 45).

In an interview for the *Times of London*, Nirad C. Chaudhuri is reported to have said, 'People are about half and half, against me and for. Previously all were against me. I know I am extreme. It is like a tug-of-war. I cannot stand up straight or the other side will pull me down. But I *know* my exaggerations' (Iyengar 601). Chaudhuri has reiterated the path of his estrangement and 'intellectual isolation' from the nationalistic overtones championed by his 'countrymen and contemporaries' that, according to him, emerged to be growingly 'impenetrable' (*The Autobiography* 414). Vindicating his alienation, Chaudhuri refers to Max Muller's observations that all Aryans in India are relocated and deranged as colonial Englishmen, because they were themselves immigrants to India (Ranasinha 83). This argument has been further developed by the author in his *The Continent of Circe* where he describes the atrophy of the Aryans in India. The 'Aryan heritage' is indicative of the imperialist communication of the elite, and it forges a parallel way of establishing the associations between the British and the Indians (Ranasinha 83, 84). Nirad C. Chaudhuri's writing is cathartic and his presentation of his alienation is liberating for him as evident when he states, 'my intellect has indeed at last emancipated itself from my country', which has facilitated the dawn of autonomy in him without dislocating or uprooting himself 'from the native soil by sojourn in a foreign country or schooling' (*The Autobiography* 607).

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ENVIRONMENTALISM IS OMNIPRESENT: A JOURNEY FROM SANSKRIT LITERATURE TO ENGLISH LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT



This paper aims to concern about environmentalism, especially focus on Sanskrit literature and English literature. In it, a search of environmentalism through the epic and the works of English literature. In the *Vedas*, water is compared to 'Amrita' - "Apaswantaramritapsu." In *Atharva Veda*, it is written "Apo asman matarah sudayanta." In the *Puranas*, we have the environmental consciousness and balance of Nature. In the *Agni Purana*, water was described as "Hari". There are many references for digging the wells and the ponds in the *Matsya Purana* and the *Baraha Purana*. In the *Shiva Purana*; we have the conservation of water. In the *Agni Purana* and the *Shiva Purana*, we have the information on the plantation of trees. In *Abhijnanasakuntalam*, we have information to maintain eco-conservation; we see the notion against animal killing. Natural consciousness is felt within the human feelings.

William Wordsworth is well known as the worshipper of Nature who journeys from Christianity to Paganism. The *Pantheistic* creed is sourced by "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings." and see the emotions in tranquility in his poetry. In *Hardy's* love for Nature, there is nothing mystic or transcendental as in that of Wordsworth. Wordsworth loves not only the sights of Nature but also those who live in its midst. His greatest characters are animal lovers. The landscape painting is linked with the subject of human moods. Thus, hills, heaths, rivers, meadows, woodlands in Wessex appear and reappear in the very philosophy of *Hardy's* existence amidst nature. This paper attempts to declare how William Wordsworth and *Hardy's* works create the depiction of environmentalism.

Keywords: Veda, Purana, Abhijnanasakuntalam, Paganism, Pantheistic, Wessex, Environmentalism.

**INTRODUCTION**

In all four *Vedas*, we find the concept of a clear, pollution-less environment, to maintain the ecology and the beautification and balance of Nature. In India, the entire emphasis is on water-based civilization. But if we look with a suspicious eye in the Vedic literature, then it can be observed that like water, there are also consciousness to the conservation of trees and wild animals. There is a keen eye to look out the proper balance in the eco-system by the contemporary Vedic sages.

The Vedic sages always regarded air as their father, brother, and friend because they know that air is the source of life: "Uta bata pitasi no uta bhratato nah sakha sa no jibatabe kridhi".¹In *Madhmantra* of *Rigveda*, we can see the total cleansing of the environment, not only the purification of air:

"Madhu bata ritayate madhu ksharanti sindhabah Madhwirnah santoshadhi.Madhu naktamutoshaso madhumat parthibam rajah Madhu daurastu nah pita".²

It is said in the *Rigveda* that all the two spheres, "Dyuloka" and "Antarikshaloka" are fulfilled with nourished with water and herb: "Madhumati roshadhirdyaba apo madhumanno bhabatwantarik-Sham".³According to the *Rig Veda*, the quality of the wind and its working is well observed. The positivity shows the vigorous creativity of the self, while the other side caused the negativity, producing evil:

