Chapter-II

'Scientific Pantheism' in the Poetry of Arun Kolatkar and Jayanta Mahapatra.
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‘Pantheism’ is the Philosophy that everything is God and God is everything, or that the universe and nature are divine. This view preserves the idea of God as creator. When we see the varities of Pantheism one can see the extensive entry in The New Encyclopedia Britannica lists seven forms of Pantheism, but actually there are many forms of Pantheism according to the different Pantheists and their views. In ‘Pantheism’, everyone is the ‘leader’ of their religion. ‘Scientific Pantheism’ is one of the major forms of Pantheism.

The phrase ‘Scientific Pantheism’ appeared in a biography of John Burrauhgs (1924) and in later works including a Greek Roman history (1960) a study of Spinoza (1971) and a biography of John Muir (1981). ‘Scientific Pantheism’, as defined in 1990’s by Paul Harrison on his Website refers to “a consistent, empirical, materialist and non dualist brand of Pantheism.”

Paul Harrison relates that “Scientific Pantheism never uses the word God.” It is “Identical with religious atheism. It is just as materialist of as atheism, the only difference is that pantheists have strong feelings of reverence, love, and sense of
belonging to nature and the universe."³ Scientific Pantheism grades into atheism, naturalism and humanism, which rejects the divinity of nature.

'Scientific Pantheism' is the belief that the universe and nature are divine. It fuses religion and Science, and concern for humans with concern for nature.

It provides the most realistic concept of life after death, and the most solid basis for environmental ethics.

It is a religion that requires no faith other than common sense, no revelation other than open eyes and a mind open to evidence, It may be argued as 'No guru other than your own self'.

'Scientific Pantheism' offers the most positive and embracing approach to life, the body and nature of any philosophy or religion. Our bodies are not base and evil. They are good. Nature is not only reflection of something higher, it is the highest. Life is not a path to somewhere else, it is the destination. We must make the best of which we have it.

'Scientific Pantheism' is rooted in the present world. It reconciles concern for humans, and concern for the planet. It places life, not death, in the focus of our concern. Scientific Pantheism is a doctrine that is related to human, concern for planet. Also it places life not death.
‘Scientific Pantheism’ has it’s central motto. Pantheism fuses spirituality and Science, mind and body, humans and nature.

‘Scientific Pantheism’ is a consistent, non-dualistic, empirical and logical approach to pantheism. Scientific Pantheism is nothing but the reverence to Nature and cosmos.

**What Pantheism Believes:**

At the heart of Pantheism, the natural earth is sacred. Scientific and Natural Pantheism has a naturalistic approach which simply accepts and reveres the universe, and nature just as they are, and promotes an ethic of respect for human and animal rights and for lifestyles that sustain rather than destroy the environment. The scientific pantheists says earth is being considered sacred. Temples, mosques, churches are the holy places on the earth. Human beings are struggling for satisfaction, love, freedom, peace which is the amalgamation with existence of God. Natural earth is sacred. Also universe is sacred. We have to respect for human beings. We have to sustain and to protect the animals because they are individual part of this sacred earth. We have to belief and faith upon the universal power. Being oneness is the part of universe. All are the product of nature an integral part of nature, therefore these are naturally bounded with the super natural power.

“We revere the universe, we are not talking about supernatural being. We are talking about the way our senses and our
emotions force to respond to the overwhelming mystery and power that surrounds us. We are part of the universe. Our earth was created from the universe and will one day be reabsorbed into the universe. We are made of the same matter and energy as the universe. We are not in exile here. We are at home. It is only here that we will ever get the chance to see the paradise face to face." The above view of Harrison Paul is about human being. He says human being is not an isolated but has a part of the universe. Because of the universe become an abode to have his identity and energy.

The Universe Creates us, preserves us and destroys us. It is beautiful and our ability to describe is wordless. We have to relate the universe with humility, awe, reverence, celebration and search for deeper understanding in many ways that relates to their God. "You can never be separated from it." Here Braddy, F.H. writes

"What ever else is taken from you. This can never be taken from you wherever you are,
It's there with you.
Wherever you go, it goes with you
Whatever happens to you
It remains you."
Those pantheists today argue that the Universe is their God who tends to be naturalistic or Scientific Pantheist. When Scientific Pantheists say they revere the universe, they are not talking about a supernatural being whom they worship. Instead, they are referring to the way human senses and emotions force us to respond to the overwhelming mystery and power that surrounds us.

When the attribute of worship is removed, however the validity of labeling the natural Universe as ‘God’ is often called into question. These seem to be some grounds for the challenge because this ‘God’ is very unlike the gods normally worshipped in the west, and its only purpose appears to be to express some emotional connection or reaction to the Universe at large.

On the other hand, our experiences with anthropomorphic and personal gods in the west should not blind us to the fact that there are many different ways to define the term. Impersonal and non-anthropomorphic gods can be found in many traditions. In Islam anthropomorphism is considered blasphemous and Allah is described as totally unlike anything else in expectation. The Universe is one being, all its parts are different expressions of the same energy, and they are all in communication with each other, therefore parts of one Organic Whole. The whole is in all its parts so beautiful, and is felt by me to be so intensely in earnest, that we have to
compel to love it, and to think of it as divine. Whole alone is worthy of the deeper sort of love and there is peace and freedom. It is a kind of Salvation, in turning one's affections outward, towards this one God, rather than inwards. On one's self or on humanity or on human imaginations and abstractions – the world of spirits. Further Robinson Jeffers Says: -

"We are resolved into the supreme air we are made one with what we touch and see, with our heart's blood each crimson sun is fair, with our young lives each spring impassioned tree flames into green, the wildest beasts that range. Have lost their terrors now, we shall not die, The Universe itself shall be our Immortality."

Pantheist considered that the Earth is Sacred. It should be clear by now that 'Pantheism' is attractive for some people today because it is a way of dissociating themselves from the kind of 'humanism' that can be used to rationalize ecological destruction. Environmental concern is so strong among pantheists here Paul Harrison views that the earth is sacred. He explains it as below :-

"When we say that the earth is sacred, we mean it with just as much commitment and reverence as we believes about speaking concern to their church or mosque or the relics of their saints. But we are not making a statement about supernatural. We are saying that we should treat the natural

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world as we believes and treat their temples and shrines a place to be revered and preserved in all its glory. 

Is Pantheism essentially a reverence for nature apart from the section of nature transformed by human culture? Well the Universal Pantheists Society the only pantheist member Organization seems to encourage open air ceremonies that evoke respect for nature and it insists that building is not necessary for the experience of the diving that sometimes a building can get in the way of that experience.

Modern Pantheists are definitely not opposed to the scientific method as a method for understanding nature.

**Arun Kolatkar's *Jejuri* -**

**With Special Reference to ‘Scientific Pantheism’.**

Arun Kolatkar, born in 1932 and, brought up at Bombay and Kolhapur is a brilliant bilingual poet who wrote independently in both English and Marathi. The Chronology of his Poems can not be easily traced.

Some of his poems on common themes are found both in English and Marathi but he himself argues that they are independent creations and not translations. He was Influenced by Marathi Poets like B.S. Mardhekar and P.S. Rege and the Marathi Saint Poets like Tukaram, Namdeo etc. and among the Europeans by Rilke Rimbaud and Eliot. The
single strongest influence on him, however seems to be the famous American poet William Carlos. His *Anthology of Marathi poetry* as well as English Poems including *Jejuri* is product of Late 60's published in early 70's and are strongly influenced by the advent of the absurdist literature in Marathi Drama, fiction and Poetry. His constant experimentation with style and structure reveals his complex, modern, pantheistic vision all the time, to make sense of bewildering surroundings. He goes on playing with words and sometimes he introduces even graphic designs achieved through arrangement of words.

The familiar objects have rendered a totally new dimension by description of the things observed at a distorted angle. His verbal play, stylistic devices and his distortions come together to throw up new startling and mostly comic possibilities and connections but behind these experiments one sees a serious mind aware of a certain predicament in which the contemporary, educated urbanized man finds himself today.

Kolatkar presents *Jejuri* – a collection of 36 Poems with pantheistic attitude. His hidden interest to depict the attention of readers superstitious mind. He exposes the superstition among the people in the matter or worshipping Gods and Idols. He has depicted the picture of material world in this collection- *Jejuri*. 

