



# Hari Ram Meena's *When the Arrows were Heated Up*: A Study of Narrative Art

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Narration is a very import device of the novel. With the help of it the author introduces the readers with the story of his novel. Hari Ram Meena is a tribal writer and his historical novel, *When the Arrows were Heated Up* (2016) deals with the struggle of tribals residing in Rajputana in the leadership of Govind Guru against the duo forces of British and the feudal lords. This novel has employed narrative techniques such as conversation, book reading, story telling, songs, myths, dreams, colloquial words of tribal dilects, humour, symbols and imagery etc. to deliniate the socio-cultural ethos of the tribals of the Rajputana and their conflict with joint forces.

## Key Words

Tribals, Banjara, Bhils, narration, story telling, dreams, songs, symbols, imagery, memory

## Introduction

Narrative style referes to the art of preseting incidents in the literary work. Seifzadeh and Raju (2014) define narrative as a series or sequences of events and they opine that the word story may be used as a synonym of narrative. Ricoeur (2010) is of the opinion that the identity of a story is constituted through the presentation of the character; for him, a narrative technique acts as a medium for a writer through which he develops the major and minor characters of the story (see Waham, Othoman 178). Thus, the author's choice of narrative techniques plays a crucial role in selecting the theme of the fictional work, and this is one of the main reasons for the close relation between the narrative technique and the voice and cultural appropriation (Waham, Othoman 178). If a writer chooses good, appropriate and precise adaptation techniques, he can effectively present the protagonist.

A "former IPS officer-turned-writer" Hari Ram Meena is a dominant literary voice of Indian literature (Times of India, N Pg.). He hailing from an Adivasi community of Rajsthan. As a versatile writer, he has written many books in Hindi such as *Haan Chand Mera Hai* (collection of poems), 1999; *Cyber City Se Nange Adivasiyon Tak*, (travelogue), 2001; *Roya Nahi Tha Yaksh* (prabandh kavya), 2003; *Subah ke Intzaar Main* (collection of poems), 2006; *Jangal Jangal Jaliyanwala* (travelogue), 2008; *Dhooni Tape Teer* (novel) 2008; *Adivasi Duniya* (vimarsh), 2012; *Samkalin Adivasi Kavita* (edited), 2013; *Adivasi Lok Ki Yatrayen*, 2015; *Adivasi Vimarsh* (collection of lecturers delivered in Central University of Hyderabad), 2015; *Adivasi Jaliyanvala Evam Anya Kavitayen*, 2019; *Daang* (novel), 2019; *Adivasi Darshan aur Samaj* (discourse) 2020; *Khaki Kalam* (reminiscences of police) 2020; and *Black Hole men Stree* (novel) 2023. His poems and articles have been published in several magazine and journals such as *Samkalin Bhartiya Sahitya*, *Kathan*, *Vartman Sahitya*, *Kathadesh*, *Vagarth*, *Hansh*, *Pahal*, *Indraprastha Bharti*, *Samkaleen Srajan*, *Vasudha*, *Aksar*, *Akaar*, *Madai*, *Janmat*, *Sambodhan*, *Prerna*, *Adivasi Satta*, *Pragatisheel Akalp*, *Doaba*, *Sankalya*, *Shesh*, *Purvagrah*, *Madhumati*, *Dastavez*, *Aksarparb*, *Poostakvarta*, *Naidisha*, *Sakhi*, *Nayapath*, *Arawaliudghosh*,

*Dastak, Sapeksha, Ek Aur Antreep, Krator.* He has been honoured with several prestigious awards including “Vishisht Sahityakar Samman”, Rajsthan Sahitya Akademi 2023.

His novel *Dhuni Tape Teer* has been translated in English as *When Arrows were Heated Up: A Tale of Tribal Struggle against British Colonialism* (2016) by Atul Cowshish. As a novelist, he is at par with any other novelists of Indian literature. The novel deals with Adivasi struggle against the duo forces of the British colonials and Indian kings in the Western Rajputana. The entire novel is set in the Adivasi flora and fauna. Narrative style of the novel consists of narration, conversation, reading of books, dreams, storytelling, myths, songs, use of cultural words, humour, symbols, imagery, panoramic description, and memory. Since Adivasi life has an intrinsic relationship with nature, the action in the novel is infused with beauty of nature. The plot of the novel presents a nice tapestry of form and feeling.

