



"LET NOBLE THOUGHTS COME TO US FROM EVERY SIDE"

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# *The Vedic Path*

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## Liberal Aesthetics: Societal Discourse in Shudraka's *Mrichchhakatikam* (The Clay Cart)

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### Abstract

Shudraka's *Mrichchhakatikam* (The Clay Cart) is a famous Sanskrit drama that attracts our attention as a unique work of art. It puts forward the vision of a splendid author who tried to give exposure to people from different classes of the then society at a single platform. The worth mentioning thing about the drama is the very love of a courtesan figure Vasantasena for a noble hearted, Charudatta, who had turned poor owing to his amazing charity. The skilful amalgamation of the love story with the political actions is simply awe inspiring. Taking cognizance of the very text of Shudraka's *Mrichchhakatikam*, this research article, hence, attempts to explore sundry dimensions of the characters of the play that are liberal and genuine to the very core of their hearts.

**Key words:** courtesan, mysticism, *nagarvradhu*, Sanskrit aesthetics

\* \* \* \* \*

The "classic" spirit, then, has its true character; and there are also the perversions of it. Its qualities, when aimed at by meaner minds, become defects. And this is the also of the "romantic"; its brilliant qualities pass into

Liberal  
the faults of the  
But these perversions  
are exaggerated  
distinction between  
in art. It is not  
modern. The  
grotesque form  
The true representation  
the common behavior  
*Mrichchhakatikam*  
society. Set in the  
(*Prakaran*) unfurl  
villainy, and other  
drama that attracts  
a courtesan figure  
Charudatta, who  
charity. Dikshit writes  
that go to make a  
constancy, kindness  
dignity. She is depicted  
who loves virtue  
as non-existent  
wealth and is wealthy  
himself, with proper  
her part madly in love  
cannot even make  
good, no doubt  
everything. In the  
the drawbacks of  
sole responsible  
man is nothing but



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ALLEGORY AS COMPLEXITY: ARTISTIC MODERNITY OF T. S. ELIOT

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ABSTRACT

Eliot's repute as a seasoned mentor of modernist age rests on his sparkling depiction of modern experiences in an inventive form. He remained a high-ranking signature in the arena of world literature. His obscurity has been a matter of great interest to the scholarly circle far across the globe. The research paper titled "*Allegory as Complexity: Artistic Modernity of T. S. Eliot*" aims to take into account the creative genius of Eliot in encompassing the curious narrative of his times by way of introducing his peculiarly innovative thoughts and style in his select poems.

**Key words:** complexity, predicament, creative creed, Apocalypse

"Because he had to open the door in this way, it was already wide open before he could be seen. He had first to slowly turn himself around one of the double doors, and he had to do it very carefully if he did not want to fall flat on his back before entering the room. He was still occupied with this difficult movement, unable to pay attention to anything else, when he heard the chief clerk exclaim a loud "Oh!" which sounded like the sighing of the wind."----Franz Kafka, "Metamorphosis" (33)

"Main Kore kagaz pe likhun phir ek Kaali nazm

Alakh Jagate Sannaton se phir sajaun bazm" --- Shaharyar, *Ek Kaali Nazm* (83)

T. S. Eliot's value as a creative genius remains unsurpassed even after a long gap of times. His immense complexity, confounded outlook, serious use of sometimes not so serious metaphors and numerous other ways to explore and feel the trauma and tribulations being faced by not only the generations of his own times, but also of the posterity, cannot be estimated as something common or as a matter of destiny that would have him in high esteem. The enormous use of complex vocabulary in tune with the allusive allegory of his themes makes him a genius of life and its adventures. Eliot estimates life in terms of a "panorama of futility" (*Ulysses, Order and Myth* 426) and his very depiction of the concrete metaphors of life in terms of the new belief and understanding is something pivotal in understanding Eliot in his holistic faculty. In his brilliant essay titled "*Tradition and the Individual Talent*" Eliot writes in full conviction about the vital role of tradition in the making of creative genius, "Tradition is a matter of much wider significance. It cannot be inherited, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labour. It involves, in the first place, the historical sense...the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write

not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order" (Enright and Chickera, Eliot, *Tradition and the Individual Talent* 294).

"*The Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock*" is an account of the bleak melancholy of a modern man dealing with the dilemma of human existence. It is a panorama of failed beliefs in personal affairs and a deep rooted sense of self imposed isolation. The metaphor of initiating a figurative journey during twilight reveals the unexplored saga of two minds/ hearts in a single body. How the note of frustrated sensibility is reflected herein,

"Let us go then, you and I,  
When the evening is spread out against the sky  
Like a patient etherised upon a table" (Prufrock `111)

Quite interestingly the persona is engrossed with the tremendous odyssey of his own consciousness, quite reluctant to brood over the questions of subsistence itself, "To lead you to an overwhelming question.../ Oh do not ask, 'What is it?'/Let us go and make our visit (11). The fashionable stuff with its bifurcated self finds deeper expression in the flippancy of the women of elevated society, "In the room the women come and go/ Talking of Michelangelo (11). However, the logic of torpor in the form of disenchanting melancholy is perceptible in the form of the persona's gross incapacity to act,

"And indeed there will be time  
To wonder, 'Do I dare?' and, 'Do I dare?'  
Time to turn back and descend the stair,  
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair—" (12)

Intertextuality has been exploited with a view to associating the texts with a great literary tradition down the ages,

"No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;  
Am an attendant lord, one that will do  
To swell a progress, start a scene or two, (15)  
The despondent fervor of a common man is associated with the universal phenomenon of life and death,  
"We have lingered in the chambers of the sea  
By sea-girls wreathed with seawood red and brown  
Till human voices wake us, and we drown. (16)

"*Portrait of a Lady*" is a reflection upon the relationship reflected upon with regrets. It's like a velleity that failed to see the desired conclusion due to some effortlessness. The modern man's predicament with his regrets and roars is the metaphorical expression of his sense of fickle instability. Existential crisis, emotional breakdown, quest for identity, survival instinct and suicidal tendencies are the crux of Eliot's creative oeuvre,

"To find expression... dance, dance  
Like a dancing bear,  
Cry like a parrot, chatter like an ape.  
Let us take the air, in a tobacco trance---" (Portrait of a Lady 21)

Death-wish has a genuine representation in Eliot. However the hope for the attainment of the infinite with a genuine smile amidst deeper turmoil cannot be ruled out,

"Now that we talk of dying ---

And should I have the right to smile? (Portrait of a Lady 21)

The peculiarity of Eliot is his deep rooted scholarship that comes out of his sense of understanding the ways and views of human affairs. His vision is an enigma; his observations are phenomenal in the context of a new society. His magnum opus "*The Waste Land*" is the passport to understand his creative creed. The issues pertaining to the modernist age have been critically evaluated and thoroughly reflected upon. Exhibiting a gloomy picture of the world in which the people of the Waste Land live, Eliot intends to put forth a break with the tradition. His is not a world of merely abstract intentions; rather his canvas is that of the seemingly absurd portrait of human survival,

"What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow  
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,  
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only  
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,  
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,  
And the dry stone no sound of water." (The Waste Land, The Burial of the Dead, 51)

The fragmented nausea of human relationship can be viewed in the following extract of the poet where the soul lacks affinity with the self. The metaphor of meaninglessness in personal relationships seems to be the trend of the times,

