



KAMARAJCOLLEGE

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STUDY MATERIAL FOR
B.A. ENGLISH
REGIONAL LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION

VI - SEMESTER



ACADEMIC YEAR 2022 - 2023

PREPARED,

BY

DEPARTMENT OF B.A. ENGLISH (SF)

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UNIT I

Possession of Love

“The fools maintain that love sustains righteous acts alone. But love does as much actuate the cruel acts of one”. This is a rather problematical couplet which is interpreted in two ways. The first and the more obvious one is this: Love for one’s near and dear always actuates deeds of good and kindness. But oftener than not, the same love for another, in another’s own interest, actuates deeds of violence also. The second meaning as given by parimelalagar is of a rarer and more magnanimous order. It is also equally valid. That is: Love is not only the basis of kindly acts. It also is capable of winning forth and weeding another from his violent deed. If one shows love towards a menacing foe bent upon mischief to one, the other is sure to be conquered by this gesture. In other words, this interpretation is an anticipation of the unilateral effect of love to become world known through Gandhiji.

As the husband and wife grow and develop along with the children, the home becomes a laboratory for love. This love is different from the romantic love that the young couple experienced only a few years ago. With the children as the centre of love, the husband and wife begin to forget themselves. They get a deeper understanding of the fundamentals of life. They see that love is the very root of life and without it there is no life. “That body has life which functions in the way of love. The body which is without love is merely bone covered with skin”. “The life of one who has no love in his heart is like the flourishing of a tree in dreary desert”. The husband and wife begin to realize in a natural way that love means selfishness. The author of the kural has dealt with love and home life in great detail and with profound understanding.

Even at the very first step in real love which the married couple feels towards each other, love reflects this highest point. “Those who have no love amass everything for themselves. Those who are blessed with real love give away even the bones of their bodies completely for the sake of others alone”. “This reminds us of the highest point of Greek love. The very body exists for the expression of love which is the very basis of the glory achieved by the happy couple. Love is the very



basis of life. “AnbinValiyutuUyir Nilai”. In its absence we see only a corpse strutting across the stage. There is another meaning given to this phrase

‘AnbinValiyutu’. “Love is a life-giving, life sustaining power”. Thiruvalluvar comes to describe this love, blossoming in the beautiful garden of family life. He describes the directions in which this love turns, when the married couple come together and achieve a communion, of their souls in their common life of love and service.

Gratitude

In noble hearts the feeling of gratitude has all the ardour of a passion. Our thanks should be as fervent for mercies received as our petitions for mercies sought. He enjoys much who is thankful for little. A grateful mind is both a great and a happy mind. He who receives a benefit should never forget it. He who bestows should never remember it. Those who make us happy are always thankful to us for being so. Their gratitude is the reward of their benefits.

Where the injury is freely and consciously forgiven, there is no such danger. It must be forgotten thereafter for the memory of it is likely to fill us with a sense of our own magnanimity. Magnanimity is certainly called for, but only in action, not in self-praise. The complement to forgiveness of injuries is the cherishing of gratitude for benefits received. We are to fill ourselves with a sense of the goodness of others even for a trifling act of kindness. This will prevent reprisals against them when they do us evil. To forget the good anyone has done is the height of ingratitude. There can be expiation for other lapses but not for ingratitude because ingratitude dries up the very source of goodness in us. “There is scope even for those who have killed every virtue but not for those who have killed gratitude”. It is the mark of a noble character to forget injuries; the mark of a base character is to forget benefits.

Thiruvalluvar has mentioned in more than one couplet that living beings have seven kinds of births. They are reborn over and over again. “The great will remember in all seven births the friendship of those who helped them in the distress”. Hence Thiruvalluvar’s doctrine of rebirth or reincarnation has to be tested in the light of the discoveries and Twentieth century has justified and set its seal of approval on the theory of Rebirth enunciated by Thiruvalluvar.



Heaven and earth are not adequate for the help received from one who has never been helped. A timely help, however small, is greater in worth than the world. The value of help depends not on the amount but on the worth of the

receiver. It is improper to forget the good deeds done to us. But it is good to forget the wrong deeds at once.

Learning

What Thiruvalluvar says in regard to learning is of interest, not only to rulers but to the ruled also. It is worth repeating once again that the applicability of his teaching is not to be rigidly restricted by ancient patterns of society, political set up, etc. They have sufficient universality to suit all times. The need for learning is emphasized in various ways. There are chapters on Learning, Ignorance, Hearing and Possession of knowledge. The aim of all educational activity is stated with the brevity and comprehensiveness characteristic of the kural in the following words. “Learn without faults what needs to be learnt, thereafter conduct yourself in a manner worthy of your learning”.

“Where is the learning to be done, when is it to be done?” What meaningless questions, Thiruvalluvar seems to say “Treat any country as your own, and till you die don’t you have time enough? If you are keen on learning, you can do it Anywhere, Anytime. What is the incentive for learning? Thiruvalluvar replies look at the learned! When they see the delight their learning gives to others, their fondness for learning increases”. In the Chapter on “Learning” Thiruvalluvar does not mention any particular sastras as does Kautilya of ‘tray’. It is safe to infer that Thiruvalluvar wants the prince to learn all that is worth knowing in his own society and in others. Otherwise how is the relevance of Kural in the Chapter “Learning”? “All lands and places are acceptable for those who wish to learn, then why not continue to learn till the lasts” asks Thiruvalluvar.

In Valluvar’s polity a person is respected not because he has been born in a particular caste but because of his learning, intelligence, good conduct and wealth, etc. It is indeed remarkable that such a state of society as Valluvar was



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contemplating and creating in his contemporary Tamilnadu is actually obtaining in the Tamilnadu of the 20th Century today.