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'Jejuri' and 'Khandoba'

'Jejuri' is a village situated about 30 miles [48 KM] from Pune. At Jejuri there is a holy shrine of Khandoba to which thousands of pilgrims from all sections of the Hindu Community pay reverence to Khandoba, a mythical God Particularly from Maharashtra and Karnataka visit all through the year. The scholars are of view that, it is the God of nomadic and pastoral tribes. It gradually evolved from his status of a folk God and has been accepted as a family deity God ('Kul-daivat') by Brahmins as well as non-Brahmins in Maharashtra. Khandoba is accepted as protector God. It is believed that Khandoba can bestow wealth, health and children on his devotees. In this respect Khandoba differs radically from another popular God in Maharashtra namely 'Vithoba'. Like all protector God's Khandoba must be propitiated by making suitable offerings to him in his shrine at Jejiri.

Certain days in the year are considered more auspicious than others the devotees from Maharashtra visit Jejuri on these 'especially potent' days. On the other hand, less auspicious or less potent days too, one can see at least about thousands of devotees making their offerings to Khandoba. The nomadic Origin of Khandoba is seen from the fact that the offerings are goats or fowls that are sacrificed near the shrine. The vegetarian devotees offer sweets made of
lentil and jiggery ['puran poli' mentioned in the poem 'The Priest'].

Just as 'Khandoba' protects his devotees and grants their demands for wealth, health and children, he can also be angry with them if the devotees fail to propitiate him or worship him according to an age code of worship. For example, if they fail to visit Jejuri or make a suitable. Sacrifice after an important event like marriage or the birth of a child in the family. In the Indian tradition this mode of worship is called ‘Sakam bhakti’ (devotion to god with expectations as regards the fulfillment of this worldly demands) as opposed to ‘nishkaambhakti’ (devotion to god which expects nothing, except salvation- a spiritual demand). The devotion which the devotees of Vithoba display is, therefore, 'Nishkam Bhakti'.

‘Khandoba’ is one of the two most popular gods in Maharashtra. Some scholars have traced the origin of Khandoba to the southern states of India such as Karnataka or Tamil Nadu. It must be remembered here that at one point in the history of this region parts of these three states could well have formed a cultural religion with strikingly similar folk deities and the modes of worship.

Khandoba's emergence as a folk deity can be traced back to 8th Century A.D. There are a number of Khandoba Shrines or temples in Maharashtra and Karnataka. Jejuri of course, is the holiest of the Shrines of Khandoba for his
devotees. There are two Shrines at Jejuri one located on a hill top, some four miles South West of Jejuri-Village called Karhe Pathar. It is regarded as the older place by devotees. This Shrine faces east. In the Shrine there is a linga [a phallus] representing Khandoba and there is also a man made idol of Khandoba. In the Indian tradition the idol in a shrine may be swayambhnu literally self formed. These are usually stones or rocks in the shape of phallus. These are believed to have ‘emerged’ where the god made his descent on the earth.

The later need to be sanctified by the priest by performing installation of the idol rites [Pran-Pratishta] At Karhe Pathar, there are some other temples of deities connected with Khandoba of such deities as Maruti or Ram as they are associated with a holy place.

The Other shrine of Khandoba at Jejuri is situated on another spur of the same hill. It is much lower in bight than Karhe Pathar. In the sanctum there are two swayambhnu Lingas representing Khandoba and his consort Malasa. There are in addition silver and gold idols of Khandoba and Mahalasadevi.

The area around the temple is well protected by erecting an impressive rampart around it. A little lower down, there is a shrine dedicated to Bani, the daughter of a nomad chieftain. According to the popular legend, Khandoba fell in love with her and married her. Khandoba, in this respect, is like many
other folk gods with two consorts, or wives.

One of the more obnoxious practice is to offer one's child, male or female to the god. This had led to the rise of a new class of devotees namely 'Vaghyas' and 'Muralis'. Animal sacrifice also appears repugnant to a large section of Maharashtrian people particularly belonging to 'Warkari Panth' devotee's of 'Vithoba', the other culturally important god in Maharashtra.

Shaikh Mohmmad severely criticizes Khandoba's devotees for their immoral and inhuman ways of propitiating Khandoba. Needless to say the god himself comes in for good measure of criticism Saint Eknath a great cultural figure during 15th Century Maharashtra. It is said that and also the myth says that Khandoba's aim was no doubt, to win them over and gradually bring them to more humane and morally acceptable ways of devotional practices. In the process Khandoba himself would undergo a transformation and become a god similar to Vithoba. But this may not be happened and Khandoba remains very much a folk deity, his absorption in the main tradition has not yet come about. Saint Ramdas, a Seventeenth Century cultural leader writes Khandoba in glowing terms but his admiration is confined only to the power of Khandoba to attract a large number of Hindus and bring them together at Jejuri. Sant Ramdas was aware of the Political potential of such gatherings at a time
when Muslim invaders in Maharashtra were affectivity challenged by Shivaji. In spite of these efforts to raise him to the status of a higher God, like Vithoba, Khandoba continues to be a folk deity and his devotees continue to propitiate him in the same old way. To millions of his devotees Khandoba is a 'living' God and Jejuri also is, in this sense, a place where the devotee can 'feel the presence' of God i.e. Khandoba, the protector fulfill the exceptions. And that feeling itself satisfies the devotees of Khandoba's career as a deity has passed through various stages. Perhaps he was a folk hero, protector of cattle, sheep etc. As his popularity among the devotee grew there were mixed responses to his rise as a God.

Some criticized him for obnoxious practices he expected of his devotees and some sought his protection and raised him higher in the hierarchy of folk gods. In due course of time, it appears, the criticism, which gave way to a wider acceptance of Khandoba as a folk God. Since the 17th Century both the Hindu as well as Muslim rulers have patronized Khandoba and even after the advent of the British in this part of India many rebels Umaji Naik being the most well known of them against the British Raj took inspiration from Khandoba's legends. The Christian Missionaries also tried to denigrate the God in 19th Century but Khandoba's spell on the popular imagination continues unabated. It has defied all efforts at 'Sanskritization' of Khandoba. Indeed since 15th Century
onwards Khandoba's popularity and his hold on his devotee came to be accepted by the upper sections of the society.

Legendary account of 'Khandoba' appeared in Sanskrit Language. Soon one legend begot another and there was a sizeable corpus of them Most are explanatory in nature.

'Khandoba' is said to be a reincarnation of Shiva the destructive aspect of Indian trinity Brahma-Vishnu-Mahesha (Shiva). It was he who destroyed the evil demons and protected the sages [Rushis]. There are other stories explaining the presence of his wife Mahalsa, his second wife Bani his horse and dogs etc. This elaborate corpus of legends has entered into the cultural life of Maharashtra.

Khandoba, Mhalsa and many expressions derived from the legendary accounts of his life and deeds have entered Marathi language. Khandoba is thus, a living presence for every large section of Maharashtrians and the place of Jejuri, reverberates all through the year and particularly on certain auspicious days with the ecstatic loud cries of his devotees.

Here Devotees cry as 'Yelkot Yelkot ghei' while feeling turmeric powder. Here the poet shows us the realistic and religious picture of Jejuri. A devotee cries with the name of Khandoba. Spirituality, science, mind and body are mingled here.
The poems from Jejuri: -

'The Priest': - The poem consists three line stanza.

"An offering of heel and haunch on the cold altar
of the culvert wall the Priest waits.
is the bus a little late?
The priest wonders.
will there be a puran poli in his plate?
with a quick intake of testicles
at the touch of the rough cut, dew drenched Stone,
He turns his head to sun."9

We must assume that the narrator of this poem is different from the narrator protagonist of the poem 'Bus'. The narrator in this poem presents a portrait of a temple priest, Waiting for the pilgrims to arrive. The technique is similar to the one used in film. A priest such as one presented here is a common sight at religious centers like Jejuri, Pandharapur, Tuljapur, Varanasi etc. For the devotees, he is the intermediary between them and deity to which they have come to offer their worship. This 'Sacred' office has its profane or mundane aspect too, which is often very jarring and upsetting to a not-so-devoted visitor. Particularly to the secularized, urbanized and westernized visitor. To such a visitor, the priests appear greedy agents who dupe the gullible devotees and gobble up their money. This attitude, it is worth nothing, has been
strengthened by the popular accounts of such priests.

