

# Title- Nature as philosopher: A Poetic Journey of Jayanta Mahapatra.

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## Abstract

Nature is the mirror of literature and philosophy portrays the mirror in meaningful words. Indian writing has always resonated with this philosophy where Jayanta Mahapatra has showed a significance role in depicting natural imagery in the best form for readers. His mastery made a hallmark in the poetry journey. His use of metaphor made the imagery more meaningful. His poem is deep and multifaceted that often grappled for self-identity quest. His poem reflects the complexities of urban life and struggle of rural life. The lyrical lines composed by him explores the human experiences. His poetry densely reflects the roots of Orissa through portrayal of culture, tradition, Nature, realities and landscapes. His poetry has gained mastery in evoking a sense of cultural glory and realities of modern life. His lyrical verses has frequently explored the existential potential of modern life. He wrote many remarkable poems dedicated to the reality of Nature and surrounding. *Dawn at Puri* is one among the best collection of his poems.

Key words: Nature, Philosophy Imagery, Urban, rural, Landscape, Metaphor

## Introduction:

Nature has served a profound framework for lyricists across generations. It offers a lens to explore moral development. Nature is portrayed as a moral teacher which motivates to receive inner peace and spiritual growth with its rhythm. Nature has always been considered as superior to human made world. This philosophical approach extends to Ralph Waldo Emerson, an American poet who established transcendentalism and referred Nature as Universal Being. It is also considered that to feel Nature one must embrace solitude in the lap of Nature and universe. Henry David Thoreau, other American poet has developed philosophical stance to establish a harmonious relation between human and environment which recognises intrinsic value of Nature beyond utility. English romantic poets particularly William Wordsworth developed the philosophical transformed relation with Nature adjoining with western thoughts. In his autobiographical world *The Prelude* poet reconnects with Nature that saved his understanding of life and character. This belief serves as a moral compass guiding life's complexities while nurturing unity with world.

## Objective of the study:

- To investigate the relevance of ecological imagery and symbolism employed in Mahapatra's poems.
- The impact of poetic lines on environment and humanity.

## Research Methodology

This study relies on secondary sources of data such as articles, books, research papers, journals, websites, and so on. It is based on Descriptive Analysis of Jayanta Mahapatra's poems in philosophical tone.

## Themes in Nature based Philosophical poetry

Harmony and Nature growth require an active engagement with expression it has also emphasised solitude in Nature as a way to self-awareness. This isolation helps individuals in getting close to Nature adding the individuality and escaping the worldly distractions. He believes that Nature holds capability to heal and nurture the soul. Wordsworth viewed Nature as a living, powerful force. His poetry explores themes such as beauty, serenity, and Nature may provide spiritual renewal and evoke powerful emotions and insights for individuals. Wordsworth believed that Nature had a divine character that might bring solace and wisdom in a world becoming increasingly

industrialized and distant. He regarded Nature as teaching lessons about humility and interdependence among all living species. Wordsworth's poems aimed to express the beauty of Nature and its transformational power on the human spirit, inspiring readers to reconnect with Nature. Wordsworth's poetry describe Nature in many ways. He views the natural environment as a source of spirituality, wisdom, love, and eternal bliss. He sees God and Nature as one entity.

Despite secular literature's popularity, Nature retained a significant presence. Chaucer pioneered English poetry. Chaucer is the father of English poetry. Chaucer's appreciation for Nature is undeniable among his readers. One of the finest poems: *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales* begins with a depiction of spring, conveying a sense of Nature's freshness.

Few lines from his poem mentioned below:

*When that Aprille with his showers soote  
The draught of March hath perced to the roote  
And bathed every vein in swich licour  
Of which virtue engendered is the flour;  
When Zephyrus eek with his sweet breeth  
Inspired hath in every holt and heath  
The tendre croppes, and the younger sonne  
Hath in Ram his half ecourse y-ronne  
And smale fowles maken melody.  
That slapen all the night with open ye  
So prinketh him Nature in his courages  
Thane longen folk to goan on pilgrimage".<sup>1</sup>*

The poets of the eighteenth century used both meanings to create their perception of Nature. The eighteenth century poets made a significant contribution to English Nature poetry by shifting the focus from exterior characteristics to the whole. Up to the seventeenth century, poets described natural objects such as flowers, rivers, Valleys, hills, landscapes, the cycle of the day and the cycle of the seasons. As they were at one with Nature, their ae pocas abounded in natural imagery. But within the eightens century the external aspect was less cared for and what the poets strove for was the expression of the halaace, orderliness and harmony of Nature in poetry. The public aspect of Nature is disorderly, haphazard and irregular but the system is ideal and thus the eighteenth century poets followed Nature in poetry but wanted their poetry to be Nature methodized.