"My nerves are bad to-night. Yes, bad. Stay with me.  
Speak to me. Why do you never speak. Speak.  
What are you thinking of? What thinking? What?  
I never know what you are thinking. Think." (The Waste Land, A Game of Chess, 55)

However, for every spectacle and scene, Tiresias remains the universal observer. Nothing can go far from his prudence,

"I Tiresias, old man with wrinkled dugs  
Perceived the scene, and foretold the rest—  
I too awaited the expected guest." (The Waste Land, The Fire Sermon 60)

The reference to Phlebas, the Phoenician sailor and his death in the context of contemporary times signifies a man's journey towards materialistic aspirations without a thought of spiritual salvation,

"Phlebas the Phoenician, a fortnight dead,  
Forgot the cry of gulls, and the deep sea swell  
And the profit and loss." (The Waste Land, Death by Water 63)

The unfulfilled trauma of human psychology and the lack of empathy from the outer world is the paradox of human affairs. The ultimate journey is that of the calibrated action with the view of the Infinite,

"These fragments I have shored against my ruins  
Why then Ile fit you. Hieronymo's mad againe.  
Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata.  
Shantih shantih shantih" (The Waste Land, What the Thunder said 64)

The final note of Eliot's *The Waste Land* is highly suggestive in its visionary message and the following extract from Eliot's prose work titled "After Strange Gods" makes us believe in Eliot's thorough knowledge of

Sanskrit as well, "Two years in the study of Sanskrit under Charles Lanman and a year in the mazes of Patanjali's metaphysics under the guidance of James Woods, left me in a state of enlightened mystification" (After Strange Gods 40).

His another poem titled "*The Hollow Men*" (1925) is a brilliant example of Eliot's constructed allusions. Eliot depicts here the predicament of modern men in the context of their times. Seemingly, they look perfect and sane; however, internally they are frail and weak. The inability to act in consonance with the natural order of life can be highly perceived herein,

"We are the hollow men

We are the stuffed men

Leaning together

Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!" (The Hollow Men 77)

The hollow men are in fact vacant souls who have nothing to offer to the posterity. Lacking in spiritual sense of the existence, they are merely the form without content,

"Shape without form, shade without colour,

Paralysed force, gesture without motion;" (The Hollow Men 77)

The concrete imagery, as is typical of Eliot, finds expression at its best. The poet persona is well known to the saga of fragmented feelings against the backdrop of a morally decayed conscience,

"This is the dead land

This is cactus land

Here the stone images

Are raised, here they receive

The supplication of a dead man's hand

Under the twinkle of a fading star." (The Hollow Men 78)

The visionary view of the Apocalypse is immensely worth noting. The incompleteness of life is in contrast with the permanence that the death promises,

"For Thine is

Life is

For Thine is the

This is the way the world ends

This is the way the world ends

This is the way the world ends

Not with a bang but a whimper." (The Hollow Men 80)

In fine, it can be safely concluded that Eliot was a champion of modernist ideology. His vision was highly elevated. By way of showcasing the bleak absurdity and horrendous breakdown of moral values in contemporary contexts, Eliot did a superb job of narrating the most truthful saga of human experiences. The allegory of existential complexity finds its outcome in the form of creative sagacity of modernist times. Louis Menand aptly writes, "Yet he was a true avant-gardist, and he made a revolution. He changed the way poetry in English is written; he re-set the paradigm for literary criticism; and his work laid down the principles on which the modern English department is built. He is the most important figure in twentieth-century English-language literary



culture, a position he achieved with a relatively small amount of writing produced in a relatively brief amount of time and in unpromising circumstances”(Menand).

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## A NEW LOOK AT WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS'S "BYZANTIUM"

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### Abstract

W.B. Yeats's poem "Byzantium" is one of the most complex poems of English literature that is highly expressive, yet mystically revealing in its usage of symbols. Despite multiple observations made by the great critics, many metaphors and symbols stand tough to be illuminated coherently. The research paper titled *A New Look at William Butler Yeats's "Byzantium"* henceforth aims at reading the poem "Byzantium" in the light of varied influences that he had put on record including his knowledge of Indian thought and myth with a view to deriving the meaning of the text in its most pertinent context.

**Key words:** Symbol, occultist, Indian thought, Great Fire.

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*"Seek those images  
That constitute the wild,  
The lion and the virgin,  
The harlot and the child."* --- W. B Yeats,  
*Those Images*, Last Poems (C.P. 316)

The most noteworthy poem of W. B. Yeats titled "Byzantium" (1930) (The Winding Stair and other poems, 1933) is an extensively discussed, yet extremely ambiguous among his poetical corpus; the sources and analogues of which have been diligently pursued and painstakingly researched upon. It would not be out of place to mention that the poem received critical attention from the doyens of English letters owing to the scope of the assorted interpretations due to its allusive connotations. In regard to the origin of this poem an excerpt from Yeats's letter to Sturge Moore dated October 4, 1930 can be put forth, "The poem originates from a

criticism of yours. You objected to the last verse of 'Sailing to Byzantium' because a bird made by a goldsmith was just as natural as anything else. That showed me that the idea needed exposition" (Quoted in V Rai 138). An eminent authority on Yeats, B. Rajan holds the opinion, "Interpretations of 'Byzantium' are varied enough to suggest that every reader makes his own poem from the same words" (Rajan 142). Regarding the ambiguity that lies in the very text of the poem, the opinion of A.G. Stock is worthy of note. He asserted without any reservations whatsoever, "Byzantium, written three years later, is powerful before it is intelligible. It has an authentic but fragmentary quality like Cassandra's second sight in Agamemnon, as if he has been to an unimaginable place and is speaking of it, but in words to which some of the clues are missing.

The intensity with which it is seen and felt almost overwhelms the translatable meaning" (Stock 202).

Despite the erudite annotations made by the seasoned critics of the likes of A. Norman Jeffares, Richard Ellmann, A.G. Stock, et cetera, many metaphors and symbols stand unexplained; it seems literally tougher to derive a coherent and compact meaning out of the very content of "Byzantium". Even a most sincere reader of Yeats's poem under consideration can have multiple doubts:

- 1) What meaning does essentially, come out of "All that man is, /All mere complexities, /The fury and mire of human veins in stanza 1?
- 2) What does the expression "death- in- life and life - in- death mean in line 16 (stanza 2)?
- 3) Who does the Emperor symbolize in stanza 5?
- 4) What does the metaphor of Dolphin suggest in stanza 6?
- 5) Who are the golden smithies of the Emperor referred to in stanza 6?
- 6) What do "dolphin –torn" and "gong – tormented sea" stand for in stanza 6?
- 7) What is the central thesis of the poem concerned?

