



Research Paper

Smṛti vṛtti* in the Earlier Poetry of Wordsworth: A Study in the Light of Patānjali's *yoga-sūtra

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I. INTRODUCTION

Patānjali's *yoga-sūtra* begins with the aphorism *atha- yoga- anuśāsanam* (25) implies that now the science of *yoga* commences. In the second aphorism, Patānjali defines *yoga* as the restriction of *citta vṛttis*. He indites *yogas-citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ*. (26) In *yoga-sūtra*, Patānjali has given emphasis to control the *citta* and its *vṛttis*. He asserts that due to the *citta vṛttis*, we feel pleasure and pain in our life. And so neither our pleasure is real nor our agony. To get rid from the cycle of happiness and sufferings, he suggests to control the *citta vṛttis*.

Patānjali has mentioned basically two states of *citta*. First, the state of *citta* when it does not have any *kliṣṭa vṛttis* that are the cause of bondage. Here *citta* has only *akliṣṭa vṛttis* that are the cause of salvation. This state of *citta* has two sub states *ekāgra* (concentrative and pointed) and *niruddha*. (meditative). When there is the emergence of *akliṣṭa vṛttis*, the upheavals of the ocean of *citta* comes to an end. Here *citta* becomes like a crystal that reflects everything clearly. At this state *Puruṣa* rests in its own form. The second state of *citta* has been explained by Patānjali in the 4th aphorism of *Samādhipāda, vṛtti-sārūpyam-itaratra*. (28) When there is *vṛttis*, *citta* becomes so dazzled that it lost its stability. It reacts to its surrounding and so takes various states according to *vṛttis*. These states of *citta* are called the sub states of *citta*. According to the fluctuations, these states have been named. These are *kṣipt* (sensitive and agitative), *mūdh*, (insensitive and dull) and *vikṣipt* (interruptive and disturbed). These three states of *citta* are called *vyutthāna* (agitated) states of *citta*.

Naming the *vṛttis*, Patānjali inscribes in the 6th aphorism of *samādhipāda, pramāṇa-viparyaya-vikalpa-nidrā-smṛtayaḥ* (30). The five *vṛttis* are *pramāṇa* (factual knowledge), *viparyaya* (false knowledge), *vikalpa* (imagination or conceptualization of verbal knowledge), *nidrā vṛtti* (feeling of non-existence) and *smṛti vṛtti* (experiences). In the 7th aphorism of *samādhipāda*, Patānjali scribes about *pramāṇa vṛtti, pratyakṣa-anumāna-āgamāḥ pramāṇāni* (31). *Pramāṇa vṛtti* has three categories, *pratyakṣ*, *anumān* and *agama*. The knowledge that *citta* obtains with the assistance of senses and considering it as true is called *pratyakṣ vṛtti*. The second category of *pramāṇa vṛtti* is *anumāna*. Ramdev in his book *Maharṣi Patānjali's Yogadarśana* has stated, "The factual knowledge acquired from the inference of relationship between the symbol-symbolised one, ends-means, cause-effects, is known as *anumāna pramāṇa vṛtti*. (3) Defining the *agama pramāṇa vṛtti*, Ramdev indites, "The factual knowledge acquired from hearing about the worldly and non-worldly (*ālaukika*) objects from axiomatic sources is known as 'agama pramāṇavṛtti.'"(3)

The absence of prior *vṛtti*, leads the *citta* towards another *vṛtti*. In the 8th *sūtra* of *samādhipāda* in *Yoga-sūtra*, Patānjali reports, *viparyayomithyā-jānam-atad-rūpa-pratiṣṭham* (32). Ved Bharti in his book *Yoga-Sūtras of Patānjali with the Exposition of Vyāsa* has expounded this *sūtra*, "False knowledge without a basis the nature or form of the respective object is the *vṛtti* called perversive cognition (*viparyaya*)." (162)

