

INDRA SINHA'S *ANIMAL'S PEOPLE*: MEMORY OF AN ECOCIDE AND UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

*The world we live in has become inhospitable due to the increase in pollution, contamination and industry-sponsored bio-disaster. Conspicuously, mankind is efficiently committing ecocide and bringing irrevocable changes in ecology. The prominence of literary works which depicts the claustrophobic effects of industrial disaster increases as long as the uneven development prevails. Indra Sinha's *Animal's People* (shortlisted for the 2007 Man Booker Prize for fiction and won the 2008 Commonwealth Writer's Prize) is a memory of the aftermath of a large-scale industrial catastrophe based on the Bhopal disaster of 1984; it is a vivid portrayal of life at gutter level among the dirt-poor of the fictional city of Khaufpur. Sinha depicts a claustrophobic world of sickness, filth, scamming, surviving on four rupees a day, and above all, the ongoing suffering of those afflicted by an explosion at the local chemical plant on what is always referred to simply as 'that night.' The writer throws light upon the environmental destruction, consequences and the unending protests of the victims due to the denial of justice. The traumatic memories of 'that night,' recollected and recorded in several tapes by the titular character *Animal* provides a symbolic representation of the uneven development in India. Indra Sinha is not speaking about the past rather he is speaking for the future. He is asking the policy makers to introspect about the development without concern for the environment. All developments without any environmental research will have a bad impact on both environment and peoples' quality of life. Every memory is a lesson for better tomorrows.*

Keywords: *ecocide, uneven development, bhopal gas tragedy, bio disaster, khaufpur.*

Literature reflects life and is an account of thoughts and memories of persons in various perspectives. A particular region's literature must have reflection of its environment and it

envisages a clear picture of its background. All ecological criticism shares the fundamental truth that human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected

by it. Ecocriticism speaks of the interconnections between nature and culture, especially cultural artifacts, language and literature. As a literary theory it examines the relations between writers, texts and the world. Ecocriticism places 'earth' at the centre as it is the ultimate one in the world.

Indra Sinha's *Animal's People* is a memory of Bhopal gas tragedy and opens up perspectives on eco-crime, disaster, and injustice. The titular character, Animal, unravels these events through his memories recorded on a series of tapes. In another dimension, the novel itself becomes a powerful symbol of the uneven development in India. The massive gas leak in Union Carbide's Bhopal pesticide factory on the night of 2-3 December 1984 has got the most disastrous consequences that India has ever witnessed. But, the indifferent attitude of the government scares the whole country. Walters observed it as the worst environmental crime of all time (Walters 324). He also says that the comprehensive compensation, healthcare and environmental decontamination continue to be denied. It was a kind of criminality done both towards nature and ecosystem.

The polluted surrounding adversely affects the human world and the animal world. In Greg Garrard's opinion: "Pollution is an ecological problem because it does not name a substance or class of substances but rather represents an implicit normative claim that too much of something is present in the environment usually in the wrong place" (Garrard 6). Sinha investigates the ecological problems of Khaufpur where high degree of chemicals present in water, soil and also in the air. He takes an effort to reconstruct the city of Bhopal through the victims and throws light on the tragedy, its aftermath and also on the continuous environmental pollution. Rob Nixon in his essay 'Neoliberalism, Slow Violence and the Environmental Picaresque' recognizes, "Khaufpur as . . . a fictional stand-in for Bhopal, but also a synecdoche for a web of poisoned communities spread out across the global south" (Nixon 446). Acutely poisoned communities in the novel have been spread across the city of "Khaufpur, translated from Urdu, means 'City of terror'" (Nixon 446). Thus Sinha's prudent decision to choose the name 'Khaufpur' to set his novel helps him to bring out the basic feeling of all the natives, who are

suffering from the ongoing process of contamination since 'that night.'

Animal's People is pregnant with disastrous experiences of Khaufpuris. "Someone," says Animal, "'s sick in every house in the Nutcracker, in many houses everyone is sick" (183). Union Carbide Company has bestowed long term damage (in all aspects) upon Khaufpur. Sinha is trying to disclose the consequences of an ecocide. He conducts an autopsy of this ruined place and analyses each and every aspect of human as well as non-human worlds. As a result the environmental pollution, destruction, homicide and ongoing death due to contamination are evident. On Nixon's Perspective the novel, "gives focus to ... the attendant burden of unsustainable ecological degradation that impacts the health and livelihood of the poor most directly" (Nixon 444). One of the printing posters of protesters reads, "LIFE POISONED IS LIVING DEATH" (261). It is a clear evidence for people's efforts to make understand the government about their degrading livelihood. The people here are forced to live in a poisoned ecology and the surrounding itself provides the feeling of living death.