“The learned men alone are said to have their eyes always
The unlettered have but a pair of sores upon their faces” (393)



UNIT II

There is no fear

Bharathi was equally concerned with the freedom of spirit of all human beings, and was eager to fight slavery in any form in any part of the world. He thought that highest civilization for a nation, or for an individual, was to forsake a life of restrictions. As far as India was concerned, it was in a perpetual state of unrest under foreign rule. While the people led a life of restrictions without any fundamental rights, their inner self like Bharathi's must have yearned to be free.

Fear is more painful to cowardice than death to true courage. There is great beauty in going through life without anxiety or fear. Half our fears are baseless and the other half discreditable. E who fears is a painted devil. Fear of serious injury cannot alone justify suppression of free speech to free men from the bondage of irrational fears. We should have no human fears. We are in state of more pangs and fears. We must tie up our fears.

Bharathi in his poem "There is No Fear" says that there is nothing to be afraid of though the entire world stands united against us. There is not even a speck of fear in us though we are belittled and vilified. Even if we are denigrated and slandered, there is no fear. Even if we lose all the objects that we have yearned for, there is not even a speck of fear in us. Even when sensual and attractive women cast their eye over us to distract, there is nothing to be afraid of. Even if we are fed with poison by our own friends, there is no fear. Even if the flesh desiring armies come with their spears to fight us, if there is not even a speck of fear in us. Even if the sky above crumbles and falls down on us, there is not even a speck of fear in us.

The lover is in ashes while burning her love letters completely. Even if she leaves him, the lover does not worry. The lover only feels that though he has loved her intensely. She is certain to fall him in his great need. She will prove disloyal to him. This is his grief.



Charge Sheet

The poet claims to be a great lover and seeks to justify this claim in the poem “Charge Sheet”. He has loved deeply as well as variously. His life has been spent in one way or another making homage to the power of love. Not all experiences it leads to are pleasant. In them, there is pain as well as calm and contentment, wonder as well as boundaries desire. And he proposes to celebrate his love and its objects, so that they may be preserved from oblivion. The lover draws up a beautiful catalogue of objects—flowers, kerchief, pen, and smiles—which have thrilled him with delight and earned a place in his affections. They show the keen sensibility of the lover to all kinds of sensations.

The lover regrets that thought he has loved her intensely, she is certain to fall him in his great need. She will prove disloyal to him and remain behind. The lover is persistent, the search is protracted and difficult. So the lover feels frustrated and needs reassurance. The love has constantly avoided the company of a lover. He is ever conscious of her presence near him, but cannot find her. The lover begins to despair for he has searched for her all the day and failure has always been his lot. She does not care for him or his persistence. She continues to avoid him and does not relent.

The failure does not make the lover hopeless or frustrated. Rather, he derives consolation and comfort from the very fact of failure. Failure to achieve one’s purpose in this world is a blessing in disguise, for it keeps a man alert and active. It is always good for a man to take failure sportingly, and persist in the pursuit of his objective with the same singleness of purpose. The pursuit must be life-long and failure must not be allowed to dampen the spirit.

The love’s memories with the lover will be remembered fondly for a long time. Forgotten memories are still in his brain. There is the pain in the lover’s tortured mind. The lover will be in ashes while burning the love letters completely. The lover complains the unkindness of his love. The lover is determined to continue the pursuit of his beloved up to the very end of his life. The lover’s quest is the quest



for ideal beauty, for ideal love for perfection. The quest must continue for great and noble achievement becomes possible only through life-long effort and persistence.

The first step of knowledge is to know that we are ignorant, knowledge is the eye of desire. Accurate knowledge is the basis of correct opinions. Light of knowledge clasps the narrator not a layman that he is. Black laws are useful starting points for the layman when faced with an unfamiliar legal term. High walled prison forts through the merciless army and police oozes out nervous fear. Unlike stress, nervousness and anxiety generally stem from the fear of failure or potential embarrassment. To overcome fear and anxiety, we take time out. It is impossible to think clearly when we are flooded with fear or anxiety.

Self-Realization

Every experience is actually an experiment of self-realization. In each and every experience, we are realizing a capacity or aspect of our soul, and by extension, an aspect of our true nature as Being. Since all there is, is Being, every experience is an experiences of Being. Every experience adds to the totality of our understanding and realization of our true nature. There is no other possibility. The formation of self-concept is fundamental to the development of an individual personality. Self-concept as its name implies means one's concept about oneself.

Stressing the need for self-realization, the narrator asks us to believe in what our own hearts tells us. We should not care for what others think. What we genuinely feel, the world will come to accept it. The whole world responds to trust. When we trust ourselves and do not fly away from our destiny, others will admire us and follow us. When a man prays to God for something he is only expressing his weakness. God is not to be begged but communed with. It is God who gives man all his faculties and therefore no aspect of human life should be kept veiled. For the narrator all men are equal and his masses are in no way different from the classes. He is born for all from the sickened history.



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The narrator is no doubt an individual whose ego is prominently to the fore. But then this ego is far from selfish or exclusive. Unlike stress, nervousness

and anxiety generally stem from the fear of failure or potential embarrassment. Tigers

have different kinds of teeth that have different jobs. The tiger teeth that hangs on his chest is nothing but a plastic. Plasticity can deform irreversibly without breaking. The narrator is a coward. He is someone who runs away or abandons his responsibilities or obligations during times of danger, distress, pain or fear of the unknown. He is considered a non-entity, a person of no influence. He is a close friend to all.

