

Tribhuvan University

2012

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A Study of Doteli Cultural Songs from Biocentric Lenses

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English in
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
of Master of Arts in English**

A Study of Doteli Cultural Songs from Biocentric Lenses

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June 2012

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Letter of Recommendation

Bhupesh Joshi has completed his thesis entitled “**A Study of Doteli Cultural Songs from Biocentric Lenses**”, under my supervision. I recommend this thesis be submitted for *viva-voce*.

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The thesis entitled “**A Study of Doteli Cultural Songs from Biocentric Lences**” Submitted to the Central Department of English, T. U by Bhupesh Joshi has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research committee.

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Acknowledgements

I am highly indebted to my respected Supervisor Dr. Amma Raj Joshi, Head of the Department, for his scholarly guidance, inspiration and suggestions from the very beginning to the completion of this thesis. Without his constant supervision and intellectual guidance, this research work would never have been into the present form. So, I express my sincere gratitude to him. By the same token, I extend my gratitude to Dr. Anirudra Thapa for his inspiring guide line to complete this research.

Similarly, I would also like to express my sincere thanks to my respected teachers Mr. Shankar Subedi, Mr. Saroj Sharma Ghimire and other teachers who helped me in different ways to complete this dissertation.

I cannot help remembering my parents Kamala Pati Joshi and Gomati Joshi for their continuous encouragement, support, co-operation, love and blessing.

I am equally thankful to my friends Shivahari Mainali, Damber Kadayat, Padam Bhatta who directly and indirectly helped me to bring the present thesis in this form.

June 2012

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Abstract

Environmental literature aims at reading the earth closely to understand its patterns and systems. Environment is the foundation of all organisms which are interconnected and dependent on each other for their existence. The present thesis undertakes the study of Doteli cultural songs from biocentric lense in *Saguns* and *Phags*. This study delinates the econogical value and its preservation through the *Phag Songs*. *Saguns* and *Phags* are holy women songs created and sung by women which deserves the value of holy Vedic incantation. In Doti region, any ritual, cultural and religious performances are performed with the privileged presence of the prist, the organizer and the *Sagun* singers. Women sing *Sagun* and *Phags* on the occasions rituals and ceremonies. In order to dramatize cultural significance of several ceremonies practiced in Far-Western region. Such as: naming ceremony, initiation ceremony and marriage ceremony. The major thrust of the research is that these songs highlight the use of and praise for different elements of nature by man. Man's association with nature is revealed to be less anthropocentric and more biocentric in these songs.

Contents

Page No.

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Chapter I:

I. A Study of Doteli Cultural Songs from Biocentric Lenses 7

II. Representation of Nature in *Saguns* and *Phags* 19

III. Conclusion 48

Works Cited 44

I. A Study of Doteli Cultural Songs from Biocentric Lenses

Saguns and *Phags* are Doteli cultural songs sung on the auspicious occasions, ritual ceremonies and traditional performances in Far- Western Region of Nepal. In these songs, nature is glorified as divine. Songs in *Saguns* and *Phags* include prayer to different gods and goddesses in their different forms of nature. For instance, in *Saguns* and *Phags*, mountains, rain, rivers, trees, wind represent different gods and goddesses. Basil, poplar trees and *Amala* trees are glorified in the *Phag* songs. Similarly, moon, mountain, rain, river, sun are also regarded as the representatives of deities.

Women in group sing *saguns* and *phags* on the occasions of rituals and ceremonies. In order to dramatize cultural significance of ceremonies practiced in Doti region. The ceremony of birth of an infant, "*Chhainti*" (six days ceremony of a male child), "*Nwaran*" (naming ceremony), "*Bartabandha*" (the initiation ceremony), marriage ceremony. In addition, these songs are also blood cells of many cultural occasions which are widely recognized in the names: *Bishu* (Chaite Dashain), *Dashara*, *Gaura Parva*, *Jatras*, *Gahanan*. People glorify gods and godliness so as to ensure their blessings.

Phag songs carry importance to keep intact the importance of traditional life and life saving values. Women sing songs typically sensitive to their relation to Nature. The primary purpose of singing these songs is to ensure good wishes, blessings and happiness in the beginning of birth (new life), marriage (new relation) and building a house opening ceremony (new family). Moreover, another important purpose of singing these songs is to show respect and regard to the dependence of human beings on the nature. Women in Doteli society are quick to occupy the prominent position in the forefront of social lives, their position is privileged in

comparison to that of men. At times of mythoi-religious cultural and domestic events and activities, women hold prominent positions. Hence, the cultural folk songs are designed to reflect the prominent positions of women in Doteli Society.

In most of ritual performances in Western region, especially Doti district, people sing songs related to nature and ecology. The hidden politics within these songs is directly related to ecology around us. Knowingly or unknowingly people of far western region worship nature as god while celebrating different rituals and ceremonies. By singing these songs, people get entertainment as well as preserve nature through these songs.

There are different purposes and motives behind the deification of nature. In the context of preservation of ecology, there are two kinds of people on the basis of relationship between nature and people. Among them, one group of people is 'tree huggers' who love nature as a god and the value of nature for them is equal to human body; they are more bio-centric. Next group of people is 'tree loggers'. This kind of people preserve nature for their benefit. Since they use and control nature for their own sake, they are anthropocentric. For them nature is culture, and they think that nature is guided by human beings.

People of Far-Western region deify nature for both biocentric as well as anthropocentric purpose. Nature is deified in *Phag* songs differently according to time and space. The politics of deification of nature in the *Phag* songs is to preserve nature for the sake of nature itself. It is more biocentric. Songs are sung for the protection of ecology which means protection of all living creatures. However, next politics behind the *Phag* songs is more anthropocentric, people of far-west region sing the *Phags* songs for themselves and for the sake of their future generations' benefit. There is a politics, invoking nature as god, behind the protection of Tulsi. On the other hand by

worshipping it, Hindu people put Tulsi in the position of god, it is the politics to save it for anthropocentric purpose.

Although, *phag* songs glorify nature, they are not only limited in the glorification of nature. In some of the songs, human benefits and desires veil in the mode of glorification of nature. Some of the songs aim at glorifying nature for nature's sake. On the contrary, the glorification of nature becomes the subtle medium to soften the direct selfishness interest of people. Sometimes nature is praised following the realization of its crucial contribution to the timeless continuity of human existence. The glorification of nature tends to be biocentric, anthropocentric and ambiguous.

Once people realize the necessity of nature for the smooth continuity of their existence, they glorify nature as deity, as moral guide, as mother, as the source of inspiration. On other occasions, people give respectful position to nature because nature provides plenty of things which are necessary to live happy life. So long as nature creates friendly atmosphere for the fulfillment of their benefit, it is glorified. In other times, the mode of glorification is ambiguous. Nature is often glorified because it helps human beings in many ways. On the other hand, nature is highlighted after realizing its significant place in the order of cosmos.

There are several purposes behind making references of nature in this text. The realization of the dependence of human beings on nature for the evolution of their culture leads to the biocentric glorification of nature. Anthropocentric projection of nature represents nature as a tool to fulfill the benefits, desires and interest of people. When both these qualities are mixed, the glorification of nature obtains ambiguous feature. Biocentric glorification is ecofriendly whereas anthropocentric representation of nature is human friendly or human centered.

Human beings and animals are embedded in the network of ecological web. If any part of that network is harmed then the whole web stops to function. So these two combinations sustain the relation between living beings and nature/ecology. Barry Commoner's 'First law of ecology' states: Everything is connected to everything else (17).