The narrator, Animal, who himself is a victim. What he is telling is essentially

a highly sentimentalized redemption. Heather Snell claims that "his oral account is entirely fictional and so is its setting. Khaufpur... exists only in the author's imagination" (Snell 2). Even though it is fictional, the description of pollution, deaths and the fearful lives of Khaufpur sounds authentic and trustworthy. In the editor's note which prefaces the novel claims: "True to the agreement between the boy and the journalist who befriended him, the story is told entirely in the boy's words as recorded on the tapes" (Sinha) which makes his account more accessible to international readers. The descriptions of events and ecological problems seem to be true since there are real evidences for them. In short, a fictional work is produced out of factual incidents.

As Rob Nixon remarks, "Although *Animal's People* is at twenty years after the disaster, the novel dramatizes the illusion of the singular event" (Nixon 449). The early records say apparently water entered into the MIC storage tanks, causing an exothermal reaction that released an amount of poisonous gas large enough to open the safety valves. There were no valves to prevent water from entering into the tanks. Compared to other locations, the safety was very low in this factory. The

precautions were neglected only for controlling the budget. On that night, when the company caught fire and exploded, the chemicals that were released into the atmosphere caused horrific physical damage to all who were exposed. The suffocation of those who encountered death and those who injured have not ended up. Still they have been experiencing it, "LIVING DEATH" (261).

L. Everest has once observed that the social activists, investigative journalist and academic researchers across multiple fields have considered the leak was no 'accident' but a 'massacre' (Everest 166). Animal through his narration, gives a perspicacious picture of the effects on people and environment. He says: "there is such a thing as 'bhayanak rasa', the kind of terror that makes your little hairs stand up and tremble, which is called roman chik" (32). The catastrophe that happened at 'that night' has been described as:

On that night, it was a river of people, some in their under wear, others in nothing at all, they were staggering like it was the end of some big race, falling down not getting up again, at Rani Hira Pathika Mahal, the road was

covered with dead bodies (31-32).

Sinha unravels the environmental terror which prevails in the fictional representative of the Bhopal County: "Khaufpuris... face a clear and present change of an environmental kind." Nixon observes this danger as "An immanent and imminent terror, faceless yet physically intimate, percolating through the penumbral time of the illimitable in between" (Nixon 457).

The factory explosion and aftermaths have sown the idea that it creates deserted, barren and unfertilized areas. When we look inside the factory: "you see something strange, a forest is growing, tall grasses, bushes, trees, creepers that shoot sprays of flowers like fireworks"(29). What the extinct company leaves behind is ongoing proofs of the excellent durability of its products. Animal notes with a realization that there is no way to find and escape from it: "wonderful poisons the Kampani made, so good it's impossible to get rid of them, after all these years they are still doing their work" (29). Even after the explosion, the residues of the pesticides never get cleaned up and so its presence in the environment goes on annihilating the insects and spreads silence. Animal

observes that there is: “No bird song. No hoppers in the grass. No bee hum. Insects can’t survive here” (29). Once, Farouq remarked that: “There are no insect in paradise” (208). Sardonicly Zafar answers to Farouq’s remark that in that case: “the kampani’s dead factory must be a kind of paradise because it too has no insects” (208). The factory becomes the ultimate reason for all the problems in Khaufpur, because: “the factory may have the abundant but the invisible poisons remain dynamic, industrious and alive” (Nixon 459).

The company’s initial advertisements came as it supports green revolution by promoting new excellent pesticides which accentuates yielding. A native of Khaufpur asks to the American lawyer: “We lived in the shadow of your factory. You told us were making medicines for the fields. You were making poisons to kill insects, but you killed us instead... was there ever much difference, to you?” (306) The old woman questions the real objective of the company officials because the remnants continue to damage ecology, poisoning groundwater supply causing tens of thousands of human and animal death and injuring half a million people since explosion. The company has never shown any regard to the

consequences of the disaster: Animal mourns, “Over the years the poisons it (Company) left behind have found their way into the wells, everyone you meet seems to be sick” (33). Sinha’s elegiac account of well water poisoning is shown. Pollution of inevitable substance spreads diseases and Khaufpuris are on struggle to get the environment decontaminated. Khaufpuris believe that the “factory has poisoned their water and made them sick” (69).