"Dwabimou batou batak aa sindhora parabatak Daksham te anya aa batu paranyo batu yad rapah. Aa bata bahi bhishajam ni bata yad rapah Twam hi bishwabshajo devanam duta iyate".⁴

In ancient times, the *Yajnas* were used to purify the air by praying to invoke rains that would clean the air

and by reducing dust and pollution from it: "Apam dharam bhindhi-puro bato barshan jinwarabritam swaha".⁵ Vedic sages are guided by the heavenly blessings of perfumed air compared to the honeyed fragrance which may cause further creativity and wisdom: "Madhu bata tayate".⁶

In the *Yajur Veda*, it is said that of the avoidance of violence and pollution spreading: "Prithibim ma himsih", "Antariksham ma himsih", "Mapohimsih ma Oushadhirhimsih".⁷

In the *Atharva Veda*, it is argued that the entire world is covered with three theories – Water (ap), Air, Banaspati (medicinal plants): "Trini chhandasi kabayo pururupam darshanam biswachakshanam Apo bata oushadhayah tanyekasmin bhuvan arpitani".⁸

It is said in the *Vedas* that water is an affectionate mother: "Ushatiriba matarah". Water is regarded as the cause of well-being for the entire world: "Apo devbrihatirbiswa sambhubah". For this reason, we cannot afford to pollute water. In the *ShuklaYajurVeda*, it is said that we should careful water preservation: "Ma apo moushadhirhimsih". Water destroys the biological negativity of the human body: "Aripra apro aparipramasmat".

The purification of air controls the environmental degradation and poisoned atmosphere: Herbs has the quality to purify the air that will make a strong resistance to diseases: Water has the auspicious quality which even washes the sins: "Idamapah pra bahata yat kincha duritam mayi". In the *Rig Vedas* we find:

"Gange cha Yamune chaiba Godabari Saraswati Narmade Sindhu Kaveri jaleasmin sannidhim kuru".⁹

In the *Rig Veda*, there is a mantra which indicates that even thousands of years ago at the time of writing of the *Rig Veda*, Vedic sages had the idea that

¹ Rig Veda(10/186/2)

²Ibid (10/90/6-8)

³ Ibid (4/57/3)

⁴ Ibid (137/2-3)

⁵Taittiriya Upanishad(2/4/7)

⁶RigVeda(1/90/6)

⁷YajurVeda

⁸Atharva Veda(18/1/17)

⁹Atharva Veda(18/1/17)



one's vital element in breathing is Oxygen. In the Chhandogyo *Upanishad*, we can see sage Uddalak said to his son Swetketu, trees have life and they can feel happiness and sorrow like humans. Here it is said that water better than rice.

In the *Bishnupurana*, the relation between water and medicinal plant is stated in the geographical description of Hindu mythology, where it is found that this globe is imagined as seven oceans and in that we have seven islands. These seven islands are named by the origin of *banaspati* (medicinal plants). For example – *Jambudwip, Plakshadip, shalmaldwip, Kushdwip, Krounchadwip, shakdwip* and *Pushkardwip*: “Jambuplakshahabayou dwipou shalmalashchaparodwija Kushakrounchastathashakah pushkarashchoiba saptamah”.¹⁰

The sublimity of trees, sowing of trees, the rituals rounding trees, to found parks and ponds are vividly described in *Puranas* with a particular ritualistic process. It is remarked in *Agni Puranas* that who sowing a tree he will live for thirty thousand *Idras* times in heaven: “Aramam karayet yastu nandane suchiram baset”. “Papnashah parasiddhi briksharamapratisthaya”. In the *Shiva Puran*, it is opined that one who planted tree amidst the forest, he will release his past and future generation from any types of obligations after death: “Atitanagatan sarban pitribamshastu tarayet Kantare briksharopi yastasmadwrikshamstu ropayet”.

The teaching of the *Puranas* is proved drastically in modern times for a forestation against the reigns of pollution. Here plants are regarded as our sons because after with the plantation of trees one can have a residence in heaven. Forest producing flowers to worship *gods, Rakshas, deities, Gandharv* as humans' sages etc. are resided in the lap of nature. The essential for creatures to live life is water. *Agni Purana* described to give water as pious; it takes one into heaven: “Toyodanath sarbadanphalam prapya dibam brajet”.