There are thousands of natural delights all over the world to be enjoyed. In addition, man has artificially created many facilities for his enjoyment. Black Laws are useful starting points for the layman when faced with an unfamiliar legal term. If mankind thinks, decides and plans in a proper way, everybody in the world could enjoy life alike, to a requisite standard. By collaboration, we could eliminate all the obstacles. We have all the potential to achieve such a goal. It is not wise to silently witness such hazardous loss and continue to suffer from multifarious problems and pains in life depriving us of our birth rights to enjoy the world. Let us arise and work with vigour and confidence to help the world community. When we trust ourselves and do not fly away from our destiny, others will admire us and follows us.



UNIT III

A Horse for the Sun

The writer Ananthamurthy, a leading modernist writer with considerable involvement in some form of left politics, is visiting his village. One day at the market place he encounters his boyhood chum Venkata whom he has not met in the last 14 years. Although Venkata is older than the author by five or six years, they had been in the same class at school. The author had subsequently left the village, gone abroad and returned to teach in the University and had become a “city monkey”. And Venkata who was already something of a good- for- nothing character, had blossomed into an idiot-like figure, irresponsible as far as his family was concerned but generous in his help to the villagers. This sudden encounters makes the author nostalgic for the many adventures he had shared with Venkata. So the author decides to visit Venkata’s house and spend the day there. Delighted, Venkata offers to give him his celebrated oil-bath.

The crisis in which the author finds himself is something more than the crisis of creativity, which is one of the self- defining clichés of the modernist self. The crisis seems to have called into question the very vocation of the modernist practice. The interrogation however has already initiated a doubling and splitting of the subject. Venkata doubles as an agency of self-critique. The rest of the journey towards Venkata’s house unfolds as an oscillation between a critique of Venkata’s form of life and ionization of that critique and its language.

At the crack of dawn, the author waking up to some noise finds the son ravaging the beautiful garden cultivated by Venkata’s wife and daughters and threatening to chop up whoever goes near him. Then he begins to see in the raised hand of Subba, the son, the nihilism of modernity. This nihilism of Subba seems to reveal the limit of Venkata’s philosophy. The author feels deeply for Venkata and wonders if this incident has shattered him. A few hours later, when the household is engaged in its early morning activities, he finds Venkata standing by the fence



and gazing at something in complete absorption. Going near Venkata he finds him looking at a 'SuryanaKudure' a sun's horse or grasshopper.

The impasse or aporia is evident in the absolute divide, the doubling between the author and Venkata. They are of course figures generated by modernism and modernity. The story does not resolve the aporia, the divide or doubling. Although it is plausible to interpret the story as an aesthetic redemption, where the ironic subject of modernism stages the other as the "idiot subject" in order to recuperate it as its redemptive double. It is equally plausible to interpret it as staging the aporia of political modernity in India. The aesthetic delight that the author shares with Venkata in looking at the sun's horse cannot conceal the fact their relationship has no chance of being embodied politically. Our time, our discrepant modernity, is experienced as an aporia. It remains to be seen if it can be overcome dialectically. Anantha feels for Venkata that implies and shapes the story that gives sense of thwarted desire and its calamitous ending.

Walls

"walls" deals with prison life in the pre-independence days. The theme of the story focuses on the love between Basheer, a prisoner and a female inmate of the prison who remains unseen throughout the story. The first person narrator is addressed as Basheer.

Basheer himself had spent time in a prison at Kollam. In fact, most of his writings can be traced back to specific instances in his life. Here is a man Basheer himself taken prisoner. He has been there so many times that now he is just a number. One day Basheer hears the laughter of a women from behind the huge wall. It is from the women's ward. Her scent fills him with desire. Another day he hears her whistling. They strike up a conversation. Gradually they get acquainted with each other. Her name is Narayani. They describe themselves so that they could visualize each other. She starts throwing twigs in the air to let him know she is there beyond the wall. He prepares a rose garden on his side of the wall. They also exchange gifts, throwing them over the wall.



Once a prisoner had made a hole in the wall, but the warders had found it out and closed it. The two now decide to meet in the hospital. They give each their marks of identification. She has a black mole on her right cheek. He is a little bald and would carry a red rose in his hand. But Basheer gets the release order. His first reaction is “but who wants freedom?” as he goes out he sees a dry twig rising in the air. He can only play for Narayani, a Hindu woman of twenty- two.

The story is repeat with the contrast between spaces inside and outside the fragmented space within the walls and the expanse beyond, symbolizing freedom. The story ends with Basheer standing outside the prison with a rose in his hand. Narayani, Basheer’s love is presented as a female voice and never appears in prison. At the end of the story the protagonist finds it difficult to move into the ordinary space of freedom. The “walls” of the story of this name, are those of a prison. Despite being imprisoned and separated by a huge wall that divides their prisons, the two romanticize each other.

Gifts

The platform was giving a unique scene. It was overcrowded. The passengers were moving here and there with their luggage. Chidambaram reached the booking window, trying to get a ticket standing among the crowd jostling about the conductor. The conductor issued the tickets. He had come to meet her at the railway station in the early morning. He had recognized her immediately. He asked her to bathe in the Tamaraparani River. But she was not accustomed to the river-bath. He was taken aback by her obstinate refusal.

Chidambaram stopped before a wooden door and called ‘Anni’. The door opened. Ganapathi was not in the town. The woman invited him. The woman had started pouring out the dosai batter. The batter spread to a perfect round. She had been cooking dosais since she was ten. They continued to eat silently. She had seen the sea at Tiuchendur. Once when she was very ill, she kept calling for the sea in her delirium. He was furious and called her a mad woman. He was a great devotee if Muruga.