The author of this research article holds the conviction that reading the poem "Byzantium" with an eye too on Yeats's knowledge of Indian thought and myth by way of various direct and indirect connections will be avidly helpful in explaining the text and obvious contexts. W.B. Yeats had received a great tradition before him that was, no doubt, impregnated with Oriental wisdom. It would not be out of place to mention that the great pioneers of world literature like Blake, Shelley, Emerson, Goethe, etc. drew their philosophical ideas from a pagan way of life metaphorically represented by India. Yeats was well familiar with the fact that "all material things correspond to the concepts in the world of spirit, and that through the use of material objects as magical symbols the adept may call down disembodied powers. The essay "Magic" (1901)

expresses Yeats's conviction that the great memory of nature "can be evoked by symbols" (Tindall 46). Yeats's linkage with the great occultist William Blake is a significant facet in Yeats scholarship. That Blake was well versed in Indian philosophy becomes quite clear from the trustworthy assurance of Northrop Frye who asserts profoundly in his "Fearful Symmetry", "Blake was among the first of European idealists able to link his own tradition of thought with the Bhagvad- Gita" (Frye 73). It is equally true that Blake was aware of the *Triguna* theory of the *Bhagvad Gita*. Yeats's reading of Blake combined with other impulses to encourage his mystical interests, and soon he was seeking wisdom in all kinds of unorthodox broodings. Yeats's very compilation of Qualitch edition of Blake in collaboration with Edwin J. Hillis in three volumes can be considered as a great achievement. Blake's "Wheel" corresponds to Yeats's "Gyre" that in other sense can be compared with the Hindu idea of *Samay Chakra* (the discus of time). Further the impact of the great Romantic poet Shelley on Yeats can be brilliantly justified on the testimony of Tindall, "The example of Blake, also an occultist, taught Yeats the use in poetry of magical symbols; the poems of Shelley, which he carefully analyzed, confirmed his symbolic system" (Tindall 46).

It is a curious fact that Celtic civilization of which Yeats was a bright product, had its roots in the Aryan culture of India. However Yeats directly came into contact with three Indian geniuses, namely, Mohini Mohun Chatterji, Rabindranath Tagore, and Shree Purohit Swami. In all probability, Chatterji visited Dublin in the final months of the year 1855. Yeats writes, "It was my first meeting with a philosophy that confirmed my vague speculations and seemed at once logical and boundless. Consciousness, he ( Mohini) taught, does not merely spread out its surface but has in vision and contemplation, another motion and can change in height and depth"(Yeats, Autobiographies 91-92). Through Chatterji, Yeats's knowledge of the *Bhagvad Gita* got enriched and he also came to know of the monistic *Vedanta* philosophy of Shankaracharya, the 8th century Indian thinker and visionary, as articulated well in his *Viveka-Chudamani*.

Yeats in the later span of time met the great Indian scholar and poet Rabindranath Tagore in the year 1912. Both had excelled in their quest for knowledge and mystical ways of the universe and of course, the "Unity of Being". The friendship between them proved to be very considerable in the evolution of their ideas and opinions. Yeats wrote an Introduction to the *Gitanjali* (1912) of Tagore for which the latter received the prestigious Nobel Prize for literature in 1913.

In 1931, Yeats met Shree Purohit Swami. Yeats wrote an Introduction to Purohit Swami's *An Indian Monk*. This book developed Yeats's reliability in the actual feelings and experiences. He also wrote an introduction to Swami's *The Holy Mountain*. Both of them undertook a joint project of translating the Upanishads that came into a book form as *The Ten Principal Upanishads* (1937) to which Yeats wrote a brilliant preface. Yeats further assisted Swami in the rendering of Patanjali's *Yoga Sutra* that later on came to be known as *Aphorisms of Yoga*. Purohit Swami dedicated his translation of the *Bhagvad Gita* into English as *The Geeta: The Gospel of Lord Shri Krishna* to "my friend William Butler Yeats" on 13 June 1935. Yeats doubtlessly got an insight into the philosophical casements of India through Swami. Yeats himself acknowledged his debt to the Indian scholar in the following words, "... I have, of late, I think come to some coherent grasp of reality and whether that will make me write or cease to write I do not know. I have learned a good deal from the Swami who suddenly becomes all wisdom if you ask him the right question." (Yeats's letter quoted in Jeffares, *Yeats: Man and Poet* 280-1).

That Yeats was deeply interested and enamored of India and her culture becomes evident from the close readings of his poems like "Anashuya and Vijaya", "Meru", "The Indian Upon God," etc.

In view of Yeats's multiple interactions and interests in India and things Indian and his visionary outlook towards various facets of knowledge and mysticism, the poem titled "Byzantium" seems essentially open for a wide range of interpretations and explications. Nothing can be considered as the last word as far as the interpretation of a literary text is considered. Tindall observes, "'Byzantium"

remains an enigma even with the help of *A Vision* and of several explications; for although it has every appearance of unity, and although such images as the dome are readily intelligible, other images and their connections and references are as obscure as those of Mallarme. In Yeats such privacy is uncommon." (Tindall 52). Another critic of repute, Graham Hough writes, "Although the image comes from the historical part of the Yeatsian system, the connection with the historical Byzantium is of the slightest and when we turn to the second poem, Byzantium has taken leave of the earth altogether and become an *unchristian* (italics mine) New Jerusalem, an intricate symbol of the initial purgatorial stages of the life beyond the grave" (Hough 72).

A Norman Jeffares in his brilliant article refers to Yeats's 1930 diary entry dated 30 April that runs as under, "Subject for a poem... Describe Byzantium as it is in the system towards the end of the first Christian millennium. A walking mummy, flames at the street corners where the soul is purified, birds of hammered gold singing in the golden trees, in the harbour offering their backs to the wailing dead that they may carry them to Paradise. These subjects have been in my head for some time, especially the last" (Jeffares, *The Byzantine Poems*, RES 49). Jeffares further goes on to refer to Yeats's system and the very reason of referring to Byzantium as the central place of his creative imagination, in his *A Vision*, "I think that if I could be given a month of antiquity and leave to spend it where I chose, I would spend it in Byzantium a little before Justinian opened St. Sophia and closed the Academy of Plato. I think I would find in some little wine shop some philosophical worker in mosaic who could answer all my questions, the supernatural descending nearer him than Plotinus even, for the pride of his delicate skill would make what was an instrument of power to Princes and Clerics and a murderous madness in the mob, show as a lovely flexible presence like that of a perfect human body.

I think that in early Byzantium, and maybe never before or since in recorded history, religious, aesthetic and practical life were one, and that the architect and artificers -- though not, it may be, poets, for language had been the instrument of



controversy and must have grown abstract -- spoke to the multitude and the few alike" (Yeats's *A Vision*, p.190, Quoted in Jeffares, *The Byzantine Poems*, RES 50).

The poem "Byzantium" therefore is a highly philosophical poem demonstrating the grand narrative of a divine world where human salvation takes place. A serious reading of the poem makes it clear that its subject is "the nature of the final escape from the round of re- incarnation" (John Unterecker 217). Commonly understood as a sequel to "Sailing to Byzantium" this poem encapsulates the description of the Utopian kingdom of Byzantium itself in night view that is nothing but a metaphor for what happens after the mortal life ends.