It is said in *Purana* that if a man digs a pond then he will get the results the same as “*Agnishtomo Yajnas*”. In the *Shiva Purana* we can see in various seasons we should reserve our necessary waters into various reservoirs like ponds, lakes and others. We find the information about proper timings of the plantation of trees, following the seasons and the proper technique of digging the soil all discussed.

The Puranas are described as always the protection of animals. *Agni Purana* warned us that the killing of animals will lead us to hell. In *Kurma Purana*, we find that we should not kill birds and eat them. If accidentally one had engaged in the killing of animals then he should take penance by “*Chandrayana-brata*”. In the various *Puranas*, the occurrence of penances is invoked to save the animal world against any brutal killings.

We can see the relationship between nature and man with path-breaking sympathy towards the bosom of nature by great poet Kalidasa in his great drama *Abhijnanasakuntalam*. Kalidasa worshiped the eight visible forms (water, fire, sky, air, earth etc.) of Lord Shiva to protect against any type of evils and nourish the world with divine blessings:

“Ya sristih srashturadya bahati
bidhikutam ya habirya cha hotriYe dwe
kalam bidhattah shrutibisayaguna ya sthita
byapya biswam . Yamahu
sarbajaparakritiriti yaya pranianh
pranabantah Pratyakshabhih
prapannastanubhirabatu
bastabhirashtabhirishah.”¹¹

It is written by Rabindranath Tagore regarding his essay about ancient literature *Sakuntala* that as the other characters like Anasuya, Priyambada, Kanva, Dusyanta, and the forest of austerities (*tapoban*) has the elements of life and personality. Here he is personifying the inanimate object or concept called “*Tapoban*”.

Even the prologue we have the description that the idle ladies are kissed politely by the bees and they use the natural flower as their ornaments in the ear:

“Ishadishachchumbitani bhramaraih
sukumarakesharshikhani Abatamsayanti dayamanah
pramadah shirishkushumamani”.

¹⁰BishnuPurana

¹¹Abhijnanasakuntalam (1/1)



After that, we can find the sage Kanva's hermitage amid landscape near the bay of river Malini. Near the hermitage of sage Kanva we can see the character of nature is established here with these lines:

"Nibara
shukagharbhakotaramukhabhrashtastaruna
madhah Prasnigdha
kwachidingudiphalabhidhah suchyanta
ebopalah. Bisvasopagamadabhinnagatayah
shabdham sahante mriga--
Stoyadharapathashcha
balkalashikhanisyandarekhankitah".¹²
i.e., Grains of wild rice fallen from tree-
hollows/ where parrots nest, lie scattered
under the trees;/those stones there look
moist, glossy, from the oil / of ingudi-nuts
split and pounded on them;/all around, deer
browse in their tranquil haunts,/unafraid of
the chariot's approach; yonder,/drops of
water dripping off the edges of bark-
garments/in long lines, trace.the paths to
pools and streams.

The description of beautiful nature is seen throughout the passages of *Abhijnanasakuntalam* :
"Rippling beneath a passing breeze, waters flow In
deep channels to leave the roots of trees; Smoke
drifts up from oblations to the Sacred Fire To dim the
soft sheen of tender leaf buds;

Free from fear, fawns browse lazily in meadows
Beyond, where Vidarbha-shoots are closely
cropped".²⁶

the great poet Kalidasa describes nature with various
natural sceneries in the drama,

Where we can find:

"Gahantam mahisha nipanasalilam
shringairmuhustaritam
Chhayabaddhakadambakam mrigakulam
romanthanamabhyasyatu.
Bishrabdhamkriyatam

barahatatibhirmustakshatih palvale
Bishramam labhatimidam cha
shithilajyabandhamasmaddhanuh".¹³

The gradual growing of small plants by nourishing
waters is very important by Kalidasa in his drama:
"Tvatta api tatKashyapasya ashramabrikshakah
priyatareti tarkayami yena nabamalikakusumapelaba
api tvam etesham alabalapurane niyukta" and " Na
kebalam tataniyoga eba asti me sodarasneha api
eteshu".

A tiny plant will be the future outcome of wood as a
small child will be the backbone of our future society.
So the human world and the jungle is seat down in
the same plane and importance to Kalidasa.