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In another city there was a little girl. She loved blue very much. The visitor watched her. She returned that glance for half a second and then stood up with her leaf to walk fast her husband. They left and could make a trip to Tiruchendur. They would take a picnic. The Murugan temple there was a very fine one. Chidanbaram brought her bus ticket. He told her that Ganapathi would certainly meet her. Before the bus finally got going, he requested the conductor to make sure she got off at the right place. Ganapathi had come to meet her. After her work was done, they took a bus to his home.

Gaanapathi called softly, ‘Chandra, Chandra’ without knocking. Immediately a young girl of about twenty came to the door. She said that Anni was asleep upstairs. She brought two banana leaves. Fresh dosais fell upon them. He must not get angry. He must not threaten her. He must be good – natured. She had the list of things what she wanted to do. Ganapathi took the case from her. She came to the front door of the house. She smiled. They reached the gate. Her voice alone followed. She could hear the sound of a sharp slap across a face, from the hand of the devotee of Murugan. Chidambaram waiting for her at the bus stand, handed her a package. She told ‘anni’ that they were leaving. She sent her dosais for the journey. Ganapathi brought her the halwa just as Chandra had wished.

Ambai’s writing is a vehicle for expressing herself. In the story she has highlighted the way men have circumscribed the world of women and determined the parameters for them. She has delineated a wide variety of women characters in her stories. Ranging from Chandra who enjoys the protective cover of her household, which nevertheless works as a control in “Gifts”



Unit IV

Girish Karnad's Nagamandala

Naga Mandala by Girish Karnad is a play where myth takes over reality. Girish Raghunath Karnad is a contemporary Indian playwright, actor and movie director in Kannada language. He is among the seven recipients of Jnanpith Award for Kannada, the highest literary honor conferred in India. Girish Karnad wrote the play Naga Mandala in 1987-88. The play is based on two oral Kannada tales he had heard from his mentor-friend and well-known poet, translator and philologist A.K. Rumanian, to whom Karnad also dedicated the play. Through the interesting blend of history and myth, he talks about socio-cultural issues of the India.

Plot Summary

Rani is a young bride who is neglected by her indifferent and unfaithful husband, Appanna. Appanna spends most of his time with his concubine and comes home only for lunch. Rani is one of those typical wives who want to win her husband's affection at any cost. In an attempt to do so, she decides to drug her husband with a love root, which she mixes in the curry. That curry is spilled on the nearby anthill and Naga, the King Cobra drinks it.

Naga, who can take the form of a human being, is enchanted with her and begins to visit her every night in the form of her husband. This changes Rani's life completely as she starts to experience the good things in life though she never knows that the person with her is not her husband but the Naga.

One of these days, she gets pregnant and breaks the news to Appanna. He immediately accuses her for adultery and says that he has not fathered the child. The issue is referred to the village Panchayat. She is then asked to prove her fidelity by putting her hand in the snake burrow and taking a vow that she has not



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committed adultery. It is a popular belief that if any person lies holding the snake in their hand, they will be instantly killed by the snake God.

She does place her hand in the snake burrow and vows that she has never touched any male other than her husband and the Naga in the burrow. She is declared chaste by the village Panchayat. However, her husband is not ready to accept that she is pregnant with his child and decides to find out the truth by spying on the house at night. Appanna is shocked to see the Naga visiting Rani in his form, spending time with her and then leaving the house.

Appanna gets furious with the Naga and indulges in a fight with him. Both of them fight vigorously and at one point of time, the Naga takes the form of the snake and escapes into the burrow. The villagers see the snake escaping into the burrow and kill it. Before dying the snake comes to Rani and reveals the truth to her.

However, after this incident Appanna realizes his mistake and he accepts Rani along with the child she is carrying.

The play NAGA MANDAL opens in village campus where temple is the base of the story. The prolong sets up the mood of the play. The almost ruined temple and the shattered idol of the deity talks about a mystical theme. The play has a dream like structure where a reader is compelled to suspend his disbelief like typical folk story. In NAGA MANDAL Girish kannand places females in central of the story. As the play open the audience comes to know about the men trying to be awake. It combine with a subplot where women are projected with the story of Rani and Appanna. This subplot constitutes the story that has been surviving in kannada folk lore for the long time and has become part of their culture. Females are projected in the story as great receptor of pleasure that need completeness from Women in this play are projected as flame of desire that have insatiable desire for sexuality, sensuality and other carnal desire and other intellectual yearning's. Kannand makes use of this female myth and give us a glimpse of the female world through the flame throwing light on the fact that no men can escape the periphery



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of female desire. Girish Kannand breaks the myth that sexual is a taboo for female folk. They also enjoy nocturnal pleasure with no contempt towards anyone. As soon as delight in the village vanishes the flames in the ruined temple where the