In the 9th *sūtra* of *Samādhipāda* of *Yoga-sūtra*, Patānjali writes, *śabda-jñāna-anupātivastu-śūnyovikalpaḥ* (32) By hearing or reading the words, *citta* starts to create an image, that can be *kliṣṭa* or *-akliṣṭa*. Commenting on the *sūtra*, Satyananda Saraswati in his book *Four Chapters On Freedom* writes, "vikalpa is imagination without the basis of an object. It does not mean that it has no object, but the object mentioned in the statement is non-existent ... Vikalpa is a creation of our mind ... We take ideas from our experiences and combine them to form new ideas of things that actually do not exist."(50)

In the 10th aphorism of *Samādhipāda* in *yoga-sūtra*, Patānjali writes, *abhāva-pratyaya-ālambanā-vṛttir-nidrā*. (4) *nidrā* is also a *vṛtti* because *citta* knows "I am sleeping." It is conscious about its *nidrā*. Here it is also notable that *nidrā*, the feeling of nothingness also occurs in the waking state of *citta*.

The last *vṛtti* of *citta* has been explained in the 11th *sūtra* by Patānjali in the *Samādhipāda*, *anubhūta-viṣayā-asampramoṣaḥ smṛtiḥ* . (4) Whatever *citta* experience does have its impression on *citta*. These impressions are *sampramoṣaḥ* means not being lost. *citta* cultivates two kinds of impressions, that give pleasure and that give pain. *citta* gets struck in these two memories. When *citta* have the same earlier situation, they again get arose from *citta*. But many times, without any *ālambana*, they exist again and again due to *kleśas* and thus *citta* feels pleasure and pain.

Kleśas are the cause of the fluctuations of *citta*. That gives the feelings of agony to the *citta*, is called *Kleśa*. Patānjali in the 3rd aphorism of *Sadhanapāda* has given the five kinds of *kleśas*. He writes *avidyā-asmitā-rāga-dveṣa-abhiniveśāḥ pañca-kleśaḥ* (61). Patānjali has enumerated five kinds of *kleśa* *avidyā* (Ignorance), *asmitā* (I-am-ness), *rāga* (attachment), *dveṣa* (aversion) and *abhiniveśa* (fear of death).

Thus all these five *vṛttis* are amenable for the pleasure as well as pain of *citta*. Due to these *vṛttis*, *Puruṣa* hides behind the dynamic *citta*, although provides light to illumines *citta*. Patānjali's *yoga-sūtra* aims at to restrict these *vṛttis* and to realize the true self means *Puruṣa*.

The philosophy of *yoga* based on the states of *citta* (mind) as propounded by Patānjali in his *yoga-sūtra* is conspicuous which provided one major impetus for English Romantic poets in general and Wordsworth in particular. The greatness of Wordsworth as a poet lies in the fact that he writes about the universal emotions. His emotions are universal because they are felt and faced by him. Although he never admits it in his writings but the through study of his poems exhibit this fact. His compositions always have the impressions of the fluctuations of his *citta* that struggle within. This trait of writing makes his poems worth to be studied in the light of Patānjali's *yoga-sūtra*.

Wordsworth begins writing poems at the early age of sixteen. To pass on a childhood that is full of loss and sufferings, he finds calmness in pouring out his heart on paper. And so in his poems we find the impressions of *smṛti vṛtti*. Wu in his book, *William Wordsworth : The Earliest Poems 1785-1790* has thrown light on his poems that have been composed in the year 1785-1790, and has claimed that the poems of this period has been affined with the personal experiences of his life. Wu has indites:

Even by 1786 (when he was sixteen), a year after composition of his earliest surviving poem, Wordsworth was concentrating more on elegy than any other genre- there are elegies to dead women, minstrels, dogs and starlings. Why? Because his parents' deaths were the most important events in his life and, whether he knew it or not, poetry had become a principal means of vocalizing his response to their loss. (ix)

Composed in the year 1786, the elegy *The Death Of the Starling* is about the death of a starling. In the first stanza, the poet shows his grief, "Pity mourns in plaintive tone The lovely Starling dead and gone; Weep ye loves, and Venus, weep The lovely Starling fall'n asleep!" (6) In the second stanza, Wordsworth addresses the starling and in a very quaint way, mentions it "in peace, in silence." (6) He gives stress on the feeling of "who felt a mother's love for thee." (6)

Here he compares the grief of the dead and the grief of the one who has lost his loving one. And for Wordsworth, the pain of the mother (sparrow) is far greater than the starling because:

Yet art thou happier far than she Who felt a mother's love for thee; For while her days are days of weeping,
Thou in peace, in silence sleeping In some still world unknown, remote, (6)

Composing these lines, his *citta* has the *smṛti vṛtti*. The memory of his dead mother is still alive in his *citta*. "perhaps an oblique reference to Wordsworth's mother, who died when he was seven." (Wu 87) His *citta* realizes itself the sufferer because of he is the loser. He has lost his mother. So the anguish of his *citta* is bigger than the grief of his mother who has lost her life.

