WORDSWORTH’S POETRY IN THE LIGHT OF RASA THEORY
AN
ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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Introduction:

Now a days the world has become global, so it is very easy for the readers to be influenced by another literature irrespective of language. In this respect different canons of literary principles of other language can be employed. In this wide scope of the significance of the subject of this thesis is based on two poles (i) Rasa theory (ii) Wordsworth’s poetics & poetry. On the basis of first the second has been analysed in this thesis.

Rasa theory is the one of most ancient and popular canons of Sanskrit poetics while William Wordsworth is a poet of Romantic age. In a close study we find the element of rasa in his poetics and poetry both. The entire thesis is divided into seven chapters (i) The Significance Of Comparative Literature, (ii) The Significance Of Comparative Athentics, (iii) The Tradition Of Indian Aesthetics, (iv) The Literary Background Of Wordsworth As A Literary Personality, (v) Wordsworth’s Theory Of Poetry, Its Analogical Similarity With Rasa Theory Of Indian Aesthetics And Its Comparision With The Views Of Other Romantic Poets In This Context, (vi) The Critical Estimate of Wordsworth’s Poetry On Basis Of Rasa Theory In General, (vii) Wordsworth’s Place Among Anglo-Indian Poets, His Influence On Literature And His Estimate As Literary Personality.

In the chapter I, the concept of comparative literature has been interpreted in detail with the illustrations, and the citations of the ideas of different scholars of international repute.

Comparative literature is a term which can be regarded as comparative criticism. Since the very beginning of literary criticism, this concept was
developed because the comparison and analysis are the integral parts of literary criticism and even early literary standard makers i.e. Aristotle and subsequent critics followed it. Indian poeticians also, from Bharat upto Panditraj Jaggnath made analysis and comparison as a very essential element dealing the subject of poetics. As a recognized term this word was firstly used by H.M. Posnett. But as the first real practioner of this, the name of Mathew Arnold can be mentioned whose touchstone method has the root of comparative literature in the sense which is nowadays widely studied. Rene Welleck has used world literature for the concept of comparative literature.

In nutshell we can understand that any literary work can be judged from the viewpoint of the literary standard of the literature of other language or we may try to find out the characteristics of the literature of other language for which no precise term has been employed in the concerned language. A person who studies the literature of more than one language naturally he/she will develop a sense that is known as comparative literature. So one can study Shakespeare’s work from the viewpoint of oriental literary standard, similarly Sanskrit classical works may be studied on the basis of western and post modern literary standards. Yvan Goll, Samuel Beckett and others who were well versed in more than one language found a better opportunity to develop the sense of comparative literature.

The advent of Petrarchan Sonnet is also a glaring example of comparative literature. The literary terms for comparative literature are world literature, general literature and Welt literature. Goethe has obtained many meanings in which these three are important J Brandt Corstius has applied world literature to signify great classical books the best that has been written in the world such as Ramayan, Mahabharata, Aeneid, The Divine Comedy and Odyssey.

There have been many literary works in which we find the impact of comparative literature.

Several literary critics and thinkers have expressed their views in this connection. In this regard the name of Goethe Andre Gide and Gaule can be
mentioned. Milman Parry, Albert B. Gord and C.M. Bowra have widened the sense of literature, as far as the selection of excellent work is concerned, it is optional and it differs man to man. Sainte Buve tried to define classics some scholars as Herman Hesse and Arthur Waley who feel the necessity of the fusion of East and West in order to make the canon of literature, they also tried to focus on the value of comparative literature. Rene Welleck has listed other terms for comparative literature the views Claude Pichois and Rousseau are similar to aforesaid views.

There are some socio-economic reasons behind any great literary creation. We can understand if from the examples of Shakespeare and Kalidas. The study of comparative literature has no national character, it is not limited in the domain of nation or country. Due to the impact of literature writers have gained inspiration for the ages. Terms such as Literature comparée, anatomie comparée and course de literature comparée have been given by different scholars. This process has been going on for the centuries. It has been the experience of scholars that it expands the vision of scholars.

In the chapter II the subject of aesthetics has been discussed from oriental and western view points. In this chapter it has been told how comparative aesthetics is applied for the literary study.