hero is taking rest for the night. At this time the flames discuss among themselves the issue of their physical desire as well as their household responsibility. The play combines the problems and the status of women in male dominant society. In the folk lore of their home women are hardly allowed to speak their minds. They are occupied with chores. They have only duty to perform and no right to demand. In this play the place symbolizes women who flee their houses to be among other women to do all kind of slander-mongering. Like flames women should do their jobs as other need them. After male needs are over female are rejected like flames. Women have a central role in this play and they have symbolic meaning. Women are represented as demanding free minded and outspoken sex. Review of literature I have done review of literature before touching upon this topic. The first review to be presented here has been picked up from PushpanathanThiruvengadam's paper "Indianans in Girish Karnad'sNagamandala". This paper tries to evaluate the position of female folk in Indian modern society through mythology. The second review has been used from DR. SHAILAJA B. WADIKAR's paper "plight of females in NAGA-MANDALA". In this paper she tries to sum up the rights and duties of females. to understand the place of women in modern society through the depiction of mythological characters of Rani and Appanna who stands for males and females respectively. Another objective of the research to try and understand gender politics in typically male dominant society. Another objective is to find that the power shift between males and females is not only a new concept but an old one. Methodology The methodology used during this research paper is through content analysis and observation. This methodology has been chosen because the subject is highly literally and social. It hardly requires any scientific data. The subject needs human touch and understanding. Data presentation and analysis In this plot of the play males do not intrude into the world of female much. Female enjoy high voltage and unlimited freedom in Girish Kannada Naga Mandala. This is the reason why Girish Kannada picks up the story of Rani and Appanna which then sheds light on the conflict between both genders (Male and Female). The plot revolves around a Rani who is completely devoted to her husband and is a



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thoroughly pious and virtuous woman. Her husband pays no attention to her or her needs. Though she is completely honest yet she is badly deceived by her husband who carries out extra marital relations with other women after locking Rani in her room. One day Rani's servant tells her to seduce her husband so that he doesn't become dishonest. To serve this purpose she gives a root to the Rani and asks her to mix it with food. Rani does the same and a strange creature appears. After being terrified Rani throws the mixture which accidentally falls upon a NAGA (Black Cobra). Fascinated by the mixture the NAGA falls in love with Rani. The cobra is blessed with the skill of aquaringany body and there upon adopts the physical shape of Rani's husband Appanna. In Appanna's absence the NAGA enters Rani's bedroom and makes love to her which not only satisfies her carnal desires but also gives her emotional enrichment. Rani eventually feels fulfilled in all walks of life and starts living happily. She soon encounters double bladed nature of her husband. During day Appanna discards her in his actual being but during night time the NAGA makes love to her in the form of Appanna. When Rani comes to know about the reality she is caught between body and soul. On one hand she loves the NAGA and pines for his contury while on the other hand she feels like a cheat. The NAGA ultimately secrifices himself and in order to reunite Rani and Appanna by committing suicide by strangling himself in the lock of her hair. Thus the play talks about the place of women in traditional as well as modern sense. Through Rani the writer depicts female folk in incomplete sense whether it be physical, emotional, spiritual and ethnical sense. In Karnad's play, it sacrifices itself for the happy life of Rani and Appanna. According to PushpanathanThiruvengadam "the play dramatizes man's attitude to woman in a patriarchal society, mistrust, infidelity and lack of communication, breaking family life and the institution of marriage, and it reaffirms the significance of motherhood as the cementing factor in the family and the society. The play upholds the significance of family, marriage and society" The paly NAGA MANDALA throws light on the effect that the gender politics was promient in mythology as well as social circuit of modern life. According to DR. SHAILAJA B. WADIKAR "The society projected in the play is divided on the basis of gender. The play criticizes gender biased values and morals of this patriarchal society where women have been oppressed for centuries together. On the day of trial, Rani has been asked to prove her chastity by giving an ordeal while Appanna goes unquestioned, even unnoticed. Appanna enjoys



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extra-marital relationship quite openly with the concubine and tries to punish Rani severely for the same when she is even unconscious and ignorant of the sin of adultery” The society projected in the play is divided on the basis of gender. The play criticizes gender biased values and morals of this patriarchal society where.

women have been oppressed for centuries together. On the day of trial, Rani has been asked to prove her chastity by giving an ordeal while Appanna goes unquestioned, even unnoticed. Appanna enjoys extra-marital relationship quite openly with the concubine and tries to punish Rani severely for the same when she is even unconscious and ignorant of the sin of adultery. Girish Karnad’s Naga-Mandala: A Note on Women Emancipation and Empowerment Dr. Rushiraj P. Waghela, Naga-Mandala is an out and out feminist drama imprinted out of the rubric of folk legends. It covers the theme of woman's destiny, her chastity and societal role and merges it with an unpredicted ending latent on double crossing and reviving of old customs. The play narrates Rani’s marital journey from marginalized position a central one. It is a simple but magical tale that celebrates sensuality from a women’s point of view. Though she suffers pain and torture in the beginning of her married life, she achieves a respectable position in the end. Commenting on this, Prem Sagar says that we shall be "worse than blind Kurudava if we fail to give women their due place in the society and worse than Cobra if we fail to appreciate their potential. Rani's and Naga's ultimate act of reconciling with the situation is edifying. It is no wisdom to remain stuck to the past, when future beckons us." (Prem Sagar "Preface"). The play tries to understand the role of females from the perspective of male psychology. The NAGA in the story represents males mind and soul towards females. On one hand the hypocrisy of males toward females is symbolically shown through the character of Appanna who himself indulges in all kinds of vanity and liters attitude while expects great honesty from his wife, on the other.