The bond between nature and man is so perfect and
intimate that we can find it in various places
throughout the drama. There is no other playwright
who can imitate the personified nature into the
feelings of human beings as well as the collaboration
of landscapes to the vigorous enthusiasm:

"Arkosyopari shithilam chytamiuba
nabamalikakusumam" and "Etasmin
shukadarosukumare nalinipatre nakhaih
nikshiptabarnam kuru".

The heart-rending call of beautiful or the natural flow
of the river collaborates quite

Uniquely, in the songs of the birds. The run
of the wild deer parallel to the run of the gushing
emotions of the human heart full of vigor and
aspiration for the betterment in the near future:

"Na namayitumadhijyamasm
shakta dhanuridamahitasayakam mrigeshu
Sahabasatimupetya yaih priyayah krita iba
mugdhabhilitopadeshah".¹⁴

So nature is correctly translating into a human being;
personifies itself to the animals, human beings, birds,
trees, and even in the sages, running wild and
ecstatic: "Yatha esha ito dattadrishtih utsukah

¹²The loom of time, Kalidasa, Penguin classic 26) Ibid

¹³Abhijnanasakuntalam (2/6)

¹⁴Abhijnanasakuntalam (2/6)



mrigapotakah mataram anvishyati .Ehi. Samyojayaba enam.”

In the fourth Act, when Sakuntala left her parental home in search of her husband's address, she seeks permission even to the trees assuming them as her guardian. The dramatist even poetically portrays the addressing of trees by symbolic representation tearing down the trees and the barks:

“Kshoumam kenachidindupandu
taruna mangalyamabishkritam
Nisthyutashcharanopabhogasulabho
laksharasah kenachid. Anyebhyo
banadebatakartalairaparvabhagotthitai-
rattanyabharnani
tatkisalayodbhedapratidvandvibihh”.¹⁵

Whenever Sakuntala goes to her husband's address, there is a sudden oracle in the sky showing the smooth journey following pleasant nature:

“Ramyantara kamaliniharitai sarobhi-
Shchhayadrumairniyamitarkamayukhatapah. Bhuyat
kusheshayarajomridurenurasyah
Shantanukalapavanashcha shivashcha panthah”.¹⁶

Even the lady sage Gautami asked Sakuntala to have her prayers to those trees who made fair permission to go to her husband's address: “Jate ,
jnatijanasnigdhabhah anujnatagamanasi
tapobanadebatabhah”.

The departure of Sakuntala its not only felt in the minds of human beings but also observed in every natural element like –trees, leaves, deer and peacock: “Udgalitadarbhakabala mrigya
pariyaktanartana mayurah Apasritapandupatra
munchantyashruniba latah”.

The parting bell of her departure also symbolically represented by the cuckoo's song as observed in the text: “Anumatagamana Sakuntala Tarubhiriyam
banabasabandhubhah. Parabhritabirutam kalam
yatha Pratibachanikritamebhiridrisham”.

The parallel comparison between Sakuntala and a creeper is well observed here, when Sakuntala takes an able husband like Dusyanta as the creeper takes the mango tree for proper dependence :

“Samkalpitam prathameba maya
tabarthe Bhartaramatmasadrisadrisam
sukritairgata tvam. Chutena samshritabati
nabamalikeya- Masyamaham tvayi cha
samprati bitachintah”.¹⁷

The departure is Sakuntala is more appealing when the emotional appeal of a tiny deer is there to make Sakuntala stay here, not to left. The divorce from nature is so bitter that only this drama can observe this type of melancholy in the whole host of Sanskrit literature. Whenever in the fifth Act Sakuntala is rejected by her husband Dusyanta, it is unique to observe that the environment is also harsh and unpleasant: “Panduptranam tapodhananam madhye
kisalayamiba”.

Thus, the entire drama is intimately associated with the backdrop of nature and the environment regarding human feelings and emotions.