If the existence of god is everywhere then why devotees do such things, narrator feels embarrassed malytically speaking in-

In the first stanza of the poem priest has a powerful visual image. It presents the priests from a 'profane' that is secular point of view. The sacred function of the priest is suggested by such words as 'Offerings' and 'altar' only to be desacralized by the mundane 'heel and haunch' referring to the typical posture of the rustics while waiting for someone or something to arrive.

'Puran Poli' a very popular sweet dish offered to the deities in Maharashtra, particularly Khandoba and consumed subsequently by the devotees and of course by the priest as 'prasad'. The mention of 'Puran Poli' here underlines the speaker's perception of the priest as a greedy agent, to exploit the devotees for his personal, material gain.

Stanza-III depicts the situation of priest. Here the priest is presented as if he were a lizard evoking an almost universal sense of repulsion and detestation. Lizard changes colours very fast to suit his interest so does the priest. He shifts quickly and easily from his sacred function to a mundane one.

In the Stanza IV of this poem the poet depicts-

Timelessness, eventlessness an impressive new coinage.

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This stanza also shows us a striking image bringing out the drab, uneventful and materially impoverished world of Jejuri.

Note the image of the sun as the village barber. In the context of the recurring sun imagery suggests that the sun is bringing light and warmth to the priest. It removes only the external physical discomfort but leaves the inside of the priest untouched.

In the next stanza of this poem narrator writes, Betel nut, mantra the decasualization of the function of the priest. The turning over and over of a piece of betel nut is compared to the chanting of a mantra. Further poet implying a cause and effect relationship between two quite gratuitous events pours further derision on the worldview of the traditional devotee.

Next stanza Catches the narrators fancy while In the next stanza we may note the image of the Bus as a cat inspired by the appearance of the front part of the bus. The pilgrims are in turn pounced upon by the lizard - priest. Note also the symbolic relationship between the priest and the bus.

All the poems appeared in this collection ‘Jejuri’ are related to God i.e. Khandoba. Here the devotee when visits the temple he prays before God, the priest in that temple come ahead and says him to offer a dish of ‘Puran Poli’ to God, which is ‘Prasad’ of deity. Devotee do it to pay respect to God. Here is proper linkage between God and devotee which is ‘reverence’,

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a part of 'scientific pantheism', scientific pantheism is notably find in some lines of the poem. There is reverence of devotee to the priest, the animal of the temple, with God as well and vise-versa. By offering such gift as a token of love it self signifies the exchange between God and devotee it mean there is take and give relationship.

It is clear that this collection is a Pantheistic collection because here is only one subject of God is highlighted.

In the next poem 'The Doorstep' Poet Says-

"That's no doorstep

It's a pillar on its side.

Yes,

That's what it is". 10

In this poem the conversation between speaker and his companions itself signifies scientific pantheism.

Through their conversation we get the idea how traditional devotee use revere the existed material in the temple and the holy idea with same emotion. A temple is often held in special reverence by the traditional devotees who show their reverence by touching the doorstep with their foreheads may be the narrator [Poet] and his friend saw some devotees doing this. For a traditional devotee every object in the temple exists at two levels. One is on material level, the other level is religious and spiritual.
The Poem 'Water Supply' recreates the poets felt sense of chaos, aridity, lack of interconnection and the resulting loss of function.

The Poet says in this poem--

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a conduit pipe
runs with the plinth
turns a corner of the house
stops dead in its tracks
shoots straight up.
Keeps close to the wall
doubles back twists around
And comes to an abrupt halt

a brass mouse with a broken neck."^{11}
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From the above lines we see a conduit pipe which is in broken stage. It is felt at the corner of the house. It is like to be in dead stage, but at the tap key there is also presence of a mouse with a broken neck. However devotees came here and pray to that mouse because it has same value like God. Reverence is elaborated here by the poet. The juxtaposition of the conduit pipe, the broken tap and the 'able bodied milestones. However a broken dysfunctional object; only one of the two pieces which make a 'functional milestone' which is placed under the broken tap underlines the random, presence of traditional object 'millstone' and 'water tap'.
Next line Explains

"A brass mouse with a broken neck,
without ever learning.
What chain of circumstance
can bring an able bodied millstone
to spend the rest of his life
under a dry water tap."\textsuperscript{12}

The above line illucidates a brass mouse with a broken neck. The key of the tap is missing giving it an appearance of a mouse with a broken neck. The words 'broken' and 'dry' once again add to the narrator's perception of Jejur as a sterile and degenerate place. But in this place also devotee expresses gratitude and attempts to find solace.

The next poem in this collection is 'The Door', which contains three line seven stanza, a detailed description of sundry objects that catch the narrator's attention. But once again the object is seen on two levels: - Mundane and the sacred or religious. The narrator sees a plain, old dangling door hanging on the hinge but describes in terms of 'A prophet half brought down / from the cross' and 'A dangling martyr' thus the dilapidated condition of the door, perhaps suggests from the narrator's point of view, the decay of religion and religious practices. It is significant that the door should make the narrator think of Christ and Crucifixion.
In the very first stanza poet says-

"A prophet half bring of down
from the cross.
A dangling martyr". 13

In The second stanza – Poet reflects on medieval age Jejuri reminds the poet of medieval world to carrying historical figures and deflects although broken and shrouded Hence he says-

"Since one hinge broke
the heavy medieval door
hangs on one hinge alone."14

The narrator suggests that the door remembers the days when the tradition was alive. Hence the grain stands out on the wood—the wood grain stands out because of the constant exposure. About the grain the Sun, the Cold and the dust in the next stanza the narrator of this poem he says that.

"Like a memory that gests only sharper
with the passage of time,
the grain stands out on the wood."15

A striking image of irreversible decay and damage is portrayed in the next stanza.

The Poet Portrays-

"and is leaning against
any old doorway to sober up
like the local drunk."16

Yet another image that evokes is the feelings of
degeneracy and squalidness of the place. The door, the highest and the dilapidate took worn by the objects all that remind the poet of degradation and the squalliest nature of the people. How devotee reveres to the door? It is clearly seem here. This poem symbolizes Jesus Christ and his crucification, still that cross pillar is inspiration to the devotees in such way that door in Jejuri is not in proper stage. It is remarkable and inspirable for them.

The devotees seek inspiration through the object of holy place.

'Chaitanya' consists of three poems. The first of three poems is perhaps a reference to the visit of the great Bhakti poet from Bengal Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to Jejiri in 1510 A.D.

'Bhakti Sampradaya' [Sect] was an ardent advocate of the direct communication between the devotee and the deity on the strength of the Bhakta's total surrender to God. In this sense it is a monotheistic sect, and frowns upon the worship of a multitude of Gods particularly of the kind one finds at Jejuri. Chaitanaya Mahaprabhu Consistently urged the devotees to turn away from such gods to worship the divine in man. The insistence on the direct communion between the devotee and the object of his worship and exclusion of the middleman (priest) makes it appear somewhat like the protestant sect. The deity on the strength of the Bhakta's total surrender to
God. In this sense it is a monotheistic sect, This sect never fill inclined to worship Chaitanya Mahaprabhu consistently urged the devotees to turn away from such gods to worship the divine in man. Considering the fact that the modern, western educated Indian intellectual is very likely to be influenced by the protestant worldview and the consequent utilitarian ethic arising there from. It is not at all surprising that someone with the narrator’s point of view should find Chaitany’s [i.e. Bhakti Sect’s] point of view more congenial and there is certainly something to be said in its favor, particularly its insistence on living a natural existence [what’s wrong / with being just a plain stone. It is tempting to think that Chaitanya may also mean life or principle of being [life principle]. The Poem consists a plea for throwing off a falsely imposed mode of existence, which disfigures and distorts the principle of being-as a stone painted to become a god is a distortion of natural stone. Pilgrimage during the Maharashtrains or Indians is warkari sect. This sect always in the way of Vithoba. They go to Pandharpur. The holy place and pilgrimage offers their prayer. Here the same view is done for Chaitanya Mahaprabhau sect in Bengal.

In the very first stanza of the poem 'Chaitanya' poet says-

"Come off it
said Chaitanya to a stone
in stone language."17

(66)
Stone language—yet another instance of the poet’s fertile imagination and creative use of language is used. One can communicate with a stone only in its language. Being holiness man and universal elements are related to each other. Chaitnaya Mahaprabhau said stone to come of with him. This is holiness Chaitnayaji and stone we witness. As clearly mentioned in the first stanza shows that Chaitnaya Mahaprabhau visited Jejuri. It means Jejuri has its own importance since last very old days. Jejuri is nothing but the holy spiritualistic place. Where devotees visit oftenly, it show us that the relation of man with relation to God is concrete. This proves that it is most realistic concept of life after death and most solid basis.