UNIT V

Tamarind history

The tamarind tree is present at the crossroads in a small town in Kanyakumari district. The plot revolves around the tree and its history for about fifty years. Advent of modernity and the greed of the human beings bring about the destruction of the tree. The novelist says that, “This is the story of the tamarind tree living and dying”. (Ramaswamy 3) The green concern of the novel is brought out through ecocriticism, as Richard Kerridge, one of the ecocritics, defines the term in his work *Writing the Environment* in the following words “Most of all, ecocriticism seeks to evaluate texts and ideas in terms of their coherence and usefulness as responses to environmental crisis”. (Garrad 4) The fiction explains the fall of an age old tree, along with old morals and association of nature with tradition. Survival of Nature Deep ecology is one of the environmental positions which are founded by Arne Naess. He along with George Sessions formulated certain significant principles that remain as its core position. Deep ecology postulates about the integrity of all living things on earth and the values of their lives. It claims that every existence is having “intrinsic value”. (Drengson 54) Sundara Ramaswamy also echoes the same in the novel, as he believes in the survival of nature for its own. Environment adds value onto human beings, and therefore he says, “It is an essential principle, to live life without being consumed by the way we push and shove each other just for self-preservation. The tamarind tree teaches us that lesson”. (Ramaswamy 3) The narrator knows the past of the tamarind tree and the places around tamarind tree through the stories of an eccentric old man, DamodaraAsan. His tales excite the narrator and the other youngsters of the town. DamodaraAsan recalls the yester years when water surrounded the tamarind tree; unlike in the present where it stands on a bustling road. DamodaraAsan describes Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-294017:8 August 2017 R. Saritha 233 Nature at Cross-roads: An Ecocritical Analysis of Sundara Ramaswamy’s Tamarind History the place as: “Back in those days, the tamarind tree was surrounded by a small tank, its water



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stagnant in the murky depths. It was known simply as the tamarind tank”. (Ramaswamy 8) The tamarind tank is near a grove of casuarina trees. The atmosphere is serene with breeze and tall grasses growing around the tank. Village people and cattle bathe in the water of the tamarind tank. Even some valuable medicinal plants grow in the area and local herbalists collect them for treatment of many ailments. Narration of Daily Activities Centering on Nature The environment is complacent with greeneries and in the ecocritical sense it can be as seen as a bioregion where the land and people are interrelated in a close community. Bioregionalism extols the presence of the human with nonhuman beings and insistence of the consciousness of the place. Bio-regionalism explains this stance as, “the land must speak to us; we must stand in relation to it; it must define us, not we it”. (Clark 131) DamodaraAsan gives explicit narration of daily activities centering on nature. The village serves as a bioregion in which community coexists with the environment. Human beings think about themselves and try to destroy nature. DamodaraAsan, in the novel vividly explains the incidents where a tussle erupts for attempting to cut the innocent tree. Ecocriticism views the interaction of the human with the nonhuman world as “human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it”. (Glotfelty xix) Sundara Ramaswamy points out that human beings take advantage of nature to express their undesirable emotions. Anthropocentrism Chellathayi, one of the village women, hangs herself in the tamarind tree after knowing about her husband’s death. Anthropocentrism is the stance in which humans place themselves above all living creatures. Deep ecology critiques anthropocentrism as it forms the basis of ecological crisis where men exploit the world. So this attitude paves the way towards the erosion of the environment where human beings do not value other inhabitants. Similarly in the novel, the anthropocentric attitude of Koplán, one of Chellathayi’s relatives is seen where he vents his Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-294017:8 August 2017 R. Saritha 234 Nature at Cross-roads: An Ecocritical Analysis of Sundara Ramaswamy’s Tamarind History anger on “a tree that had no one to stand up for it and no way to argue with him”. (Ramaswamy 30) Asan stops him from bringing down the tree. Deep ecologists believe in the equality of all the living beings. This is a common notion in varied environmental distinctions; where they propagate a shift from anthropocentrism to nonanthropocentric orientation. This alternative view is



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known as ecocentrism or biocentrism. Ecocentrism blurs the distinctions between the living creatures of the world. It is explained in the following words as: “The world is an intrinsically dynamic, interconnected web of relations in which there are no absolutely discrete entities and no absolute dividing lines between the living and the nonliving, the animate and the inanimate, or the human and the nonhuman”. (Eckersley 49) Ecocentral Attitudes The novel brings on the ecocentral attitude of DamodaraAsan, where he cares even for a single tree. DamodaraAsan with his wit convinces Koplán about an evil spirit residing in the tree. Finally, Koplán cuts out the branch where Chellathayi hung herself. Removal of the branch leaves a scar on the trunk of the tree and it loses its regeneration ability which is explained in the following line: “No new shoot grew on that branch, nor a single leaf, a single flower, bud or fruit”. (Ramaswamy 31) DamodaraAsan, in the novel expresses his affinity for nature and its elements. He stops the tree from being cut down and solicits the essentiality of nature preservation through tales to young generations. Deep ecology proposes an ecocentric attitude for the collective well-being; and Asan with his ecocentric outlook guards the tamarind tree. Hierarchy, Social and Ecological Degradation Sundara Ramaswamy comments on the gradual degradation of the tree along with its milieu brought about by human actions. Hierarchy imposes power and avails of it for human ends. Deep ecology desist dominion that calls upon societies’ norms which command nature. In the novel, the tamarind tree is slowly losing its natural setting. DamodaraAsan explains to the narrator and others, the tale of Maharaja PooramThirunal. The Maharaja is perturbed by a strange stench during his routine annual visit to Vadivamman temple of Meenakshipuram. He takes off for his palace in a rage, as the cause of the odour is the unclean water of the tamarind Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-294017:8 August 2017 R. Saritha 235 Nature at Cross-roads: An Ecocritical Analysis of Sundara Ramaswamy’s Tamarind History tank. So the officials’ hatch plans to drain the water from the tank into the ocean and fill it up with earth: “They dug a sluice to drain the water from the tamarind tank into the Theregalputhur channel. In just one day, the tamarind tank merged with the Indian ocean”. (Ramaswamy 45) The tree with the tank is now converted into a pathway and the majesty is happy about the



