

SIGNPOST

**Evolving Poetic Utterance:
New Frontiers and Visual Signatures**



**P.G. DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
NAIPUNNYA INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT AND
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
PONGAM, KORATTY**

SIGNPOST
Evolving Poetic Utterance:
New Frontiers and Visual Signatures



P.G. DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
NAIPUNNYA INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT AND
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
PONGAM, KORATTY

Language: English

Evolving Poetic Utterance: New Frontiers and Visual Signatures

Collection of essays edited by: Grace K. Benny, Greena Joseph and Dr. P. Kumar

© Authors

Publication year: 2022

Cover design: SM Press

Layout: SM Press

Printing: SM Press

Publishing

Association for Cultural and Scientific Research

Thrissur- 680689

Circulation

P.G. Department of English

Naipunnaya Institute of Management and Information Technology,

Pongan, Koratty

Thrissur, Kerala, India, Pin 680308

ISBN: 978-81-952711-2-2

Transhumanism: *A Taste for Transgression in the prospect of Jeanette W.*
The Stone Gods
Cyril B.

Binding of Women and History on Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid*
Agnes Beneeta Dsilva

Peregrination into the Human Psyche through Underlying Spiritual Philoso
movie *Manassinakkare*
Jameelathu. K.A

Postmodernism, Identity and Late Capitalism
Simon Peter

Blending of Science and Horror Fiction in the novel *The Invisible Man* by
H.G. Wells
Vandana Martin

The Puppets: Students' Thoughts are Under the Control of Political Parties
Abhinandh Jeneesh

Peregrination into the Human Psyche through Underlying Spiritual Philosophy in the movie *Manassinakkare*

Jameelathu.K.A

Assistant Professor

Research Department of English

Mes Asmabi College.P.Vemballur

Abstract

Movies act as a reformative medium from the time it has been initiated as an art form. A spiritualistic change that occurs when purified by "arousing pity and fear" as Aristotle said can really modify men by making them think reflectively on life and meaning of life. Religion, wealth and power are the tools with which we measure our happiness normally. But watching an apt movie makes us think philosophically about life, shifting our mental texture from material leaning to the spiritual leaning and thus we start thinking about an egalitarian society. Some movies pierce into our mind, making a trepidation within and topsyturvying our concept of life altogether. Malayalam movie "Manassinakkare", thus affects our conscience suggesting a lot many possibilities of burden free life showing the mysterious paths of Sisyphean life. The recurrence of life's frivolous, sometimes cruel mockery makes the movie more like a purgatory. It moves in like a well written poem to our heart and tickles our ego to shed itself as a snake's moult. The rustic greenery throughout the movie signifies the eco-related peacefulness and solemnity. The songs echo the strong relation of man and nature. The ideal and the real are placed side by side in the movie. A middle generation moving towards thorough materialism and the old and the new turning towards the ideal rustic notion brings a poetic charm to the whole movie. An Eco-Culture evolving out of the Taoist philosophy is latent here and sometimes reflects through some of the characters.

Keywords: Purgatory, Taoism, Sisyphean, Eco-culture

Introduction

The rhythm of the universe lies in the balanced life of humans and animals. Man should understand the value of and start practicing, aligning oneself to the natural way of cosmos, simple life. In that process, he gains the wisdom to

understand the pain of life in the universe and the methods to surpass the pain. Joy comes out as a natural result when we become one with the rhythm. Chinese spiritual philosophy Taoism is closely connected with nature, as man and animals are regarded as the two sides of the nature in this. It speaks about pure joy and stress free life as the sole result of this close connection. Movies sometimes act as the daydream fulfilment of its creator sometimes as Sigmund Freud suggested in his "Creative writers and Day dreaming". Man dreams about an ideal life which will never happen in his real life as Plato said that the ideal is the thing of heaven and we have the copy of what is ideal in heaven. And so he fulfils his daydream through his creative art. The Malayalam movie Manassinakkare, beyond the mind, directed by Sri Sathyan Anthikad imbibes that poetic charm of a dream and instils the same into the aesthetic mind.