William Howarth in his essay "*some principles of eco-criticism*" postulates:

A person who judges the merits and faults of writing that depicts the effects of culture upon nature, with a view towards celebrating nature berating its despoilers and reversing their harm through political action. Ecology studies the relation between species and habitats; eco-criticism must see its complicity it attacks.

Although we cast nature and culture as opposites,

in fact they constantly mingle, like, water and soil. (69)

In *Saguns* and *Phags* different kinds of natural things related to human life are mentioned directly and indirectly. These natural things have been discussed in the religious books also. These religious books have the specific and spiritual significance of those natural things. Forest, mountain, river and sun are given with the unique and specific importance. These natural elements have been playing crucial role in human life. Since *Sagun* and *Phags* are related to human life, people dwelling in the Far Western Nepal are sincerely devoted to them. The glorification of nature serves as the support for the constant security and welfare of people. Nature is glorified so that the chaotic human existence happens to take the form of harmony and order.

Therefore, the glorification of nature seems in the sense of human welfare.

Nature is not glorified in its own sake rather human preserve nature for their personal benefit. For instance, grass (Dubo) is a necessary thing while celebrating *baptism* and

annaprasan. Grass symbolizes long life because that remains green for a long time. In this regard, the following lines explain:

Papal Katya Paap laagncha Bad Katya Baulauchha

Simal Katya Suki Jaanchha Khar Katya Palauchha

Cutting poplar tree is crime and people is going mad after cutting
banyan tree

People is going thinner after cutting cotton-tree and begets after cutting
thatch

In Far Western region an oral song which has been transmitted from generation to generation as a moral lesson. Here supposed to be given with feedback to the logics that the glorification of natural things by the human being in Doteli society is an inborn transformation of ethical sense rather than a concept of selfishness. The people of Far Western use natural thing for their self purpose. Following line tells that if People cut the poplar trees we will suffer from everlasting diseases '*Kustaroag*' which is believed to be caused by sinful act. Similarly cutting *bad* trees is strictly prohibited believing that people might go to insanity due to that cutting of *Bad* trees. In the same way, if we cut *Simal* trees that go dry up, whereas if people cut the grass the people beget.

Bad and *Papal* are representation of Lord Bishnu and Goddess Laxmi but *Simal* and *Grass* are not. It is believed in Doteli society that if we cut *Bad* and *Pipal* we are supposed to have committed sinful act. (Killing Bishnu and Laxmi) when we cut *Simal* that itself up but no harm to human being, at the same time when we cut grass then it grows again and again.

In *Saguns* and *Phags* there is one word that we usually hear and it is '*Ganga*'. Every *Saguns* and *Phags* Song it is necessary to take bath in *Ganga*. *Ganga* is

supposed to be a holy river that purifies us from all dust and sinful spots. In Hindu religion, to take bath in Ganga is necessary for every Hindu before they die. Whether people did any crime or not it does not matter but people think that once they take bath in Ganga then they emancipate from all kinds of evil things; so that they could step on heavens way. Ganga should be so neat and clean where we can see our reflection rather it is like a mirror where we can see our image. Ganga should be like Bagmati river where all the Gutters mixed up here, we mean that, although the Bagmati river is totally destroyed by the human civilization even the prestige it preserves is ever green. The sense of preservation, taught from generation to generation, even though it has failed to act. Ganga is such a Holy river which should not be polluted, Ganga is polluted, it will be no Ganga at all. For example no one could regard the prestigious status of Bagmati River now because of the rubbishes flow on. In this way Dotli society is guided by its own ethics that is borrow form Hindu myths and local myths.

The glorification of nature in *Saguns* and *Phags* talk about the motive behind glorification of nature. Human beings are interrelated with nature and everything that exists in nature have an effective role to the human existence too. The role of natural things itself determine their place in human needs. If something is rarely available in the surrounding, people pay, more attention to preserve that thing than that which is easily available. In this sense, it is more anthropocentric rather than ecocentric or biocentric, but we cannot claim that is totally anthropocentric rather it would be better to say that it has dual sense. One example can be helpful to justify this anthropocentric view; *Basil*, (Tulsa) is planted in the yard of every household of Brahmins, Kshetris because it is believed to be sacred plant with various medicinal properties and worshipping with a ritual practices.

Saguns and *Phags*, the glorification of nature has seen visibly and invisibly. It is neither for fulfillment of human interest nor for totally preservation for natural things. It means to say, neither it is only anthropocentric nor it is only biocentric.

Different critics have forwarded their views regarding *Phags* and *Saguns*. Some critics have focused on cultural and some have focused on nature, Jairaj Pant, a critic of *Saguns* and *Phags* has focused on "Social bonding as a moral science, Doteli women's literature, cultural heritages, main sources of entertainment, a cultural grandeur and issue of conservation of ethnic sovereignty" (13). Similarly Govinda Raj emphasizes the glorification of female in his book *Doteli Sanskrit Phag Manjari*.

Saguns and *Phags* depicts in Jairaj Pant's book, *Anjuli Bhari Sagun Polta bhari Phags* shows traditional life style of people living in Far-Western society. Their social structure, behavioral pattern, customs, language, folklores, norms, values and history are incorporated when we read between the lines of these songs. Despite the privileged presence of *Saguns* and *Phags* singer while performing the ritualistic songs like *Saguns* and *Phags*, gives the message of ecological awareness as well as its importance. Generally, every text, literary genre of art has been taken as a cultural entity. Since it reflects the culture of a particular place or society, language is culture and the literature, either written or oral, carries within it the culture of that place. We can also say every individual is a representation of the culture part. It is the culture that shapes life style, behaviors, norms and values of an individual. *Saguns* and *Phags* songs are cultural songs, which carry social norms and provide a total exposure to the culture of a particular place. In the words of E.B. Tyler culture means, "that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs are: morals law, custom and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society" (23).

Though E. B. Tyler has focused on culture morality, this research explores the ecological effect of these songs which lies under study of eco-criticism. *Saguns* and *Phags* have been practiced orally since the ancient time. However some writers from the Doteli Pradesh have tried their best to bring Doteli literature into the written form and into mainstream literature. Govinda Raj Paneru in his book "Doteli Phag Manjari" illustrates the ideas of *Phags* and *Saguns* in the written form. Similarly, Dr. Jairaj Panta in *Anjulibhari Sagun Poltaphari Phags*, has successfully portrayed the socio-cultural aspects that inherent in *Saguns* and *Phags* songs. Both Paneru and Panta have written these songs in Doteli dialect. Presenting *Saguns* and *Phags* in the dialect of Doteli society in which they are sung, their native land makes these songs cultural language necessary for human beings to share feeling, emotion, ideas, experience with each other to keep a society in structure. Language is an unconscious state of a whole community that is invented and created by human beings themselves. In this regarded W.D. Whitney states:

Language making is a mere incident of social life and of cultural growth. It is great an error to hold that at some period men are engaged in making and laying up expressions for their own future use and that of their descendants, as that, at another period, succession shall find expression. Each period provides just what it has occasion for nothing more. The production of language is a continuous process; it varies in rate and kind with the circumstances and habits of the speaking community, but it never ceases; there was never a time when it was more truly going than at present. (Sachdeva & Bhusan 119-19)

Thus, Doteli language, like any other language, has a unique historical background, it is a language of whole Far-Western region. It has its own linguistic structure and

therefore, it is different from other Nepalese language. It has played a significant role to mould every individual except community. Doteli language is a mother tongue of every Far-Western people, who used to live in far-western region, and children also uses this language. This mother tongue helps to make easier to communicate with people (who cannot speak and understand Nepali language) in the whole society as well as to fulfill the need of a member of established ideas with other member of society. Doteli people also do have distinct cultural identity formed by their culture and language. Preservation of Doteli culture and language is a must; Doteli people can preserve their culture by practicing it in the cultural ceremonies.

