

FACETS OF LITERARY THEORY



**Edited and Published by
Department of English
The Madura College (Autonomous)
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Foreword

The National Conference on Literary Theory at the Department of English, The Madura College (Autonomous) was like air brushing into the realm of theories and research perspectives and new ideas mushrooming out of every clarity, grace and freshness. I was so fortunate to attend and listen to papers, which dealt with a plethora of subjects ranging from feminism, eco criticism to travel writing. It was a significant marker to our unending enquiry to the life's tender fabric that links everything with everything revelatory and we discovered that study of literature confined to Shakespeare and Dickens; it could illuminate aspects of our daily lives, throw fresh light into cook books and comics alike. The idea of cultural studies as urban anthropology is now thoroughly enshrined in every discourse that happens in academia, and that is an encouraging thought, as well as it brings us at the brink of the sight of an ever-expanding knowledge. I wish Prof. Subramony and his team the very best in taking out the initiative to bring out the conference proceedings. I also wish all the fellow participants newer theoretical meanings so that the whole world of meanings dawn and lead them to the pastures of research and theoretical understanding.

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EXPUNGING METAPHORICAL BOUNDARIES THROUGH EARTH DEMOCRACY: AN ANALYSIS OF ARUN SARMA'S *ON A WING AND A PRAYER*

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Abstract: Literature highlights the core issues and attempts to analyse the cause, effect, and impact at various levels. Marginalisation of both the human and the non-human is not a recent concern but dates back to ancient era. This social evil is deep rooted in the human world enabling metaphorical prejudices that reflect in the literal planes too. Writers try to highlight these sensitive problems to sensitise humanity so that it would march towards common good. Arun Sarma is one such Assamese writer who has absorbed the traumas and tribulations of his people, and expresses them faithfully in his writings. His *On a Wing and a Prayer* demands literary significance as the interplay of the trio – ecology, community, and politics – is presented lively and powerfully. *On a Wing and a Prayer* relates the tale of Gojen Keunt who strives hard to awaken the spirit of and fight for the marginalised in his native land. The current paper analyses Arun Sarma's *On a Wing and a Prayer* as a social document that exposes the triple marginalisation of land, people, and women, and attempts to fit the novel into the theoretical framework of Earth Democracy. The objective of the paper is not only to showcase the trials and tears of the marginalised but to seek out ways for redemption; 'assertion' in the case of the oppressed and 'awareness' in the case of the oppressor.

Key Words: Earth Democracy, Living Economies, Living Cultures, Living democracies, Vandana Shiva, Arun Sarma, marginalisation

Literature reflects the momentum and the spirit of and delves deep into the nuances contributing to the making. Through ages human journey is not without literal and metaphorical impediments. Literature highlights the core issues and attempts to analyse the cause, effect, and impact at various levels. Marginalisation of both the human and the non-human is not a recent concern but dates back to ancient era. This social evil is deep rooted in the human world enabling metaphorical prejudices that reflect in the literal planes too. Writers try to highlight these sensitive problems to sensitise humanity so that it would march towards common good. While there are numerous representations of the marginalised throughout the world, the voices from the marginalised community, but for African and African-American literature are comparatively less in number or have not come to limelight. Tribal people belonging to different countries have not yet received their thoughts, emotions, and experiences through literature. One can listen to such, only a few, representative voices from the marginalised community, may be, not through literature but through media. Even then, Dalit literature, Aboriginal literature, African American literature, and literatures from other minority groups have started securing a place in world literature owing to the demand of the genuine taste of their cultural pride and tears. But, some writers, though not belonging to the oppressed groups, could capture and sense the spirit of their place and people, and lay down the incidents and the emotions commingling both objective and subjective stances. Arun Sarma is one such Assamese writer who has absorbed the traumas and tribulations of his people and expresses them faithfully in his writings. K.M. George appraises the expressive and genuine quality of his novels as "giving vivid and intimate glimpses of Assamese life" (32). Arun Sarma's *On a Wing and a Prayer* demands literary significance as the interplay of the trio – ecology, community, and politics – is presented lively and powerfully.

Ecocriticism is an interdisciplinary study that aims at harmonious relationships among all beings in the world, portraying the inter-connectedness of the ecological web.