### **Narration and Conversation**

The narration is a way of arranging or organizing episodes, actions, and accounts of actions as an achievement that will bring together monotonous facts, fantastic creations, in time and place incorporated to bring out an idea. Narration allows the addition of actors, reasons for their acts, as well as causes of the happening (Seifzadeh and Raju, 2014, Sarbin, 1986; see Waham, Othoman 178). The novel has been mostly written in third person narrative style. The story in the novel is narrated, however, it contains conversations between the characters. Most of the novel contains dialogic interchange. Often dialogues are lengthy, however, they are deftly created. Storytelling, songs, dreams, intertextuality, myth, humour, symbols, imagery, use of local dialects, culture specific ritual, customs and festivals are some elements which form the stylistic feature of the novel.

### **Book Reading**

To picturize the incidents of the past, the novelist has used the method of inter-textuality through reading of the book. After Rishabdev Temple agreement between Maharaja Sajjan Singh and Adivasis of Barapal and Padona under Udaipur Darbar, AGG Colonel Walter, Colonel Blair and Captain Ashely sit in the mess of Khairwada cantonment. After discussion about the consequences of the agreement at dining table while drinking alcohol, Colonel Blair who is somewhat restless, starts reading a book, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajsthan* written by British Political Agent of Mewar, Col. Todd. The pages read by Col. Blair have been printed in the novel and give information about the inhabiting areas of the Adivasis such as the Bhils and the Meenas in Mewar and their criminal behaviour as well as the geographical situation of the area. Staying at Sajjan Nivas after celebration of Diamond jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1887, AGG Trover, when he is resting after lunch, receives telegram about the sad demise of Col. Showers at the age of 86, who had played a significant role in crushing the revolution of 1857 as a British officer. As Col. Showers has been a distant relative of AGG Trover, the news of his death fills him with grief and he reads Col. Showers' book, *The Missing Chapter of the Indian Mutiny* which contains an eyewitness account of 1857 mutiny.

### **Dreams**

For novelists, dreaming is good technique to depict inner turmoil of the characters in the novels. This technique employed by many novelists is popularly known as stream of consciousness technique after it was practised by Virginia Woolf. After losing his wife and sons in Chachpanya famine which broke into 1898, Govind Guru leaves his village Basiya and settles in Natwa village in Santrampur state of Gujrat. There, he marries again a widow named Gani who gives birth to the two sons—Aru and Amru. One day, a middle aged Sadhu visits him when he is sitting alone in his thatched hut because wife has gone to pick up firewood. The Sadhu first suggests him to remember God mastering art of controlling five senses, which tie mankind to the human world, through Samadhi; thereafter, he tells him to save the Adivasis of Vegad and nearby areas, who are living life in dark and moving towards superstitions forgetting God, by “initiating them into the acts of devotion to God and kindling their spirits to fight against oppression” (*When Arrows were Heated Up* 161). It rekindles his spirit to serve for the welfare of Adivasis leaving him restless. He passes that evening sitting over platform of the old Shiv temple. As night proceeds, he lies into cot knitted with jute rope but sleep overcomes his restless soul only in the third phase of night. He dreams as if crossing the foothills beyond forest and passing through the dark tunnel without touching the ground like a boat sailing gently in a calm lake, his hands hit the rocky walls