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change. Bioregion is a place where elements of nature such as land, water, along with other organisms intermingle with the human beings. However, after the removal of water surrounding the tamarind tree, diversity is lost. The village with the tamarind tank as a bioregion is altered into a junction with numerous vehicles running on the pathway exuberating modernity. Growth of Towns and Ecology Ecocriticism criticises the way of treating resources as a personal gain and in order “to manipulate it technologically and exploit it economically”, then call it “progress”. (Heise 507) Sundara Ramaswamy eventually in the story details how a small village turns into a modern town in the process of development. People affected with their own short-sightedness unnecessarily destroy natural sphere to create leisure spots. In the novel, the municipal commissioner decides to remove the grove of casuarina trees in order to make the tamarind junction a bustling place: “The road that ran in front of the tamarind tree was paved with cement. The grove of rain trees that stood next to the tree junction was converted into a city park”. (Ramaswamy 48) A landscape architecture is appointed by the commissioner to plan and execute the modern park. Man domineering perception towards nature is not right as, “This domination strips nature of any value other than as a material resource and commodity and leads to a gradual destruction that may in the end deprive humanity of its basis for subsistence”. (Heise 507) Deep ecology considers “self-realization” (Devall 66) as the process of recognizing the non-humanity as a part of oneself. Self-realization is propounded by Arne Neass for development of the self, which includes extending the boundary to the other living beings. The novel presents ecological orientation of DamodaraAsan where he prefers the natural world for its wholeness. The narrator is reminiscing about DamodaraAsan’s love for the trees. He says: “For DamodaraAsan, however, the grove of casuarina trees was the closest thing to heaven”. (Ramaswamy 51) The presence of trees with mild breeze gives the place a look of everlasting beauty. Asan spent his young days climbing the trees and playing in the vast ground beneath the tall trees. It serves Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-294017:8 August 2017 R. Saritha 236 Nature at Cross-roads: An Ecocritical Analysis of Sundara Ramaswamy’s Tamarind History as a place of solitude and haven for him. The novelist presents the old man with a biocentric view, considering nature as part and parcel of his life. DamodaraAsan’s association with nature can be seen as that of the deep ecologists’ claim for self-realization where



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his identification with the nonhuman world is going beyond narrow selves. The narrator says that: “Asan, who had told us all these stories about the grove, took his leave of the world without lingering on to witness its incredible transformation, perhaps magnificent, perhaps terrifying, into a municipal park”. (Ramaswamy 51) With values and stories recounting the beauty of the trees, the narrator feels incredible pain to see the slicing of the giant trees. Change in Desired Ecology The only person to voice his opposition against the cutting of the casuarina trees is an old man. He clearly does not understand the logic of planting hedges in the place of trees. The narrator thinks that he sees Damodara Asan in that old man. The novel presents clashing ideologies of the modern and the ancient. Deep ecologists are inclusive of ecological consciousness, which consider people in communion with nature. Bill Devall and George Sessions in their book *The Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered*, propose that: “The foundations of deep ecology are the basic intuitions and experiencing of ourselves and Nature which comprise ecological consciousness”. (Devall 65) Ecological consciousness looms largely on the old generation which prefers nature in its originality. They consider it insane to slay trees in the name of modernity. The new place without the grove of casuarina trees is presented as: “The sun’s rays glare down on the empty space where the trees were felled. The darkness that once concealed the grove is gone, and the place is unrecognizable”. (Ramaswamy 58) The park symbolizing development imposes the dominant view of society and its industrialized notion which “regards humans as isolated and fundamentally separate from the rest of Nature, as superior to, and in charge of the rest of creation”. (Luke 180) The city park is full of artificiality with a decorative pond in the middle and rubber ducks floating on the water. A zoo also erupts near the park. The novelist voices his discontent on modern science and mocks at humans who partake in the process of creation; he displays it through the character of the architect who establishes the park. He says: Plants blossomed with bright flowers at his command. The touch of his hand led delicate creepers to curl in tight spirals. Swaying leaves grew long on the shrubs Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 17:8 August 2017 R. Saritha 237 Nature at Cross-roads: An Ecocritical Analysis of Sundara Ramaswamy’s Tamarind History to fulfill his whim. It amazed everyone, the way he smeared the face of creation with the blossoms of science. (Ramaswamy 60) The park becomes the centre of attraction with people of all ages spending time within it. Varying



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notions of the human beings in the society is seen in the novel, where a majority of them prefer the park and appreciate it. The narrator in the novel feels that the period is witnessing fast changes with public indulgence in superficial and artificial entities. Anthropocentric Culture and Civilization Anthropocentric behaviour is evident in the novel, as the Municipal council takes charge of the tree only because of the presence of the tamarind pods in particular seasons. The council values the tree in terms of revenue as it incurs money through auctioning pods. Anthropocentrism in regard to nature is explained as: “the nonhuman world is reduced to a storehouse of resource and is considered to have instrumental value only, that is, it is valuable only insofar as it can serve as an instrument, or as a means, to human ends”. (Eckersley 26) Nature is not restrictive with human utilitarianism and their subsistence is devoid of materialism. The novelist pictures this in the novel as he describes that the tree exists in a manner like, “It was a tree that took no one as master, but lived by the enlightened creed that it belonged to everybody”. (Ramaswamy 79) Scavengers of the town tempted with the taste of the pods take out everything. Thereby, annual auction does not take place after eleven years. The novelist is of the opinion that the government cared only about revenue, even it is from a tree. So he voices that: “All it needed was money: to keep people safe, to keep the town running and take care of any difficulties”. (Ramaswamy 79) Tamarind History depicts the change in thinking in the modern era where human supposition is overwhelmed with materialistic concerns. This inherent quality is the essence of anthropocentrism. Deep ecology argues that the anthropocentric deeds will in certainty lead to environmental destruction. The novel reflects this human-centric norm which is evident through the characters and their motives. Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-294017:8 August 2017 R. Saritha 238 Nature at Cross-roads: An Ecocritical Analysis of Sundara Ramaswamy’s Tamarind History Deep ecology is of the view that “nature of human interference in the various ecosystems is not sustainable”, (Drengson 54) and the human beings intrusion with nature is increasing. Deep ecology critiques the dominant view of self in human beings and its influence in negligence of the other living entities in the world. This adversary view preoccupies Abdul Khader and Damu in the novel, the rivals who own stores near the tamarind tree junction. Both compete with each other for money and power trying to establish their superiority. Abdul Khader and Damu Abdul Khader hates Damu thoroughly,