Indian English poets often explored the relationship between Nature, humanity, and philosophical ideas, reflecting themes of interconnectedness, spirituality, and the human experience within the natural world. Despite present socio-cultural and political challenges, the handling of Nature remains significant in a capital-oriented and technological society. Writers of this period are actively depicting the landscape via their Pen to educate the world about Nature. Eco-conscious writers who focus on Nature's deterioration often address this issue in their poems. Nature and literature have a strong relationship. Poets and authors from several civilizations throughout the world have exemplified this concept. The connection between Nature and the social world is increasingly being explored and emphasized. Literary critics analyze how writers have portrayed the connection between Nature and civilization in their works. There are two words in this situation. Ecology and ecocriticism have grown in significance in recent years. Many Indian English writers deal with Nature. Nature can be viewed through an aesthetic, philosophical, or spiritual lens. This research does an ecological analysis of selected Indian English poetry to give a general perspective. The Earth's environment is deteriorating. Nature has an important role in poetry expressions, both thematically and artistically. Nature's components, such as rivers, sky, trees, animals, and beings, frequently hold symbolic importance. That adds intricacy to lyrical creations and improves their texture. Contemporary Indian English poetry reflects an eco-conscious worldview that resonates with worldwide audiences and warns of looming environmental threats. Nature has always shown to be stronger than humans. Natural disasters such as starvation, drought, floods, and earthquakes have been used to exert control over human resources. Human life and Nature are so inextricably interwoven that they cannot be separated. They protect themselves from its impact. Our careless activities do

irrevocable harm to Nature. The ecosystem functions like a chain, with everything interconnected and affecting one another. These poems express care for the environment and ecology, reflecting personal and cultural views towards the environment. They also convey a message to the masses to preserve Nature and the environment.

A known poet from India owning ice-breaker quality in lyrical composition took birth on the land of Nature and culture. Jayanta Mahapatra magistically known for his lyrical composition dedicated to the culture and Nature of Orissa. A Sahitya Academy Awardee and receiver of several accolades has also been rewarded with Padma Shri in 2009. His poetic journey begins with the commendable work *Close the Sky Ten by Ten* published in 1971 with the work he explored the cultural struggle and displacement of Nature and culture of the surrounding. Utilization of ordinary images of landscape defines his approach of his thoughts and thinking. His most characteristics are ironic reflections concerning love and sensuality with deep understanding of Indian environment. His poetry dives deeply into the workings of the human mind, examining emotions, memories, and philosophical problems. He inspires readers to reflect on life's mysteries and their own role in the world. The poet frequently employs first-person narration to examine his personal experiences and thoughts. This personal emphasis enables readers to connect with his feelings and thoughts on a deeper level. He uses rich imagery and symbolism to express complicated concepts and emotions. He creates expressive and thought-provoking images using inspiration from Nature, mythology, and everyday life. The poet regularly delves into identity issues, both personal and societal. He investigates the difficulties of moving across cultural contexts and the search for one's genuine self. Many of Mahapatra's poems are infused with a sense of loss and dislocation. He thinks about the loss of loved ones, cultural traditions, and the passing of time. His poetry frequently addresses philosophical themes concerning life, death, and the meaning of existence. He asks readers to examine the universe's deepest secrets. Despite the complexities of his ideas, Mahapatra employs simple and understandable language. His poems are frequently deceptively simple, enabling readers to focus on the core concepts and feelings.

Jayanta Mahapatra's poetry are often expressive, allegorical, and to the point. He can convey himself more effectively with less words. The author allows readers to imagine and ponder for themselves. Because he cannot take the burden of existence, he aspires to begin life afresh. The poet's desire is obvious in the poem *Starting Point*. He cites climate change as a source of ecological degradation among other natural disasters. Environmental degradation and climate change have a devastating consequence that the poet cannot bear. He wishes to return to the *Starting Point* and restart his life. It explores the poet's emotional reaction to the devastation of the natural world, notably the effects of climate change and environmental degradation. He expresses a wish to return to a former condition, a "starting point," where he might start over, possibly with a revitalized sense of connection to Nature.