In the second stanza of the poem poet insists on letting the stone remain stone alone

"Wipe the red paint off your face
i don’t think, the colours suits you,
i mean what’s wrong with being just a plain stone
i’ll still bring you flowers,
you like the flowers of Zendu,
don’t you?"18

Zandu-Marigold—The flower most commonly offered to Khandoba and other stone Gods. It is a bright red or orche coloured flower, which matches the red colour of the God. The
poet reflects the oneness in the worship. The inseparable of marigold and the red offered to stone God. The common faith of devotees shows that they have strong feelings of reverence, love to God. Devotees offer Zandu-Marigold to God Khandoba. They offers it with deep faith in God.

In the Poem 'A low Temple' poet depicts in the first line

"A Low Temple keeps its gods in the dark."19

The word low symbolises the physical appearance of the temple. The poem at one level is a straight forward narration of an intriguing. Also frustrating experience for the narrator but as in a successful poem, the same objects and movements take on quite unobtrusively, a metaphorical and symbolic meaning. The existence of God is in the temple. Men go there to pray before God, because this universe is full with existence of God. This universe not only creates but also destroy us. So the flow of men is always to the way of temple. This is nothing but emotional connection or reaction to universe at large.

Further poet depicts the material images in the line

"Amused bronze, smiling stone. Unsurprised".20

The narrator absorbs the material images those are made of [bronze or stone] and not the fact that they stand for something else. Unsurprised again a startling and yet very effective way of describing the images.

In line No. 11 and 12 of this poem poet depicts
"A skeptic match coughs
You can count".21

Here poet explains the skeptic match coughs – Coughing of the match is the wavering of the flame as the matchstick nears the end.

The narrator would not, like the believers, accept the priest's words when he can see that the goddess has eighteen and not eight arms. The narrator's insistence to go by or trust his sensory impressions, evidence of the sense reinforces the word skeptic.

In next line 'You can count' the narrator – ‘counts’ whereas the other devotees accept the priest's word. This marks the difference between the other pilgrims believing devotees and the narrator. The view of pilgrims and poet is not same. Here poet's ideas are skeptic, but pilgrims believing the presence of God. The intermingling situation of devotees is explained here. Arun Kolatkar has given his sensory impressions, evidences of sense reinforces the world skeptic. But the symbolic picture of pilgrims is cleared here that here is an attachment of them is with God. They got pleasure after meeting to God. The approach of devotees is non-skeptic.

"But she has eighteen, you protest.
All the same she is still an eight arm
goddess to the priest."
You come out in

The sun and light a charminar.

Children play on the back of the twenty foot
tortoise."

In these lines. Hence
You Protest: - It is a natural outcome of the ability and
insistence to trust it rather than the priest. Note that the
'skeptical' narrator's protest begins with 'but' which is met
with by a stubborn unyielding all the same.

The priests stubborn mulish insistence that 'she is still
an eight armed goddess' shows that he would go on repeating
the traditional description of goddess even if he were able to
count and see for himself he corrects that the goddess had
eighteen arms. The priest obviously belongs to the dark
'regions'. Poet's pantheistic attitude does not accept third
opinion, which is generally accepted by the common man.
Kolatkar's originality lies in focusing the attention of reader's
towards eight armed goddess. Kolatkar runs after the
materialistic pleasure of devotees but devotees feel better that.

In the sun: -For the narrator the sun and the open space
in front of the temple offers an escape from the suffocating
atmosphere inside the 'low' temple.

The 'Sun' again stands for reason. The narrator's lighting
a charminar is a gesture expressing his feelings after the

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frustrating encounter with the priest and also an expression of defiance seeking relief. One would normally not smoke in the precincts of a temple. Creative writer such as Kolatkar enjoys adequate amount of freedom to mould even historical facts to achieve artistic motif for his creation.

Children are being natural. They are not yet affected by the religious ethos. For them the brass tortoise is just a huge toy to play with and not a sacred object and part of the temple complex. We have to note that the narrator measures, twentyfeet tortoise matter more.

At the Khandoba temple on 1 karhe pathar 1 – Jejuri, as one gets out the low temple, one finds a huge brass tortoise. Certain symbols like tortoise where devotee feels the comfort. The specialty of tortoise is to show his small incarnation, in such a way we have to become small before God.

'The Pattern' :- This short poem illucidates the check board motifs pattern which, he presumes, was drawn by 'Old men' getting fainter as the children play on it.

“A check board Pattern”.

Some old men must have drawn

yesterday

With a piece of chalk

on the back of the Twenty foot

tortoise.”23

The tortoise images in the temple are holy. It is compared
to 'Kurma Aavtar'. It might tortoise symbolises the love and relation of creators and creation. Pantheists has accepted to co-relation between them. It appears that the narrator is struck by the fact that the tortoise, obviously, a sacred object. The narrator's attitude is typical of the western educated 'rational' man who would scoffingly point at the blurring of the boundary line between the sacred and the profane. It is to be noted that this was the attitude of the Englishmen particularly the missionaries vis-à-vis own temples, the gods and other 'sacred' objects in them.

The idea is that these two realms should be kept separate. It is a measure of the narrator's alienation from a typical traditional Indian mind for which the relationship between the sacred and the profane is much more complex. To a traditional mind any object can be sacred or profane depending upon the context of the situation. The devotees seen in God as father, friend and guide who shares his joys and sorrows. It is comfortable that he is walking with God as a companion. The devotees goes beyond this saying it God is with him, he finds no difference between joy and sorrow.

In 'The Horseshoe Shrine'- The narrator is obviously recounting the account of the horseshoe shrine given by a priest or guide. The narrator omits 'says the priest or says the guide'. But it is quite obvious that he cannot digest the fantastic legend. The priest or the guide, however, is quite
convinced of the legendary prowess’ of Khandoba and his horse. His livelihood also depends on his narrating the legend as if it were literally true. In the beginning poet says-

"That nick in the rock
is really a kick in the side of the hill.
Its where a hoof
struck."^{24}

He feels like a sympathetic listener the narrator however, seems to mock the rendering. The legend says that Khandoba carried Bani, his second wife from her father’s house on a blue horse. The horse, in a big leap jumped across the hill and hit it so hard that the mark of the horseshoe dug into the side of the hill.

The next stanza is full of similes

"Fleeing from flint
To a home that waited
on the other side
of the hill like a hay stack."^{25}

The reference is to Bani temple on the other side of the hill. ‘Hay Stack’ could as well be an aside remark alluding to the relationship between Khandoba and Bani=love in the haystack or an actual reference to the legendary story in which Khandoba met her in a haystack in her father’s house.
Arun Kolatkar has invariably drowned subject matter for his poems from Indian Culture – myths, legends, folk-tales and histories. *Jejuri* is one of them.

Admittedly Kolatkars poem *Jejuri* is an excellent work of art with an interaction, irony, satire and symbolism. Here is and attempt is made by Kolatkar to light on certain myths in Jejuri, particularly related to Khandoba and Bani, which are the proper perspectives of pilgrims to attract this place.

‘An Old Woman’- is a very beautiful poem. It offers a portrait of an old woman on the hill. It captures very poignantly’ the plight of the old and the helpless.

“An Old woman grabs
hold of your sleeve
and tugs along.”

Tags along – hobbles along attaching herself to the narrator like a leech.

“She wants a fifty paise coin
she says she will take you
to the horseshoe shrine.”

The woman wants to retain her dignity by offering to render some service in return.

“You’ve seen it already
“She hobbles along anyway”
and tightens her grip on your shirt
You turn around and face her
With an air of finality
You want to end the face
When you hear her say
What else can an old woman do
On hills as wretched as these."

In fact the horse shoe is an instrument, a source of
earning daily bread and butter for an old women-she is
deprived of bread and butter in fact Khandoba temple is not a
shrine but a shelter for the houseless destitute.

A ‘burr’ is nothing but a seed case or a flower head that
clings to the hair or fur of animals, something or somebody
that sticks like burr, especially a person who forces his or her
company on others and his heart to shake off.

At the end whole situation appears ridiculous and
farcical to the narrator.