often and he feels weightless when he stands in one position. He is puzzled with dark long tunnel which does not seem to end. Many questions arise in his mind. But his inner consciousness consoles him: "All that is needed is some patience to negotiate through the rocks on either side of the path. Now that you are in the tunnel, it will lead you somewhere in the end. That will be your destiny, your future" (WAwHU 162). After travelling a long distance, the tunnel ends and he is greeted by the pleasant rays of the rising sun. He finds a sandy flat land where raindrops falling from the blue sky are shining like silver particles. He witnesses an eye-catching rainbow above the right horizon. He sees multicoloured flower buds and wet land after rain drops stop within a while. Within a few moments, he finds the entire land is filled with tiny green plants and multicolour blossomed flowers. The pleasant sunlight, gentle cool breeze, flower laden swaying plants fill him with great pleasure and he bursts into laughter which his wife listens to. She awakes him with a tug at his chest. He mutters half-asleep: "Where is my sun, where has the gentle breeze eloped, where has the rainbow disappeared, where are the raindrops hiding, what has happened to my flat brown land and where have all the multicoloured flowers gone? (WAwHU 163-164). This dream unveils the perplexity of his mind and the spiritual voyage he is going to set in.

### Storytelling

The story telling constitutes major element in the novel. The novelist communicates the reader about the Adivasi belief system and socio-cultural values through stories which carry significant aspects of Adivasi culture. Some stories told in the novel are mythical and the others are community specific. Due to lack of other entertainment, these stories are means of community entertainment for Adivasi groups. When Hiralya is died of snake bite due to absence of Roopaji, Roopa ji is asked to tell some story to change the gloomy atmosphere. He sings the story of Shiv-Parvati from the scriptures which is a traditional way of narrating fables and stories popular in the area among the Adivasis:

Hey! Once Shiva and Parvati were at loggerheads  
Whereupon Shiva renounced her,  
And lived as an ascetic in the woods  
For years twelve. (WAwHU 23)

This serves the purpose of familiarizing the readers with the life-style and belief system prevalent among Adivasis. The story in the song is about the birth of Lord Ganesh from the dirt of Parvati's body who had not bathed after Lord Shiva left home to carry out acetic practice in the Jungle for twelve years and rebirth of Lord Ganesha when Lord Shiva made him alive by placing head of an elephant over his body after he beheaded him.

Another story is told to Mema Bhil, resident of Bisoriya near Sarda who has been staying in Kotda in search of job after failure of monsoon, by Sunder baba with whom he and Sohna Banjara smoke chillum at Patiniyon inn in Pindwara where banjara traders are at halt during their trade of salt. Sunder baba while smoking chillum recalls story of Lakha Banjara who meets Goddess Badatri Mata while traveling through dense forest. Asked by Lakha Banjara where she is going at, she tells him that she is going to write fate of a Rajput's son who will inherit his property and wealth. When she disappears, Lakha follows her and misguides the Rajput about his infant disguising himself as Sadhu. Under a trap of Lakha, the Rajput hands over his son to him. Wrapping the infant in the cloth, Lakha leaves him in the bush anticipating that either the infant will die of hunger or he will be killed by animals but as luck could have it, he is found by a cowherd who returns him to his parents. When the child becomes young, the father discloses the incident about fake Sadhu to him. Thereafter, he decides to find out fake Sadhu and he reaches his home where he starts working as his cowherd. With an intention to find out what is going on in his mind, one day he asks him about the fake sadhu which creates suspicion about him. Finally, Lakha successfully gets information that the boy is no one but the son of the Rajput who he left in the bush. He hatches a plan to kill the boy and sends him to his brother's house to deliver a sealed envelope which contains a letter with a message to kill the bearer of this envelop. Fortunately, when the boy is resting under a tree, Lakha's daughter recognizes her father's mere and seeing the handsome boy falls in love with him. As she sees the envelop which is jutting out from the pocket of sleeping boy, she pulls it out and is shocked after reading the content. She changes the letter with message that as soon as this letter is received, his daughter should be married to the boy. Thus, the boy is married to Lakha's daughter. As a next plan to kill the boy, he lures the shoemaker of the neighbouring village to kill the boy when he comes to him to get a new pair of shoes. But this time, fortunately his brother-in-law meets him on the way to



