

**A JOURNEY OF SPIRITUAL AWAKENING THROUGH DR JAGRUTI VYAS TRIVEDI'S "DEAR LIFE"****MISS NAVITA MALANI**Assistant Professor,
Department of English
Smt Radhabai Sarda Arts, Commerce
& Science College, Anjangaon Surji**ABSTRACT:**

Spiritual upliftment bestows human life positivity to survive in an utterly dejected scenario. Whether there is a war, pandemic, any devastating phase; a natural calamity or a deliberate destruction; a man with sound spiritual inclination and deep faith in the absolute Divine gets through every difficulty and tough times. All the 43 verses comprised in Dear Life: A Collection of Poems by Dr Jagruti Vyas Trivedi knocks gently on the sensibilities of the readers and takes them on a pilgrimage; serene and spiritual. Going through the verses one after the other is just like diving into the deep ocean of spirituality and finding the pearls of wisdom, patience, self-introspection, divine realization, optimism, compassion, elevation, and so on. Each verse unfolds the layers of a different spiritual aspect gently and dispels the darkness, negativity, frustration, dilemma, and strengthens the faith in the Divine presence and awakens the spiritual core enveloped with a higher radiance. The present research paper is an humble attempt to probe deeper into the poetic world created by Dr Jagruti Vyas Trivedi and to bring forth bright light of its precious gems.

Key Words: *Divine, Expectation, Life, Spiritual, Transcendentalism*

Dear Life: A Collection of Poems by Dr Jagruti Vyas Trivedi is a marvelous artistic treat to the readers carrying spiritual inclination. Each verse in her collection strikes a different note of spiritual and sublime. Her poetry not only delights the readers but also enhances their understanding about the Divine Creator. The poetry of Dr Vyas gives answers to so many spiritual queries, curiosities and turmoil of the readers in a very simple and serene diction with beautiful imagery. The very foreword of the book which is given by the renowned critic and author Dr Ashutosh Javadekar speaks volumes about the poetry collection. He has written

“Dr. Jagruti Vyas Trivedi’s poems are unique for two reasons – those poems scream of authenticity with an absolute and trite harmony between her diction, the rhythm- her poems choose and the expression she wishes to portray. And then there is another reason which makes it stand above rest of the lot – her poems dwell in a realm which tries to bridge the fissure that

Special Issue**151****5th April, 2023**Website: www.langlit.org

Contact No.: +919890290602

One Day International Conference on “Language & Literature: A Form of Social Discourse” organized by**Department of English, Shankarlal Khandelwal Arts, Science and Commerce College, Akola (MS)****Indexed: ICI, Google Scholar, Research Gate, Academia.edu, IBI, IIFC, DRJI, The CiteFactor, COSMOS**

deepens as age and experience grows between the earthly reason of existence and metaphysical purpose of life, if any.”

He further adds

“This attempt of Dr. Jagruti’s poems to stand on the sacred site of meeting of science and metaphysics is itself a courageous one and praiseworthy. And yet, there are signs, signals which bring out ‘a longing to meet... just to tell you that it’s raining’. The poem may be addressing a lover or God or anyone but clearly and distinctly this is an earthly longing of bonding, relationships and far away from perceived detachment as many spiritual practices demand.”¹

For Dr Vyas poetry comes into existence in the same way as a new life takes birth inside the womb of a mother. The small seed of a thought develops in the poet’s mind and takes its life blood from the feelings of pain, anxiety, worries in poet’s life. Poetry starts taking shape in the mind of the poet as an embryo develops in a mother’s womb. The strong yearning to bring poetry in this world is like going through the travails through which a mother goes before giving birth to a child. The poet undergoes through this consistently and one fine day, Poetry, her brain child is comes in this world. It knocks on the sensibilities of the poet and struggles to take birth into this world. The poet thinks poetic creation to be as sacred as the creation a new life on this earth and the concept of Garbha Sanskar is emphasized here. The birth of poetry in the poet’s life is as glorifying as the birth of a child in the life of a mother.

*The travails continue,
Till she starts
sprouting out.....,
Her perfumes pervades
my entire existence..
Her voice soothes me!
As some celestial light
Alights the earth,
My poem is born,
giving me a new birth!(My Poem 15).*

Poetry which has a touch of the Divine element brings glory into the life of the poet-mother. Her whole existence is enlightened and perfumed with the celestial light of divine element in the poetry. Dr Vyas looks at the process of poetic creativity with the same sacredness and sanctity as a mother looks at the birth to her child.