Similarly Glotfelty defines eco-criticism: "Eco-criticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment" (XVIII).

In Nepal, various groups of people used to live and they have their own language. Language differs from each community likewise other language. Doteli language, in this world is also the bearer of the culture and is the medium of transmission from one generation to another generation. Sachdeva and Bhusan argue:

Language conserves our cultures which is passes to posterity the culture that exists at a given time and place has come from the past and is the result of accumulation of the things, attitudes, ideas, knowledge, error and prejudice. It is man, who has acquired through language a high degree of culture and civilization. (119)

Language can be taken as a tool that helps to change a 'savage man' into a 'noble man' all as such by using Doteli language as a medium to record *Saguns* and *Phags*, *Deuda*, both songs are melodious, informative, and touch the heart of people too. Through *Saguns* and *Phags* we shall explore the core of Doteli culture, which as Sachdeva and Bhusau has remarked," is the sum totality of all knowledge, attitudes, ideas, error,

prejudice"(120) acquired by Doteli community. These are primarily art, painting and other literary genre that express the cultural heritage of a society.

Wendell Berry in his essay "Harmony of Nature" talks about the connectedness of nature with every living creatures of the universe Berry opines:

Nature is a wave and we are the minor parts linked with the very wave. If any one member of the wave is disturbed then, the whole wave can be affected. Most of the liter writing about ecology focuses on the preservation of the very wave. These kinds of writing arouse a kind of ecological awareness through their writing some literary writing focuses on the apocalyptic (destructive effect) awareness to preserve the nature. (123)

Through *Saguns* and *Phags* song, Far-Western people want to protect their domestic animals, children, relatives, health, and so on. Through their song they want to protect the nature and at the same time they want to get benefit from the nature. Jai Raj Panta explains:

Chala jiya balapati sumpurana raathi,

Isaat paapiya desha Tulashaina aathi,

Ara babu Balibhadra dharmako baato,

Kaseri holo jiya dharmako baato,

Aagana Talsa laya hola dharmako baato (Paneru 25)

Dear chid Balabhadra ,do some virtuous work in your life.

Mother how shall I do such good deeds, tell me the procedure.

My boy, plant *Tulsi* (basil) in the yard it is the only work that emancipate you.

These lines contain a sense of love for the herbs like 'Tulsi' which is a symbol of god and a medicine which cures several diseases. If Hindu families do not plant Tulsi in front of their house yard then the family may suffer from different bad lucks.

According to Hindu belief Tulsi is god as well as medicine which emancipate us. It is useful and needed for Hindus from birth to death ceremonies.

In a nutshell, *Saguns* and *Phags* deserve ecological importance as well as social value in Doteli community. To show the cultural and ecological significance of these songs this paper exploits the theoretical tool from eco-criticism since it can be helpful to unearth the intimate relationship between culture and nature. There are different variants of this theory but this research will take help from few theories which are most relevant in this research. By demonstrating the issues about the ecological feeling present research tries to study the relationship between nature and human being, and how expression of feeling and respect towards the nature is portrayed that is significant to eco-criticism. Cheryl Glotfelty defines eco-criticism in *The Eco- criticism Reader* as:

What then is eco-criticism? Simply put, eco-criticism is the relationship between literature and physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from the gender conscious perspectives and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production and economics class to its readings of texts, eco-criticism takes an earth centered approach to literary studies. (18)

In this regard these songs expose the lifestyles, beliefs, traditions, and feelings of the residents of this particular region. Hence, these songs are not only the melodious notes, sung during different cultural ceremonies but also the manifestation of the unique lifestyle of the Doteli community.

This research attempts to explore the ecological insight and biocentric motive behind the singing of *sagun* and *phag* song. The research is divided into three chapters. In the first chapter is introduction of the research entitled Doteli Cultural Folk songs; the second chapter is textual analysis with the application of theoretical tool of eco-criticism forwarded by cheryll Glotfelty, John Hannigan, Wendell Berry and the third chapter will be conclusion of the whole research.

II. Representation of Nature in *Saguns* and *Phags*

Saguns and *Phags* make frequent references to nature. Natural entities and phenomena are repeatedly brought in these folk songs. For instance, rain, wind, river, trees are recurrently introduced in these songs. While making references to different elements of nature, these songs make use of plenty of figures. Several analogies and images of natural elements are incorporated in *Saguns* and *Phags*. For instance, *Basil*, *Poplar* trees and *Amala* tree are discussed and described in a delightful way. The usefulness and advantage of these trees are emphasized through the medium of these songs. In addition, the interrelationships of human beings with these trees are also hinted in these songs. The sacred and pure qualities of these plants are discussed to people through these songs. Moreover, these songs show the necessity of small natural things in the lives of human beings.

The symbiotic interconnectedness of every living being of nature and human beings are expressed in the songs. Respect towards nature is fostered by these songs. Symbiosis is a condition in which both nature and human beings interact mutually. So as to strengthen each other's existence. For human beings to exist and survive, nature is essential. For the smooth and continuous existences of nature, human beings' nature friendly behavior is necessary. In short, symbiosis is a reciprocal condition in which nature and human beings co-exist harmoniously influencing one by the other.

Trees and plants are not simply represented in these songs but there is clear motive behind such representation. Trees and plants are important elements of nature. Human lives are basically connected to trees and plants. Though people hardly realize the value of trees and plants in their lives, they have been dependent upon nature for many things. Because of their superior intelligence, human beings can develop anti-nature attitude. Because of their pride and prejudice, mankind at large

can conquer and contest nature. Human urges and ambition know no boundary.

Human nature tends to believe in the ideas of conquering nature so that human beings feel no threat from the hostile forces of nature. If plants and trees are mentioned in song, people can better appreciate the role of nature, value of environment and necessity of ecosystem in human existence. There is a biocentric inclination in making the references of trees and plants in songs.

Some of the songs intend to communicate the idea that nature is useful for human beings. It has to be used sparingly so that the discomforts and short coming of lives can be overcome. Even if certain aspects of nature are transformed, it must stand in the service of mankind. Human beings do have the habit of overlooking the vital importance of nature. Art becomes necessary to reveal the unavoidable value of nature. That is why trees and plants are frequently referred in these songs.

These motives underlie the significant aspect of human/ nature relationship. The interdependence between human beings and nature is indicated by these motives.

Similarly, some songs make use of the analogy of nature. In Wendell Berry's, book *Harmony of Nature* nature, is portrayed as wave and we are represented as the minor parts linked with the very wave. This analogy describes the dependence of every living and nonliving beings of earth. This analogy seems to establish the ecological harmony and integrity in nature. These songs are characterized by a tendency to deliver certain informative messages didactically. The analysis of these songs demonstrates significant critical concepts from the domain of ecological aspect. Although this concept is not known theoretically by the peasants of the rural areas, they practice the same concepts to preserve the ecology.

Actually, the glorification of nature exists at the heart of the school of eco-criticism. Any trend of thought to subdue nature for the sole benefit of mankind is

flatly rejected by the practitioners of eco-criticism. Eco-criticism is a term coined in the late 1970's by combining criticism with a shortened form of ecology, the science that investigates the interrelations of all forms of plant and animal life with each other and their physical habits. It is often used synonymously with ecosophy or eco-philosophy.