shoemaker's house and asks him to go back home promising that he will visit shoemaker's house to bring shoes for him. As shoemaker does not recognize none of them, he kills Lakha's son when he goes to him for a pair of new shoes. Even then, Lakha does not stop. He makes another plan to remove the boy from his way; he bribes four men with one hundred rupee each and instructs to kill the boy, who has fraudulently become his son-in-law, by dumping him into the river when he is fast asleep into bed. But this comes to the knowledge of his daughter who discloses it to her husband and suggests him to lie down quietly in bed pretending to be sleeping but he should run away in the night; she will meet at the decided place with money stolen from his father's chamber. He executes plan successfully. When Lakhan goes there before daybreak, he finds empty bed and sleeps on it assuming that the men who are sleeping must have done their job. As the men get up, they tie Lakha and throw him into the river and the swift currents of the water sweep him away to his doom. Thus, his property is owned by the Rajpoot youth.

Another story is told by the sepoy Dhanna on the request of the sepoy Teja to cheer up the sepoy Rajia who is sad because his leave application to attend his childhood friend Kubera has been rejected. The story is about two thieves and a ghost. While going for thieving, two brothers meet a ghost who offers them roti and a fish curry to eat as soon as he knows for what purpose they are going. When all of them enter a house to steal, the ghost spots a drum and insists to beat drum it. Being denied by them, he asks them to return his roties and fish curry which is not possible, hence he is allowed. Listening to the drum sound, the entire village wakes up and they are chased; consequently, they hide in the forest where they see a wild buffalo whom the ghost insists to call. Again, they deny but are made silent with the same condition. The buffalo chases them and they have to seek shelter in the lion's den who is sleeping. He presses hard to wake the lion and they are helpless again. The angry lion kills the buffalo and after eating it half, as he goes to drink water, both the brothers come out of his den silently. All of them climb up the tree holding a portion of the buffalo. The ghost forces them to fall the buffalo meat down, where a wedding party of Mahajan trader is resting under the tree due to summer, which they have to concede. As the meat falls over them, they run away being afraid of, leaving all their valuable item such as jewellery etc. The ghost goes away without taking any share and two brothers divide the whole gain between them. The stories in the novel work as interludes and enlighten the tensed situation.

### Songs

As the story telling is the part of Adivasi life, so are the songs. They also contribute to the development of the narration. At the same time, they comment on the socio-cultural and socio-political situation of the time. When Sunder Banjara finishes narration of the story about Lakha Banjara, the sound of night prayers at a holy site is heard in the tents of Banjaras. The song is sung with accompaniment of musical instruments such as drums, cymbals, conchs and bells. Another song that the sepoys of Khairwada cantonment listen to when they are in jovial mood comes from behind the fence on the western boundary:

The black cuckoo'd love to be in the forest  
And in the forest she'd stay long, feeding on the fruits.  
On the fruits she'd feed and drink from the pond  
And roost on the mango or mahua tree.  
Who did she wait for?  
Lo! Over there above the valley twinkles  
The colourful crest of the groom's turban  
Here come the groom at last. (WAwHU 128)

This song makes sepoy Rajia, number 423 nostalgic about his village and memory about his beloved, Sangi, whose father married her to someone else because of his job in the Bhil Corpse even though their marriage had already been decided, fills his mind. Today, he is low in spirit also because his application for leave to attend marriage of Kubera, the childhood friend, has been turned down by the Subedar Major Roopji. Thus, song here serves the purpose of reflecting upon the past. The next song is heard by Govind Guru while he is meditating in the prison Cell. The song describes the situation of *thoor* hamlet, where a draught has occurred, and invaders kill Kanheng. It pulls Govind Guru's mind towards famine, even though he tries hard to focus on his meditation:

Well known is Kanheng in the hamlet of *thoor*, brother.

... ..  
 Brother, *thoor* suffers today from a severe draught.  
 The cows are dying, brother  
 And stores have grains little.  
 The folk are dying, brother  
 And we are frightened with more and more deaths.  
 Beat the drum, brother, and blow the siren.  
 Go and find out if thou can  
 And money or wealth anywhere.

