

DOMINANT THEMES & IMAGERIES IN  
PASHUPATI JHA'S POETRY COLLECTION,  
"AWAITING EDEN AGAIN"

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ISSN 2277-7733

Volume 11 Issue 4,

March 2023

**Abstract**

*The poetry of Pashupati Jha has a diversity and multiplicity of themes like nature, feminism, corruption, immorality, and other contemporary and radical issues. His poetry can be interpreted and its web can be woven by spinning the yarn of any of its fabrics. In the light of it, there is an unmistakable stamp of Sylvia Plath's confessional writings on his poetry and leaping further a step, he ensures that the confessional tone and element in his poetry remains free from semblance of solipsistic tendencies, making his poetry comprehensive and universal in nature. Waiting seems to be over now and it's Eden Again.*

**Keywords:** *Themes, imageries, nature, feminism, corruption, immorality, confessional poetry, Eden*

Surviving on fast and junk food and 'on chemical colours/of fruits, flowers and vegetables', the suffering of the people from 'obese ego' is common phenomena. The poet takes up the challenges of dwarfing these maladies and 'piercing worm' that has plagued and is playing havoc with our society. In pursuit of doing so, he seeks the shelter of poetry which 'is not a luxury' for him, but it is 'the gnawing/of guts in the taut belly/surge of feelings like a cyclone/storming up the veins, lungs and heart'. The poetry is not only his passion but it is also a yoga and transcendental meditation which sustains him and his poetry amid all adversities. It allows him to take a step towards restoring Eden again, 'like oyster pregnant with pearls/no stormy wave big/enough to steal the shine'.

**Dominant Themes**

Though the present volume makes use of a host of metaphors, similes, symbols and other figures of speech, the use of alliteration can be attention grabbing for both general and avid readers, not counting some epigrammatic lines like 'tyranny too has a short life, like lies', 'discretion is the better part of valour' and 'Money is the lone miracle the hospitals know'. The use of alliteration draws the interest and attention of the readers and keeps them riveted between the lines. They create appropriate atmosphere, disposition and nuance to give readers greater insight into the thematic preoccupations of his poetry. It is like an intermission in a mission and a breathing spell in an arduous adventure. Though they have not been used here, as usually used, for comic effect, they certainly amuse the reader amid grim reality of life and society. That is the reason the poet seems to use them accidentally and sometimes, intentionally. It would be relevant and significant here to take a short survey of the uses of alliteration in this volume:

'a budding blaze—to enlighten the engulfing depth of darkness', 'sockets sunk', 'sudden shower simmering with the scent', 'pregnant with pearls', 'steal the shine', 'storm with a sweet sense', 'fragments of fulfillments', 'love to some is surrender and sacrifice', 'social show to show the world', 'burning body', 'the daily drudgery drains me hollow', 'pristine passion of love', 'love of family and a few friends', 'the teaming toilers', 'World of the Wolf', 'blinding blaze', 'The Prayer of a Poet', 'deadly doses', 'sacred seas', 'herbs hunted from fifteen forests', 'potent potion', 'matchless mobility', 'to harass the honest and the harmless', 'tight togetherness', 'smelling the stories of our passionate past', 'second hand saris and shirts', 'senile face shrinks in shame to see', 'beyond the boundary/of creeds, cultures, and countries', 'song to silence', 'dark deeds devising', 'shining serpentine curls/where doubly dense darkness/of arrogance and apathy rules supreme', 'sturdy stones', 'imposed ideas', 'pristine purity', 'beginning of our bond'.

The lover appeals the beloved to 'let the body touch the body/and dissolve into an undying spirit'. His poem, 'Winter Does a Lot,' has something for all ages and strata of people, but for young couple he has the special one which makes them.

Tightly close forgetting the day's fracas; nothing is warmer than the young flesh knotted in clasp.

These are only few samples, but there are plenty of other poems as well depicting love and romance that can be recapitulated as a paragraph. He starts addressing his beloved with 'You', and culminates his addressing with 'You and I' promising to meet in 'Eden Again'. The evoking of beloved through 'Let Me' embodies the famous quotation of Song of Solomon, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." 'The First Page' of life brings many 'Possibilities', promising to 'Meet Again' in auspicious moments where 'Winter Does a Lot'. His love is not merely 'a social show to show the world', 'Merely Flesh-Lost' and for quenching 'Her Desire,' rather his love is testimonial of 'Love without Mask', leaving no space for 'Betrayal' and leaving no semblance of 'Cracked Mask', reiterating his promise that they are 'Made for Each Other'. The promise he took at the time of circling round the sacrificing fire, assuring her to live no more a 'Bracketed' life. The lover reminisces past 'Moments' of love which becomes even more momentous in her 'Absence'.