Ecocriticism, a branch of green studies, considers the relationship between human and non-human life as represented in the literary texts. Non-human life includes all the biotic and abiotic forms such as water, plants, rocks, hills, insects and wild animals etc. Non-human life in a way constructs the environment in which human life exists. Eco-criticism seeks to study this relationship in the literary texts.

The relationship between human beings and nature takes place in the literature of every time and every culture. Many literary works contain concrete physical images such as mountains, springs, high hills, dark woods, and wild animals. Moreover, these literary works show the interaction between human and natural world, especially human treatment of nature. The eco-elements in the literary works may provoke a sense of love and affection toward natural objects which brings friendly relation between human and nature. Hence, ecocriticism transfers human sensibility to the natural entities.

Ecocriticism attempts to apply ecological concepts to literary studies. This ecological concept is a way of raising awareness about the dwelling place in literary texts. This kind of awareness is the knowledge that we get about the land or environment. The knowledge about the dwelling place in the literary text is similar to knowing the place on earth. Thus, ecocriticism informs us about the origins of the natural world and the mechanism of the earth as a whole.

William Howarth is the famous eco-critic. He has defined the term Eco-criticism in his book *some principles of eco-criticism* in the following way:

A person who judges the merits and faults of writing that depicts the effects of culture upon nature, with a view towards celebrating nature berating its despoilers and reversing their harm through political action. Ecology studies the relation between species and habitats; eco-criticism must see its complicity it attacks. Although we cast nature and culture as opposites, in fact they constantly mingle, like, water and soil. (69)

William Howarth is of the opinion that eco-criticism is concerned with exposing the effects of culture upon nature. He cautions the despoilers of nature that the uninterrupted process of harming nature by human beings, ultimately results in the disintegration of human lives. Moreover, he argues that nature and cultures are not hostile to each other. On the contrary, they are interrelated to each other. He has talked about the value and importance of safeguarding nature. The primary importance and necessity of protecting nature is clearly expressed by Howarth.

In the song, *Saguns* and *Phags*, nature is frequently mentioned. Directly or indirectly, its significances in human life are emphasized. Moreover, these songs aim at maintaining the harmonious interrelationship between natural elements and lives of people and species.

The following lines of *Saguns* and *Phags* illustrate the crucial advantages of the interdependence between natural phenomenon and cultural life:

There are some songs which wholly give the biocentric concept of planting basil. The activity of planting basil is known a deed of virtue. Such an act leads to the emancipation from sin. The process of planting basil for the protection of

environment is emphasized within the religious context. Although there is a slight biocentric interest in the planting basil, the obvious purpose is largely anthropocentric. The following song dramatizes the religious and ecological importance of planting basil.

*Chala jiya balapati sumpurana raathi,
Isaat paapiya desha Tulashaina aathi,
Ara babu Balibhadra dharmako baato,
Kaseri holo jiya dharmako baato,
Aagana Talsa laya hola dharmako baato. (Paneru 25)*

Let's move on mother in the night, let's not stay.

In this sinful country where *Tulsi* (Basil) is not

Planted

Dear child Balabhadra, do some virtuous work in your life

Mother how shall I do such good deeds, tell me the procedure

My boy, plant *Tulsi* (basil) in the yards. It is the only work that emancipate you.

In the above mentioned song "Tulsi Ko Phags", an emphasis on sense of love or respect for the herbs like *Tulsi* (Basil) is clearly noticed. This shows that *Saguns* and *Phags* tend to highlight the relationship between nature and human beings. In this songs basil and other herbal trees are treated as religious entities, human beings tend to show respect towards nature. In this regard, it is biocentric. But basil has the power to soothe us, heal us and cure our diseases. Hence, anthropocentric and biocentric motives blend the idea of interdependence. According to Hindu mythology *tulsi*, is a symbol of God, and it is useful for medicinal purpose also. It is widely believed that general patients can be recovered after its daily use. And it is also said that the person

who does not plant *tulsi* in front of their house may suffer from bad lucks. Whereas, anybody who plants *tulsi* is considered as pious and lucky. On the other hand, for Hindu, *tulsi* is a god as well as the source of medicine which helps us to get rid of various problems. Overall, the planting of *tulsi* is regarded as a virtuous deed. After all, people plant *tulsi* and worship it. The devotion or respect towards *tulsi* is like respect towards religion or god. This shows the eco-friendly nature of human being in regard to planting *tulsi*. But the reason behind this deification is to save humanity and to safeguard human-centric motive not so much to establish bio-centric unity.

This song offers strong moral lesson. Planting basil help to serve our medicinal purpose. It keeps surrounding, pure and clean. Moreover, it implants in our mind the religious and human responsibility to the structure of eco-friendly surrounding.

Most of the *Saguns* and *Phags* song mention that the cultural practice of planting *tulsi* is a virtuous deed. It is believed that planting *tulsi* brings emancipation from sin and suffering. The act of planting tree is raised to the religious level. Furthermore, some of the songs highlight the healing power of *tulsi*. The act of planting tree serves some other purposes. Certain illness or sickness can be cured by *tulsi* leaves. Frequently, some of *Saguns* and *Phags* songs make references to herbal trees like *tulsi*. Respecting it as the symbolic embodiment of god is a part and parcel of our culture.

This sort of cultural practice does not encourage the trend of conquering and controlling nature aggressively. On the contrary, this kind of cultural practice is eco-friendly. It is beneficial to environment. Although some people plants *tulsi* in the name of religious duty, indirectly they try to fulfill their own private interest and goal. The reason behind planting *tulsi* fulfills their own interest. *Tulsi* is planted so that the

surrounding could be kept neat and clean and sicknesses can be cured. *Tulsi* has the power to heal the deformities of human life.

The idea pertaining to the anthropocentric preservation of Nature is well portrayed in the theoretical frame of ecocriticism "Eco-criticism must see its complicity it attacks. Although we cast nature and culture as opposites, in fact they constantly mingle, like, water and soil" (7). Howarth argues that nature and culture are complimentary, interdependent and interrelated to each other, although they are opposite to each other at surface level. Nature is, therefore, brought to the focal point of literary representation. These songs make frequent references to nature. Anthropocentric motive lies at the back of making frequent references to nature. In the "*Tulsi Song*" the process of planting *Tulsi* is emphasized as a vitreous deed.

Some songs address nature as if it is a living being. Moreover, literary work captures the integral and inseparable nexus between society and nature. The task of eco-criticism is to examine and analyze this relationship between nature and the cultural practice.

Only after late 1980's has literary criticism begun. Its usefulness and purpose in a broader notion of society. Previously, literary criticism has discussed notions of the pastoral, romantic wilderness, literary naturalism and so on, but such criticism has focused more on the literary style of the text. In order to place it into a canonical framework than on the human descriptions of an actual landscape.

Generally, eco and critic both are derived from Greek 'oikos' and 'kritis' and they mean "house Jude" which may surprise many lovers of green outdoor writing. Oikos means our wildest house and kritis means the arbiter of taste who wants the house in good order ho boots or dishes strewn about to ruin the original decor. So, eco-

criticism not only includes the study of the interconnectedness but also close relationship with other disciplines too.

The important fact is that the eco-criticism focuses upon the human knowledge which must be able to understand the earth as the natural phenomena. It affirms the natural importance of earth in the existence of mankind. In this context Richard Kerridge expresses his views as follows:

The branches of knowledge have some sort of relation to the ecosphere. They cannot go away from the eco-spheric implications. Every knowledge or discipline follows the earth. In this way, earth works as a "point of reference" for the understanding of art, literature, philosophy, culture, religion, politics and all other disciplines. (89)

The major slogan of eco-criticism is "knows the Earth." It does not tend towards discussing about the earth alone but understanding the cosmos as a whole. The proper knowledge of the earth lies not on parts but in whole. Hence, an ecological study leads us towards knowing the earth holistically. It means seeing in a single life all the biotic and a-biotic constituents of the ecosphere.