Key Concepts of Taoism

Chinese Taoism or Daoism is a spiritual philosophy that closely connects its followers to Nature and normal earthbound life. It is mostly value based, focussing on genuineness as a human being, vitality and natural action, refinement and selfless nature and immortality. It acknowledges the core of all religions as the same, regardless of its multifarious differences. Pure poetics and aesthetics emerge out of this earthbound life and mirth that is unpolluted and natural. Simplicity, patience and compassion to the fellow being make the perfect navigation through life. Wu Wei or perfect equilibrium with life is the primary focus of Taoism. It means no force is needed, life happens in its own way and everything is done naturally. Man need not hold on to anything or he needn't use coercion or force. Natural flow of life should not be disturbed. Man should live in perfect harmony with nature to have a peaceful and happy life. Human interference often disturbs the natural order and harmony. Longevity is associated with this principle of non-interference with nature. Tao or Dao means "path", "method", "principle" or the "way" The Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu or Lao Tze is the founder of this philosophy. He has authored the philosophical work called *Tao Te Ching*.

Unusual normalcy in Manassinakkare

The main concern of the paper is the harmonious poetic charm of the 2003 Sathyan Anthikad movie Manassinakkare which portrays the childlike

Kochuthresia's unusual friendship with Reji, a down to earth young man, which brings the hope to be a long-lasting friendship. As a socially committed director, Sathyan Anthikad always brings about 'sons of the earth' stories that pours into human psyche kicking the conscious, subconscious and unconscious realms. The movie stresses many relations that ranges from familial, emotional, biological and ideological and the frustrations and fragmentations connected to it. Familial relations are only biological as far as Kochuthresia and her family is concerned whereas purely emotional when the relation of Reji and Chakko Mappila are concerned. It is ideological to Sreedharan and Shanthamma, and seems platonic to Reji and Gouri. The whole movie runs like smooth flowing river with certain undercurrents in it. Taoist principle of 'being away from domination' is the main focus of this movie. Shadow of the past recurs when Kochuthresia emotionally drifts back to her good old days. The concept of the gone days are of an egalitarian society where man loved men, nature and animals. The calf Malu interrelates her to her past and so she likes to cling on to that animal whenever she can. Her relation with Reji is also connected with this calf as Tony sells this to Reji to get rid of the nuisance of mother's over concern for that. This selling off and buying has a significance as it perplexes the world of Kochuthresia when her sons started disobeying and contradicting her. Malu is her sole connection with the past to which she nostalgically clings on whenever something hurts her. Tony threatens to sell it to the butcher to ward off her obstinacy. Now she is purity itself and her pranks are connected with her grandchildren who spiritually inherits her innocence.

Reji who buys the calf tries to instil a sense of responsibility in his father Chakko Mappila who is a drunkard. He is the one who represents Tao in this movie. Even when he is sad about his father's drunkenness, he is not ready to force anything on him. His concern over his father's health and the trouble Chacko unwittingly causes others make Reji take his father to the Retreat Centre, but as he is not ready to impose any restrictions on him, he takes him back to the house. Reji's taking his drunken father on his shoulder signifies life's inevitable circular mode which Tao Te Ch'ing refers as a natural flow. Life should have a natural flow without any coercion exerted on it. Kochuthresia's naive actions prevent Tony to take her to the theatre, but Reji takes her and both of them energises the audience with their reflexive responses to the happenings in the movie. The hypocrisy of the so called

sophisticated society is satirised in Kochuthresia's reply to Aliyamma's sarcastic laughter when Tony refuses to take her "The people who sit in the boxes will not respond to the happenings in the movie". Kochuthresia is not ready to comply with the hypocritical society as she claims to be 'the daughter of the earth'. She cries and laughs to follow the natural flow, Wu Wei. There is no place for the passionate desires like amassing wealth through uncanny ways like mixing up undesirable things in the toddy to increase the effect and thereby increase the demand for it in Kochuthresia. Tony cheats her through running the toddy shop using her licence and thereby putting her in the jail for the death of the drunkards. Biological relations versus emotional relations when Kochuthresia decides to sell her property to pay compensation for the dead person's family. Tony who refuses to facilitate her release by giving the compensation as he claims himself to be bankrupt comes first with ready cash when she sets an auction for her house. Disposing everything Kochuthresia goes back to live her rustic life in the small house which her husband had built in the midst of paddy field. Reji enjoins her with Gouri as a promising support.

