

## Zaverchand Meghani's '*Otarada Vaayra Utho*' and P.B.Shelley's '*Ode to the West Wind*': A Comparative Analysis

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### Abstract

Literature is universal in nature. Any great work of literature has its relevance in every age. Literary works written in different languages and products of different nations can be analyzed from comparative perspective thus enhancing the scope of such works.

The present paper will attempt to compare two poems, '*Otarada Vaayra Utho*' by Gujarati poet Zaverchand Meghani and '*Ode to the West Wind*' by P.B.Shelley. Both poems belong to different cultures, nations and time periods. What seems to be connecting them is a wake-up call. Both poems aim to bring positive change and for that, the poets want to evoke the spirit of people and awaken all.

The paper also endeavors to study both poems as having *Veer Rasa* as the common sentiment. *Rasa* theory given by Bharat Muni in the famous treatise *Natyasastra*, has been established as a universally applicable concept. The present work would significantly contribute to the area of Comparative Literary Studies as well as it will give newer perspective to analyze and interpret both these classic poems. Even when the contexts of both poems are different, spirit flows almost parallel. It also reflects the influence of Romantic Poetry on Meghani.

**Key Words:** Veer Rasa, Awakening, Enthusiasm, Positivity, Optimism.

### Introduction:

Great works of literature are always beyond the barriers of nation, culture, religion, language and time periods. The quality of universality connects such works. As Eliot says, every great writer has or must have a strong sense of tradition which combines with his individual talent that results into great literary creation. Various theories, concepts and critical perspectives help us to understand literary works written across the world. Comparative literature is an important area of studies that widens the scope for analyzing different literary works and gives new perspectives to look at two or more than two works as having similarities and differences. The present paper attempts to study two poems belonging to different nations, cultures, languages and ages and still they share the spirit. Gujarati poet Zaverchand Meghani's '*Otarada Vaayra Utho*', and P.B.Shelley's '*Ode to the West Wind*' are products of two different cultures

and ages. What connects them or makes them comparable is poets' efforts to awaken people and motivate them to join hands in creating better times.

### **Contexts compared:**

As mentioned above, both poems are products of different ages and nations. Meghani wrote during India's struggle for Independence. It was the time when India was colonized and therefore, the poet wanted to spread his words as wake up call. For him, Autumn indicates everything that is old, dead and harmful for the present, it means need for awareness and awakening spirit among the Indians to remove the Britishers' rule and restore India's freedom. Meghani, through his poem, addresses particularly the young men of the nation who, he thinks, are asleep and idle. Only they can make India free from the tyrant colonizers. Meghani, who has been called the National Poet by Mahatma Gandhi, writes as a true patriot. He wishes to evoke patriotic spirit among the youth of India.

Shelley had witnessed Peterloo Massacre and seen loss of many lives. He also suffered in personal life during those years as he lost a son and an infant daughter. Thus, both personal and political events causing deaths had badly shaken him. He addresses West Wind as a power that can change the inner and outer worlds of the poet. He has faith in the wild and terrible but necessary power of Wind, he depends on it for his life ahead. Along with loss in his family and loss of people in massacre, he has totally lost his spirit that can drive him again to a new life.

### **Wind as Metaphor:**

The first point that catches one's attention is that both Meghani and Shelley have personified and invoked Wind. Wind in both poems stands as the reawakening element. Through Wind, poets want to generate the spirit of heroism and positivity among people of their nations. Wind symbolizes energy, rejuvenation, spirit to conquer and power to bring change. The notable difference is Meghani addresses to North Wind whereas Shelley calls upon West Wind. Shelley was in Florence when he composed the present poem and in Italy, West Wind of Autumn brings Spring. Both poets, thus, invoke Autumn Wind which is like a sister to Spring and would fulfil need of the time by replacing the old leaves with the new ones. Metaphorically, it stands for new ideas, change and also a revolution. Thus, for both the poets, Wind is an invisible power that can turn disappointment into new hope.

For Shelley, Wind symbolizes power of his words. He wishes that he can spread his poetic words, his thoughts as rapidly as the West Wind. He wants to spread optimistic ideas among his people. He wrote the poem when he was away from his homeland. Being detached from political scene of his own country, he felt absolutely powerless. The society needed action. Shelley used his poetry as that powerful weapon to raise spirit of enthusiasm. He presents Wind as more powerful than himself and therefore asks the Wind to lift him. He wishes Wind to become himself so that he can cause a revolution within him as well as in the external life around him.