Composed in the year 1786, the short poem "Now ye meet in the cave" also has the reflections of his dead mother. In this poem, we find his *citta* suffered with *kleśa* of *rāga*. His *citta* still has the *smṛti* of the day when his mother was died. He recreates his thoughts (*vṛttis*) about her burial, "Now ye meet in the cave, Husbands, sons and all; If ye've hands oh make a grave For she dies, she dies, she dies." (9)

Published in the same year, the sonnet *Sonnet on Seeing Miss Helen Maria Williams Weep at Tale of Distress* is about the distress and anguish of life from which he suffers. In this poem, we find his *citta* being besieged by the *kleśas* of *avidyā*, *asmitā* and *rāga*. Forgetting the realities of life and its real purpose, his *citta* considers itself as the seer or sufferer. Thinking about (*smṛti vṛtti*) his sufferings, he writes:

Dim were my swimming eyes--my pulse beat slow, And my full heart was swell'd to dear delicious pain. Life left my loaded heart, and closing eye; A sigh recall'd the wanderer to my breast; Dear was the pause of life, and dear the sigh That call'd the wanderer home, and home to rest. (10)

Another sonnet, *Sonnet Written by – Immediately after the death of his wife* is too concerned with the death of his parents. As the title suggests that the poem has been composed with the perspective of husband who has lost his wife. In the poem, the lost one is wife (that is also a mother, the mother of Wordsworth). In this sonnet, we find how much extent the *citta* of Wordsworth has the *vṛttis* (fluctuations) relating to his mother. Recalling (*smṛti vṛtti*) his mother, he indites, "The sun is dead- ye heard the curfew toll! Come nature, let us mourn our kindred doom." (10) In the sonnet, his *citta* tries to immortalize the dead one that is due to the *avidyā*

kleśa of *citta*. “She too shall soon from her [] height Pour o’er my breast Religion’s moonlight ray, To cheer me through my long and lonely night Till Heav’n’s bright Morn lead on the eternal day.” (11)

We Are Seven, composed in 1798 is the another poem that presents his *citta* in the state of *kṣhipta*. Surendranath Dasgupta in his book *Yoga: A Philosophy and Religions* indites that a *kṣhipta citta* is “always moved to and fro by the rise of passion ...” (95) The title of the poem indicates towards the family life of Wordsworth. He had seven members in the family including his parents and four siblings. In the poem we find the fluctuating *citta* that imagined about the fear of losing his family. He has lost his parents early in the age. His *citta* is feared to think about the death of his siblings. Even after losing his parents, now they are only five in the family, but still his *citta* is not able to accept it. His *citta* counts total seven members in the family. His *citta* fluctuate from *smṛti vṛtti* when he indites ... “met a little cottage girl: She was eight years old, she said” (Wordsworth 96) Here he assumes himself. He was eight years old at the time of the death of his mother. “(The girl is the same age Wordsworth was when his mother died, and when Nature began to be all in all ...)” (Hartman 145). The girl is no one but the one of *citta* of Wordsworth that argues about the existence of those who are no more in this world.

Sisters and brothers, little maid,
How many may you be?
'how many? Seven in all,' she said
.....
'And where are they? I pray you to tell.'
She answered, 'seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.
'Two of us in the churchyard lie,
My sister and my brother; (Wordsworth 96)

The impression of the death of his parents finds an echo in most of his poems. Now and then his *citta* fluctuate from *smṛti* of his dead parents. We find this resonance in the poem, “Alice Fell”. He indites, “And said, 'My name is Alice Fell; I'm fatherless and motherless.” (95)

We can feel the pain and repentance of his *citta* in the poem *The Childless Father* composed in the year 1800. Again written in the background of *Prakṛti*, his *citta* has the *rāga kleśa*. His *citta* is eager to see his daughter Caroline to whom Wordsworth could not call his daughter. Somewhere he is also a childless father.