With the help of theoretical idea about eco-criticism, the researcher proceeds ahead in the task of analyzing the songs where human dignity is not revered and ennobled. Rather, the virtual dependence of nature and human beings is emphasized.

Ecocriticism has come up as a response to human indifference towards the nature. People referred socio-cultural contexts to environment concern. They took wildness secondary to the human world. Ecocriticism rejects this human-centered view along with its establishment of the eco-centric vision of the world. Nature is source of all lives and it is the essence of our existence. So we need to concentrate on the environmental issues. We have to pay our due respect to the natural world in

which we exist. This view develops the idea of environmental ethics. The idea of environmental ethic is portrayed in the following songs:

Kalash Pujan Ko Phag

(Phag song while worshipping pitcher)

Kumhal bhaiya, kumal bhaya mero boul lena

Sunko kalash banaidena

Sunko kalash ta kasaikhi napuga

Matika kalash sanisara. (Panta 344)

Listen Kumhale brother! Make a bowl

Make a golden pitcher for me

Golden pitcher used no one

Clay pitcher is used universally

Tam ta dhanila looga teso lai arala

Nirdhani raijanna aabyau

You are rich, so you can make a golden pitcher

Poor people are cultureless

Listen Kumahale brother! Make a bowl

Make clay pitcher for me

Bhijehalyo Kumhale chamadiya maati

Banihalyo mattika kalash

Tala kalash modiaaya purkalash bhari aaya

Bich kalash motiyeki haar. (Panta 344)

Kumhale drenched the slippy mud

Make clay pitcher

Pitcher is filled from top, garnished to bottom

Pearl necklace is in middle.

This song describes a conversation between pitcher god and kumhale. The pitcher god asks kumhale to make a golden pitcher for him. But kumhale responds politely, since you are rich to make a golden pitcher, you are asking for it. But what can the poor do? Are they able to afford the golden pitcher? Impressed by kumhale, the pitcher god demands the pitcher of mud, an element of nature. It is from mud (nature, earth) from which culture (pitcher of mud) is made. The gist of the song is that culture emanates from nature. This song deals with the process in which nature/culture harmony arises.

Environmental ethics is the field of inquiry which is used to evaluate the ethical responsibilities of human beings towards the nature world. It talks about the appropriate human amoral attitude towards nature and natural ecosystem. For this reason, environmental ethics goes against anthropocentrism in favor of eco-criticism. Environmental ethics has the purpose of safeguarding the biological integrity. Nature has intrinsic value. Objectively people cannot realize the intrinsic value. Intrinsic value can be perceived subjectively.

Eco-criticism rests on the belief that the natural world has intrinsic value. All organisms have inherent worth within which human beings should not judge nature in terms of their needs and interests if a man judge the nature from his/her own perspective treat will results in to a Jaundice perspective . In this regard, Poul W. Taylor in his *The Ethics of Respect for Nature* explains:

In so far as we regard any organism, species population or life community as entity having inherent worth, we believe that it must never be treated as if it were a mere object or thing whose entire value lies in being instrument to the good of some entity. The well being of each is judged to have value in and itself. (354)

Thus, the idea of “intrinsic value” promotes human respect and obligation towards nature. This moral relation with the wild species and the wilderness helps to maintain a healthy existence in a natural state. By being even handed to nature, the cultural spirit evokes harmoniously. The following song projects the environmental ethics:

Ladu banauda ko Phag,

(Phag songs Sung while making laddu)

Kanaile dyali bhina khanikuti arichha

Kanaile biba chhadiaichha. (Panta 302)

Who dug, tilled and ploughed the field?

Who ordered to sow the seeds?

Kanaile gadaiko goadmale arichha

Kanaile kheto kataechha

Who weeded and dug the terraced field?

Who ordered to cut farming?

Kanaile khalaiki lippoat arichha

Kanaile anna madaichha

Who smeared the yard?

Who treat out the rice?

Kanaile chamal gadi bhutbhat arichha

Kanaile ghatta pisaechha (Panta 303)

Who fried grain of rice?

Who powdered rice in water mill?

This song makes a poetic affirmation of environmental ethics. Several agricultural activities, farming, clearing the land, sowing and tilling, garnering and harvesting are mentioned in these songs. These songs are designed to inculcate sense of concern and

curiosity about the grace of nature so that culture, agriculture and productive activities can be run smoothly. Both of this sense of ethics and harmony are expressed in the collective participation of people in agricultural activities.

Terry Gifford is the distinct critic whose view concerning nature draws our attention. The pattern of Gifford's thought has taken somewhat a new turn. He has pointed out dozens of meanings of the word 'rain'. According to Gifford the word "rain" implies different meanings in the different social contexts. In the shifting contexts of human interactions, observations and experiences the word rain offers different implications. The word rain hardly offers a solid and fixed meaning. It's meaning changes from one context to another. From Gifford's view it can be deduced that the meaning of the word rain is socially constructed. It is the effect of human circumstances, context and the situation in which the word rain is used. On the basis of this evidence it can also be argued that nature is a construct. It is constructed.

Certain elements of nature have therapeutic value. Human sickness and diseases can be overcome by the grace of nature, nature observation and nature-protection. In several ways nature (tree, rain, wind, and river) is linked to human existence. It has occupied the primary position in the collective activities of mankind. At times nature (Tree, rain) can have the therapeutic value. On another occasion, it seems that it can be the source of healing power. Gifford's view regarding nature tends to be somewhat different. Both Gifford and Raymond Williams believe that nature is a construct. But Gifford argues that nature is not only the construct of the materialistic forces but the product of our viewpoints, values, attitudes and other things. The following lines exemplify Terry Gifford's view in a crystal clear way:

A personal notion of nature will always be in dialectical relation to socially constructed notions of nature. The poem is a site where writer

and reader negotiate that dialectic of personal and social meanings. Literary criticism is, of course, the exchange of reports from that imaginative encounter. It is an articulation of what has been provisionally taken as suspect in the text. To put it another way, 'Consciousness, mind, imagination and language are fundamentally wild. (148)

Gifford is quite straightforward in saying that nothing can be viewed outside the relationship between nature and human being. From the dialectical relation between nature and society, our consciousness, thinking and perception arise. As nature is basically wild, so there are certain elements of wilderness in the pattern of our thinking. With the help of Gifford's idea some suitable and relevant examples can be forwarded from the selected songs.

A greater number of *Phags* and *Saguns* are fully devoted to the ethical responsibility of people towards the protection of the sanctity and integrity of nature. These songs evolve profound sense of respect and reverence towards the mystery and miracle of natural phenomena. The fact that human beings evolved and originated from the womb of nature-mothers deeply embedded in the texture of *Saguns* and *Phags* songs. Hence, extending their respect towards nature, human beings are actually safeguarding their own existences. That is why they often make frequent references to nature. Elements of nature are addressed in an innocent way when the reasoning of human fails to perceive the exact cause behind the sporadic and random unfolding of natural mystery; human beings begin to give expression to their sense of wonder and amazement. The following song shows how a bird, parrot, is addressed by those people who want to communicate important message to the distinct place for their relatives:

'Neuntako Phag'

(Phag Songs of Invitation)

Suwa Na Suwa Banarashi suwa

Jana suwa barma neuti liana

Oh! Parrot from Banaras (a wise parrot)

You go and invite our priest (Brahman)

Neutun main neutun main malubeli malhatti

Tinu sagun saila

Neutun main neutun main aaula saladali,

Tinum Sagun saila

I shall invite the creeper of *malu* found in terai

Who will offer good omen.