The very opening stanza talks of the very moment of devout meditation. The time is that of night and the predominance of *Tamo- Guna* is perceived because the impure images of day are diminished and the drunken soldiers have gone to take rest. There can be viewed only the presence of the night walkers after the cathedral gong,

"The unpurged images of day recede;  
The emperor's drunken soldiery are abed;  
Night resonance recedes, night walker's song  
After great cathedral gong;" (C.P. 243)

A sense of chaos, confusion and restlessness seems the future of mankind itself. The dome of St. Sophia signifies the Divine Force --- *Brahma* --- that governs the cosmos and its ways. It is the life giving elixir that has the potential to mend the perverted vehemence of human existence. The poet's belief that the grand vision of the Divine purifies a man with his in born frailties,

"A starlit or a moonlit dome disdains  
All that man is,  
All mere complexities,  
The fury and mire of human veins." (C.P. 243)

While composing the above lines it seems that Yeats had in his mind the dictum of Jagatguru Shankaracharya --- *Brahma Satyam Jaganmithya*; *Jeevo Brahmaiva Naparah* that means only the *Brahma* is true, the rest is merely an illusion and that only He can free a burdened conscience from the anxieties of bodily forms.

Vision of a *Mayavi* world is well reflected in the second stanza through the grand image,

"Before me floats an image, man or shade,  
Shade more than man, more image than a shade;  
For Hades' bobbin bound in mummy- cloth  
May unwind the winding path;  
A mouth that has no moisture and no breath  
Breathless mouths may summon;  
I hail the superhuman;  
I call it death-in-life and life - in - death." (C.P. 243)

The poet - persona is not confirmed of the image that he sees. Sometimes he visualizes it as a man and sometimes a shade. The persona sees an image of a superhuman force that is lacking in human attributes. The great image is trying to unwind the cycle of death and life. The narrative of soul is perceived as death-in-life and vice versa. This image is a powerful phenomenon and the very *aavahan* (*invocation*) of it as death- in- life and life- in- death is symptomatic of the persisting disillusionment of the worldly affairs. Even this life is a form of death owing to the imprisonment of *Atma* by Body. Lord Krishna has enunciated the idea that we are soul and not body and that body is only the covering of the soul in the 22<sup>nd</sup> verse of the chapter 2 entitled *Samkhya Yoga* (*The Philosophy of Discrimination*) of the *Bhagvad Gita*:

Vaasansi jeernani yatha vihaya  
Navani gruhnati naroparani/  
Tatha shareerani vihaya jeernanya—  
Nyani sanyati navani dehi// (BG II 22)

(As a man discards his threadbare robes and puts on new, so the Spirit throws of its worn-out bodies and takes fresh ones. -*The Geeta* 14)

Further the image alludes to the *Virat Purush* (*Vishwa Roop Darshan* --- *The Cosmic Vision*) of Chapter 11 of the *Bhagvad Gita* that the overwhelmingly befuddled Arjuna perceives with a sense of wonder,

"Anadimadhyantamaanantveerya---  
Manantbahum shashisuryanetram/  
Pashyami tvaam deepthutashvaktram

*Svatejasa vishvamidam tapantam//* (BG XI  
19)

(Without beginning, without middle and without end, infinite in power, Thine arms all embracing, the sun and the moon Thine eyes, Thy face beaming with the fire of sacrifice, flooding the whole universe with light. -*The Geeta* 51)

In the third stanza the poet finds a sort of miracle in the form of a golden bird on the starlit dome. Regarding the very bird image, a remark by Yeats in July 1937 seems worth mentioning, "There is a record of a tree of gold with artificial bird, which sang. The tree was somewhere in the Royal Palace of Byzantium. I use it as symbol of the intellectual Joy of eternity, as contrasted with the instinctive joy of human life" (The Letters of W. B. Yeats, Ed. Allan Wade). Yeats writes,

"Miracle, bird or golden handiwork,  
More miracle than bird or handiwork,  
Planted on the star-lit golden bough,  
Can like the cocks of Hades crow,  
Or, by the moon embittered, scorn aloud  
In glory of changeless metal  
Common bird or petal  
And all complexities of mire or blood." (C.P. 243)

This golden handiwork, for the poet, is the symbol of permanence of art and intellectual aesthetics. The body made of flesh and blood is subject to decay. However, the creative and artistic genius becomes a permanent source of rejuvenation and ultimate inspiration. The poet persona visualizes in it a metaphor of permanence of art in contrast to the temporal nuances of human life.

The fourth stanza of the poem reflects upon the time of midnight that is considered as very significant in ritualistic practices. The Great Fire of Judgment that purifies the blood- smitten spirits is not man-made. It is the form of the Great Soul of the Emperor (God) with His ever- diminishing aura. Under the spell of this highly mystical power the blood begotten spirits undertake a hypnotically cathartic dance and free themselves of the complexities and qualms that had perverted their conscience for long,

"At midnight on the Emperor's pavement flit  
Flames that no faggot feeds, nor steel has lit,  
Nor storm disturbs, flames begotten of flame,  
Where blood-begotten spirits come  
And all complexities of fury leave,  
Dying into a dance,  
An agony of trance,  
An agony of flame that cannot singe a  
sleeve."(C.P. 244)

In the succeeding stanza Yeats suggests the way to attain salvation,

Astraddle on the dolphin's mire and blood,  
Spirit after spirit! The smithes break the  
flood,  
The golden smithies of the Emperor!  
Marbles of the dancing floor  
Break bitter furies of complexity,  
Those images that yet  
Fresh images beget,  
That dolphin- torn, that gong-tormented sea.  
(C.P. 244)

That means by seeking the knowledge from *Guru* (Dolphin --- In Hindu mythology the dolphin is said to be one among the creatures that facilitated Ganga's descent from the heavens and her mount, *Makara*, is shown sometimes as a dolphin. Vide <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dolphin>) a general mortal can attain the state of *Moksha* (Divine Abode). The persons --- The golden smithies of the Emperor--- who cultivate the elevated state of *Sthitaprajnta*, after having initiated as the true *Shishyas* of an eminent *Guru* are only capable of breaking the shackles of the cycle of birth and death --- *Mayavi Tantra* (i.e. the bitter furies of complexity). Further "those images that yet / fresh images beget" corresponds with the *Mrig -Trishna* (lust for materialistic gratification) of those ignorant people who in spite of the quest for spiritual salvation, seek the fulfillment of one's desires. The visionary poet is convinced of the fact that those who have transcended these *Mayavi* boundaries only can sail across the "gong -tormented sea", i.e. the *Bhavasagar* and can attain the lofty height of *Moksha*.

In fine, we can safely conclude that the central thesis of the poem "Byzantium" is the

depiction of a vision of a mystical land where the human soul gets fully purified and liberated from the complexities of the materialistic world. Byzantium is a sublime symbol of that cathartic platform where the soul becomes free of its *Karma* of the previous birth by seeking wisdom from an encouraging *Guru* (Moral Guide) that can be only possible with the blessings of the Great Emperor (God). John Joubert truly writes, "Yeats was not the first artist to invent for himself his own personal mythology. For him the city from which the poem takes its title represents a staging –post in the continuing process of transmigration where the spirits of those who have died are purged in preparation for rebirth. But it can also be looked upon as a monument to the durability of great art and therefore a symbol of immortality" (Joubert 249).