.... ..  
 O my brother, they killed Kanheng. (WAwHU 144)

When Deena, an employee in the kitchen of Dungarpur prison, is severely beaten by the officers just for sharing news with Govind Guru about Adivasis marching towards the prison against his arrest, he recalls a song sung by Gurlya Bhopa whose wife had died. The song, which contains repeated refrains and dialogic rhetorical questions between husband and wife, conveys wife's jealousy towards her husband's beloved.

### Myths

Like all societies, myths are present in the illiterate and primitive societies of the Adivasis as well. One myth popular among Adivasis of Banswara and Dungarpur states is related to Lord Shiva who is worshipped as the lord of the snakes and lord of protection. A snake bite causes of Hiralya because Roopaji, who has extensive knowledge of herbs and medicinal plants which can cure bites from snake, lizards, and other poisonous insects, has gone to visit a relative elsewhere. When he returns, he consoles the family members of the deceased saying that "Had I been present that day, Mahadev Baba (God) would have extended his blessings and perhaps Hiralya would have been saved" (WAwHU 23). To lighten the gloomy situation, when Deena requests him to tell some story, he narrates a mythical story about the birth of Lord Ganesha. Apart from myth, the novel contains information about the genesis of the Black Magic. Sengaji Sadh addresses a mob at Rohida in the month of Sawan, at time when there should be rainfall, but unfortunately, there is none. He explains that black magic, also known by names such as witchcraft, sorcery etc., was started by Raja Indra to take control of the wealth of the people. After constructing a palace, Raja Indra became carefree and handed over the wealth to Kuber who guarded it like a cobra. Later, sorcery was used by Bajrabu, the Black Brahmin, Raja Kans, and Haroon to trouble people. Raja Betal became their successor. With its origin, it was known as Indrajal since it was started by Raja Indra. When it was practiced by Kuber, it came to be known as *Mahamaya*; when Raja Kans practiced it, it was known as *Jaaduchala*; King Haroon popularized it as Infidel's Knowledge. Lord Shani exposed Indrajal; Lord Shankar unmasked *Mahamaya*; Lord Krishna unveiled *Jaaduchala*; and Guru Nanak uncovered Infidel's Knowledge before the world. The names are different but the purpose of the black magic is the same i.e. to harm people and to usurp their wealth. He also narrates that the British too resort to black magic and the people should not fall into their trap if they want to save their lives. He further cautions people not to believe Brahmins who are visiting door to door holding books in their hands as the future cannot be foretold from the books. Connecting his speech with the occurrence of draught, he holds the sins committed by the Indian rulers and the British responsible for it. This reminds one of Raja Rao's novel *Kanthapura* in which the story of *Ramayana* is connected with the freedom fight movement. Addressing Adivasis in Kewara ki Naal, Senga Sadhu talks about the myth related to the origin of the universe. He tells that a childless couple, named Birma and Bhaimata, are the creator of the universe. One day, thinking of creating the universe, they collect bits of earth from different places and kneads it nicely as a potter does. First, Bhaimata makes a male and a female from the black soil, and Birma gives them life. Thereafter, giving them a bow and arrow, they bless them with an instruction that they will drive strangers away with the bow and arrow if anyone tries to intrude into their region. These people are called Bhils. Next, Bhaimata forms next couple with a mixture of black and a little brown clay and Birma infuses life into them; this couple is named Meena; like he Bhil couple, they are also given a bow and arrow and are blessed. Then, they create a couple using red-coloured clay. The man prays to Birma to teach him the art of magic but Birma denies arguing that he has not taught this art to anyone. After them, many species of human beings are created. Lastly, they shape Indra, whom they adopt as

their *dharam poot* and teach him the art of magic but stealthy, it is overheard by the man made of red soil. As Birma learns of this deceitful act, he curses the man saying that he will not be able to use this magic before *Kalukal*. Then, Birma explains that the British are the men made of red soil. Since they know the magic taught to Indra, therefore, they have casted it over all—Mahrajas, rajas, mahajans, and brahmins—in order to make money without an effort. Their aim is to extract the money you have earned with hard work. Therefore, it the duty of the Bhils and Meena to guard the forest and mountains from the red men who have taken Kings in their control.