I shall invite sal tree

Who will offer good omen

Ka tuele malubeli janam lithi,

Indraloog mouliyo jhal,

Ka tuele Saldali janam lithi,

Ka tero mpulito jhal,

Humaile Basundhara janam liya

Indraloog mouliyo jhal

Hey! Creeper of *malu*, where is your origin

Where do your branch flourish

They are born in the earth

Branches flourish in heaven

Ka tuele saldali janam lithi

Ka thero mouliyo jhal

Humaile Basundhara janam liya

Indraloog mouliyo jhal (Panta 332).

Hey Sal tree! Where is your origin?

Where your branches flourish

They born in the earth,

Branches flourish in the heaven

This song evinces how people show their attention and a kind of respect to the bird parrot. In their daily lives, people are under pressure to communicate important message. Because they do not have the quick means of communicating message to the far distance, they tend to depend upon nature. For the sake of their convenience people choose parrot as the harbinger of message. Whether parrot is really the harbinger of message or not, it is the matter of observation, analysis and speculation. But one thing is really true that human beings attribute different kinds of significance, value and role to the different elements and beings of nature. Whether parrot exists independently or not, it is the different point. But the core idea is that there is the close and sensible of connection between nature and human beings. Whichever way human beings utilize nature; their anthropocentric concern dominates their ideal and pristine value.

Apart from this song, there is another song which equally reinforces the fact that human beings glorify the protective and purifying forces of nature. Nature comes in different images, forms and representation. These metaphoric images and representations carry important religions and cultural values. The concept of the holiness of nature encourages us to show respect towards nature. The following song

dramatizes how the water of *Ganga* River is associated with the idea of purity, sanctity, holiness and natural harmony:

'Nuhauda ko Phag'

(Phag song while taking Bath)

Diya meri iju maya Ganga Jamuna Jaal.

Diya maya Sananai ko jaal

Laija bala snanai ko Jaal,

Nai dhoi mera Jagyami basalo,

Saal bala GangaJumana snan,

kungKum Kasturi gaat ghasididiya

saalihalyo balaile snan.(Panta 263)

Mother, give me holy water (water of Ganga Jamuna)

Mother, give me holy water bathing

My boy you can carry holy water,

My boy carries holy water of bathing.

My boy will sit on altar after taking bath,

Dear boy bath holy water (fetch from Ganga Jamuna)

Mother, rub musk deer in my body

The boy has already taken a bath. (263)

In this song, river, water and the source of life come in the form of *Ganga* and *Yamuna*. *Ganga* and *Yamuna* rivers are the symbols of purity, holiness and spiritual sanctity. When a new thing is to be started in our life, the holy water from *Ganga* River is to be introduced. That is why *Ganga* and *Yamuna* Rivers have been given the primary importance. To keep the surrounding clean, the sprinkling of *Ganga* water is a must. Moreover, it has been increasingly believed that taking a bath in *Ganga* River

washes away all the diseases and impurities from bodies. The bodily purity and the inner purity of soul both come from the source of *Ganga* River. Rivers like *Ganga* and *Yamuna* have been treated as the foundation of spiritual healing power. In Hindu scripture, these rivers are given with the utmost importance. That is why they have received a great deal of thematic treatment.

The idea of wilderness signifying nature suggests the uncontaminated state of human innocence prior to the emergence of human civilization. However wild, nature is always pure and uncontaminated. In the general day to day life the concepts of wilderness is unacceptable. But speaking within the framework of environmentalism the idea of wilderness carries the crucial meaning. It tells more about the important relation between human beings and nature. The idea of wilderness can have the negative connotation speaking from the viewpoint of the complex relation between human beings and civilization. In other words, it can safely be said that wilderness has an almost sacramental value. It reveals the promise of a renewed authentic relation of humanity and the earth. The idea of wilderness makes constant evocation of the responsibility of mankind towards the sanctity of nature. The following song presents the different version of wilderness:

"Swostibachan ko Sagun"

(Sanguns of Chanting)

Kauchha ki jhalumani Badpipal Boatamuni Jagini asam haalyo

Jaginimi chandrasurya aya

Kauchha ki jhalumani Badpipal Boatamuni Jagini asam haalyo

Jaginimi dhartimata aein

Kauchha ki jhalumani Badpipal Boatamuni Jagini asam haalyo

Jaginimi Gangajamuna aein

Kauchha ki jhalumani Badpipal Boatamuni Jagini asam haalyo

Jaginimi kaafali aaya. (Panta 321)

Altar schemes under the climber of *Mucuna Pruries* and poplar Bayan tree

Moon and sun comes to the altar

Altar schemes under the climber of *Mucuna Pruries* and poplar Bayan tree

Earth -mother comes to the altar

Altar schemes under the climber of *Mucuna Pruries* and poplar Bayan tree

Ganga Jamuna comes to the altar

Alter schemes under the climber of *Mucuna Pruries* and poplar Bayan tree

Kaafali (local deities) comes to the altar.

The vine tree (unwelcome visitor), is the object of reference in this song. Apart from this tree as the object of reference, there are other references also. Poplar and Bayan tree are also referred. Under the shade of these to tree altar is organized in this altar Chandra, surya deity, earth mother, Ganga Jamuna as well as local deity (kafali) have taken part. The wilderness of nature is deified. Even god's love to dwell on the lap of wild nature. This song implants biocentric concern amidst the reader.

There are some literary works, chiefly poems, which describe and dramatize the fundamental value of nature in the management of disordered chaotic human experiences. Pastoral poems deal with the crucial importance of wilderness in light of human experience, agony and anguish.

Wilderness narrative shares the motif of escape and return with the typical pastoral narratives, but the construction of nature they propose and reinforce is fundamentally different. If pastoral is the distinctive old world construction of nature suited to long-settled and domesticated landscapes, wilderness fits the settler experiences in the new worlds. Particularly the United States, Canada and Australia with their apparently untamed landscapes and the sharp distinction between the forces of culture and nature. Yet settler's culture crossed the oceans with their preconceptions intact, so the nature they encountered was inevitably shaped by the histories they often sought to leave behind. To understand current conceptions of wilderness, we must explore the old world history of wilderness. Nor can we take for granted the politics of the wild. For many critics, after all, the wilderness we should seek is epitomized in the American West, which was assumed to be an untrammelled realm to which the Euro-American has a manifest right.

The song, which is presented below, narrates pastoral concern with the business and job of selling the leaves of *sal* trees and using those leaves for ritualistic purpose:

'paat gaasda ko Phag'

(Phag song while making leaf plate)

Khoji Moli diya baba Sal paat muthi,

Bhaugaichha paat gatthi belal,

khoji molidiya Nigalaka sinka,

Bhaigaichha paat gathibela

Father! Give us leaf, go search or buy it,

Now it is the time for making leaf plates.

Father! Give us small bamboo twinges,

Go search or bring it,

Now is the time of making leaf plates. (Panta 200)

Tipi liya ho patawari doka doka paat

Haam chaiyee paataiki bhari

chiri lya ho parki bhiya mutha mutha sinka,

haam chauyee sinka iki bhari"

Oh! Patwari go and bring a wicker basket full of Sal leaf

We need a big basket full of Sal leaf.