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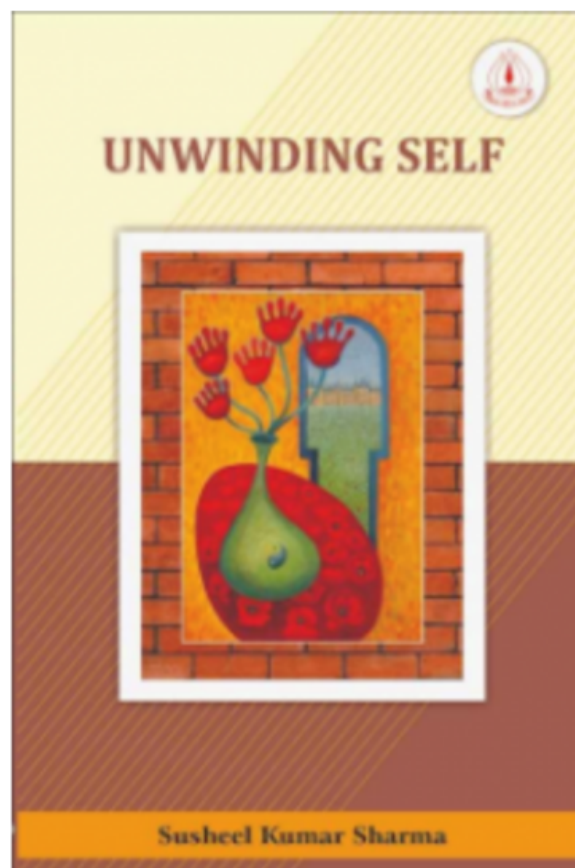
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**Critique**

***Unwinding Self: India's Cultural  
Quintessence***

**Abhishek Tiwari**





## ***Unwinding Self: India's Cultural Quintessence***

**Abhishek Tiwari**

'Know then thyself,' resounded the veteran poet of British literature, Alexander Pope as a realized experience of human affairs. As a point of fact knowing oneself is the prerequisite to perceive the unknown mysteries pervading the universe. Life is a phenomenon of enigmatic experiences that delves deeper into the collective conscience of humanity. Being a *sahridaya* --human is a precondition to address the issue of humanism in a surreptitiously muddled social set-up. Poetic creation, no doubt, is a divine inspiration; it is a means to explore the undercurrents of the conscious through the layers of sub conscious. This act is also perceived as a deliberate attempt to transform personal experiences into a saga of universal thought system. Adi kavi Valmiki's abrupt reaction at the distress of the *krauncha* bird is a pragmatic model of the process of poetic creativity:

*Ma Nishad pratishtam tvamagamah shasvatih  
samah,  
yatkrauncha mithunade kamavadhih kama  
mohitam!*

Quite incredibly, the famous composer of Ramcharitmanas, Tulsidas composes his magnum opus with a view to cultivating self-happiness (*swantah sukhay*) that offers him a chance to write something from the very core of heart. Matthew



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## WOMAN AS SUPREME CONSCIOUSNESS

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**Abstract:** The image of a woman has ever been a matter of respect and importance owing to her position as highly regarded person of the society in which she is born and takes recourse to her evolution. Traditions across globe have immensely put forth the fact that women have moulded and mended the ways and views of their male counterparts. They are a source of epoch-making turning points in familial and formal affairs. Taking examples from the classical tradition of India and world literature, this research paper therefore attempts to analyze the assorted dimensions of feminine consciousness in the context of their significant role as a preserver of human values and moral order; henceforth deriving the conclusion that womanhood encompasses within herself the universal/collective consciousness that is nothing but the expansion of the supreme consciousness that pervades the essence of human conscience without any doubt whatsoever.

**Key words:** Womanhood, Primordial Motherhood, Epic.

### Introduction

“Now Dopdi spreads her arms, raises her face to the sky, turns toward the forest, and ululates with the force of her entire being. Once, twice, three times. At the third burst the birds in the trees at the outskirts of the forest awake and flap their wings. The echo of the call travels far.”

--- Mahasveta Devi, *Draupadi*

“Lady Macbeth: That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold;  
What hath quench’d them hath given me fire.”

--- Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, (Act 2 Scene 2)

Pt. Vidyaniwas Mishra in his essay titled “Women in Tantras” asserts, “There is a dictum in Prapanchasara, a work ascribed to Sri Sankaracharya, that higher consciousness reveals itself with less effort in woman rather than in man. The reason has not been given by Shankaracharya but it can be surmised that it is the women who has the potential of being matrix creativity along with the measure of higher consciousness. Every being is provided with male and female instincts and it is the female instinct which when aroused makes a man artist, poet, singer, and a creator. The highest bliss is not the absence of dualism but merger of two complimentary aspects into each other so as to enable a person to become one with Shiva and Shakti simultaneously” (Mishra 83).

The curious observation made above by the great thinker of Indology assimilates within its parameters the long prevailing dimension of Indian thought that imparts numinous credit to a female figure. Of all the creations made by the Supreme Creator, she has the sole distinction of creating self-image; in fact, she can only create what we call ‘selfhood’ or in other terms ‘womanhood’.

India has been a country of diverse cultures and a repository of plurality. Ever since the times of the Vedas, women have received immense regards and admiration from the society. She has been referred to as “Shakti”, “Paramba”, “Jagat Janani”, “Bhavani”. Even Sankaracharya, the great visionary saw only the pang-erasing attribute of a mother --- “Param jane matas tvadanusharnam klesh harnam”. Moreover, they are the torch bearer of Indian value system in all capacities. There can be no accomplishment of Purushartha in the absence of Prakriti inherent in women. The great seer Manu’s reflection on Indian society bears a benchmark for an ideal state of being,

“Yatra naryastu poojyante ramante tatra Devatah/

Yatraitastu na poojyante sarvast traphalaah kriyaah//” (Manusmriti; 3/56)

There is no denying the existence of all feelings and emotions in the Supreme Deity. Everybody invokes the Supreme Mother to impart Her Patronage to the elevated presence in all forms vis. Shakti, Trishna, Shanti, Kanti, Lakshmi, etc.

Indian tradition is manifested in its culture and its culture finds utterance in the great epical traditions. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata are the two epics that bear true mirror to Indian sensibility and space. Tulsidas, the famous Avadhi poet and composer of ‘Ramcharitmanas’ leaves no stone unturned in praising the primordial Motherhood. There is no need to assert that this epoch-making epic brings to the fore the great saga of the odyssey of Ram whose sole aim was to put forth the narrative of what is truly ideal. The



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female characters in the epic as Kaushalya, Kaikeyi, Sita, Mandodari, etc. are very powerful in one way or another. When the daughter of Janak, namely, Sita finds herself in a turbulent fix when on the one hand she feels bewitched by Rama's charms and on other hand she thinks of the grand bow of Lord Shiva that had to be broken anyhow to wed Sita, then she pays her compassionate obeisance to Bhavani as follows:

“Jay jay giribar rajkisoni/ Jay Mahes mukh Chand chakori//  
Jay Gajabadan shadanan maata/ Jagat janani damini duti gaata//

Nahi tava aadi Madhya avasaana/ Amit prabhau bedu nahin jaana//  
Bhava bhava bibhav parabhar karini/ Bisva Bimohani Svabas Biharini//

Sevat tohi sulabh phal chari/ bardayani purari piaree//  
Devi pooji pad kamal tumhare/ Sur nar muni sab hohi sukharee//

Mor manorath janahu neeke/ basahu sada ur pur sabahee ke//  
Keenuh pragat na karan tehi/ as kahi charan gah baidehee// (Ramcharitmanas, Balkanda, 200,201)

What Sita says above is nothing but the sole fact that the Divine Devi is free from birth and death and that her glory can't be sung by even the Apaurusheya Vedas. She is above the painstaking circle of birth and death. Desired boon and eternal bliss can be easily got by praying the Eternal Goddess. And that there is no need to express one's feeling to her because she resides in the soul selves of all and sundry.