Historicizing the misery of the distressed people, Birms says that their plight was not good even in the days of Indra, King Kuber, King Kans, and lastly, Haroon Rashid. Their reigns were the days of gold, silver and bronze. But this age is the age of iron. Since iron is black, this age is called *Kalukal* means black age. This is the reason, the British are making iron tracks and running trains. Under the spell of magic, you are unable to see that iron represents power for the British and *Kalukal* for you.

Another myth the novelist discusses is related to Sura Bawadi, located 14-16 miles away from Udaipur. The myth about Sura Bawadi is that it was constructed by Lord Bhole Nath with his own hands, and Lord Shiva and his wife stayed there for a long time. Adivasi warrior would drink water before going inot a battle because it was believed that a warrior who drank the water before starting journey to battle would never lose. Another hearsay about Sura Bawadi is that a Jain saint took his last breath there during his penance which led the Jains to construct a temple in his memory. However, the Adivasis resisted, arguing that if the Jains construct a temple, thier Sadhus would control the rain god and would tie up the rains, resulting in no rain. The novel contains other myths related to a cobra and Holi festival. In the novel, the Vagad region has been compared with Jambudwip.

### Use of Cultural Words

The novel deals with Bhil, Meena, and Banjara Adivasi communities. Apart from other features, the use of culture-specific words from local dialects maintains Adivasi character of the novel. The novelist has used words such as *Gauhara* (a venomous reptile), *Kaankhajura* (a venomous centipede), Begar (wage less labour), *Bolai* and *Rakhwali*, *Hal Barar* and *Trisala*, *Gameti* (Adivasi Chief), *Shamiana* (Big tent), *Panch patels* (headmen), *Nishank Samuday* (cleaning society), *phirangis* (foreigners), *bhuratiyons* (white skinned foreigners), *Lamana* (word used for Banajara Tribe), *Lota*, *Dera*, Names of the months *Asadh*, *Savan*, *Bhadon*, *Qawaar etc. Teras*, *Chaudas*, *Achkan*, *turra*, *Bandra* ( a derogatory word used for Adivasis by Pathans recruited by the State Council in Dungarpur and Banswara), *Dharam poot*, *Kukal* (Bad Era), *Halkara Dhol*, *Kachri* (a vegetable), etc.

### Humour

Humour is a tool of Narrative style. The novelist has used humour to enrich interest in the story and to highlight the innocence of the Adivasis. When the delegation of Adivasis residing in the Udaypur areas goes to meet Maharana Sajjan Singh, the Maharaja instructs his personal secretary, Shyamaldas, to speak with the delegation. However, due to the delegation's insistence on meeting the Maharana, Shyamaldas lead them to the Darbar Khas, where whatever the Adivasi Mukhiyas, who are called *gametis*, say causes laughter. One of the Mukhiya says that lengthy roads of stone and iron are being constructed, on which bullocks of iron will pull big iron carts. Moreover, the bullocks will "spit fire, which will burn trees, vegetation, and grass in the jungles" (WAwHU 39). Another Mukhiya says:

... while the road is being constructed through the jungle, the jagirdar's men come to us with barbers who chop off he hair of the elders and on inquiry tell us that it is for the road that the Raj is building. Now that a real road is built the what is the need to cut our hair in a style that makes a two-inch channel on the head? (WAwHU 39)

These conversations create huge laughter in the Darbar. The Maharana bursts into laughter to such an extent that he nearly chocks and is given water in a silver tumbler by one of the servants.

### Symbol and Imagery

He has drawn numerous imagery and symbols from Nature. When Rifle award ceremony of Mewar Bhil Crop is to be held on the January 1, 1984, the climate is not in tune with happy mood of the occasion. Strong wind