Oh! Parki brother go and bring bundles of small bamboo twinges

We need lots of bundles of small bamboo twinges. (Panta 200)

Since time immemorial, farmers and residents in the village have been using the leaves of *sal* tree from on the occasion of ritualistic enactment. A daughter is asking her father to bring the leaves of *sal* tree to do *shrad* (regular worship). Although a mature man is ecologically conscious of saving nature and using leaves of *sal* tree to make the departed soul of his dead ancestors happy, the concerned motive is entirely anthropocentric.

Literary works projecting the inseparable relation between nature and human society are to be analyzed to obtain profound sense of ecological insight.

Gary Snyder's opinions furthermore elaborate the idea of ecological insight inherent in the pastoral works. The following lines clarify the point "wild as in wild ecosystem richly interconnected, interdependent and incredibly complex. Diverse, ancient, and full of information literary criticism is one way of nature itself thinking" (29). Snyder's view regarding to the pastoral works is anthropocentric. Most of the pastoral poems emphasized the interest and motive of human beings in the center of

the poetic representation. Having quoted these sorts of theoretical ideas, the researcher puts forward the relevant evidences from the text.

The Phags " *Janai pairaudako phag*" describes how the clearing burning of the bushes in barren land can show both the anthropocentric and biocentric motive. The peasants clear the bushes and burn and fire them so that the barren land can be changed into the cultivate land. Changing the barren land for planting the cotton plant refers to the anthropocentric purpose because people can take advantages. Such process of clearing the land and planting the cotton can also reveal the biocentric purposes. It is biocentric act because environment can be shaved and upgraded if cotton plants are planted. For whichever purpose they plant cotton trees, after all trees are planted. Such a process of a forestation surely leads to the increase in the beauty of landscape. Eco-critics take into account how human beings use nature either destructively or creatively if they find out the possibility of taking advantage from it. Even after clearing the bush, new plants are planted so that greenery could be obtained again and land can be suitable for cultivation. This kind of productive activity comes in the discourse of ecology.

People are concerned with nature; surrounding and landscape. They are saddened to know any destructive act made against the integrity of natural beauty. Their agony is manifested in the lines of song:

Kanaile bala tero katyo kataala?

Kanaile katyo kataala?

Who cut the bush on the field for you lad?

Who cut bush on the field?

Kanaile bala tera kedamedada polyo

Kanaile kadamedada polyo

Kanaile bala tera kabaasa boyo

Kanaile kabaasa boyo

Kanaile bala tera godyo kabaasa?

Kanaile godyo kabaasa? (Panta 392)

Who set fire on the cutting and chopping?

Who set fire on the cutting and chopping?

Who sowed the seeds of cotton for you lad?

Who sowed the seeds of cotton?

Who weeded and dug the cotton plants lad

Who weeded and dug round the cotton plants?

These lines express the pain at the loss of natural order and harmony. But they do not bewail at the loss. They struggle to transform pain into the pleasure of maintaining the biological and natural integrity. The loss is taken as the beginning of new order and opportunity.

Berry, as an ecocritic offers a great deal of insights and knowledge regarding to the symbiotic relationship between various events and elements of nature and the complex structure of the cultural lives of people. He places emphasis upon the interconnection of nature with all the living and non living entities of universe. He gives his views as follows:

Nature is a wave and we are the minor parts linked with the very wave.

If any one member of the wave is disturbed then, the whole wave can be affected. Most of the literary writing about ecology focuses on the preservation of the very wave. These kinds of writing arouse a kind of ecological awareness through their writing some literary writing

focuses on the apocalyptic (destructive effect) awareness to preserve the nature. (123)

These lines put a great emphasis on the interconnectedness of different elements of the whole ecological system. One part is dependent on the other so they coexist. This kind of interconnectedness proves that nothing is separate. Even a minor entity has a big importance in the order of cosmos. Berry conceives that every tiny part of nature should exist to be the world complete, either it be a living being or non living thing. For him even the soil is our heritage, our history. Soil must be put into consideration to know our history; it should but be known only dirt. As expressed by Berry nature can be turned in to culture and culture into nature and there can be seen interdependence between economy and ecology, domestic and wild, and nature and culture as well.

Wendell Berry talks about the concept of wave according to which different elements of nature are the parts of a large whole. There are some songs which contain people's sense of surprise and respects for the mysterious phenomena of nature. People are puzzled to know where the roots of bamboos, bananas and swing ropes are spreaded. In addition, these songs evoke peoples concern with the benefits of planting of particular plant in a particular place. Certain part of song describes respect for biology and ecology where as the remaining part talks about the necessity to think about the order and system of nature.

Thus, ecocriticism gives a balance of all the things such as species of the earth critical practices, scientific inquiry and spiritual beliefs. There is no branch of knowledge that ecocriticism does not touch. It gathers all the perspectives together and combines itself with and discipline. If any element is affected, the whole eco-

system is affected, this concept can be seen in the following mentioned *Saguns* and

Phags:

Kaa tuele kela thumadi jada roki jada roki

Kaa tero mauliyo jhala,

Aanali kanali maile jada rokya jada rokya

Mandap mauliyo jhal

Kaa tuele baasa daali jada roki jada roki

Kaa tero mauliyo jhal

Gaada kholsa khola kholsa jada rokya jada rokya

Mandaap mauliyo jhaal

Kaa tuele Babbya boata jada roki jada roki

Kaa moliyo jhala

Padapakhana maile jada rokya jada rokya

Maandap mauliyo jhal

Hey pillar of banana! Where are your roots settled?

Where your branches flourish

Beside nook I stop my roots

Branches flourish in altar

Hey bamboo! Where are your roots settled?

Where your branches flourish

To torrent brook stream they stops roots

Branches flourish in altar

Hey swing ropes! Where are you settled roots

Where your branches flourish

I stop my roots in rocky steep. (448)

The above cited song means that planting bamboo tree on the bank of river saves us from environmental disasters such as flood, landslide, soil erosion and other unprecedented natural disaster. In this regard, this song conveys the biocentric purpose. On the contrary it has the anthropocentric purpose also. People can manufacture different devices and objects of daily life use from bamboo sticks. Hence it can have anthropocentric dimension also. Nature does not allow such disasters to happen if it is initially saved.

Cheryll Glotfelty is of the opinion that eco-criticism views the relationship between human beings and ecological systems in terms of art and literature. It analyzes literary texts in the light of the organic relationship admits all the living and non living beings of the earth. It advocates the earth- centered approach to the study of literature discussing about the connection between ecosystem and human beings. Cheryll Glotfelty makes the following observation eco-criticism in *The Eco- criticism Reader* as follows:

Eco-criticism is the Relationship between literature and physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from the gender conscious perspectives and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production and economics class to be readings of texts, Eco-criticism takes an earth centered approach to literary studies. (18)

Eco-criticism rests on the principle of "earth -centeredness." Here Cheryll Glotfelty tries to show the very relationship of ecosystem to the human life in terms of literature and art; art, in this way defines the eco-system in its essential-form while other criticisms like Marxism and gender issues convey the awareness while the Marxists relate the same issue to the means of production: totally economic class reading of the

text. Other important fact is that the eco-criticism focuses upon the human knowledge which must be able understand the earth as the natural phenomena.

Now, the researcher dwells upon the theoretical portion. Cheryll Glotfelty shows the link between the literature and the physical environment. He says "Eco-criticism is the relationship between literature and physical environment" (18). This idea of Glotfelty is somehow similar to the idea manifest in the following song; One *Phags* song is related to Sandal Wood. Sandal wood is situated in between Saraswoti and Bhagirathi River. The term Saraswoti refers to the intelligence, sharpness and alacrity. Bhagirathi symbolizes the idea of continuity. Snow forts and haze surround the Sandal Wood, beside which *milsimi* local deity dwells. The following extract from the *Phags* song highlight the spiritual and physical dependence of human beings in nature.