The publication of *Preface to Lyrical Ballads*, a joint venture by Wordsworth and Coleridge, in 1800, is found to mark the beginning of a new literary movement in the history of English literature, known as romanticism, pointing such features like subjectivity, escapism, melancholy note, worship of freedom, return to nature, interest in the middle ages, sense of wonder and mystery, variety rather than uniformity and dignity. Here Wordsworth attacks the artificial and restricted forms of neo-classical poetry on the grounds of over-sophistication and polishedness in style and theme. He discarded the *gaudiness and inane phraseology* of many modern writers and their complete alienation from the sympathies of men. The immediate purpose of Wordsworth's *Préface* is to defend his poems against the charges of lowness and un-poeticalness that had been made against both their subjects and their diction. Its wider intention is to relate poetry as

¹⁵Abhijnanasakuntalam (2/6)

¹⁶Abhijnanasakuntalam (2/6)

¹⁷Abhijnanasakuntalam (2/6)



closely as possible to the common life, to remove it in the first place from the realm of fantasy, and in the second from the polite and over-sophisticated amusement of the *Augustan* era. The principal object was to choose incidents and situations from common life and to relate and describe them, throughout, as far as possible in as language used by men, and at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination; whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect. By selection he means that it should be purified from provincialism and all rational causes of disgust and dislike, it was to be selected, it was to be the language of men in a state of vivid sensation. The process of selection is Accomplish through the agency of imagination when the poet is vividly inspired; imagination would create out of 'the *language used by men*', the true and real language and style of poetry. Wordsworth feels in every object of nature the presence of a sublime spirit that rolls through all things. And the poet's function is not limited to mere recording but he is a man speaking to men, a man endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, which have a greater knowledge of human nature and a more comprehensive soul that is supposed to be common among mankind. The evil effects of contemporary developments --- notably the spread of industrialization, the over-standardization of urban life and the consequent thirst for stimulation by sensational news--- made him thirsty for the conception of that art which is the '*breath and finer spirit of all language*' and which is the product of '*the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings*' taking its origin from '*emotion recollected in tranquility*'. His love of nature is so intense, his revelation of her inmost beauties so lifelike, that he inspires enthusiasm in those who have studied him unlike by aroused by any other writer. It has been said that no one who has once felt his touch can throw off its influence. Nature was alive to him and appealed to him so forcibly that he more than any other poets have been enabled to make others feel her power. To many objects before indifferent, his touch has added

"the gleam

The light that never was on sea and land".¹⁸

Wordsworth's inborn passion for nature was such that, to use his own words,

"While he was yet a boy
The moon, the glory of the sun,
And streams that murmur as they run Had been his
dearest joy".¹⁹

Most of his waking hours were spent beneath the open sky, and much of his time he was under the spell of the beautiful scenes that enriched the lake country in which he lived. How genuine is his heavenly observation:

"To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."²⁰

It is doubtful whether any man ever lived who caught more fully the music of nature, whose soul was more fully attuned to its harmonies. To him there was an eloquence in a noble hill, in a lordly forest, in a bank of flowers, in one lone '*violet by a mossy stone, half hidden from the eye*', that moved him the very inmost deeps of his being, and stirred his heart of hearts. The peace, the serenity, the loveliness of Grasmere vale, his home, 'his heart's delight', seem to have entered his soul, and given it a note of beauty rarely, if ever, before heard by mortals. The celestial light in which he says meadow, grove, and stream, the earth and sky and every common sight seemed to him in his childhood to be appareled, was ever more visible to him than to less rare natures, and more often suggestive of that, "Sense sublime Of something far more deeply interfused Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns'. Wordsworth's debt to nature is with deepest gratitude told in The Prelude: 'I had received so much, that all my thoughts / were steeped in feeling'

The provincial and local elements are predominant in Hardy's Wessex novels. The major areas focused here are hills, dales, rivers, meadows and woodlands. In

¹⁸Elegiac Stanzas

¹⁹Poems by William Wordsworth (1815)

²⁰Intimations of Immortality



The Return of the Native, Egdon Heath has a profound influence on characters. Though Hardy had personified nature, he never believed that nature has a separate life, a soul of her own. The beauties of nature and the mystic qualities of it are harmonized. The bleak, barren, wild, stormy beautiful forms of nature are described in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. His characters are hay-trussers, dairymaids, woodcutters, furze-cutters. Hardy's love is always for the natural men of common existence. The sheepdogs of Gabriel Oak represent his love for the animal world. Tess could never bear to hurt a fly. The side effects of beautiful nature also have in Hardy's mind. Rose is a very beautiful flower with a thorn! The mortal existence is also pained Thomas Hardy. To Hardy nature is indifferent to human emotions! Tess feels very pain of her fate but there shows any observation of nature's anxiety. Hardy shows his natural landscapes following the popular character's moods. The romantic glow is invoked in the conjunction of history and prehistory. The pastoral evolves its unique form, but the flaws in natural law leave it tangled. Hardy can say "*To dwellers in a wood, almost every species of tree has its voice as well as its features*".²¹ There is a fond relation between Hardy and nature. In *Desperate Remedies* Hardy writes: "The beautiful things of the earth become more dear as they elude pursuit".