The old woman does not have even the protection of the
tradition as the priest and the Vaghaya and Murali have. She
is just like a stray dog. Her question brings out her utmost
efforts to retain her dignity in this condition.

Her eyes become a kind of window to the cosmic world
like a transparent glass pane of a window.

Extending the image of her eye as a window glass the
narrator imagines that it is broken. The crowfeet around her eyes make her eyes look like a splintered window pane. This is a typical westernized surrealistic image. For the narrator everything around her, the hills, the temples etc. collapse. The narrator imagines that the sky itself has fallen down and caused this clatter.

The narrator's realization of how 'small' and worthless he is as a human being. [for he has no compassion] in comparison with the woman who retains her dignity. The devotees says God is father and caretaker. He is too kind. God is not a money lender, he is the giver of life. The poet feels here the question about 'An old woman' who has no any caretaker such as priest and 'Vaghya', 'Murali' have.

But God is omnipresent so the devotee feels the existence of God everywhere. God exists in each and everything. He pervades the entire universe. We come into this world not merely to know it, but to accept it. So we must establish an intimate relationship with all existence.

'Chaitanya' - is a group of poems. Each poem consists of three line stanza. It's a favorite formation of the poet. We do find the poets own invention and creation without following the tradition of poem writing. In this poem the poet is not following the rituals blindly but has consciousness about the modern world and the changing attitude. He also intends to change the ways and ideas as far as deity is concern. This
poem is without any punctuation mark

“sweet as grapes
are the stones of Jejuri
said Chaitanya
he popped a stone
in his mouth
and spat out gods”29

Here the poet takes recourse fantasy. It's about a strange transformation of metamorphosis like the ones.

At the center of this poem is a pun on the word ‘stone’ but in the context of the metamorphosis this becomes almost like the metaphysical poets conceit for the artistic effect.

In ‘Chaitanya’, the poet imagines, with his Bhakti doctrine would see god's spirit informing both the animate and inanimate objects and for one truly believing in this doctrine a stone would be like a grape and equally sweet. But one’s attempt to observe this sameness in practice, leads in fact, not to an assimilation to one god but further fragmentation. The poet seems to suggest that Jejuri the ethos and the world view that the place represents defies Chaitanya’s attempt at assimilation and reemerges in the form of so many gods as per Hinduism.

The latter expression reminds the reader of a stock description in modern violent, glory thrillers where someone
hits very hard in the mouth 'spits out' teeth. In the context, which the poem presents chaitanya spits out stone-gods covered with red paint. (shendur- scarlet colour) Here the devotee experiences the warmth of God's love and compassion. God cares and raves him lovingly.

'Hills'. is a beautiful poem that depicts-

Everything at Jejuri, it seems to exist on two levels - the literal or physical and the level of a legend or a mythological level. For a true devotee of Khandoba with his holistic outlook the two levels interpenetrate so that he is able to look at the hills as demons transformed into geological forms and also as plain geological forms. His awareness of the two levels existed simultaneously. The narrator with his westernized, atomistic [and not holistic] outlook can see hills and rocks as it is only. When the priest or the guide says that they are really demons transformed by Khandoba- thus a testimony to Khandoba's prowess the narrator's sensibility rebels. As in the poem 'The priest' the narrator feels like protesting. The Protest and the 'confusion' are beautifully expressed by the way the pair 'hills-demons'. This arrangement seems to express the doubt, the confusion and the protest. The poet intends to say that it is nothing but the creation of God, which are attractively created in the nature in the form of hills.

In each stanza the description of the hills begins with hills / demons or demons / hills. If the lines are read
consecutively.

Poet describes the symbols of fangs blades breaking through the rituals. Further we see the 'anthropomorphic' view of the poet. He conceives the features of the hills in terms of human anatomy. One fact we cannot deny that the touch of God's hand makes the sky dance, flowers bloom and leaves shiver. This divine presence makes the devotees sing of God's praises.

The single line at the end of the poem powerfully expresses the confusion in the mind of the narrator. The chain of his thoughts is broken by the words of the priest's son who appears in the next poem, 'The Priest's Son' in which one can see how the guide who narrates the legend of the hills to which the poem is a responds.

'The Priest's Son' is the best example of legend of the two demons and God-Khandoba killed them which was the starting point of the previous poem 'Hills'.

Hills is recounted briefly by the priest's Son, a young boy enjoys school vacation, he accompanies the narrator as a guide, Once again we see the narrator being struck by the way people in Jejuri – in this case the young boy easily moves from one domain to the other. The boy narrates the legend sincerely. It never strikes him to question it though the school to which he goes ought to fetch him to do that. For the boy the legend and what the geography book says about the formation
of the hills are two truths that exist simultaneously. In the classroom he will explain the formations in terms of the principles of geology while here, in the vicinity of the temples on the hills he will sincerely believe in the legend.

In short two-line intervention from the narrator upsets the young boy. It makes him uncomfortable. The young boy's discomfort shows that may be he is acting a middle ground.

His 'shrugging' and 'looking' away shows that he is disturbed by his inability to reconcile the legend and his education. Maybe he is acting as a guide because his father asked him to do it. But just as the narrator's question punctuates his enthusiasm and embarrasses him.

His 'natural' childlike behaviour – being attracted by a natural form of life, which needs no legendary explanation and hence produces no contradictions. The priest's son explains the various answers of devotees questions raised to the legend of Khandoba and how Khandoba killed the demon etc. In the devotee's point of view it has too much importance. Hence legend has a very complex character. It has capacity to hold social mind. It's symbolic significance is more effective and it offers an opportunity to develop new vision and outlook. It also helps to promote continuity to tradition and flourishes it. Legends have an autonomous world of consistent symbols. Here the legend of Khandoba is elaborately told to the devotee by the priest's son.

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‘Yeshwant Rao’ is a poem dealing with challenges and the blind belief among the Hindus. Kolatkar has tried to search the God in the heart of man instead of seeking him in temple or idols. Hence Kolatkar advocates the philosophy
This poem deals with gods plenty soaking every action of man.

**YESHWANTRAO**

“Are you looking for a god?
I know a good one
His name is yeshwat rao
And he’s one of the best
Look him up
When you are in Jejuri next.
Of course he’s only a second-class god
and his place is just outside the main temple
Out side even of the outer wall
As if he belonged
among the tradesman and the lepers.
I’ve known gods
Prettier faced
Or straighter laced
Gods who soak you for your gold.
Gods who soak you for your soul
Gods who make you walk

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On a bed of burning coal
Gods who put a child inside your wife
Or a knife inside your enemy
Gods who tell you how to live your life,
double your money
Or triple your land holdings
Gods who can barely suppress a smile
as you crawl a mile for them
Gods who will see you drown
if you won’t buy them a new crown
And although I’m sure they’re all to be praised,
they’re either too symmetrical
Or too theatrical for my taste

Yeshwant Rao

Mass of basalt
bright as any post box,
the shape of protoplasm
Or a king size lava pie
thrown against the wall,
without an arm, a leg
Or even a single head.

Yeshwant Rao

He’s the god you’ve got to meet
If you’re short of a limb,
Yeshwant rao will lend you a hand
and get you back on your feet.

Yeshwant Rao
does nothing spectacular
He doesn’t promise you the earth
Or book your seat on the next rocket to heaven
But if any bones are broken
You know he’ll mend them.
He’ll make you whole in your body,
And hope your spirit will look after itself
He is merely a kind of a bone setter

The only thing is
As he himself has no heads, hands and feet
He happens to understand you a little better."

The Narrator is now the outside the outer wall of the main temple. As he comes down the steps, he comes upon what he himself calls part of God whose place is just outside the main temple, but close to the devotees.

The poet has initialized the ill treatments and superstitions which already intermingled in the religion he intents to irradiates these evils from the practices of religiosity of God ness.

Considering the rhythmic movement of the poem and certain repetitions in the stanza. It is possible that the
narrator in this poem is imitating one of the traditional singers or beggars or a guide that one meets at Jejuri. However, as usual the imitation is modified by the use of his own idiom and tone. 'Look him up'. The narrator takes the reader into confidence and suggests that he should not forget to visit Yeshwant Rao at least on his next visit to Jejuri. Here the narrator might well be speaking of a friend rather than of a god.

'Pantheism' believes that some supreme power of God has created this universe and hence they use to think that creator of the human being may be like human instead of other ugly creators.