Kaushalya, the mother of Ram supports Ram's dutiful action of going in exile for fourteen years just to keep the words of his great father Dasaratha. She was all praise for his decision in following the great tradition of Raghu kula and asserts quite confidently that keeping the words of the father is the epitome of dutiful conduct and that it has the merit of highest moral resolution:

Saral subhau Ram mahtari/ boli bachan dheer dhar bhari//  
Taat jaun bali keenhehu neeka/pitu aayasu sab dharmak teeka// (351)

As a matter of consequence, Kaikeyi's exercise of her feminine viles and Triya hath (woman's obstinacy) to procure kingdom of Ayodhya for her own son Bharat paved the way for the toughness that Ayodhya faced. Mandodari's moral wisdom and Sulochana's true affection for her husband Meghnad is of utmost importance in the history of feminine consciousness, particularly in Indian context.

Ved Vyas's magnum opus Mahabharata also cites examples in which we see the higher consciousness of women characters to the fore. Satyawati's candid decision to prepare Ambika and Ambalika, the daughters of the king of Kashi, for the Niyoga with a view to maintaining the lineage of Chandra clan, her prominent role in the decisions made in courtly affairs affirms her highly respectable position. Gandhari's assertive act of adapting a blind way of life as a mark of revolt against the patriarchal dominance of Hastinapur estate that made her marry a blind prince Dhritarashtra, her not giving boon of victory to her own son Duryodhana during the great war demonstrates the higher sense of probity that she upheld, and finally the fatal curse given to Krishna are the supreme acts of her dispassionately emancipated personality. Draupadi's humiliation at the behest of Duryodhana in the Rajasabha, finally proved to be the last nail in the coffin of Dhritrashtra's dynasty. Urvashi's grand display of her love longing before Arjuna and the curse inflicted upon the latter is an example of the power of a woman's feelings.

World literature is full of assorted references to the vital roles played by the female figures. Kalidasa's Shakuntala is the epitome of beauty and intellect. Her sense of morality and affection for natural piety ultimately wins her good luck. Vasantsena, a courtesan figure, the heroine of Shudraka's Mrichchakatikam (The Clay Cart) prefers the affection of a rich turned poor out of his noble acts, Charudatta to that of the lustful gestures of Sansthanaka. Similarly, the valiant acts of Sophocles' heroine Antigone is of great charm in the history of Greek literature. Shakespeare's Cordelia, Desdemona, Lady Macbeth, and Rosalind played vital role in the development of the themes of his superb plays. Lady Macbeth's guilt conscience explicates the touching saga of human existence with its fabricated nuances. How touchingly she cries,

“Out, damned spot! out, I say!-- One:  
Two: why, then 'tis time to do it. --- Hell is murky!



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---Fie,my lord, fie! a soldier , and afraid? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account? --- Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?" (Shakespeare Act V, Scene I, 67)

Of course, Nora Helmer in Henrik Ibsen's A Doll's House created a milestone in the journey of feminine assertions.

Examples of women depicting the height of their consciousness are ample. Despite the stereotypical narratives of the female figures in society, there is no denying that they have always stood for their own ideology while being in support of their masculine counterparts. They have elaborated extensively on various issues of social and political significance. Urmi Chanda -Vaz writes, "Neither feminism nor mythology is a modern construct. Strong, feminist characters have long been the hallmark of Indian mythology. In fact, a famous ancient verse brings together quite a fiery bunch. This verse about the Panchakanya or Panchasati exhorts the faithful to start their day by remembering the five famous "maidens" from the Indian epics:

Ahalya Draupadi Kunti Tara Mandodari tatha / Panchakanya smaranyam mahapataka nashaka//".

Sonia Gomes aptly observes in "Gender equality and female empowerment as a norm",

"Women's roles should be increasingly valued as an active presence within the family with responsibilities, whether in the world of work, communities, or just as mothers. Their contribution is indispensable to a sustainable society, since their participation has become an example of social inclusion and empowerment." Quite amazingly, Simone de Beauvoir beautifully depicts about women's role in the context of marital bondage with her husband, "A husband regards none of his wife's good qualities as particularly meritorious; they are implied by the institution of marriage itself... he is still more profoundly ignorant of her dreams, her fancies, her nostalgic yearnings, of the emotional climate in which she spends her days." (Beauvoir 492)

In fine, it may be convincingly concluded that a woman's world is a world of emotions, feelings, bondage, assertions, abundance and merit. No single word has power to narrate her in totality. In fact, she is not a matter to be judged; she can't be explained either. She is a worldly image of the blessings of the Providence that reaches out to those in pain and peace with her graciously endearing presence.

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# The Story of Hamlet

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## **Abstract:**

William Shakespeare emerged as a champion of dramatic art in his brilliant tragedies. *Hamlet* stands as a touchstone of his creative opus owing to its manifold themes and depiction of human conscience at work. The story of the tragic prince of Denmark is very enigmatic in nature. His is the saga of a creative and philosophic genius who had to undergo deeper pains to justify his existence in the not so sensitive world. That he wanted his story to be known to the posterity in its logical form and that he beseeched his confidante Horatio to live to narrate it so that he might not be misunderstood and misquoted, makes this drama more significant in the analysis of human nature trying to cope up with the ways of destiny. It was due to Hamlet's nobility of thought, his stoic ability of endurance amidst wounded circumstances that make his story the most touching portrayal of human nature in conflict with the societal forces.

**Key words:** Trauma, abnormal behavior, moral turpitude

*"It is the story... that saves our progeny from blundering like blind beggars into the spikes of the cactus fence. The Story is our escort; without it, we are blind.*

*Does the blind man own his escort? No, neither do we the story; rather it is the story that owns us and directs us."*

--- Chinua Achebe, *Anthills of the Savannah*

It is pertinent to note that the brilliant critic and poet of Victorian Age, Matthew Arnold's cogent consideration of the dying speech of Hamlet in the great play of William Shakespeare of the same name as one of the Touchstone passages in his "The Study of Poetry" owing to the "higher seriousness" that it invites the general attention of the readers and viewers regarding the grand theme and rhetoric of individual experience in a chaotically "out of joint" world. The story that Hamlet intends his bosom friend Horatio to transfer to the posterity is the saga of a sentimental mind trying to adjust with the moral depravity of the materialistic world. The relevant extract from Arnold's text is as follows:

"...and take, as well, Hamlet's dying request to Horatio ---

'If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,  
Absent thee from felicity awhile,  
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,  
To tell my story...' (Enright & Chikera 268)