The Immigrant Mother, penned by Wordsworth in the year 1802, is another poem that shows at what extent his *citta* fluctuates from *vṛttis*. The impressions of his past life alive repeatedly in his *citta* and he penned the poem that reflects his sufferings of *citta*. Wordsworth has cunningly given the title *The Immigrant Mother*. When readers go through the poem, it becomes clear that it is about the immigrant father who is Wordsworth himself. To see a child, his *citta* imagine about Caroline, the illegitimate daughter with whom he never spend time. “And I have left a babe at home: A long, long way of land and sea!” Here his *citta* has the *viparyaya vṛtti*. It imagine the moment when it faced the girl and how it will convey its love to her. Wordsworth admits:

This child, I chanted to myself a lay,
Endeavouring, in our English tongue,
to trace
Such things as she unto the Babe might say:
And thus, from what I heard and knew, or guessed,
My song the working of her heart expressed. (139)

In the year 1805, Wordsworth lost his brother John. His brother was much close to him. Wordsworth has a lot of complaint from his life. But the death of his brother, has added one more complaint. In the poem entitled *Complaint*, he indites, “There is a change- and I am poor; Your love hath been, nor long ago, A fountain at my fond heart's door, Whose only business was to flow; (128). He talks about one more change in his life that is the death of his brother. This change left him “poor” by heart and by life.

Maternal Grief written in 1810, is one of the examples of it. Superficially, the poem seems to be composed on the universal theme of loss. But it is the utterance of a *citta* that is drowned in the fear of losing his children. After a long period of illness, his two children, daughter Catherine and son Thomas died in the same year 1812. “such union, in the lovely girl maintained, And her twin Brother, had the parent seen, Ere, pouncing like a ravenous bird of prey, Death in a moment parted them ...” (Wordsworth 137). The poem does not throw light on the grief of a mother. It is not a maternal grief. It represents ‘Paternal Grief’. Here his *citta* is in the state of *mūdh*. It is not able to argue or to think. “Absence and death how differ they?” (136)

His fluctuating *citta* finds shelter in the lap of *Prakṛti*. Wu has thrown light over this fact, “Unresolved grief doubtless marked Wordsworth in the years after his parents’ deaths, but it was also a gift, endowing him with an exceptional sensitivity to the numinous potential of natural things ... the young Wordsworth came to regard nature as a medium with those he had lost.” (x)

In few of his earlier poems, written after the death of his parents, we find how he has given words to his *citta vṛttis* by mentioning the various aspects of nature. The description of these natural aspects put forward his readers the storm, the darkness, the terror that blown in his *citta*. In the poem *The Storm Fragments* he has personified storm with an Eagle that hover its prey. “The Storm was up at Eve, and now at night (Stretching his wings that sweep the hollow vale, As grim he fastens on the mountain top) Wails like an Eagle caw’ring o’er his prey.” (46) In the further three fragments, the poet has explained the terror of it. Here this horrible storm signifies the storm that is related to his own life. “... he had used the metaphor to describe the emotional distress of summer 1787, and storms were associated in his imagination with the continuing effects of his parents’ deaths.” (Wu 118)

Wordsworth has composed the poem *The Vale of Esthwaite* at the age of seventeen in the year 1787. The poem is worth to be studied in the light of the *citta vṛttis* given by Patānjali for, “its subject is indeed the mind of Wordsworth, understood generically as the Mind of a poet.”(Hartman79) This poem contains the natural scenes of the Esthwaite where he spent eight years in the lap of nature. The poem has the natural and the gothic description of nature that presents his *citta vṛttis*. Here we find two forms of nature, the sterner and the milder. The sterner description of nature shows the *vṛttis* of his *citta*, while in the milder description of nature, his *citta* finds shelter. Here we find that in both of the descriptions, he has used nature to express his *citta vṛttis*. In this poem, his *citta* like an unfathomed ocean has the whirlpools of *vṛtti* in which his *citta* drowned. Here we also infest the minutely transitions of the *citta vṛttis*. The poem begins with the natural description. The poem begins with, “Avaunt! With the pleasure, the landskip’s various treasure.” Here it appear that the poet is trying to repel the past impressions of his life by commencing his poem by the word “avaunt” or to move away those impressions which cease him to converge with nature or to feel pleasure. To affiliate with nature, he has to delude the pain and sufferings of life through which he goes.