In early years aesthetics was the subject of west. In the histories of aesthetics written by several writers, the matter was limited up to the writings of western thinkers from Plato. When the significance of oriental studies was understood in the later times then Indian aesthetics was also started to be studied in international arena. It led to the discovery of important insights in oriental aesthetics, applicable to art and aesthetic experience every where and made many western artists and critics believe the Western art has much to learn from Eastern methods. A number of orientalists came into being the names of prominent orientalist; Stella Karmrisch, R. Gnoli, Anand Coomarswamy, V. Raghavan, Benjamind Rowland, A.L. Basham, Manmohan Ghosh, K.C. Pandey and others.
can be mentioned in this respect.

Now *aesthetics* is not regarded as an exclusively western subject but as world-wide subject.

The word *aesthetics* means the study of beauty in all respects. In the context of Indian sense, this word denotes the science and philosophy of fine art. According to western sense it is somewhat different, pertaining to things perceptible by senses, things material. Hegal recognises architecture, music, poetry, sculpture and painting to be fine art but Indian authorities admit the first three only to be fine arts. Vatsyayan has listed 64 number of fine art. But as far as the literary study is concerned we include only the parameters of good when we study *aesthetics*. Poetry is the highest of all arts and drama is the highest of all forms of poetry. Music and scenic representations have been regarded auxiliaries to the drama. Primarily Indian poetics was centred around dramaturgy. The earliest treatise on the subject is *Natyashastra*. The value of the *aesthetics* in the present context has increased very much. Nowadays we approach the problem of beautiful not only from the philosophical viewpoint but also from the technical. Different theories of *aesthetics* known to the historians of *aesthetics* represent different points of view from which ‘Beauty’ has been studied by different thinkers at different times. The earliest theories (i) *hedoristic* (ii) *regoristic* and (iii) *moralistic* or *pedagogic* study the problem from the viewpoint of art, while the theories of (i) *imitation*, (ii) *illusion* and (iii) *idealized* have been advanced from the viewpoint of artist.

Indian aestheticians recognize sculpture and painting subordinate to architecture. Like Hegel they don’t suppose them as independent *fine arts*.

Oriental school of poetics has six types; *Dhvani, Rasa, Alamkar, Vakrokti, Reeti* and *Auchitya*. From Bharata (I Century A.D.) up to Pandit raj Jagannath, there had been many authors who wrote many treatises based one of the six systems.

In *western criticism* we find that it has been developing since Plato (427
B.C. – 347 B.C.). *Modern criticism* starts from T.S. Eliot which was continued by F.R. Leavis and I.A. Richards. In *New Criticism* or Post-modern *criticism*. Various theories such as Post-Structuralism, Colonism, Historicism, Feminism, Reader-Response theory, Deconstruction theory, Maxism and Freudianism are included. Due to development of technology it is very easy to be influenced by the literature of any other language.

Since the scope of *comparative literature* has widened, so the literary canons of the literature of any language is applied to evaluate the literature of any other language beyond the frontiers of nations and continents. Researches have been drawn in this course, some parallels between *anubhava*, a major constituent of *rasa* and T.S. Eliot’s *objective corelative* and also between sadharanikarana, another principle implied in *rasa theory* and the concept of *negative capability* expounded by Keats. Although there is a basic difference between *sadharanikarana* and *negative capability*; the first appears in common men/readers/viewers, while the second appears in poets but a via media can be traced between the two.

It has been observed that the great literary persons of previous age employed those devices in their literature which was not termed in their pertaining language while it was very well known and amicably termed in another language. As Shakespeare has employed the use of *vyatirek* figure of speech in *Mid Summer Night’s Dream* of Indian concept but he is a unaware of its origin.

In the chapter III the tradition of *Indian poetics* has been described from the very beginning up to the *post modern age*.

*Indian poetics* is mainly supposed to be parametre of poetry. Since the advent of *Ramayan and Mahabharata* after *Vedic literature* poetry was the main base of composing literary. *Sanskrit* prose writers were not free from the impact of bordic register of poets. In their works also we find, imagery, figures of speech, poetic style etc. Banabhatta, Subandhu, Dandin and some others are the prominent *Sanskrit* prose writes.
For the purpose of understanding Sanskrit literature it is very necessary to go through the tradition of Sanskrit poetics.