Before we initiate into delving deeper the importance of the story of Hamlet for the society at large in the present times as well as for the future generation, it would not be out of context to mention that Matthew Arnold, the great poet critic of Victorian Age, while valuing the significance of the immense future of poetry (*Kavya* including *Drishya* and *Shravya* in the broader sense of the word) in the making of a hopeful and good society, asserted that it is because of the possession of higher truth and higher

seriousness, that Aristotle observed as profound, the poetry stands superior to history. The famous Aristotle scholar, K G Srivastava views, "... if poetry is a criticism of life, then its highest mark should be the expression of the best and the noblest of thoughts gathered from various branches of learning, powerful enough to have moved the poet profoundly and to have been assimilated by his mind and soul, thus gaining an authentic ring in their expression. It is the deeply felt noble thoughts, rendered most impersonal by the imaginative structuring by the poet that constitutes 'Higher Seriousness' of Arnold's conception which is.... Substantially the same thing as Aristotle's notion of the "Universality of Poetry"(Srivastava 106). Arnold's consideration of the value of Shakespeare lies in the universal view of life and nature depicted so virtually and lucidly that it looks like a lively tale of common human being trapped in the tumultuous whirlwind of crises. The tragedy of destiny, that the character of Hamlet witnesses, unfurls multilayered experiences of human consciousness. Hamlet, a university student comes to know about the sudden death of his loving father. The psychological fret felt by him has ever been inscrutable to the scholarly circle. The hasty marriage of his mother Gertrude with his uncle Claudius soon after the death of his affectionate father was something tough to bear with. His rendezvous with the ghost of his father followed by his tormented confession about the ugliest and unnatural murder of his constructs the evolution of plot in, "Murder most foul, as in the best it is; But this most foul, strange, and unnatural" (Act I Scene V) and that Hamlet should avenge his father's murder if he was guided by his basic human instinct,

"O, horrible! O, horrible! Most horrible!

If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;

Let not the royal bed of Denmark be

A couch for luxury and damned incest" (Act I Scene V)

However the ghost suggests Hamlet not to treat Gertrude in the manner of Claudius and asks him to let her suffer her own *Karma* and bear the consequences accordingly,

"Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive

Against thy mother aught; leave her to heaven,

And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,

To prick and sting her. (Act I Scene V)

Hamlet's inner voice in the form of his soliloquies reveals his reflections on the worldly abyss. Life, as is well known, seems a bed of roses for a person like Hamlet who is born with silver spoons in his hands. The Romantic poet John Keats also invites our attention about the common phenomenon that "In the very temple of Delight/ Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine"(Ode on Melancholy). The melancholia of which Hamlet suffers was due to his failure to find an ideal world. His quest for the Ideal in fact leads him to undertake his actions. A man of thought, he initially broods over suicide but the idea soon gets dispelled after he reflects upon its repercussions that were due to his insightful bent of mind that could realize the fact that nobody knows as to what happens after death. Probably his belief in the idea of rebirth makes him think so. His ethical mindset is changed with the common wisdom that the uglier present should be preferred to unknown future,

"To grunt and sweat under a weary life,

But that the dread of something after death,

The undiscover'd country from whose bourn

No traveler returns, puzzles the will,

And makes us rather bear those ills we have

Than fly to others that we know not of?  
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;  
And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.” (Act III Scene I)

As regards the suicidal tendency, Albert Camus observes in ‘An Absurd Reasoning’, “Suicide has never been dealt with except as a social phenomenon. On the contrary, we are concerned here, at the outset, with the relationship between individual thought and suicide. An act like this is prepared within the silence of the heart, as is a great work of art, the man himself is ignorant of it. One evening he pulls the trigger and jumps. ...he had ‘undermined’ him. A more exact word cannot be imagined. Beginning to think is beginning to be undermined. Society has but little connection with such beginnings. The worm is in man’s heart” (The Myth of Sisyphus 03). A loving son of an adorable father, Hamlet develops within himself a deeper sense of distraction after having heard of the untimely death of his father under mysterious circumstances. Moreover, Hamlet’s anxiety is developed with the suggestion of the new king of Denmark, Claudius to consider the demise of Hamlet senior with “wisest sorrow” and that they ought to mind their own interests. Gertrude’s shameless suggestion to Hamlet that everyone who is born is sure to die one day and that he would not be so particular with the death of his father creates a deeper sense of frustration in his mind. Unable to cope with the emotional turbulence he realizes the troublesome nature of this temporary world that offers no trust but only disenchantment and mental trauma. He utters,

O, that this too, too sullied flesh would melt,  
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew,  
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed  
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter!  
O God, God, How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable  
Seem to me all the uses of this world!  
Fie on't, ah fie! 'Tis an unweeded garden  
That grows to seed. (Act I, Scene II)

He generalized the image of a woman as a weakling who because of their fragility may be easily won over --“Frailty! Thy name is woman.” His resentment against Gertrude reached so intense that he deemed her even inferior to a beast lacking in reason and morality. In fact Gertrude’s moral turpitude seems to be one of the prime reasons behind Hamlet’s abnormal behavior. His over reflective mind finds no option but lack of decision regarding the future course of action,

“To be, or not to be: that is the question:  
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,  
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
And by opposing end them” (Act III, Scene I)

However, as regards his relationship with Gertrude is concerned, he follows the ethical code formulated by the society. It highly seems probable that Hamlet got psychologically offended not much with the death of his father, but with the marriage of his mother with his own uncle Claudius, and that too at a very short notice. It is a well known fact that mother is the most respectful figure worthy to be admired and trusted. Matricide is deemed as a sin. His utterance, “I will speak daggers to her but use none” (Act III Scene II) is suggestive of his intention not to hurt her physically. When he interacts with his mother, he rebukes her by way of showing a mirror up to her guilty conscience as follows,

“A bloody deed—almost as bad, good mother,  
As kill a king and marry with his brother.” (Act III Scene IV)

This made Gertrude again reminded of her immoral act and she says in a pathetically emotional tone,  
“O Hamlet, speak no more!

Thou turn'st my eyes into my very soul,  
And there I see such black and grainèd spots  
As will not leave their tinct” (Act III Scene IV)

According to Bradley, “If these various peculiarities of the tragedy are considered, it will be agreed that, while Hamlet certainly cannot be called in the specific sense a ‘religious drama’, there is in it nevertheless both a freer use of popular religious ideas, and a more decided, though always imaginative, intimation of a supreme power concerned in human evil and good, that can be found in any other of Shakespeare’s tragedies. And this is probably one of the causes of the special popularity of this play, just as Macbeth, the tragedy which in these respects most nearly approaches it, has also the place next to it in general esteem”( Bradley 141). Further in the play, Hamlet, while taking cognizance of the pain he inflicted upon Laertes by mistakenly killing his father Polonius, notes that it was not his true Self that killed him; rather his Madness was responsible for the act. Like an advocate on record in the court of justice, he intends himself to be regarded as a sufferer and not a perpetrator,

“Was't Hamlet wrong;d Laertes? Never Hamlet:

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,  
And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,  
Then Hamlet does it not; Hamlet denies it.

Who doest it then? His madness. If 't be so,  
Hamlet is of the faction wrong'd;

His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy” (Act V Scene II).