In the third Stanza the narrator’s tone changes as he goes over the gods he has visited to Jejuri. The account is inevitably sarcastic, even contemptuous. The narrator has no use for such gods.

Yeshwant Rao is more useful God to his devotees we have to note no legends depicting miraculous prowess are associated with Yeshwant Rao as they are with Khandoba. Actually there is history behind the creation of this God. In medieval times a man whose whole limbs generally from Mang community was sacrificed rather he offered himself to be buried alive before the construction work of a fort, fortress, bridges or dams etc. started. As ‘this sacrifice’ was responsible for the success of construction. Yeshwant Rao was flawless in physique, he
gained miraculous powers of bones setting and making the broken limbs whole.

Yeshwant Rao is a God of modest powers he is God of mundane matters rather than a God who will take care of spiritual matters.

Yeshwant Rao thus appears to be more ‘humane’ more compassionate god than other gods on the hill.

God is worshipped and its only purpose appears to be, to express some emotional connection or reaction to the universe at large.

While studying about Kolatkar’s ‘Yeshwant Rao’ our experiences are with anthropomorphic and personal gods which should blind us to fact that these are many different ways are leading to define the term ‘Pantheism’.

India’s traditional societies rooted in cosmic and acosmic spiritualities. Spirituality in human being is the realization that the spirit, the breath of God resides in the soul and through prayer, scarifies and devotion, a devotee of the God sublimates his passions and baser instincts, negates himself thereby bringing his spirit/soul in communion with God, as like Yeshwant Rao has done. We need to consider the significance of the primer cosmic and the mystic monistic spiritualities for a post modern spirituality which can support an alternative paradigm of development which will protect the bio-diversity on earth. Cosmic faiths of the tribal people or

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folk cultures stress the living aspect in all human being. They believe that the beauty in the physical world around us is not illusory but a real experience of the divine creation.

**Jejuri :- House of Gods:- Amalgamation of gods**

Arun Kolatkar’s *Jejuri* has almost uniformly been regarded as a ‘quest poem’, and which present the views of pantheism. A close analysis reveals that while a scrutiny of ancient religious tradition is certainly a theme in the poem, it is not the sole theme but a part of a larger thematic complex, which is actually a conscious attempt to present in sharp contrast three major value-systems viz, those of ancient religious tradition and modern industrial civilization and a value system older than both these the life principle in Nature and its ways.

The religious theme is evident even to a casual reader, for the title *Jejuri* which is an unmistakable pioneer to it. The place Jejuri, thirty miles from Pune one of the most prominent temples in western Maharashtra, and the god to whom it is dedicated as one of the most popular ones in Maharashtra and Karnataka known variously as ‘Mallari, Mallari-Martand, Malahari-Mahalsakant, Markandeya, Mailar and Mairal.’ Mallukhan god, Khandoba is worshipped in all castes and communities and has even muslim devotees too whom he is known as ‘Mallukhan’. Emperor Aurangzeb whom no one will accuse of being partial to Hindu Gods is supposed to have
called him ‘Ajamkhan’ (the holy one) It is a religious quest the chief motive behind the personal journey to Jejuri?

S.K. Desai says. “The protagonist goes to Jejuri not as a seeker----nor as a pilgrim. He is a kind of traveler----a tourist.”

But actually there are two ‘Visitor observer’ figures in the poem. Manohar is obviously the protagonist, through whose consciousness the impression of Jejuri is conveyed to us and Makarand who is perhaps his after ego.

The entire description of the temple town, the temple, the gods, the priests and the attendants, Vaghya, Murali etc make it abundantly clear that whatever the motives that have brought the protagonist to Jejuri, he has not come here in the spirit in which T.S. Eliot View Little Giddings “You are here to kneel/where prayer has been Valid.” Aridity and ugliness, decay and neglect, fossilization and perversion are all that he sees here everywhere. The dry enumeration in “The Little town/with its 63 priests inside their sixty three houses/huddled at the foot of the hill/with its three hundred pillars, five hundred steps and eighteen arches” is manifestly ironic. The hill itself is all bad earth and hard rock. The old woman whom he complaints about these wretched hills. These wretched hills have nothing to show except ‘sand blasted shoulders bladed with shale’ At another place attention is
drawn to a scanty patch of scruffy dry grass/burnt brown in the sun.

The various temples on the hill betray different stages of dilapidation and neglect. The roof comes down on 'Maruti's head' and a mongrel bitch has found a place for herself and her puppies/in the heart of ruin. In another ruined temple 'a pillar on its side' serves as a doorstep. And what looks like a temple actually turns out to be just a cowshed. In the central shrine of Mallahari Martand itself, the temple the rat stops on mighty shoulder of the warrior god for a quick look around.

The religious significance of what he calls the strange instrument of torture, is lost for him totally, for it is actually an instrument called 'begad' used in ritualistic ordeals by devotees.

The priest and his young son, the traditional temple attendants and the hangers on these are all treated equally unsympathetically. The priest awaits anxiously. The pilgrimage bus wandering how much money he will extract form them. The priest's son, a schoolboy, acts as a guide, since his school has vacation, and when asked whether he believes in the legends of the place, he does not reply but merely looks, uncomfortable shrugs and looks away and tries to change the subject. While picturing the deity, 'Khandoba' and the devotees belief, the poet is remarkably have touched the modern fact about the commercialization of the temples

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and Gods. Priests and guides seem faithless and normal about the deity.

Of the two traditional Khandoba dedicators, viz. Vaghya (male) and Murali (female) the former is treated mere sympathetically. Vaghya carries a bag made of tiger skin in which he keeps the turmeric powder indispensable for the worship of Khandoba and begs from door to door for oil for worship. The one string instrument to the accompaniment of which he sings his song of devotion to his god is symbolic of his single-minded dedication to his sacred calling. A distinct note of irony, however, appears in the closing lines of the sections ‘A song of Vaghya’ the Vaghya declares, God is the world and he knew it backwards he knew it as fangs inside his flanks, but he also knew it as a lamb between his teeth as a taste of blood upon his tongue. The ironic suggestion here is clear that Vaghya the ‘tiger’ himself the fangs of his ‘god’ inside his flanks, for his entire existence has a meaning only in terms of Khandoba. There are compensations for his calling that provides him with his daily food. If Vaghya is associated with the day and the sun (‘I took this yellow scarf from the sun.’) Murali is rightly a nocturnal creature, and the setting for ‘A song of Murli’ is a moonlit night but this short song is filled with biting sense.

Thus Jejuri juxtaposes the ability to astonish, to give life interestingly valuable, with what is conventional and dead.
The artist is like the saint. He is being unconventional, in seeing life differently in having a direct or renewed appreciation of living.

*Jejuri* is a collection of poems about a modern wasteland and loss of faith than a poem which contrasts deafness of perception with the ability to see the divine in the natural vitality of life. The crazy hens and cocks dancing is like the simplicity of the vision of the saints, presumably the artists shares. Saint poetry of contemporary days takes a different perspective in the hands of Kolatkar, a freedom of spirit. In this age of self conscious disbelief while mocking the institutionalized religion. It affirms the free imagination and dynamism of life. The long poem about Jejuri is a way of making affirmations which in the early dog poem are shrouded in surrealistic obscurities and paradoxes. We might see the emotional withdrawal, skepticism, and humors as a kind of modern equivalent of the medieval Bhakti saint who could ignore rituals and address his god directly, conversationally and specially.

Kolatkar replied when asked by an interviewer whether he believes in God, he said "I leave the question alone. I don't think I have to take a position about god one way or the other." 34
However traditional story usually belonging to a particular people; and almost commonly associated with religious ideas or with pre-religious superstitions.

It should not be forgotten that if we subjectively speaking about 'myths' in the poem. These myths are true or at any rate it is believed to be true among the people who credit it with religious importance.

Every group or people including the most primitive distinguishes in it's own way been untrue stories and true myths, ignoring questions of verisimilitude and basing judgement on the religious reality read into story.

Kolatkar's collection of poem Jejuri is an amalgamation of traditions, myths and Indian history which has a very significance according to scientific pantheism.