Sanskrit literature, where writings of a philosophical and speculative nature abound, has been a fertile field for critical theorizing on poetry from the earliest beginning of Bharata and Bhamah upto the present day many books have been written in Sanskrit with a view of enlightening the reader on the nature and scope of poetry and on the nature of poetic delight. It is supposed that since after Jagannath the original and creative thinking with keen insight had come to an end.

The credit of systematizing and coordinating the diverse theories put forward by earliest writers and formulating a synthetic theory out of them, goes to such outstanding writers like Mammata, Bhamah, Vaman, Kuntaka Kshemendra, Vishvanath Kaviraj and Panditraj Jagannath who succeeded them. All literary theories were built up with this presumption as the base declaring one or the other of the aforesaid concepts was the soul of poetry. Thus the emphasis shifted from one concept to the other. In many instances there arose a group of writers who subscribed to a particular view and this resulted in the formation of school of critical thought (referred to Sanskrit as vadas). Thus in theory of poetry, we hear of rasavada, alamkara vada and so forth. The rasa school would maintain that rasa is the soul of poetry, reetivadins, reeti so on. Poetry has been compared to human being by aestheticians.

Though eight concepts have been thus expounded, all the eight of them are not of equal significance. Some theories are seen to be sub-divisions of another and infact merged into the latter within the course of time. Alamkara school is the earliest known theory of poetic criticism in Sanskrit. Natyashastra is an encyclopaedic manual on thearte arts, it is the oldest treatise on the subject of poetics. Rasa theory starts from this treatise. Several commentaries are available on it.

The Kavyalamkar of Bhamah (7th century A.D.) the Kavyalamkar Samgraha of Udbhata (8th century A.D.) and Kavyalamkara of Rudrata (9th
century A.D.) deal the subject of alamkara school. Dandin (8th century A.D.) has the credit of presenting alamkara theory systematically.

Vamana (9th century A.D.) built up the theory based on reeti (style) in which qualities (gunas) have been discussed for the standard of good poetry.

Anandvardhan’s Dhvnyalok (9th century A.D.) revolutionized the entire Indian poetics. Anandvardhan and following him, Abhinavagupta, the commentator of his treatise, were the first to recognize and emphasize the importance of the function of suggestion in poetic language. The followers of Anandvardhan became successful in incorporating the concept of rasa into their critical framework.

The foul wheels of rasa system, are Bhatt Lollata, Shri Shankuk, Bhatt, Nayaka and Abhinavagupta who applied utpattivada, anumitivada, bhuktivada and abhivyaktivada respectively.

The Kavyamimasa of Rajshekhar (10th century A.D.) is not assigned to any school.

In 11th Century Kuntaka composed Vakrokiyevita to refute the dhvani theory. The staunch opponent of dhvani theory was Mahimbhatt (11th century A.D.).

The last school is auchitya school, the propounder of this theory is Khemendra (11th century A.D.). The author of Auchityavicharcharcha.

Mammata (11th century A.D.) is very outstanding luminary of Sanskrit poetics. His Kavyaprakash is a profound work on the poetics with several commentaries.

During the years other poeticians also wrote their works. But the last great poetician is Panditraj Jagannath whose Rasagangadhara is a complete manual of poetic theory.

In the latest research, the names of some other poeticians have been found out who occurred after Panditraj Jagannath.

In this respect we cann’t overlook the modern Sanskrit poetics also which is
not untouched of *comparative literature*. Brahmanand Sharma, Rewa Prasad Dwivedi. Govind Chandra Pandey, Rajendra Mishra and some others are the big names who contributed in the *post modern Sanskrit poetics*.

In the chapter IV the chronological study of Wordsworth’s life has been analyzed and it has been found out how he was motivated to compose poetry. In this connection it has been searched that he was in the touch of oriental studies.