Situations become more terrific when a mother sends jets of breast milk spurting onto the earth. In a rustic way of talking she speaks: “Our wells are full of poison. It’s in the soil, water, in our blood, it’s in our milk. Everything here is poisoned” (108). If a mother’s milk is also being poisoned, what will happen to the future generations? On another occasion Nisha says: “I don’t want our children growing up here. The poison in Khaufpur’s not only in the soil and water, it’s in people’s hearts” (196) which means the toxic has polluted not only native but also the human conscience.

The scarcity of pure water in Khaufpur and the condition of the lake beside the factory is really miserable. As every industrial plant does, the garbage gets dumped into the water resources on

the thought that it consumes everything and keeps the land clean and tidy! Nevertheless the people know the fact that they themselves pave the way for the destruction. Animal's retrospection on childhood incident depicts his yearning for rainwater:

I'd have been about eight or nine, we'd gone to swim. Just now I mentioned lakes, really they're clay pits behind the Kampani's factory where bulldozers would dump all different coloured sledges. These pits are massive, the water in them stinks, but when the rains come they fill up and become proper lakes with reeds etc. Since rain water is clean people would wash their cows and buffalos, we kids would jump in, splash around in the water (16).

Khaufpuris ecstatically celebrate rain since it showers pure and chemical free water. Unfortunately the uncertain clouds reluctantly pour water very often on this devastated city. Zafar analyses Khaufpur on the basis of getting much rain: "What a place is this Khaufpur... where even the sky is broken and when rain comes it's just a loan against long overdue debts" (296). But, however, it is mainly through

rainwater chemicals from the factory entered into several water resources. During the monsoon season just after the disaster this initial air-borne terror turned to water-borne terror. Nixon specifies it as: "the monsoon season that each year washes abandoned chemicals into the aquifers, re-poisoning wells and producing new cycles of deferred causalities. Thus the initial air-born terror morphs into a water-borne terror that acquires its own seasonal rhythms of heightened risk (Nixon 457).

If the frightening surrounding persists, there is no hope for good in the minds of the victims. Sinha tries to disclose the aftermath of the disaster through describing the lives of various characters. The way it unsnarls to the readers through Animal's narration creates a sense of revelation within us. Revelation of suffering, that suffering is due to a criminal ecocide.

The character Animal is the symbolic representation of the actual condition of Khaufpur as well as the whole nation. Sinha has created a man like Animal: "he does so by devising a narrator who is at best ambivalent towards the pursuit of justice, yet whose physical form serves as a bodily short hand for Khaufpur's transnational plight" (Nixon 450). He is

destined to be morphed at the age of six from an upright boy into a creature going around on all his fours. It was due to a toxic corkscrewing of his spine. When, he became four footed Animal (now nineteen) carries an ailing child on his back, this poster makes him a beast of burden. In Nixon's words: "Thus the symbolic economy of Animal's body affords Sinha an implicit yet unforgettable image of a body politic bent double beneath the weight of Khaufpuri's foreign load" (Nixon 450). Animal introspects: "I used to be human once. So I'm told" (1). He never remembers the days he walked like human being and actually when he looked like a human being.

Mere Ambrosine alias Ma Franci, mother figure for Animal becomes slightly insane and forgot all the languages she had known except her mother tongue. Animal describes her story in a funny way as follows:

On that night all sorts of people lost all kinds of things, lives for sure, families, health, jobs, in some cases their wits. This poor woman, Ma Franci, lost all knowledge of Hindi.... she forgot all languages except her childhood speech of France (37).

The poison wiped of all the foreign languages from her mind. We may not be quite sure of the possibility of this strange disorder. There was a further twist to Ma Franci's madness, when she hears any other tongue used in Khaufpur, she can no longer recognize that what they are speaking is a language. She thinks that they are "just making stupid grunts and sounds" (37).

Ma is living in an orphanage run by French priests, in Jyothinagar, near the factory. Her decision to serve the people of Khaufpur strengthens after witnessing the results of the disaster: "...on that night it [orphanage] was badly hit. Many of the children died nuns too. Those who survived were sick. Afterwards Indian nuns came and the French nuns one by one were taken back home. Ma refused to leave" (37). Her ultimate decision was to spend rest of her days to serve Khaufpuris and pray for their well being.