### **Dominant Imageries**

The poem, 'Solution' clearly reveals what the themes the poet imagines, creates and recreates. He certainly seems to be preoccupied with pathetic condition of his country, recurrent terror-attacks, burgeoning cases of molestations, eve-teasing and rapes, corruption in offices, unemployment, ecological crisis and pollution, corrupt politician and officials, etc:

Why is our country going to dogs? Why are there frequent terror-attacks? Why is the number of rapes going up? Why don't the files move in offices? Why are the youths without jobs? Why are bridges washed off in the first flood? Why are the cracks visible in the new houses? Why does the pollution shoot up by the day? Why are those, who rule the country, so deaf? He blurts a lot blast him to silence before it is too late.

The poet was awarded Ph.D. on the Poetry of Sylvia Plath and her influence on his poetry is bound to be natural, not contrived one. The thematic preoccupations of some of poems reveal that the poet is deeply desperate and agonized by the commonly reported news of violence, zero-tolerance, and depravation of morality and dispossession of women's honour. He feels 'Born at a Wrong Time' as the definition of humanity has changed, 'Man was earlier a social animal; / he is now an animal alone.' They now indulge in 'entrenched sins/ piling up and up each day/like the growing mound of the city-garbage/ or the raging flame of inferno'. The ongoing cases of molestations, eve-teasing and rapes are another cause of concern for him as 'Nothing seems safe now from the lust/ for gold and the lechery of flesh' and victim's 'wails drowned in the lewd shouts/celebrating their male virility'. In the poem, 'The Way of the World' he depicts a sense of insecurity and horror associated with women:

A virgin dragged out from her defenceless hut and ravished then with relish bears stoically the torture of rape her dress as torn and soiled as her heart.

These anguish ridden feelings are translated into words and resurface into most of his poems, taking the shape and countenance of confessional poetry. The poem, 'For You Alone, My Mom', is highly and potentially charged with anguished expression. Sons and daughters are inherently and affectionately associated with their parents, but their attachment and affinity with the father and the mother is not evenly poised and naturally inclined towards the mother. This fact is expressed by the poet in the manner of brutal frankness:

My lines and words are for you alone and not for anyone else not even for my dad who only impregnated my mom and completely forgot me forming in her womb.

Women are considered only puppets made of flesh where men discharge their brazen passion and toy with their emotions and feelings. The poet has dwelt upon the themes of women and pain, sufferings and sorrows pertaining to them, with a great deal of honesty and openness. This candid expression is a symbol of cathartic purgation, and through this forthrightness the poet breathes a sigh of relief from the hurt and anguish buried inside his heart for the suffering women. The constrained agony is reaching its pinnacle in the poem, 'Merely Flesh-Lost,' and it is pertinent here to quote most parts of the poem in support of the ongoing debate:

## *DOMINANT THEMES & IMAGERIES*

When entering my body you see nothing beyond the tantalizing flesh;  
I waited for days, months, and years expecting a moment in our life when  
you'd get a little tired of my body and think of our soul and spirit too.  
But you didn't grow from a crow tearing at carrion.

even if I spend all my life in waiting for more, something more and  
different than the mere animal appetite. Born of flesh you remained a  
piece of flesh. But what would happen to your love when my body begins  
sagging under the burden of withering age? Would you go then for  
another young flesh?

### **Conclusion**

The poetry of Pashupati Jha has a diversity and multiplicity of themes like nature, feminism, corruption, immorality, and other contemporary and radical issues. His poetry can be interpreted and its web can be woven by spinning the yarn of any of its fabrics. In the light of it, there is an unmistakable stamp of Sylvia Plath's confessional writings on his poetry and leaping further a step, he ensures that the confessional tone and element in his poetry remains free from semblance of solipsistic tendencies, making his poetry comprehensive and universal in nature. Waiting seems to be over now and it's Eden Again.

### **Reference**

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