Moral Codes in the Movie

The movie runs on like a conversational mode of vices and virtues. The vices are mostly concentrated on domination through coercion. Arrogance rules over mother and society through force, greed tries to eke out possessions through force, Desire for power feigns humanitarian sentiments using domination and force. Virtues give away happiness and support, thus contributing to the Wu- Wei, or equilibrium. There is no hoarding and boasting in virtues. Characters like Tony, Benny, Sherin, Moliamma and most of all, Kuriakose represent vices. Sreedharan, Shanthamma, Gouri and Kunjumaria are for the sons of the soil concept besides Reji and Kochuthresia. They are closely connected to the earth and relations on earth. A middle generation is portrayed as unscrupulous and selfish. Food is also discriminated in arrogance as the homely made food of Kochumaria is thrown off as dirty and the junk food is preferred as clean. The movie criticises the unhealthy preference given to junk food that might be the root cause of fatal illnesses like cancer. Virtuous characters are highlighted as most of them unwittingly inherits Taoist virtues.

The close tie that even drives into an everlasting tie between Reji and Kochuthresia is caused by Kochuthresia's affection towards Malu, the calf which is just like her daughter. It moos when she calls it by its name, indicating the gratitude animal world has for its protector. Human world ungratefully discards relations after facilitating and attaining their selfish ends. Kochuthresia shows this world that human beings need not amass wealth and money to live happily in this world. The absolute happiness that we get when we live in close connection with nature without owning it personally, is all that we need to live. The philosophy of Taoism brings peace and solemnity and thereby purifying our wounded heart of all its impurities. The movie ends when Reji comes to take Kochuthresia as his mother. Kunjumaria, the old friend of Kochuthresia goes abroad to look after her son's children as servants are very expensive there. The adjectives 'kunju' 'kochu' etc indicates the practice of the old generation to attach a title of humility on them so as not to become proud or arrogant of their material prosperity. The place is 'Kinasseri' which has the magical spell of a dream. Gouri too prefers to be a part of the unselfish life of Reji and Kochumaria thereby causing the total decay of religious barriers also. Taoist principles are the ways of natural life, the pure and unmixed pleasure that we get while observing nature with a pure heart. The five songs in the movie reiterate the theme by melodiously reflecting on the relationship with nature. The songs Marakkudayal and Chellathathe are full of images from nature, instilling the essence of life in every lines. Reji pulls Kochuthresia in to nostalgia by singing Melleyonnu padi...Kochuthresia ruminates over the circular mode of life when she thinks about her disobedience towards her parents.

Conclusion

The life of obligations suffocates human life; struggle to live up to others' expectations vexes human mind with its entanglements and sometimes proves fatal to those who neurotically suffers to attain the unattainable. There is a clear message in this movie that joy never comes out of wealth. Pleasure may come out of the comforts money can buy; but not joy. Coercion makes things difficult. Life should be lived with ease. Taoism with its wide range underlies the very theme of this movie, which spreads a message around that nothing is permanent and so try to make the lives easier by moving along with the flow of life. Biological relations should be properly pillared by mental identifications, otherwise it will become purely material.

Movies like *Manassinakkare* are capable of modifying human psyche as it enters smoothly into the subconscious and we get purified of our emotions through universalisation of emotions or catharsis.

Works Cited

B, Watson. tr., *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* 1968

Freud, Sigmund. *Creative Writers and Day dreaming* 1908

Pramod Ranjan *Manassinakkare* dir. by Sathyan Anthikad - 2003

Rossi, Martino. *What is beauty?: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Aesthetic Experience* Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2020

Waley, *The Way and Its Power* 1935; D. C. Lau, tr., *Tao Te Ch'ing* 1963