A fluctuating *citta* perceives the nature, according to its state. And so *citta* gets entangled in the *vṛttis* related to past, present and future. That emotion of *citta* results in *pramāṇa*, *viparyaya*, *vikalpa*, and *nidrā* or *smṛti vṛtti*. The *citta* of Wordsworth also encounter this kind of state when he sees a *Thorn* nearby a pond.

There is a Thorn-it looks so old,
In truth, you’d find it hard to say
How it could ever have been young,
It looks so old and grey.
Not higher than a two years’ child
It stands erect, this aged thorn; (Wordsworth 231)

The title of the poem represents the *kleśas* of his *citta*. It indicates towards an incident that hurt someone and his *citta* also. Here we find his *citta* in the state of *smṛti vṛtti*. The incident is “so old” and “hard to say” and about a “child”. (Wordsworth 231) In the 12th stanza of the first part of the poem, he discloses the matter. His *citta* repents for the sin he did in the year 1792. He penned the story of his own and indites:

‘And they had fixed the wedding day,
The morning that must wed them both;
But Stephen to another Maid
Her sworn another oath;
And, with this other Maid, to church
Unthinking Stephen went-
Poor Martha! On that woeful day
A pang of pitiless dismay
Into her soul was sent;
A fire was kindled to her breast,
Which might not burn itself to rest. (Wordsworth 233)

The *samyoga* of his *citta* with *Prakṛti* reminds him of his past. During his tour to France, he fell in love with Annette Vallon but they could not get marry. Looking at the thorn and the heap of moss, his *citta* has the *asmitā kleśa* that leads the *citta* towards *rāga* and *dveṣa kleśa*. His *citta* is the seer and the sufferer too. His *citta* fluctuates from *smṛti vṛtti*. It recalls those old days with Annette and feels pain. His *citta* now pours out that every moment:

'They say, full six months after this,
While yet the summer leaves were green,
.....
.....
.....
.....
She was with child, and she was mad;
Yet often was she sober sad
From her exceeding pain.
O guilty Father- would hat death
Have saved him from that breach of faith! (Wordsworth 233)

Annette was six month pregnant when she was moved to Orleans from Blois. "she was now in her sixth month, and her appearance had begun to raise comment, she was removed to Orleans" (Johnston 226) His *citta* realized that hard time of his beloved. Annette wanted to get marry with him but Wordsworth did not dare to do that. So his *citta* never forget that it has cheated somewhere. The *samskars* of that deed still alive in his *citta* and is activated in the company of *Prakṛti*. "Annette in her letter of the coming March, speaks without hesitation about her desire to get married as soon as possible ... she was not allowed to keep her baby at home because of hr unmarried status ." (230) In the poem we find Annette in the disguise of Martha. Stephen is Wordsworth himself.

In one of the poem entitled *The Haunted Tree* (1819) the sound of the leaves of a tree seems to his *citta* bitter and shrill.

This venerable Tree; for, when the wind
Blows keenly, it sends forth a creaking sound
.....
Distinctly heard from far-a doleful note!
As if(so Grecian shepherd would have deemed)
The Hamadryad, pent within, bewailed
Some bitter wrong. (Wordsworth 259)

His *citta* suffers from his past deeds. It is in the state of *smṛti vṛtti*. The impression of leaving his daughter and beloved are still alive in his *citta* and is "lamanting deeds". (Wordsworth 259)

Thus the early poems of Wordsworth exhibit his fluctuating *citta*. His earlier poems present how his *citta* suffers from the *smṛti* of his dead parents (experiences). In his autobiographical poem *The Prelude* Wordsworth has also discussed about his childhood memories. In many of his nature poems, we find how his *citta* fluctuates from *smṛti vṛtti*.

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