Many people lost many things on that night which are of physical, material and mental kinds. Aawaaz-e- Khaufpur (the voice of Khaufpur), Somraj Tryambak Punekar, simply called Pundit Somraj, used to be a singer "until that night took away his wife and baby son and fucked up his lungs" (33). His daughter Nisha says: "When the

kampani stole away her father's breath, it also stole his life" (33). Even then Somraj, who tries to find music in everything, speaks about musicality of nature: "Music does not all have to be made with stings and bows and pipes, it can also be made by drops of rain or wind cut by a leaf" (48). The harmony or the inter connection with nature is evident here. In contrast, deadly visuals are seen everywhere in Khaufpur. Nevertheless, he advises Animal:

...according to the old writers, peacocks, goats and even the gray herons which sometimes we'd find dead beside the kampani's lakes, these creatures too sing notes if the scale, and if you listen carefully you can hear the same notes in many other things which you wouldn't expect such as the creaking of bicycle wheels and butt-butt pigs because all things make their own kind of music. 'Listen to how the rain is drip drop dripping into the pond, plink PLONK plank, it's raga Bilavel' (49).

Somraj is able to listen to music out of disharmony and even unpleasant things as described by the old writers. He listens to the music of pain and

becomes a part of anti-kampani activism.

The tale of Pyari Bai reflects the tale of thousands. Her husband Aftaab, being an employee of the company speaks of the dangerous chemicals produce there: "...how dangerous were the chemicals in there. If by chance you got any on your hand, Aftaab said, the skin would blister" (84). Due to the frequent contact with the chemicals, Aftaab's: "condition grew worse. His eyes suffered, he got rashes all over, plus fever and pains in his joints" (84). How rapidly the environment of their life changes to a hazardous one? "All were nevertheless damaged by the poisons, Aftaab the worst, because he'd taken less care over himself, he was coughing foam tinged with blood, his eyes were nearly shut" (84). The workers in the factory suffered too much and it obviously would have affected the environment of their family too.

Almost all the people in Khaufpur have stories that make our eyes wet. Faqri, Animal's friend lost his parents and five brothers and sisters in the lanes. The disaster made many people orphans. The physical discomforts of victims are narrated by Animal thus: "Hanif, blinded and coughing ...Aliya whose lungs are inflamed, Shambhu

who hardly can breathe the ulcer of Yusuf Omar... I'm Alive and his dead neighbours" (150) are so miserable. He is called 'I'm Alive' for he is still alive with more than one deadly disease. Aliya, who is a small girl and suffering from lung-rotting illness, always coughing. Her death creates a lamenting mood in the novel. In the last moments: "Aliya's face looks strange. She has rouge on her cheeks, her eyes are ringed with kohl, her mouth is smeared with lipstick. She is wearing a fancy new dress. Old Hanif's fingers are moving over her face, as if he is trying to memorize its details. Hanif gives an explanation for dressing up their granddaughter like this: "The angel of death is here in this city. When he comes for Alia, he will see her looking well, healthy. Death will believe he's made a mistake, he will not want to take her and he will go away" (326).

The toxics from the factory have entered to all the bodies and the different human organs which have been damaged are specified in the novel:

On the first table is propped a huge drawing of a human body. On it are marked all the places where the kampani's that-night-poisons have damaged people,

such as eyes, lungs, joints, womb, and brain. These are marked in red. In blue are marked the places which have been harmed by drinking the poisoned water, breasts, again womb, stomach, skin. Blue and red spirals are coming from the head, which is also being banged by a hammer, above all hangs a dark grey cloud with lightening (162).

In a certain occasion, an old doctor informs Elli which has not mentioned in any of the books that: "On that night the moon was two-thirds full. It was shaped like a tear and as it appeared through the clouds of gas, it was the colour of blood" (153). It shows explicitly that a large amount of toxic gas had diffused into the air which killed numerous innocent people instantly.

All these crises happened in an environment obviously create protesters or fighters for the justice. The indifference shown by the American Company officials was enough to burst out strong violence all over Khaufpur: "The case against the kampani had been dragging on endless years. It stood accused of causing the deaths of thousands on that night, plus it ran away from Khaufpur without cleaning its factory"(33). The

settlement was immediately contested in the Indian judiciary after the event. The company had to promise to pay compensation for the survivors. Opinion on the inefficiency of Union Carbide Company to give proper compensation is: "what the company has paid till now is so small, hardly does it amount to the price of one cup of daal a day" (126). The American company was trying to shake loose of all the burdens by putting all blames on Indians. Their craven attempts to shift the responsibility for the disaster on to the Indian managers were clearly visible. Anthony Carrigan in his article titled 'Justice is on our side? Animal's People, Generic Hybridity and Eco-crime' says: "There is now a surfeit of evidence that demolishes the American Company's craven attempts to blame the world's largest industrial disaster on an imagined act of sabotage and shift the responsibility for its illegal safety standards on to the plant's Indian managers" (Carrigan 11). Company official's complete rejection of the responsibility is very clear in Jackson Browning's Report "Union Carbide: Disaster at Bhopal":

In 1984, the entire work force at the Bhopal plant was Indian. In keeping with the Government's interest in promoting self-

sufficiency and local control, the last American employed at the site had left two years before. The Indian workers had years of experience working with methyl isocyanate dating back to the mid-1970s (Browning 3).