One *Sagun* song is related to Sandal Wood. Sandal wood is situated in between Saraswoti and Bhagirathi rivers the term Saraswati refers to the intelligent, sharpness and alacrity. Bhagrathi symbolizes the idea of continuity. Snow, frost and haze surround the Sandal wood beside which *Milsimi* (local deity) dwells. The following extract from the *Sagun* song highlights the spiritual and physical dependence of human beings in Nature. Nature comes in song in symbolic forms which attract human attention:

Halara ko Phag

(Phag songs sung while worshipping local deities)

wari ganga Bhagirathi pari saraswoti

Bich badlami srikhanda boat,

Baira badal dheku hiud re tusaro,

Bhitar badal dheku milsimi deba.

Baira badal dheku hiud re tusaro,

Bhitar badal dheku Betal deba. (Panta 528)

Hither Bhagrathi tether Saraswoti

A sandalwood tree is grown up on the edge of both rivers

The shore it looks foggy and misty from outside

Misimy (local deities) is in the middle of shore.

The shore it looks foggy and misty from outside

Betal (local deities) is in the middle of shore

Deity, Sandal Wood, Saraswoti and Bhagirathi are used as the symbolic manifestation. Sandal Wood throws of good scent and smell, which carry spiritual importance. It serves the medicational purpose. The relation of Sandal Wood, River and human beings is portrayed in the light of an ecological and anthropocentric importance.

This song tells us that a literary text represents the interrelatedness of human beings, living being, nonliving being and the environment. The complex relation between nature and human being is discussed in the pattern of analyzing literature. The precious sandal wood is situated in between three rivers (Ganga, Bhagrati, Saraswoti). The interdependence amidst the several components of nature is discussed in this song. Furthermore, the line "*wari ganga Bhagirathi pari saraswoti Bich badlami srikhanda boat, Baira badal dheku hiud re tusaro, Bhitar badal dheku milsimi deba*". Clarifies the complex interrelationship amidst cloud, mist and show.

Dianna Phillips's remarks give further insight which is presented below:

The erasure of the distinction between life and death, nature and culture, is equally clear in the promotion of a new form of fishing practice called CPR, which stands not for "cardiopulmonary

resuscitation," although the associated images of revivification are apt, but for "catch, photograph, and Release," under the guise of responsible conservation, and faced with a decreasing fish population of increasing levels of toxicity, bass fishermen are being urged-quite sensibly-to set free a majority of the fish they boat. But in order to help them remember each fish, BASS suggests that fisher men photograph their catch before release, noting all the pertinent data (date, place, weight of the fish, etc.) On the back of each snapshot. (209)

Danna Phillips says that it is not necessary to set up the hierarchy amidst all the entities and elements of Nature. He wants to remove the distinction between life and death nature and culture. Nature should be severed and consumed in the biocentric and anthropocentric way. But the real fact is that it should be treated as a symbiotically and organically interconnected entity. Danna Philips emphasizes an eclectic but pragmatic approach to a variety of topics. Her subject matter includes the doctrine of social construction, the disparity between scientific and literary vision realism, the resolving the tension between facts and values or between nature and culture. Dana Phillips is taught challenging and unsentimental reader. She interplays with another ecocritic Wendell Berry in the ground of nature-culture relations. Phillips writes about berry that we must take a measure-reproductively-as our standard of what we might cautiously call use-value.

This song, which is mentioned below tells many things about deities of disasters who are often and always associated with beast and wild animals:

Nabgraha ko Phag

(phags song of the nine planets)

Kaun bahan chadi chandrama aya

Kaun saramaiki puja

Mirga bahan chadi chanrama aya

Srikhanda aachhet aiki puja. (Panta, 216)

Which tenor moon ride for coming?

Which commodity is used for worshipping?

Moon comes to ride on deer's tenor

Sandal Wood and acchet are offered for worshipping

Bheka bahan chadi mangal aya

Rattan chananai ki puga. (Panta 216)

Mars comes to ride on young bull's tenor

Red Sandal Wood is offered for worshipping.

Hasti bahan chadi Biraspati chali aya

Kesar achhetai ki puja. (Panta, 217)

Jupiter comes to ride on elephant's tenor

Kesar and achheta are offered for worshipping

This song represents the fact that every planetary body descends upon the earth riding on mount. Planetary bodies are the embodiment of disasters, bad luck and misfortune. These planetary bodies choose to ride on their respective mounts. Like lion, deer, peacock and dog. The idea of respecting animals and beasts as the mounts of different deity of disasters is straight forwardly manifest in this song. In song trees and plants are mentioned the root cause of the references is to implant in readers the ethical and pragmatic responsibility to keep biological integrity intact. The symbiosis is foreground in the songs.

III. Conclusion

Saguns and *Phags* aim at inculcating people's sense of responsibility towards the protection of the ecological integrity so that human beings could live joyously and freely. These folk songs evoke in people genuine concern in dealing with the ecology, environment and biosphere. Culture emanates from nature. For the origin and evolution of human culture, nature always plays the role of an affectionate mother. However, self sustaining and independent human beings might feel, they are dependent upon the grace and mercy of nature, environment and ecology. The creators of *Saguns* and *Phags* songs have realized the fact that the ethos of culture survives and is sustained by virtue of the grace of nature, exuberance of environment and enrichment of ecology. The folk songs *Saguns* and *phags* express the uplifting sense that all living and nonliving beings are interdependent and interconnected. The idea of symbiosis is inherently manifest in almost all the *Saguns* and *Phags* songs.

These cultural songs describe how people dwelling in far western Doteli regions make use of nature like river, tree, stone, mud, earth, vine so that their daily lives can be organized and harmonized. While organizing and harmonizing daily lives by using nature, people do not forget their conscious and genuine responsibility towards Nature.

Although, nature and natural objects are projected to the centre of these songs, there is hardly any strong sense of biocentrism. Although, nature is frequently glorified and idealized in these songs, there is selfish motive behind the glorification. Their own selfishness, concern and interest have taken precedence over the respectful and responsible attitude towards nature.

Many natural objects like river, tree, vine, earth, *tulsi* (basil), banyan trees are frequently mentioned in *Saguns* and *Phags*. These objects of nature are not only

mentioned and glorified but are charged with utmost significance. Behind the glorification of natural objects the anthropocentric concept is hidden. Natural objects are not glorified for the sake of glorification. Respect and responsibility towards the purity and integrity of nature are the medium to gloss over the stark selfishness of people.

Human beings are hardly selfless in worshipping natural objects. There is the politics behind the idealization and glorification of natural objects. Objects in nature are represented as the symbols of deity. Most of the natural objects are charged with the religious importance. These objects carry virtue. Even Gods and local deities are found of dwelling in the lap of nature.

Whatever might be the purpose behind the glorification of nature, the obvious reality is that nature is frequently referred. Whatever might be the purpose, the fact of the facts is that nature and its importance is highlighted in the songs.

There is a strong biocentric emphasis on the reference of nature in *saguns* and *phags*. From the perspective of biocentric concern, elements of nature are highlighted as though they are the integral part of human existence. Knowledge about the importance of nature in human life is expressed in different form. The pattern in which the glorification of river, tree, leaf and flower take place occurs in the same spirit in different folk songs. The biological significance takes precedence over any other considerations in *saguns* and *phags*. Instead of human selfish interest, the genuine respect of nature is inculcated in Doteli songs *Saguns* and *Phags*.

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