As regards his relationship with Ophelia, it had a bit of tragedy involved in it. It seems that it was an interaction between the philosophically ideal person and a realistically practical woman who failed to communicate properly to meet their nuptial destinations. His misogynistic remark to Ophelia smells a note of dissent towards the feminine world. Though here Hamlet looks quite rude and blunt, yet it seems that having been so much affronted by the infirmity of a mother figure Gertrude, he had lost faith in the feminine world. To Hamlet, Ophelia is an image of purity, chastity and virtue that he didn't want to be ravished by social flaws. He says, “Get thee to a nunnery! Why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves – believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?” (Act III Scene I) This has further to be noted that after the death of Ophelia when Hamlet says,

“I loved Ophelia. Forty thousand brothers could not with all their quantity of love make up my sum (Act V Scene I)” it becomes highly apparent that since he was known to the doom he would follow in avenging his father's murder, he couldn't afford to develop amorous advances when situations were terribly against him. Lady Ophelia remained a virtuous figure in his mind because she died pure and intact without any slight trace of infidelity. Later on, when Hamlet says that, “There's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it

be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all,” (Act V Scene II) here in this statement Hamlet asserts that everything goes on as per the dictates of the divine, as per the irretrievable Fate and finds assurance amidst chaotic circumstances thus leading to Hamlet’s complete surrender to the will of God. It seems in all probability that Hamlet, after having been fully fed up with the wounded system, wanted to take shelter in the divinity by way of heroically dying the death of a warrior, and not like a coward. The final fencing match became a means to validate his actions as a tragic hero able enough to bring about the catharsis of the emotions of pity and fear. James Joyce observes, “Pity is the feeling which arrests the mind in the presence of whatsoever is grave and constant in human sufferings and unites it with the human sufferer. Terror is the feeling which arrests the mind in the presence of whatsoever is grave and constant in human sufferings and unites it with the secret cause.....

The tragic emotion, in fact, is a face looking two ways, towards terror and towards pity, both of which are phases of it. You see I use the word arrest. I mean that the tragic emotion is static. Or rather the dramatic emotion is. The feelings excited by improper art are kinetic, desire or loathing. Desire urges us to possess, to go to something; loathing urges to abandon, to go from something. The arts which excite them, pornographical or didactic, are therefore, improper arts. The aesthetic emotion is therefore static. The mind is arrested and raised above desire and loathing (Joyce 204-205).

In fine, *Hamlet* can be considered as a tragedy of psychological intellectualism. The central protagonist’s tendency to overanalysing his proposed actions becomes a bane for his personality. In fact it became his tragic flaw as well. The last scene of the play deliberates upon the thematic nature of death in the context of a morally depraved and rotten social setting. A young boy’s inability to adjust his neurotic orders with the trend of the materialistic world amounted to the catastrophe of his existence. The final scene in the text unfurls the fruits of the *Karmic* theory. Gertrude and Claudius met their tragic fate as a matter of fact falling prey to their self made trap. It becomes quite clear that Laertes had well understood the impish plot concocted by Claudius and before Laertes died he had a very fine opinion about Hamlet,

“Exchange forgiveness with me, Noble Hamlet;  
Mine and mine father’s death come not upon thee,  
Nor thine on me! (Act V, Scene II)

This leads to the display of Hamlet’s grand nobility in the eyes of Laertes that made even Fortinbras opine highly of him,

“Let four captains  
Bear Hamlet like a soldier to the stage;  
For he was likely, had he been put on,  
To have prov’d most royally; and for his passage  
The soldiers’ music and the rites of war  
Speak loudly for him. (Act V Scene II)

According to Schopenhauer, “ in tragedies the noblest men after long conflict and suffering at last renounce the ends they have so keenly followed, and all the pleasure of life forever, or else freely and joyfully surrender life itself” (The World as Will and Idea Vol 1, 327). The thought of Pt Vidyanivas Mishra is worthy of note herein, “Of Dharma there is no death, for it is purified continually by truth; what actually is (rita) and imperishable resides in truth (Satya). The awareness that death is in this body and immortality is too is in it, constitutes truth’s consciousness.

Amrutam chaiva mrutyushcha dvayam dehe pratishthitam/  
Mrityurapayate mohatsyenyapayate mrutam// (S. P. 278/29-30)



So there is contradiction between them only in the sense of being better or still better. That which seems to be contradictory in essence are degrees of comparison. In choosing eventually the better over the lesser, one has to forego all attachment. One has to view equally all aspects that affect all, If one does this, then one realizes that really there is no choice, except choiceless Dharma” ( Mishra, Mahabharata, 197).

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## Initiating Experiments while Enunciating Humanism : An Overview of Gandhian Thought

Dr. Abhishek Tiwari\*

**Abstract:** The thought of Mahatma Gandhi has had the potential to shape the Modern Era in a new way. Gandhi was, no doubt, one of the best minds that the world has ever seen who shaped the destiny of mankind by his thought provoking and sonorous ideas. The gravity of his thoughts influenced the people from various strata of society. His gentle and kind behavior paved the way for humanistic and philanthropic ambience in society. It was not for nothing that his thoughts like non-aggression, *Ahimsa*, truth, civil disobedience, etc. proved to be revolutionary in bringing about societal changes. The research article titled "Initiating Experiments while Enunciating Humanism: An Overview of Gandhian Thought" thus aims to take account of Gandhian Thought with a view to deliberating the relevance of the same in contemporary contexts.

**Key words:** Ego, Talisman, Providence, Truth, *Ahimsa*

*'When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept.'*

---William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar* (Act 3 Scene 2)

The question of our existence poses the very idea of conflict. So long as the breath of life is within a person, and obviously, that is a mark of a living person, it is tough to be without conflict or dilemma in other words. This dilemmatic occurrence is the natural existence of a sense of what is wrong and what is morally upright. Probably, it also inculcates within itself the dominance of Ego. However, when the sense of Ego pervades our sense of existence and triumphs over our natural consciousness (*naisargikchetana*), it is subject to create a disharmony within and without. The need for a mindset set of belief becomes necessary to cope with the existential crises and going ahead while facing the turbulence and trials of life with resilience and perseverance. However, with a view to creating cosmic harmony compassion, spirituality, love for all living creatures, social integration and benevolent ideology are the most essential ingredients. Mahatma Gandhi (2<sup>nd</sup> October 1869—30 January, 1948) was a pioneer of a thoughtfully gracious way of resisting the colonial rule by way of his self-reliant weapons as *satyagrah*, *ahimsa*, civil disobedience, etc. Gandhi showed his resistance against the triumphant Bills of the country called 'Black Bills' that demonstrated the tyrannical mindset of the colonial rule as '*navakil, na appeal, nadalit*'. Gandhi, who undertook the cause of the tenants of the European planters in Champaran (Bihar) and the peasantry of Kaira (Gujarat), felt heartbroken at the sight of the poverty stricken geography of the then times.

Gandhi's ideas including his famous talisman are the philosophically psychological answers to the question of a person's subsistence in the Vanity Fair of materialistic aspirations. Gandhi asks us to test our credentials and worth as to how it can help those desperately in basic need of life. Have our ego got potential to cure the maladies of humanity? Are the riches that we very often boast of facilitate those have-nots in taking care of their problems in any way? His talisman stands a touchstone for addressing a mindset obsessed with power and ego. This further elaborates on Gandhi's conscious concern for those deprived and most vulnerable to social evils. The central message of this talisman is to make people feel their own limitations until and unless they contextualize themselves to the humanitarian causes. Gandhi's quest was not for power politics; rather it was for a visualization that aimed for glittering happiness and ocean of contentment amongst the lowest strata of the society. J L Nehru's overwhelming impressions of Gandhi's take on the cause of the poor and the marginalized is well expressed as thus,

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