CONCLUSION

To conclude, it is said that this research paper has been remaining successful to present the status of environment from the Vedic to English Literature. It William Wordsworth, Thomas Hardy and Thomas Cray who gives the glimpse in their works.

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SOCIETY AND WOMEN CONDITION FROM ANCIENT TO THE CONTEMPORARY TIMES: A JOURNEY FROM *MRICHCHHAKATIKA* TO THE POETRY OF KAMALA DAS

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ABSTRACT



In the drama *Mrichchhakatika*, Sudrak is not only displays the reigns of kings or queens but also had portrayed all sorts of characters in the society. The wisdom of Charudutta and the natural love for Basantasena makes her a housewife from Hustler. Although, she is a harlot and she becomes the embodiment of all qualities in terms of holiness. Here in this drama, she is treated as a heroine.

In contemporary times, Kamala Das *My Story* relates how she has denied love and treated as a sex object by her husband Madhav Das in her autobiography 'MY Story'. Her poetry talks about "endless female hunger" with untainted honesty and represents the reality of female sexuality. She questions the marginalized status of women, gender construction, and oppression. Her suicidal urge reflects her desperate desire to renew herself.

The existence of an Indian entity is also reflected in her poetry: "I am an Indian, very brown, born in / Malabar, I speak three languages, write in/Two, and dream in one." The distinct post-colonial female identity formation is also there in her poetry.

Keywords: harlot marginalized, gender, post-colonial female identity

**INTRODUCTION**

Sudraka had written his play *Mrichchhakatika* dealing with the various stratus of society. The hero, in this play a poor Brahmin businessman named Charudatta. The protagonist and the heroine of this play is Vasantasena. In this play, the heroine Vasantasena takes the profession of harlotry. The definition of the heroine as describe in the book *Dasarupaka*:

“

Swanyasadharanstrititadgunanayikatritha”.

1

Therefore there are three types of the heroine in a play *Swiya*, *Anya* and *Sadharanstri*.

In the book *Sahityadarpana* it is said that the definition of the heroine of the *Prakarana*:

“Dhirapragalbhisyadveshyasamanyanayika”.²

Here, the norm of an ideal wife is portrayed in the character of Dhuta in this play, but the protagonist here is the harlot (Ganika) Vasantasena. The bravery of the dramatist is shown by his selection of a harlot (Ganika) as the main heroine in the play. The definition of a harlot (Ganika) describes in the book *Dasarupaka* as:

“Sadharanastriganikakalapragalbhyaadhourtyayuk”.³

Manu refers to the case of those men who make money by allowing their wives to act as a prostitute and says that people holding a conversation with such women are not to be severely punished but have to pay only a small amount as a fine. This clearly shows that Manu had a very low opinion about such women. But in spite of such severe condemnations, the institution of prostitutes persisted and laws had to be made with regard to them also. *Yajnavalkya* lays down if a prostitute after

getting the fee refuses to receive the customer she shall pay twice the amount of the fee and the same shall be imposed on a man who does not pay her fee after having had intercourse with her. The *Matsya Purana* dilates upon the duties of the prostitutes and the special clauses of law applicable to them. The *Kamasutra* defines a Ganika as a *Vesya* who is accomplished and proficient in the 64 Kalas. The *Mitakshara* says that the *Skanda Purana* regards the prostitutes as the fifth caste beyond the four recognized ones.

In Gupta period, The ganikas were generally more educated and better-skilled in the arts than the married women, and the nagarakas , though they had devoted wives at home, as the ideal of a wife drawn by Vatsyayana shows, were attracted by the intellectual and artistic qualities of the educated ganika.

In this play, the protagonist Vasantasena is not only the richest person of Ujjayini but also the ornament of Ujjayini. Her home is located in the aristocratic area of the city. Farceur (Vidushaka) Maitreye opines about the palace of Vasantasena comparable to that of the heavenly Eden garden and the house of the deity Kuvera :

“*Kim**tavatganikagrihaathavaKuverbhavanparichchhedoiti*”.⁴

The harlot (Ganika) Vasantasena is varied character when she is not greedy by the economic concern. The brother-in-law (Sakara) of the king Palaka gives her ornaments and a car only getting her favour; but she does not accept the proposal. When Charudatta's son was crying for the golden car, Vasantasena gives her all golden ornaments without any hesitation. These facts are actually the proof of the greedless character of Vasantasena.