Few lines from the poem *Starting point* mentioned below:

*Thirsty-looking branches  
For a barefooted love in the distance,  
Half of what I see isn't there.  
The river flows, like a dying man  
Its body tangled in the weeds,  
And the sky, a bruised purple,  
Weeps at its own emptiness.  
The wind, a forgotten song,  
Rustles through the skeletal trees,  
Whispering tales of a world gone by.  
And I, standing at the edge of nothing,  
Look for a sign, a glimmer of hope,  
In the decaying landscape.*<sup>2</sup>

The poet equates love with rain, which the plants eagerly await. The poet is accustomed to things that are full of life and energy. The sudden transformation has left him pining for the life he once had. The poem's language is saturated. The poem explores how the past and present intersect. Language is used to constrain experience. The

poet acknowledges that human language has limitations and can only express so much. The poem explores friction between rural and urban areas. He longs for a rustic atmosphere which employs rich images of Nature and human sorrow to portray disadvantaged people's hardships as well as the poet's personal musings on life's intricacies. The poem's imagery and symbolism successfully reflect the poet's views and feelings about the world around him, particularly the sharp contrasts between Nature and human misery.

His other best remarkable poem dedicated to the life of Nature is *Dawn at puri*. In the setting of a revered Indian beach, it examines the relationship between death, Nature, and religious rites. The poem criticizes cultural traditions as well as the human condition via powerful imagery and symbolism. A cremation pyre, a skull, and the picture of widows waiting outside the temple represent death, poverty, and religious restrictions, respectively. The poem is split among stanzas that alternate between the beach, the temple, and the cremation area, reflecting the poet's shift in attention and observations. Poetic lines of the poem mentioned below:

*Endless crow noises*

*A skull in the holy sands*

*tilts its empty country towards hunger.*

*White-clad widowed Women*

*past the centers of their lives*

*are waiting to enter the Great Temple*

*Their austere eye*

*stare like those caught in a net*

*hanging by the dawn's shining strands of faith.<sup>3</sup>*

The first stanza's first three lines discuss three distinct topics: the crows' crowing, which is a common ornithological scene in India; the holy ling on the sands, which was once a living man; and heat, dust, hunger, and poverty, which are prevalent throughout the vast nation where the biggest issue is finding food and clothing. The former describes the atmosphere of Puri sea beach at daybreak. The nation is also struggling with illiteracy, ignorance, backwardness, superstition, inaction, and fatalism. Crows, astrologers, palmists, pundits, and middlemen, dana-doers and dana-takers, all characterize Indian poverty in their own distinctive way. *Dawn at Puri* is a moving story that explores the human condition through the perspective of Nature and religious ceremonies. It employs powerful imagery and symbolism to convey the intricacies of life, death, faith, and social reality in India. The poem encourages readers to consider the interplay of these aspects and to rethink the standard narratives they frequently take for granted.

## Conclusion

Jayanta Mahapatra's poetry on Nature express his worry about environmental destruction. The Nature He relies much on imagery in his poetry. Mahapatra's poetry use regional color and sensitivity to depict human realities and predicaments across many settings. The poet uses Nature to explore philosophical themes. He writes in English, although his poetry is profoundly entrenched in Indian culture. He draws inspiration from Indian mythology, philosophy, and everyday life, resulting in a distinct fusion of Eastern and Western themes. Jayanta Mahapatra's lyrical style is distinguished by introspection, contemplation, symbolism, and a concentration on identity, loss, and relocation. His poetry urges readers to delve into the complexity of human existence and contemplate life's deeper questions. He is a progressive and imaginative writer known for his philosophical lyrics. In Indian literature. This research examines Mahapatra's work as a philosophical poet who draws inspiration from his prior experiences. The author explores socio-cultural issues in the country and draws inspiration from his surroundings. He discusses Nature, suffering, misery, poverty, prostitution, and the well-being of women. His subjects and ideas include a broad range of essential academic areas. A region's scenery correlates with its inhabitants' religious beliefs. Often, the landscape in his Poetry is an extension of one's physical self.

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