In *The Sense Trap* the poet brings forth the longing of the soul to go beyond the world of sensory perception and to realize and ‘embrace the all-inclusive White’. The poet says that for most part of life, humans live caught in the trap of multi coloured sensory world. With the sensory organs they see, hear, feel, taste, and smell the world around. Every trivial thing they come across is enjoyed by them with an apparent gratification. However, that gratification gradually turns into satiety. The inner core of the soul still starves for a whole experience of divine presence as the poet presents in the following lines:



Drank too much of the world
Through five ways,
Much starved core,
Sorely looking over the bays...!
No more of this,
Cried my soul,
World, not in these pieces,
I want it as a whole... (The Sense Trap 18).

The realization of divine things is resisted, ignored persistently over the joy of material pleasures received through the sensory world. One fine day the satiety of his heart and mind makes him realize that he is missing the most divine presence due to overindulgence in sensuous pleasures and material world. The series of poet's thought about sensual indulgence shrouding the possibility of some ascetic experience continues in the poem *Illusion* too. Dr Vyas says that the worldly life enchains the soul and bars it from realizing the higher divine life.

Should I call it love...?
Or
Sensual indulgence,
the canopy,
that clouds something....
something vague...
enigmatic...!
Perchance asceticism...! (Illusion 21).

The poet says that while carrying over the routine life many times a soft voice approaches her. It seems to be a divine voice coming from far beyond the boundaries of the physical world. The presence of the divine voice consistently makes the poet realize that the material world in which humans live is nothing but a mirage. Though the poet, engulfed in the routine mediocre life forgets the higher purpose of life, the soft divine voice persistently reminds her of the promises made by her soul before coming to earth. The divine voice asks her about her deeds and the poet hardly knows the answer.

The voice asked me,
Of my deeds,
What so far did I do,
And the promise that I made to self,
When I came from the blue.....

I didn't know what to say
And couldn't judge myself,
Lost in the mediocre routine of life,
The answer I hardly knew..... (Mirage 25)

The above lines carry a highly universal approach. At sometime or the other, almost every one experiences the divine presence interacting with him/her. In the worries and care of everyday life even the promises of the soul made to itself before birth are forgotten. The Almighty reminds us through various ways so that the quest of soul for eternal truth doesn't stop in the course of routine life and the higher purpose of life is thought about. The imagery of the divine voice strikes the note of vacuum in human life and reminds the forgotten promises which echoes Wordsworth's following lines from "Ode on Intimations of Immortality".

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar: (lines 59-62)

And

The youth who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it dies away,
And fade into the light of common day (lines 72-77) ²

Dr Vyas beautifully observes that the feeling of pain too is very important for spiritual upliftment in life. Pain persuades us to introspect our own deeds and to keep a constant check on our words and actions. Like a catalyst it brings out the catharsis of agonized soul and makes it feel lighter. Aristotle's concept of Catharsis is reemphasized by Dr Vyas in the poem 'Pain'. Various sufferings and afflictions themselves give the sufferer faith and patience enough to bear the adverse situation and stand again unshakably in the face of perennial pain and ultimately connect us to the eternal 'One'. Kunti, ages ago pleaded to Lord Krishna for sorrow because she wanted to spend her life worshipping Krishna. When one is in pain, one contemplates about God. Kunti wanted to constantly contemplate about God and live under His blessings, so she sought 'perennial pain'.

The sufferings,
The afflictions,

fill the heart with
A rock like faith
That saves me from
Crumbling down,
Unshakably connecting me with the One,
Who is beyond pain...!
A blessing in disguise,
A charismatic phenomenon,
Unveils the enigma,
Why Kunti pleaded for
Perennial pain,
To the joy incarnate, Krishna...!(Pain 29)

Following lines from George Herbert's poetic collection too elaborate the same outlook. Dr Vyas reasserts the theory through her poetry for her readers living in the chaotic life of the present day.

“Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to my breast” (The Pulley, lines 16-20)³

The theory of Karma is asserted by Dr Vyas in a very unique way. She relates the theory of Karma with the Newton's third Law of Motion and elaborates it in the simplest diction for her modern readers. She unfolds the secret of birth-death-rebirth, actions and result, sowing seeds and getting fruits and encourages the readers to perform good and appropriate actions to avail the desirable results. The poet very convincingly states that the present birth is a sequel to the actions of the last birth. All the experiences which a man gets throughout his life are the results of some of his past actions. If the equation of action and consequences remains incomplete in this life than it has to be continued in the next birth. The Poem Karma ends on a very positive note:

Let me sow,
The sweeter seeds,
For the sweeter fruits
to grow! (Karma 37)

Death is not the negation of life rather it is a gateway through which life constantly renews itself. Death has its own place in the scheme of life. In the tradition of Tagore's

Transcendentalism Dr Vyas observes that death is the fulfillment and completion of life and that it is a channel through which life ceaselessly flows and renews itself. “The Journey” echoes the cry of poet’s soul yearning to be one with the creator. An unknown urge constantly draws the poet near to the infinite unknown. She moves on without any concern for the barriers in her path, hindrances like ego or pride are also left much behind in the persuasion of the Almighty. She doesn’t know when will her journey end, she has stopped counting the distance she has crossed and the remaining distance she will have to cross in order to reach the Almighty, who is as vast as a Sea. Her journey is like the journey of a river which crosses infinite distance to get united with and become the Sea itself. Dr Vyas admits in an interview that her journey is from physical to metaphysical world:

“The internal journey had begun long back in me and unknowingly this poetic journey meandered through the feminine sensibilities, occasionally it dived deep into the realms of love getting drenched in the cool showers of rain while on other ones it reflected upon the enigma called life transcending the world of metaphysics. The collection of my poems is humble attempt to give an expression to the feelings of ‘I’ that transcends the subjectivity and merges with the universal spirit.”⁴

Visits to the sacred river Ganga highly exalts the poet and she bows down, praying to the Divine Mother. The poet cannot just spare herself from asking Mother Ganga about the sacred saga of glorious past centuries. Dr Vyas extends her prayers to Divine Mother in an exalted and elevated mood in the following words:

Trying to verbalize the non-verbal,

All my prayers turn speechless! (The Ganga 47)

The celestial glory of Mother Ganga calls back the poet on her banks. Every time she visits the banks of Ganges the gloom, malice and all her burden are washed away by the eternal grandeur and sublime force of Ganga’s holy water. The profound spiritual effect of river Wye on William Wordsworth’s mindset which he expressed exaltedly in the poem Tintern Abbey and the serenity which was bestowed by river Rotha on the temperament of Edmund Spenser resemble the exultation experienced by Dr Vyas on the banks of Ganges and she opens her heart and pour out her prayer at the altar of the most celestial water of Ganga

The same celestial flow

That carries away

The gloom of life!

O Divine Mother!

Your call is so soft

Yet so strong

It has brought me back

To meet you



And melt my pain

In your serene lap...!(The Call Again 50)

Various religions and philosophies mention that ‘expectation’ is the root cause of sorrow. Humans can’t get rid of their expectations in life; naturally they have to face sorrow of getting their expectations broken. Higher the expectation, more the pain. Newton reasserts the great law taught by Life the great teacher. The poem ‘Inevitable Corollary’ by Dr Vyas observes the theory of Expectation & Pain in an undoubted manner. The poet says when she was taught the theory of action: reaction analogous to expectation: sorrow during school days she found it difficult to grasp its core. But Life the great teacher has its own ways of teaching and making understand the lessons of life. Rather than teaching the theory, life demonstrates and gives the learners firsthand experience of everything. Such experiences provide life time lessons.

The strange ways of human mind are immeasurable. Many times restlessness of soul disturbs the whole being. It yearns for something more, something vague. The comfortable and cozy lifestyle too fails to pacify the restless mind. Dr Vyas probes deeply into such agitation in her verse “Restlessness”. She hints at spiritual lacuna which troubles the human soul in the following stanza:

It’s actually ‘nothing’...

Things are well set,

Life is at its best,

Needs and luxuries,

Have erased the boundaries now....