Although, she is a harlot (ganika), she is holy in terms of monogamy and purity in

¹Basu, Anil Chandra.“Dasharupaka”.Sanskrit Book Dipo. Kolkata.2012

²Bandyopadhyaya,Uday. “SahityaDarpana”(part-III). Sanskrit Book Dipo. 2014

³Basu, Anil Chandra.“Dasharupaka”.Sanskrit Book Dipo.Kolkata. 2012

⁴Bandyopadhyaya, Dr. Uday Chandra and Bandyopadhyaya, Dr. Anita. “Mrichchhakatikam”.Sanskrit Book Dipo. Kolkata.2007



relationships. There is no hesitation to choose one's partner in prostitution but in this respect, Vasantasena is not common to all. When Vasantasena first saw Charudatta in the temple of Kamadeva, she feels heart bonding and attraction to him. But when she knows about the poor economic condition of Charudatta she feels no objection to that. When Sakara forced her to sexual intercourse, she comments that:

"Gunahkhaluanuragasyakaranamnapunahbalatkarah".⁵

Vasantasena states to clearly Sakara about her love Charudatta :

"
Yatnasevitabyahpurushahkulshilvandarid
opi
Shobha hi
panyastrinamsadrishjanasamashrayamkama
h".⁶

By this statement, we can have the bravery of Vasantasena.

Although she is the harlot (ganika), she maintains the purity of her character. But the identity of a harlot causes her pain and disappointment:

*"Mandabhaginikhalwahamtababhyantarasya."*⁷

Vasantasena is intelligent, skilled in various art crafts and women of wisdom. In the fifth act, what we have the practice-expression from Vasantasena's mouth; from it, we can get the poetical creativity the heroine. The behaviour towards the wife Charudatta, named Dhuta, shows the great heart of Vasantasena. She is so warm to her relatives that she can give away everything for the freedom from the slavery of her domestic relatives:

*"Yadimama
chhandastadabinarthamsarvamparijanambhujishya
mkarishyami"*.⁸

⁵ibide

⁶Ibde

⁷Ibde

When the ornaments are stolen from Vasantasena, we see that Charudatta gives the necklace of his wife to her; but surprisingly it is returned by Vasantasena politely. Here she gives her self-identity as:

*"Ahamshreecharudattasyagunanirjitadasitathayush
makamapi"*.⁹

She is so much attracted by the qualities of Charudatta and even gives her identity as the slave to him:

"
Tepituhgunnirjitadasi".¹⁰

When Vasantasena proposed Charudatta, she is so much anxious about the lack of money factor. She tries to manage the factor politely. She even says that she can engage death for Charudatta. This shows a very peculiar note for a harlot like that of a very wise wife:

*"Balamstriyanchanagarasyabibhushanancha
Veshyamabesha-sadrishapranayopacharam.
Enamanagasamahamyadimarayami
Kenodupenaparalokanadimtarishye"*.¹¹

In this drama, Vasantasena is projected as a deity. The beauty of Vasantasena is even gleaned by the tiny light:

*"Ayekathamdevatopasthanayogyayuvatiriyam"?*¹²

For this very wise character of Vasantasena, Charudatta is happy to recognize her as his wife. Therefore, it can be said that the character of Vasantasena, although slammed by the common societal culture, is projected by the dramatist here the light of heaven.

⁸ibde

⁹ Singh, Kuljeet. "The Mrichchhakatika of

Sudraka". MotilalBanarasidass Publishers Pvt. Delhi. 2017

¹⁰Bandyopadhyaya, Dr. Uday Chandra and Bandyopadhyaya, Dr.

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¹¹ibde

¹²ibde



Kamla Das is one of the most eminent poetesses in Indian English poetry. She portrays many aspects of Indian life such as love, culture, womanism, feminism, etc. Kamla Das's poetry centers on woman, wife, sexual partner. She was a feminist in her poetry. There are many poems of Das which show the sensibility of feminism such as- *The Looking Glass*, *The White Followers*, *Composition* and *The Old Playhouse*.