is blowing, and the atmosphere is covered with fog reducing visibility. The cold is bitter. Fog, biting cold wind, and chilly winter day are symbols of nature's resistance to the ceremony of the Rifle award, organized by the Col. A. Connolly, the Commandant of Mewar Bhil Corp, a battalion of the British-controlled Indian army, with Col. Walters, the Agent in Charge and Viceroy of British India as the chief guest; Mewar Maharana, Sajjan Singh, and Dungarpur Maharawal Udai Singh as special guests. When the AGG comes out of his room in the guest house at quarter to six in the morning as per his routine, he feels uncomfortable because of the cold and goes back in the room. He comes out again wearing a tracksuit and woollen cap on his head. He expresses his inability to ride a horse and decides to walk on foot. The programme is delayed by an hour. The resistant mood of the weather symbolizes disharmony between the Adivasis and the British officers. Following the instructions of the British officers, the Mewar Bhil Corp has inflicted atrocities, tortures, and murder on the Adivasis, that's why the weather is not compatible with their ceremony. Elsewhere, the writer compares Govind Guru to a banyan tree, the *Sampsabha* to its branches, and increasing bhagats and other followers to its leaves. The killing of Govind Guru's followers by the British army is compared to the falling of the leaves. But the writer's description of hope through the arrival of spring is amazing. Arrested Govind Guru thinks of arrival of spring after autumn: "There will be fresh shoots of the trees and the Sampsabha members will bloom like the blazing red flowers of the flame of the forest tree. They will kindle a new fire for the protection of the forests" (WAHU 407). The present situation is full of darkness but he is confident that "intense darkness of the night . . . carries in its womb the light of the dawn" (WAHU 407). Govind Guru, while standing surrounded with the army, is described as "the worthy son of forest" (WAHU 407). The portrayal of an old green Mahua tree on Mangarh hill symbolizes hope of arrested old Govind Guru.

Hari Ram Meena has drawn images from tribal life. Even in the great disappointment, the face of Govind Guru shines like "a lamp that keeps burning in the midst of storm" and reflects a "strong fire of resistance" (WAHU 407). Awakening of Adivasis is compared to "eternal lamps at dhooni sites" which is realized in the atmosphere of Mangarh hill (WAHU 407). Govind Guru descends from Mangarh Hill in the custody of the British army. His dwindling hope is matched with doused but warm wicks in the lamp and extinguishing fire with sparkles under ash of the dhooni.

The novelist has depicted certain bird imagery and cosmic movements to communicate Adivasi belief system. Once Sagtya Bhagat tells Govind Guru that he has heard the peacock calling for four time which infers this time it will rain good. Supporting Sagtya, Deepa Gameti says that he has seen the eggs laid down by a sandpiper near the village fence; moreover, the eggs have been placed at an elevation which is an indication of good rain. Deena remembers the word of Gurlya who used to tell that shooting star symbolizes death of a person. Subedar Liaqat Ali is compared with 'wolf' by Hariya. Kuriya shoots a white vulture, symbolizing the British officers, hovering over Kunda valley with his bow and arrow. The novelist has profusely used colour, sound and visual imageries. The flag of dhuni is white with the images of sun and the moon. The white colour represents peace. In the flag, there are objects of nature in the form of the sun and the moon; man and woman in the white and red colours; more of red colour symbolizes power and god of power, Lord Hanuman; green colour represents prosperity; trident, spear, conch, metal bangle, small neckless, the word "Om" and a lit lamp reflects awakening. ". . . the burning eternal lamp at dhooni-dhams were the source of energy for Sampsabha movement and the white flag, symbol of awareness" (WAWHU 368). The sound of *Halkara dhol* symbolizes the urgency and listening to it, the Adivasis get ready for war. The shouting of *Halkara* means fight by Kuriya in the end of the novel echoes in the entire valley. Chirping of birds, blowing wind etc. have been used repeatedly in the novel. The sound of bullets and machine guns has been described during Adivasi and British encounter. When Dalli is raped by Liaqat Ali in the Rest House, she screams to save her. "When Dalli was screaming the birds perched on the tree around the Rest House cried as they took off in hurry. The peacocks hollered angrily. The sun had quietly gone down the western horizon shrouded in a haze" (WAWHU 373). When the goats feel tired of waiting for Dalli, their eyes are moist and goats' kids do not suckle their mother in the evening. Description of natural beauty visualizes calm and serene atmosphere of Adivasi habitats.