Dainties and delicacies

Have decked life now....(Restlessness 71)

Life is very well set for the poet, all the goals accomplished, targets achieved still when the she peeps into the depth of her mind and heart, an anxiety spreads over her existence. There is something missing, something lacking in spite of having everything up to the mark in life. Readers can identify their own mindsets with that of the poet’s and find their own experience elaborated in the poem. Failure to connect life with the eternal purpose naturally creates restless subconscious. Troubled mind can’t enjoy even the most luxurious life. Such is the trouble of people living a comfortable life but on a superficial level which the poet conveys very beautifully in her lines.

Optimism is a quality on which the world survives and goes on. It is a virtue which is like oxygen to a dejected soul which is about to die in the heavy tide of life. Optimistic attitude can transform the life of someone who has no hopes any more. The Torch Bearers is the zenith of optimistic attitude which is a recurring theme throughout the anthology Dear Life. Dr Vyas wonderfully mentions that howsoever difficult and disappointing life becomes but still goodness and mercy exist in the world and shower bliss on the life of the people

whose dreams are shattered into pieces and takes them through the stormy voyage of life. The beautiful remark from Srishti J. is the witness of the love and appreciation Dear Life receives from the readers.

“I must say the way each and every poem written in the book is just remarkable. Every poem has left an imprint on my mind. It helps me to realize the fact that in spite of many difficulties and problems a person should never lose the hope and the will to revive again in life.”⁵

The lines mentioned below don't just form a stanza in the poem of Dr Vyas but a lived experience in the life of so many people around.

Yes! The world survives...
that the darkness around
frightens to the core,
dreams break
hopes no more,
Mercies rise, showering bliss on you...!(The Torch Bearers 73)

Just when the life seems unbearable, just when there seems no end to the hardships, when the darkness gives no way to a ray of hope then suddenly a day some unexpected help reaches us from the most unexpected corner of the world. The world survives because the virtues of goodness, mercy, help, compassion, sympathy etc are still practiced by a few good people in the world who are the torch bearers to/for the dejected human race.

Dr Vyas concludes her anthology with a poem dedicated to express her gratitude towards the Almighty. An over whelming feeling of gratitude for becoming a part of this cosmos pervades the poet's entire existence. She feels that her precious bond with the infinite is becoming stronger each day. The moment she tries to give words to her overwhelming feeling, her efforts go in vain and her eyes are filled with the tears of gratitude.

Gratitude...
Not just a word, but a feeling,
That binds me to you,
And to everything,
that has your name on it! (Gratitude 108)

Conclusion:

“Dear Life” not only appeals to the spiritual sensibilities of the readers but also offers answers to so many spiritual queries which perplex our minds time and again. The unique perspective, simple yet beautiful language and sublime thought has made the anthology a precious gem in the treasure of spiritual poetical collection published in the recent times. A



reader named Jatin highly appreciates the poems as “Amalgamation of all universal feelings. A must read book for all ages”⁶ Aptly can we use the phrase by Ben Jonson “.....not of an age, but for all time!” to the poetic art of Dr Jagruti Vyas Trivedi.

REFERENCES:

1. * All in text citations are taken from Dr Vyas-Trivedi, Jagruti. *Dear Life: A Collection of Poems*, notionpress.com 2022, ISBN- 978-1-68538-854-6
2. Foreword by Dr Ashutosh Javadekar to *Dear Life: A Collection of Poems*, p.5-6.
3. Wordsworth, William. “Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood.” *William Wordsworth: Select Poems* Edited by Rajinder Paul, First Edition 1977, Rama Brothers India Pvt. Ltd. 2016, p.133-134.
4. Herbert, George. “The Pulley” *The Winged Word*. Edited by David Green, First Published 1974, Macmillan India Limited 2005, p.23.
5. Dr Vyas-Trivedi, Jagruti. Interview. Conducted by Neel Preet for The Literature Today Magazine, India, Edited by Dr Mayurkumar Solanki, 30 October, 2022 Volume 2, Issue 4.
6. Srishti J. <https://www.amazon.in/Dear-Life-Dr-Jagruti-Vyas-Trivedi/dp/168538854X#customerReviews> Reviewed in India on 10 November 2022
7. Jatin. https://www.amazon.in/gp/customer-reviews/R3SIEBLCY8GVHB?ref=pf_vv_at_pdctrvw_srp
8. Reviewed in India on 7 September 2022