Before we study the *poetics* and poems of Wordsworth in the context of *rasa* theory, it is very necessary to look into his life. On the basis of close study we find that two factors were responsible in shaping him as a poet. (i) his surroundings in which he spent his half of the life and aspirations by which he was motivated (ii) Wordsworth was much indebted to oriental ideas and learning as this fact has been disclosed by Prof. K.G. Srivastava in his book *Bhagvadgita and the English Romantic Movement: A study in influence*. According to Prof. Srivastava not only Wordsworth but the entire romantic movement was influenced by this sacred book.

Outwardly his life can be divided into four periods (i) his childhood and youth in the Cumberland Hills from 1770 to 1787; (ii) a period of uncertainty of storm and stress, including his life at Cambridge, his travels abroad and his experience of French revolution from 1787 to 1797 (iii) a short but significant period of finding himself and his work from 1797 to 1799 (iv) a long period of retirement in the northern lake region.

Wordsworth passed his early days in misery, since the very beginning he used to take much interest in the midst of Nature. Wordsworth has mentioned this fact in his famous poem *The Prelude*. During his primary education. Ann Tyson an old dame William Taylor, the head master of Hawkshead Grammar School were very inspiring personalities. Besides it Wordsworth was fond of reading Fielding’s works, *Don Quixote*, *Gulliver’s Travels*. Geometry was his favourite subject. Even during the higher education he used to take interest in this subject. During the B.A. education at Cambridge he used to study beyond syllabus so he
secured only II\textsuperscript{nd} class in the final examination of B.A. He started composing poem after the end of (1791-92) his education at Cambridge. \textit{Descriptive sketches} was his first poem. In the search of job he went to Paris fell in love with Annette Vallon and an intelligimate female child was born from her. Wordsworth couldn’t marry Annette Vallon due to some reasons.

Wordsworth remained jobless, due to mometary help from his posthumous friend he carried forward his poetic career. At Alfoxden Wordsworth met S.T. Coleridge and in 1798 A.D. Both of them jointly published \textit{Lyrical Ballads}. His poetic career was upto 1814 although he composed poems throughout the life. In 1802 he married Mary Hutchinson. At Dove Cottage Wordsworth found himself to be recognized as a good literary personality and came into contact of a number of literary persons including Watter Scott, George Beaumont, and De Quincey.

Under the royal patronage his financial condition improved because he had become the supporter of Tory Party, so he was appointed as the distributor of stamps in Westmoreland and received a pension of £. 300 from Sir Robert Peele.

In last quarter of his life he was not only appointed a poet laureate but honoured by several universities.

Persons who influenced him very much are, Dorothy, his sister, Annette Vallon, with whom he had an illicit love affair and his wife Mary Hutchinsion. Besides it he took inspiration from the philosophy of Godwin, Locke, Rousseau, Hartley and Coleridge. It was Coleridge who motivated him towards oriental learning. In the aforementioned book of Prof. K.G. Srivastava we find sufficient evidence that he was very much influenced from the \textit{oriental learning} and \textit{Bhagvadgita} was studied by him.

In the chapter V the elements of \textit{rasa} and \textit{dhvani} has been traced out in Wordsworth’s poetics. Applying the theory of Panditraj Jagannath we find that there is a logical connection of his poetic theory with \textit{rasa} theory. Further we find that to some extent Coleridge’s theory of \textit{fancy} and \textit{imagination} is applicable to \textit{rasa} theory.
The evolution of *rasa* theory is the greatest achievement of *Sanskrit poetics* and *rasa school* is just and foremost among the schools discussing the soul of poetry. Similarly *dhvani-theory* of Sanskrit poetics is very popular and finds its prominence in many ways. William Wordsworth (170-1850 A.D.) is an English poet belonging to Romantic Age. We can trace the elements of *rasa* and *dhvani* in his poetic definition.

*Rasa* theory has been declared many a time by the phrases like *şokD; aşJlkReda dkO;e~ ¼lkfgR;niZ.k] izFke ifjPNSn½^- After the entire analysis it has been found out that during the feeling of *rasa* in the mind of readers/spectators intimate realization comes after the limitation of the ego-centric attitude is transcended and separate existence of unity or harmony realized. It is therefore described as a relish in which the contemplation of anything but rasa is lost.