### **Panoramic Description**

As an Adivasi who are very close to the Nature and its changes, the novelist has depicted scenic beauty which adds charm to the plot. At many places, description of the natural scenes during morning and evening makes the story interesting and informs the reader about time and spatial beauty. Narration of the spatial beauty amidst the scene of tension or crisis serve several purposes: it relaxes the readers; explains the close ties of

Adivais with nature, and unveils some hidden meaning. Most of the chapters start with the spatial descriptions which narrate picturesque view of the forest, hills etc. One such description has been given in the beginning of the novel. After Roopaji finishes the story about Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati, the clouds, which were on the west-northern zone, have covered the entire western sky. Not a single star is visible now. The air becomes still. In the forest, trees like Kalpataru are motionless. All of sudden, a roar, “Hukki. . . Hukki . . . Hukki” from the forest is heard. As the night deepens, lightning, thunder and hailstorm occur in the night. Next description is visualized when Colonel Blair and AGG Kol Walters are engaged in serious discussion about the consequences of Rishabhdev Temple agreement made between Maharaja Sajjan Singh and Bhils and Meena Adivasis sitting in the veranda of the mess. The novelist presents description of natural beauty of the evening:

The sun was setting. Its fast descent below the horizon could be seen minute by minute. Those were the last days of the month of April. There were many palash (flaming tree) in Kharwada Cantonment. The soft yellow rays from the retreating sun were turning the crimson flowers of palash into ochre-reddish. . . . The strong sun had rendered the day rather uncomfortable. By evening the weather had become pleasant because of a gentle breeze. The cantonment was echoing with the songs of various birds. (WAWHU 45)

Unpleasantness of the day refers to the discomfort which Colonels have been feeling after Rishabhdev Temple agreement. Though either the beauty of the Palash or the song of birds has no meaning for the Colonels because they are disturbed with the Rishabhdev Temple agreement as it has relaxed Adivasi not only from taxes but also taxes already paid will be repaid to them, however, it works as a relief for the reader while reading the novel. There are other relevant descriptions of spatial beauty which seem to be relevant to be mentioned. When rifle award is to be held, the novelist presents the picture of the atmosphere on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1884 in very realistic manner: “Strong winds were blowing across. The curse of a cold wave loomed large. There was fog, though light. The sky was cloudless; the warmth from the sun was coming out reluctantly” (WAWHU 67). Before commencement of the ceremony delayed by one hour at 9.00 am, the weather changes: “By now the fog had begun to lift. The sun now looked like the real blazing sun. The bite of the morning cold was also becoming less severe” (WAWHU 70). The description of the nature at Basiya around Chhani Magari is very impressive where Govind Guru holds meeting of the worker of Sampasabha.

## Memory

Memory has an important place in the primitive societies of Adivasis through which they transmit their cultural heritage orally from one generation to another. Through storytelling, singing, and dance, they transfer the socio-cultural values. The novelist has used memory as a tool to unveil the past. Songs, stories and some incidents work as associative instruments to ignite the memory in the characters. The song coming from the southward of the cantonment takes the sepoy Rajia to his immediate past life and makes him nostalgic about his village where his marriage was fixed with Sangi but it came to an end when he got job in Bhil Corpse. On the request of Sepoy Teja, Dhanna recalls the story of two brothers and a ghost which he heard in the village. Being brutally beaten by the British officers just because of sharing news to Govind Guru about Adivasi's unrest against his arrest, distressed Deena remembers the days of his village where there were hills, forest, green pasture, cattle, ponds full of water, fairs and festivals. Also, his mind is filled with memory of Gurlya Bhopa who practised exorcism and whose wife died. He recalls song sung by Gurlya Bhopa. “Tragic memories are the progenitors of sweet dreams” is the belief of Guru Govind which refers the purpose of the use of memories in the novel.

Thus, narrative devices used by Hari Ram Meena are very common to the tribal world and suit themes of the novel. Songs, stories, myths, memories are part of tribal life. Since, tribals are very close to nature, hence panoramic descriptions in the novel adds to it a tribal sensibility. With the help of book reading he has tried to take readers into the past.



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