Kamala Das has been considered as an important voice of her generation who exemplifies a break from the past by writing in a distinctly Indian persona rather than adopting the techniques of the English modernists. In the words of Archana Singh, "Das' provocative poems are known for their unflinchingly honest explorations of the self and female sexuality, urban life, women's roles in traditional Indian society, issues of postcolonial identity, and the political and personal struggles of marginalized people. She writes in both Malayalam and English and has published eleven books in her mother tongue and three books of poems in English." The combination of her 'royal' and 'peasant' identities, along with the atmosphere of colonialism and its pervasive racism, produced feelings of inadequacy and alienation of Das. Das published six volumes of poetry between 1965 and 1985.

In the poem *An Introduction* she remarks on patriarchal society and advocates the right of woman like other poems it despises. Here, she is against the conventionalism and

"I was child, and later they
Told me I grow, for I become tall, my limbs
Swelled and one or two places sprouted
hair"¹³

Das' expression is a strong criticism of child marriage which pushes children into such a

predicament while they are still very childish at heart. Though he did not beat her, she felt beaten and her body seemed crushed under her own weight. This is a very emphatic expression of how unprepared the body of sixteen years old is for the assault it gets subjected to. She shrank pitifully, ashamed of her femininity: -

"Then... I wore a shirt and my
Brother's trousers, cut my hair short and
ignored
My womanliness."¹⁴

In *Forest Fire*, Kamala Das tells the tales of human lust and greed in a feminist's terminology. A woman thinks over her life and times, just supposes and places under situations. She may be frank and bold here, but her 'U' turn it is very difficult to take to her volte-face. She is a master artist double-speaker. The loss of innocence and the attainment of puberty are the things of deliberation.

"Of late I have begun to feel a hunger
To take in with greed, like a forest fire that
Consumes a with each killing gains a wilder,
Brighter charm, all that comes my way."¹⁵

In the poems, *The Looking Glass*, Kamla Das suggests to the woman about how they get the pleasure then more. She remarks:

"Woman. Stand nude before the glass with
him
so that he sees himself the stronger one
and believes it so, and you so much more
softer, younger, lovelier. Admit your
admiration.
Notice the perfection of his limbs, his eyes
reddening under"

The poem "The Old Playhouse" tells about the advice of Kamala Das in it, she gives the details of her unsatisfactory and disappointing conjugal life and compares her like to a Swallow. She says;

"You planned to tame a swallow, to hold her

¹³Sen, S. Kamala Das: Selected Poems.. New Delhi: Unique Publishers, 2012.

¹⁴ibid
¹⁵ibid



In the long summer of your love so that she
would forget
Not the raw seasons alone, and the homes
left behind, but
Also her nature, the urge to fly, and the
endless
Pathways of the sky. It was not to gather
knowledge
Of yet another man that I came to you but
to learn
What I was, and by learning, to learn to
grow, but every
Lesson you gave was about yourself. You
were pleased
With my body's response, its weather, its
usual shallow
Convulsions. You dribbled spittle into my
mouth, you poured"

In *the Colombo* poem, Kamala Das describes the effort that comes from the distraction of love and chastity by the onslaught of racial hatred. In the poem, *the Sea at Gall Face Green*, she represents with memories of a once beautiful city, Colombo. Now the city is like half-burnt Corpse. Another poem *Smoke in Colombo* describes the inconsolable affliction after the distraction of human lives and environment: -

"... as grief linger son within women
Rocking emptied cradles.
Women rocked the cradles without
children."¹⁶

The poem shows Kamala Das's compassion towards women by the onslaught of men due to racial hatred. One of the most favourite endear ours of an artist is to get included in her search for value, the social consciousness, interactions between man and the universe. With this aspect in her mind, Kamala Das voices out against hypocrisy, male tyranny the existing moral codes, human predicament and human fatalism.

CONCLUSION

To sum up above points, it can not be wrong to say that this paper find out that a journey from *mrichchhakatika* to the poetry of kamala das: society and woman from ancient to the contemporary times. Kamala Das is one of the most poetess in Indian English literature to present her views on feminism. Her poems are the reflection of her struggle to break all the shackles and set new laws of existence. Thus, from ancient to the contemporary Indian literature presents the status of women like morality, feminism, anger, harlot etc.

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