*Rasa* emanates from a combination or cominglinga of *vibharas* (causes), *anubhavas* (effects) and *vyabhicharis* (accessories). Bharat coined this term in order to denote aesthetic relish in his treatise *Natyashashtra*. The significance of *rasa* was considered on a very high scale in the drama. Bharata has discussed the process of rasa in his treatise.

Permanent moods seem to be very similar to basic instincts of modern psychology. Bhatt, Lollata, Shri Shankuk, Bhatt Nayak and Abhinavagupta Padacharya are the interpreters of *rasa* theory who tried to interpret, it with their different principles. Wordsworth too expounded his views on poetry, its nature and function and the qualifications of a true poet in his *Preface* to 1802 A.D. edition of *Lyrical Ballads* and later developed his theory in the *Preface* to the 1815 A.D.’s edition and a supplementary essay. To find out the elements of *rasa* theory, in Wordsworth’s poetic principles, it is very necessary to go through the entire text of *Preface To Lyrical Ballads*. After examining the whole text we find some elements of *rasa theory* in the text. But it doesn’t occur systematically. Wordsworth says, “poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings”. In other words poetry proceeds from the internal feelings of the poet. The compound
term *organic sensibility* used by the poet in the *Preface* seems to stand for the combination of *vibharas, anubhavas* and *vyabhichari bhavas*.

Panditraj Jaganatth didn’t follow the exact theory of *rasa* propounded by Bharata. Applying the principle of Jagannath we touch the closeness between *rasa* theory and Wordsworth’s poetic definition.

Next Wordsworth further says “poetry takes its origin emotions recollected from tranquility”. It seems that Wordsworth has followed Abhinavagupta who considers *shant rasa* as the *basic rasa*.

Wordsworth claims that “poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge.” Thus idea is very similar to Mammat who considers poetry is the best medium to understand nonworldly matter.

Further Wordsworth says about poetry: “Poetry is reason in its exalted mood”. This definition seems to be very similar to the canon of *dhvani*. In the latter stage *rasa* and *dhvani* both mingled in *rasa theory* and the excellent poetry was supposed which depicts *rasa-dhvani*.

About verse system Wordsworth’s ideas are very similar to that of *Sanskrit* poeticians.

Among the other romantic poets S.T. Coledrige is the person whose theory of *Fancy* and *Imagination* can be applied in terms of *anumitivada* of Shankuk.

In chapter VI some poems of Wordsworth have been taken up to find the element of *rasa* in them. Along with it, we study their poetic qualities.

We select some popular poems of William Wordsworth to search the elements of *rasa* in his poems because we can’t discuss all his poems due to limitation of the length of this thesis since entire poetic work of Wordsworth is longer than this research work. Along with it we study the poetical qualities of these poems also. For the critical study of *rasas* in Wordsworth’s poems we can classify his poems in three groups (i) The poems of *shant rasa* (ii) The poems of *karuna rasa* (iii) The poems of *other rasas*. 
Shant rasa is of two types in Wordsworth’s poetry (i) when the poet expresses his views of spiritual elevation (ii) Where the poet feels deeply involved in sketching natural scenes and sights. In the first category comes the poems as *Immortality Ode* and *The world Is Too Much With Us*. In the second category comes as *it Is A Beauteous Evening Calm and Free*. Although traditional Sanskrit poeticians haven’t expressed their opinion about such poems but this norm and custom are already available in the works of great classical Sanskrit poets i.e. Valmiki and Vedvyas. Following these poets we consider that *shant rasa* should be supposed to exist in these poems because reading these pieces the reader feels the emotion of serenity in his mind.

For the purpose of study of rasa the poems taken of *shant rasa* are *Tintern Abbey, Immorality Ode, The Prelude, Prelude, The Excursion, The Worlds Is Too Much With Us, It Is A Beauteous Evening Calm and Free, Composed Upon Westminster Bridge, Daffodils, The Solitary Reaper, Oh! Mystery of Man, To The Cuckoo, The Nightingale and To The Skylark.*


For the purpose of study of other rasas in the poet’s poems, the poems included are *French Revolution, To Milton. It Is Not To Be Thought Of That Flood, Character Of Happy Warrior and She Was A Phantom Of Delight.*

There may be other poems for the selection of case-study which may be subject of analysis in the research work.