'Scientific Pantheism' in the poetry of Jayanta Mahapatra:-

Thematically Mahapatra's poetry is redolent of the Orissa Scene, and the deity like, Jagannatha temple at Puri. It figures quite often in it. His most characteristic note is one of quite but often ironic reflection mostly concerning love, sex, and sensuality in the earlier poetry and the social and political scene in some of his later poems. His style has an admirable, colloquial ease punctuated by thrusts of striking images as for instance, his lean to opened like a wound in the poem Hunger,
and the one wide street/Lolls out like a giant tongue in the poem Test for Tomorrow.

**The Human Longing for the possible Alternatives of the Dying process:** -

Jayanta Mahapatra’s poetry demonstrates a continual rehearsal of dramatizing a human longing for the possible alternatives of the dying process. The dying process refers to the dying process of the Hindu myth “The dance of Shiva” or the myth of origins. Myth is predominantly incarnated in the Hindu way of life over which Orissa temples were originally founded. Mahapatra confronts its dying process in the life of common men and women in Orissa, there is a marked intensity and range of themes (temples, workhouses, nature and love) which is diffused into the poet’s consciousness of the dying process in history. This process refers specially to the shattered myth of Hindu. Devinder Mohan is of view that, “His poetic perspective transforms what is local in culture, the myths and thoughts to universal human predicament. His poems deals with hunger, myth, India too”.35

**Myth, Tradition and Culture in the poetic work of Jayanta Mahapatra:** -

Myth, tradition and culture are the roots underneath ‘Pantheism’. These are the base stones of ‘Pantheism’. The existence of God i.e. ‘Pantheism’ is explained through Myth, tradition and culture. It is an integral part of man’s life
whether he is theist or an atheist or an agnostic. The impact of the three aspects moulds the very fabric of his mind towards the immediate surrounding.

Jayanta Mahapatra is also impressed by the myth, tradition and cultures of Indians especially that of Oriyans. As a sensitive poet, Mahapatra identifies himself with the tradition around him. He is haunted by the tradition as he haunts the tradition. Explaining his views on the tradition he remarks:

"I seem to be pulled by the tradition. Tradition might represent many things such as history and myth, the suffering of others. I intend to imagine, ........ And poetry for me, does try to redefine tradition. I realize this would seem a little unclear, but in a way tradition pursues me as I pursue it myself."\textsuperscript{36}

Mahapatra also affirms his staunch belief in myth and religious motifs drawn from his immediate surrounding. They naturally come to him and become a way of life.

He says-

"Orissa is a religious place. We have a number of festivals going on throughout the year. And one can't shut oneself away in one's room and write about something else. What I mean to say is that one doesn't have to these things like myth, symbols and religious motifs come about on their own. I don't have to strive or do these things deliberately. Myth
is there, history is there, and myth, history and rituals do become the stuff of poetry. Because that's the way of life in Orissa and poetry is a way of life for me. 37

Mahapatra emphasizes his view that he belongs to Orissa and that like all the common people he too celebrates the festivals and identifies himself with the place. He says.

"This is the town where I was born here with others, year after year I celebrate the joyous festivals." 38

Regarding Mahapatra's poems and keen quest for roots. Keki N. Daruwalla remarks -

"These poems are just attempts of mine to hold a handful of earth to my face and let it speak--- perhaps this signifies a return to my roots so that they reveal who I am." 39

For realization of his identity. Mahapatra feels that he must delve deep into the history, truth, legend, existence of God, tradition, culture, and myth of Orissa. He cogitates on myth: -

"Once again one must sit back and bury the face
in the earth of the forbidden myth,
the phallus of the enormous stone." 40

Mahapatra is a Christian and rationalist. The myth of 'Shiva' is "forbidding" to him. He seeks myth as a source of "miracle of living" as the stone is the generative power (phallus) to carry him aloft into blessedness. Besides, he considers the myth as the core of his life's various activities.
He feels that the myth prevails over the whole gamut of life, nature, environment and the ruin of Konarka. Myth is the only source of solace, comfort and composure. It alleviates fear and pain and arouses compassion in him for others. He considers it as a soothing benefactor to him.

Mahapatra looks about his identity through myth, tradition and culture in the sprawling environment of Orissa, particularly in Konarka. He declares the sources of his origins despite tension in his mind in section I

"Only that the stones were my very own
waiting as mother or goddess or witch,
as my birth feeds on them as though on the empty dugs of
sorceries thought."\textsuperscript{41}

He considers stone as mother or goddess or witch as his mind is nurtured on rumpled thoughts. He believes that stone carries him a loft into infinite distances of real origin. He is in a fix to decide whether the present time is worthwhile for him to search for his origins or he has to take refuge in the pristine of time. He doubts whether the earth would open out to him all its hidden secrets.

The existence of god is everywhere in the universe. He is not only in stone, but also every particles and atoms.

Mahapatra finds his roots of relationship in stones, because the underground currents of water lie beneath the
stones and they are the perennial source of filling his mind with the spiritual reality i.e. the part of pantheism. He arrogates loftiness of felling to himself. He has to cling to the stone, for consciousness instilled by the stones is a mystery that forms his destiny. Mahapatra thinks that the slopes of stones have a magical power to transcend the realms of the dead people and also to cast a spell of warm feeling on the dead of spiritual presence as the dead men are smitten by lack of consciousness. He, therefore, voices his confidence in the stones for their un-canny power to lift him into bliss.

Rabindra K. Swain remarks, "for the poet, it (Konarka Temple) becomes a medium of a dialogue between the present and the past."42 In this context Devinder Mohan observes, "The prophetic voice of the temple stones, it's presence in both past and future, is consumed by the ruins of the temples."43

The sculptures of the temple now stand a symbol of destruction. He feels shrouded in animosity caused by the 'bloody' past. Thereupon he looks for solace in the present as father i.e. God, but Mahapatra is rationalist insists in him a telepathic feeling of "children's laughter" and "whispers of Gods" presents showers on him the feeling of good.

Mahapatra considers 'sleep' as a source of all possibilities of solace and comfort to his disturbed mind. Sleep makes possible an awakening of his mind for rootless ness of his self. The poet hopes that the sleeping habituate of the

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golden deer helps him to realize the miracle of living in his unending dream percolating through his mind.

Thus in short we say that Jayanta Mahapatra puts down no shutters and puts no blinkers. He has an open mind and perhaps a willing ear in choosing the themes of poetry.

He is firmly rooted in the Orian soil. Puri, Konark, Cuttak, Bhuvaneshwar, form, a quadrangle in the landscape of Mahapatra's poetry. Legends, History and myths are associated with these places immensely interest Mahapatra and from the nerve center of the poetry. He wrote a number of poems on Puri—the great place of lord Jagannatha, the presiding deity of Orissa, one of the four great sacred places of pilgrimage of the Hindus.

In the poems titled 'Dawn at, Puri' and 'Main Temple' and 'Street Puri' Mahapatra underlines the importance of Puri and what it means to Hindus. Widows long for breathing their last at Puri lest they would attain salvation. As the poet puts it

"her last wish to be cremated here

twisting uncertainly like light

On the shifting sands"44

Since the temple of lord Jagannatha at Puri, points at unending, the dying in the place will take to silence him soul the ultimate desire of human being which will enable him to attain the ultimate 'nirvana'.
In another poem titled *The Temple Road at Puri* Mahapatra describes the stream of common men on the road to the temple and the form of their prayer. If the existence of god is everywhere then why people have blind belief in such superstritious things, If you want to find the god then serve the man you have to, 'Service to man is service to God.' Thus the poet says-

"Later,
 As the shrines skics of light
 Slowly close their eyes,
 Something reaching into them
 From that place they learn to
 bear the lamp post
 To the huge temple door
 The sacred beads in their hands
 gaping
 At the human ground."45

The devotion to the deity makes the devotees humble, as they seem to hear his message and begin to understand it. The sense of universal brotherhood overwhelms them and the heart gets purified. Mahapatra's poetic exploration of the place to which he belongs turns out to be a search for the self.

The heroic Oriya past is vividly remembered and recalled with a sense of nostalgia. The glory of pride of our ancestors

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exhibited in the climatic Kalinga war in 261 B.C., which turned Ashoka, the great into a deeply religious man is now a long lost trait in our racial character. The river Doya is a witness to our ancestors heroic effort which has become a sort of myth for us. Mahapatra notices a sharp contract in the descending order between the past and the present marking an overwhelming decline in values of life in our time.