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so when he contests in local election, he too enters the race. TrivancoreNesan's reporter, Isaki helps Khader to plot against his enemy. In an attempt to breakdown Damu, the reporter suggests: "It's the shade that calls out to people when they pass by the store, and coaxes them to buy something ...No shade, no business". (Ramaswamy 173) To establish their authority, Khader and Isaki further articulate the idea of destroying the tree through news reports. The Municipal Council along with President Joseph forms a committee to decide the fate of the tree. Deep ecology believes humans are an integral part of a whole web of creation. The earth belongs to all forms of life and they possess value. However, the precedence of self in people creates the problem of ecological destruction as in the novel. Man's subjugation of nature for their whims is seen in Tamarind History, as the characters channel their revenge for fellow human beings and bring on the degradation of the environment. Social and Economic Conflicts and Ecology Deep ecology questions the possession of exclusive legal rights for human beings and not for the non-humans. It is antagonistic for nature because people claiming these rules take advantage of the resources, thereby depleting the wealth of the earth. The novel shows how the people in authority use law as a tool to create the environmental crisis. The committee abiding by Joseph's decision finally confirms to abolish the tamarind tree. KambaramayanamAnandan Pillai as a councilman opposes the notion saying: "This is a holy place, this town, he said, and Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-294017:8 August 2017 R. Saritha 239 Nature at Cross-roads: An Ecocritical Analysis of Sundara Ramaswamy's Tamarind History the tamarind tree is sacred to it. True, it cannot speak, and true, it is frail, but it's a living being all the same". (Ramaswamy 187) The novelist exhibits prevalence of "biocentric equality" (Devall 66) in the character of Pillai. Arne Naess puts forward this aspect where all living things possess equality in the earth. They are inherent and have right to survive for their own accord. On the other hand in the novel, Damu gaining insight about the plot of Khader through an employee decides to protect the tamarind tree for his benefit. Therefore, Pillai and Damu jointly start an opposition rally to stop the destruction. Damu with great diplomacy turns the tree into a religious symbol for gaining the trust from the public and converts this tussle into communalism. Modern society is driven towards possession of economic and political benefit to exhibit superiority. The novel further displays the plight of the tamarind tree which is caught amidst a war



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between two characters Damu and Khader. Abdul Khader taken over with anger poisons the tree with mercury syrup using coolie Ayyappan. Damu's workers get hold of Ayyappan and in the ensuing fight he is stabbed accidentally with a knife. The novelist portrays in the novel the petty fight of men over power and killing a solemn tree for their own reasons. In the end, it is the tamarind tree which loses life after its survival for decades. The narrator is full of grief as he explains the tree's transformation on toxicity in the following words: "The tamarind tree was still at the crossroads, wasted and barren. It was clearly dead. Only its carcass remained, yet to be carried off". (Ramaswamy 205) Absence of the tamarind tree in the junction is irreplaceable and the novel portrays it in the following lines: The place will fade away to nothing any time now. It had been so many years since the sun's rays touched the ground there, playing over the earth just as they liked! Fifty years, maybe even more. The tree had changed light into shade, bright heat into gentle coolness, and now it had finished its service. (Ramaswamy 205) The novelist presents the tale of a simple tree with insight into human bonding with nature. Even after the death of the tree in the novel, the town junction bears its name. The novelist portrays the irony where the absence of the tamarind tree is due to the people, yet society continues to call the place as Tamarind Tree Junction. Tamarind History shows the Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-294017:8 August 2017 R. Saritha 240 Nature at Cross-roads: An Ecocritical Analysis of Sundara Ramaswamy's Tamarind History thoughts of human beings in relation to nature, where environment is measured through benefits. The novelist through his narration points out the inevitability of nature and its role in the lives of people. Ecocritical analysis of the novel brings out the novelist's concern for nature in emerging modern days. Sundara Ramaswamy reveals the hypocrisies of the human mind and its havoc in impacting the environment. Anthropocentrism seems to be a vital cause in the origin of natural disruption as reflected in the novel. DamodaraAsan stands as man who presents ecocentrism as the essential norm to prevent the damage. He represents the old tradition which sees nature in a holistic sense. Men like Asan, relate community with nature and protect it. The principles of deep ecological movement perceive villages as sustainable and so it is said: "Deep ecology, associated often with a valuation of wild and rural spaces, self-sufficiency, a sense of place, and local knowledge". (Heise 507) The narrative clearly voices the drastic changes a small village undergoes in the process of



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modernization and the loss of pristine environment accompanying it. Bill Devall and George Sessions as deep ecologists propose: “We are not alone. We are part and parcel of the larger community, the land community. Each life in its own sense is heroic and connected... This perspective encompasses all notions of saving anything, whether it be an endangered species, the community or your own self”. (Luke 184)