Meghani addresses North Wind and begins with the mention of 'Kailasi' and 'Shiv'. It suggests that North Wind is not only Spring-bringer, it also is blessed by Lord Shiv as it blows

from Himalayas where Lord Shiv's presence is felt deeply. Thus, the Wind has divine power. Shelley also talks about heavenly and devilish qualities of his West Wind. He uses number of imageries for Wind like angels of rain and lightening, fierce Maenad, dirge to the dying year, and one that will cause black rain and fire all around, By using lighter and darker images, poet conveys that West Wind is terribly powerful and can destroy the unnecessary elements and it is the Wind that is also a creator of new world, new Nature, and preserver of all that's good and eternal. Meghani calls Wind 'Zanza na Veer' by making it revolutionary. Shelley also presents it as stormy Wind. Meghani says, 'Viplav na dholda dhaduko'. He means that the way autumn Wind destroys dead, yellow, pale leaves, let it also be the revolution for decolonization of India. Shelley too wishes to bring reform both in his inner world and in socio-political world of his time. Thus, both poets believe in rebellious nature of Wind.

Both poets are aware that the effects of such a revolution may be both positive and negative. West Wind might cause harm, spread darkness temporarily, and might prove terrible and fierce. Still, they invoke it as it is necessary in the times they are living in. As Adrienne Rich rightly says, "We live in a time/that needs to be lived through us", Meghani and Shelley lived in time that needed to be lived though them, through their poetic power.

Wind remains the symbol of heroism in both poems. Meghani and Shelley want to raise heroic spirit among idle and inactive people whose minds are filled with negative and pessimism. Wind is that element of Nature which has power to destroy the unnecessary things and replace them with fresh, new elements. Wind is an apt symbol of fearlessness. Thinking from Rasa perspective, it is the Alamban Vibhava that combines with Udippan Vibhava, the words suggesting renewal and coming of Spring. Vibhavas combine with Sthayi Bhava of energy. Shelley seeks energy not only for people of his country but also for his own self. He has turned absolutely weak and has no energy to act again after the times of loss. He invokes Wind and asks it to fill his soul with positive thoughts and courage and lift him so that he can reform himself and his world. 'Otarada Vaayra Utho' is clearly a heroic poem. Wind stands for all soldiers, patriots, aware citizens and fighters of India who can be indefatigable against the colonizers and make India free. Meghani addresses Wind and says,

*"Bhidyaa Darwajani Bhogal Bhaangine Tame Purpaat Ghodle Chhuto."*

The above line is rich with heroism and courage. The power of Autumn Wind is special because it drives away all that's not suitable to the upcoming season. Spring is time for birth, regeneration, renewal and reawakening. Only Autumn Wind can create space for new beginnings. Meghani further says,

*"Murchhit Vanraajina Dhandholo Maathda"*

By these words, he makes Wind that element which can control the whole of Nature. He asks it to awaken and energize all natural elements. Thus, Wind is the Alamban Vibhava and there is emergence of Veer Rasa in the poem like in 'Ode to the West Wind'.

**Dissimilarities:**

The major difference is that 'Ode to the West Wind' has strong autobiographical note. It reflects Shelley's own sense of loss and efforts to regain energy. 'Otarada Vaayra Utho' is a poem generating spirit of patriotism. There is no autobiographical reference in it. Shelley wants to spread positivity and hope because there is disappointment and agony all around after Peterloo Massacre. Through poetic power, he intends to remove darkness from human minds and bring new light through good thoughts. Meghani's aim is to raise patriotic spirit and awaken the young men of the nation to join freedom struggle. Both poets wish to bring a revolutions through their words but the purpose is different. One has seen a tragic event, another is witnessing fight for Independence.

The idea of Spring is difference for Meghani and Shelley. For Meghani, Spring will come with India's Independence and for Shelley, there will be Spring when he is out of the sorrow caused due to personal loss, and when peace is restored in his homeland and people regain positive energy and new hope. Thus, both poems have similarities as well as significant difference. The essence is what unites them.

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