In the poem *The Hour Before Dawn* the poet records his concern for his beloved father. The poem deals with a sense of pathos when the poet apprehends his father’s death. This is a significant poem for it embodies the Hindu faith that parents take rebirth and return alive to their children as their offspring. This belief is all alive among all Indians despite of so many faiths and religions. Mahapatra shares with other Indians. This prompts the poet to look within and to know his own self as he puts it:

The myth has another shade of pantheism. As we realize that the existence of god is everywhere in the world i.e. in small atoms, and particles, the creator of universe consisting of all elements chats, time, space and all.

Thus Orian landscape has a great significance in Mahapatra’s poetry so far as it enables the poet to search for his own self in order to understand the world in its proper perspective. The landscape also helps the poet to alleviate his suffering. In the poem *Evening* he depicts.
"I would forget the causes of suffering, mine and others to justify my even-ings spirit, searching the landscape for the leafs green, the stones or che for what I would not make of myself" 46

Sun and Moon, dawn and dusk, day and night and dust mountains and sea, river and hills, sky and earth all incorporated into the texture of his landscape poetry. In his effort to depict the predicament of modern man is an irreligious milieu. He is not a romantic poet to sing songs in the praise of beauty of nature.

"I am Large,
I contain multitudes,
I exist as I am, that is enough,
If no other in the world be aware,
I sit content,
And if each and all be aware I sit
Content" 47

Walt Whitman, (Song of myself)

Total Solar Eclipse :- This poem was written at Puri in Orissa on February 16, 1980. Here is the explanation of the sun's transformation into a meek and humble personality, the animal behaviour during the solar eclipse, the civilization is become mad. This poem is written near the temple of Jagannatha. This temple is an important landmark in the town of Puri. Puri is regarded as a holy town, cultural and religious centre and what particularly imparts a holy character

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to this town is the temple, which is dedicated to Lord Jagannatha. This seaside town is situated at a distance about three hundred and ten miles from Calcutta, on the bay of Bengal. Steamers call at the part of Puri only occasionally as there is no safe landing space. It is probably the ancient 'Daupura', where Lord Buddha's tooth was housed before being sent to Ceylon (Srilanka). The town of Puri includes the sacred precincts of Purushottama, in the centre being the temple containing the shrine of Lord Jagannatha. (Or Juggernaut) which is said to date from A.D. 318. The Annual festival of Lord Jagannatha's car is attended by large number of pilgrims from all parts of the country and the museum in the town is visited by antiquarians and scholars. The town is popular as a watering place. The giant temple street is only one street in the town which is wide. It is in this street that the temple of Jagannatha stands, where it takes out an annual 'Rathyatra' god by procession.

The total solar eclipse, the poet witnesses on the said auspicious day. He narrates the blind beliefs and superstions regarding 'the solar eclipse'.

'Solar Eclipse' :- According to science, 'solar eclipse' occurs when the moon comes between the sun and the earth. Orthodox Hindus offer their own explanation of the phenomenon of the solar eclipse as well as of the lunar Eclipse. A Line, "Quietly the moon's dark well moves on"48
Here in this line a reference has been made to the movement of the moon of course this movement is imperceptible. We never see the moon moving even though it keeps going round and round the earth all the time just as the earth itself keeps rotating around the sun. Here the poet depicts the scene at the time of solar Eclipse as –

In the Stanza third “emerging from the dark caves of space the wind, the obsession, the nightmare, to affirm what only these men would let come through precious paschal fast, dire superstition.

In the Stanza fourth Quietly the moon’s dark well moves on, against the stone pillars, the disturbed blood, the dust, the pigments and embers, the clear ash, against the lonely foetus of Puri.

In the Stanza fifth The cobra slides along the waiting hill with its unveiled peril, the hyena sniffs at the sudden cool air and lets out a despairing wail, bewildered by this new image of night”49

This poem describes the state of affairs in the town of Puri on 16th Feb 1980 when a total solar eclipse had occurred. The day time seemed absolutely all dark. The sun’s loss of its light and radiance seems to show that sun had become meek and humble.
The sun seemed to have become as meek or submissive as a frightened child is on the top of the temple of lord Jagannatha where the priests had hung a banner of human skin which then went fluttering in the breeze. People living in the congested localities of the town of Puri were groaning in distress because they were feeling panicky. The sun having been completely darkened. The human beings felt miserable like hunted dogs. To them sun looked like a dead body. Unknown to them, the moon was continuing to pursue its journey because it was the moon's position between the earth and the sun. That had caused the eclipse. The ordinary people did not understand this and continued to harbors their own suppositious ideas.

Animal Behavior, during the solar eclipse animals felt scared. The cobra stealthily slid along the hill. The hyena turned up its nose at the air, which had suddenly become cool. The hyena in its state of fear let out a cry of despair. The hyena was watching the sun in altogether different shape. The crocodile moved cautiously in the water, sensing trouble like the sacred Brahmin priest, performing holy rites in order to ward off the danger. The Brahmin believed this darkness to be an omen pasting displeasure of the gods.

Civilization is going to become mad, the narrator feels mankind being damage and the harm to themselves. Human civilization was taking a wrong direction and instead of
advancing or prompting human values, was destroying them. Civilization is also seemed to have gone mad.

Jayanta Mahapatra perfected the art of composing these poems by infusing into them the actual sigh scenes which himself witnessed.

In total solar eclipse devotee confesses that he is sinner, but he has strong faith in god that god will forgive his sins.

He is like a frail and empty vessel. He request God to forgive him and accomplish him. Because God is giver of all things, life also. He is everlasting creator.

In *Exile*: -

It's an exile: The speaker in the poem or the protagonist who may be the poet himself describes his plight of miserable condition as a state of exile. It seems to him that he does not belong to any place, and that no place would be willing to own him. This poem describes the personal feelings that he is an exile of his plight Evidently the speaker in the poem is in a miserable state of mind. He seems to be broken physically, mentally, and morally and so he gives vent to his feelings of distress and frustration.

He first refers to a decaying village which has a crude and shabby look which is situated by the side of the sunburst hills. The village is situated in the hilly area. People keep dying everywhere, and people die in and around this village so that
the protagonist frequently witnesses dead bodies burnt on the funeral pyres.

Having walked some distance from the village, the protagonist now returns home. The long haired priest, who looks after the shrine of the goddess kali, the goddess of destruction and death, worshipped by the Hindus with mixed feelings of reverence, awe, and fear. Bloody sacrifices are offered to the images of kali by the Orthodox, devout. This kali, steals jasmines from other peoples gardens and parks in order to offer them to goddess kali, early in the morning. The priest continues with his professional duties while the protagonist is feeling miserable.

The protagonist thinks himself being an exile. He has experienced the pull of evil and good. In this state he feels that it would be better for him to die.

'Exile' is one of Mahapatras' philosophical poems. In the present case the word has been used for the banished person. The title of the poem is surrealistic.

In fact apart from Tagore and Aurobindo, Jayanta Mahapatra is the only Indian poet who has produced a significant body of poetry in English.

Survey of criticism of Indian poetry in English during the last decade reveals a surprising fact that. Not a single critic has considered in full the entire body of Jayanta Mahapatra’s poetic output. There is only one small critical study, studied
by Devinder Mohan titled *Jayanta Mahapatra* published by Arnold Heinemann in 1987 (P. 97) However this study doesn't include Mahapatra's later two volumes. Temple (1989) and a whiteness of Bone (1972) and one earlier volume Dispossessed vests (1986)

Devinder Mohan feels that Mahapatra is more successful in shorter poems. He remarks-

"Mahapatra offers us images of love, rain, temples and worehouses, notwithstanding however they come across as shimmering fragments, ironical duplicates witnessed madness in his relation with the universe since there is continual rejection and dissatisfaction"^{50}

Jayant Mahapatra’s poems offers us the most positive and embracing approach to life, also the body and nature of any philosophy or religion.

Mahapatra’s poems has its central motto. These poems are fuses with 1. Spirituality and Science, 2. Mind and Body and 3) Human and Nature.

In the spiritual state the intensity of devotee’s faith has a great depth that he constantly uses entreaty mode of communication with God. The Bhakta entreats God to give him solace, peace and joy. The union with God is bliss for the devotee. Which is clearly revealed by Mahapatra in some of his poems.
Mahapatra's poems show us the socio-historical environment and the literary, aesthetic choices open to such a milieu. Simultaneously, it tries to view Jayanta Mahapatra in terms of pantheism and mythic structure and symbols that shape and control his vision.
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