In the chapter VII Wordsworth’s place in the field of literature has been discussed. In this connection his influence on literature and his estimate as a literary personality also is a matter of discussion.

Romanticism was started by Thomas Gray, William Blake, Robert Burns
and Southey but from the time of Wordsworth it took the shape of a literary
movement. In respect of the thesis, it is better to enlarge the scope and include the
poets not only of English, Sanskrit, Hindi and other languages when we decide to
assess Wordsworth’s placement among great literary giants of world.

Although Wordsworth composed long poems as *The Prelude* and *The
Excursion* but such poems are not appealing to the readers as classical epics appeal
to the readers. We may agree with Mathew Arnold that Wordsworth’s long poems
lack the depth of excellent poetry. So it is in vain to discuss Wordsworth’s genius
with the genius of grand epic poets. *Sanskrit* epic poets were the masters of style
and vividness which make their works far from being monotonous.

Wordsworth’s this *short coming* can be studied under the blemishes of
Sanskrit poetics.

In making to any great literary work, different factors are involved and it
depends on socio economic dynamics of different works. The popular appeal of
the works of Shakespeare, Milton and Tulsidas can be easily understood in this
context. We may say that circumstances of his age in which Wordsworth born was
not much favourable to him.

*Wordsworth’s* significance resides particularly for the depiction of nature.
Wordsworth’s one of the *Lucy Poems Three Years She Grew* can be studied in
reference to the depiction of the upbringing of *Shakuntala* in Acharya Kanva’s
ashram where flora and fauna play a vital role. But Wordsworth has not depicted
the terrible aspect of Nature while Bhavabhuti does it very successfully in IInd Act
of *Uttarramcharit*.

Wordsworth selected the language of common people for the purpose of
composing poems. So he made the poetry, a subject of study for the common
people.

Wordsworth’s demerits and merits both are necessary to assess his place in
the field of poetry.

His demerits are :- (i) inequality in the standard (ii) excessive egotism (iii)
lack of lyricism, (iv) lack of style (v) lack of surprises (vi) limited range of his poetry.

His merits are: (i) His unique approach to Nature, (ii) as the poet of man, (iii) unique spiritual and mystic English poet (iv) as a teacher (v) his healing power of his poetry.

There is a wide influence of Wordsworth on posterior poets. The points on which Wordsworth influenced these poets are (i) broader sense in regard to concept of God. (ii) Hellenism and Medievalism (iii) break from set rules (iv) revolutionary zeal (v) description of Nature.

Wordsworth had influence on the thinkers also. John Sturat Mill and Leslie Stephen were much influenced by him.

The Chayavada of modern age of Hindi poetry is very much influenced from Wordsworth. We find an echo of Wordsworth in the works of literary giants-Jay shankar Prasad. Pt. Survyakant Tripathi Nirala, Sumitra Nandal Pant and Mahadevi Verma.

Wordsworth has an indirect contribution in Indian renaissance. It was the power of Wordsworth’s poetic genius that an atheist Narendra became an Hindu monk known as Swami Vivekananda.

In portraying a harmonious and joyous relationship between Man and Nature, in relying upon the authenticity of intuition rather than reason of self impressions in mystically visualizing the essential unity in the midst of diversity and in the divine spirit that “rolls through all things” Wordsworth displays a greater affinity of sprit with Rabindranath than any other English poet.

Tagore followed the idea of liberty also expressed by Wordsworth.

Wordsworth’s greatest contribution to the literary world is that he has widened our perception and sharpened our emotion relating these not only with our present environment but with our future generation.

A number of critics have expressed their opinion about the significance of Wordsworth among these Firaq Gorakhpuri’s opinion is precisely befitting.
Finally we may consider the opinion of Mathew Arnold who places Wordsworth’s rank next to Shakespeare and Milton in the evaluation of literature but thinks that he is one of the chief glories of English poetry.