The protests are going on for the long eighteen years. The American defendants have never even bothered to attend the court and have not sent the lawyers too. Zafar makes clear his stand in court:

...there are two sets of defendants in this case, first there are the local accused, employees of the kampani, their personal defence lawyers are here before you. Then there are Amrikan accused, ergo the kampani itself plus the big bosses who took the crucial decisions. For the past eighteen years these Amrikan defendants have not shown up in this court. They have not even bothered to send lawyers. They sit in Amrika claiming this court has no jurisdiction over them, yet nothing can be achieved without them being here, thus these proceedings drag on and on, for the people of this city justice continues to be delayed and denied (52).

The American defendants are not seemed to be appeared before the court. As long as they do not appear, it is certain that people in Khaufpur are not going to get justice. Zafar asks the court and makes clear about their real condition:

‘My point, Sir, is that thousands in the city have died since that night, for them was no justice. The factory is abundant full of chemicals which as we speak are poisoning the water of thousands more. Must all perish before these American defendants appear?’ (52)

The media also have abandoned the care as there is no hope for justice to the people as well as the environment. But each and every year they never forget to observe the day with the deadly image of the disaster. Animal’s observation on the attitude of press regarding tragedy is quite amazing: “As to what happened, well, there are many versions going around, every news paper had a different story, not one knows the truth” (10-11). Even the news papers are inconsistent to produce true stories.

Sinha foregrounds the protest in progress under the leadership of the anti-company activist Zafar. Even

though they do not meet their goal, the strong anticipation for the best helps to regain extra courage to fight against the company. When the judges and lawyers in the court are late on the day of ‘Naya Adalat’ their optimism must say: “...eighteen years late, what’s a few more minutes?” (51) They are ready to wait till they get justice from the court. Giving up is not their style. We may feel that the famous Gandhian thought ‘do or die’ must have influenced them. Because of this reason Zafar decides to do hunger strike till death only to prevent the government from signing a deal with the company. He perishes but never dies. Zafar’s philosophical idea evokes the inseparability of life and the world. In his mother tongue, beautifully it is said as: “Jahaan jaa, Jahaan hai” (284) which mean while we have life we have world. As far as Khaufpuris are concerned, they have a world, even though it is a less comfortable one. But the description of Zafar’s dream once had in his sleep emphasizes on the impossibilities of attaining all sorts of problems. In his dream, he sees a worthless bird like crow and it asks his wishes to be redeemed:

‘The kampani must return to Khaufpur, remove the poisons from its factory plus cleaned soil

and the water it has contaminated. It must pay for good medical treatment for the thousands of people whose health is ruined, it must give better than one-cup-chai-per-day compensation, plus the kampani bosses must come to Khaufpur and face the charges from which they have been ruining for so long and the court case against them should conclude' (227).

The crow refuses to grant the above wish and gives an explanation that it is an impossible as well as foolish wish. The improbability prevails over Khaufpur, however, the people never give up their yearning for a comfortable life. When Zafar expresses his urge to see the face of their enemy, the bird says, that is also an impossible one because: "The kampani has no face" (229).

Ever since the explosion happened, the people here in Khaufpur have suffered too much. After the event, the fastidious environment is disturbing the life of human world. That fastidiousness cannot be removed until nature undergoes the process of decontamination. As the American company contaminated the environment, almost all the people in Khaufpur hate America and Americans.

It is in this context, an American doctor Elli Barber visits the place in order to start a free clinic for the surviving unhealthy people. According to Khaufpuris, the outsiders like Elli cannot understand the depth of mental as well as physical wound of victims. The ruined atmosphere forces them to be angry with the situation and to suspect the foreigners and their activities as the typical orientalis. Hence the people, especially Zafar is not ready to accept Doctor Elli and her clinic. He suspects the objective behind it but ostensibly she is genuine in her intentions. She is capable of understanding the real health problems of the victims.

In the inaugural ceremony of the clinic she announces that, "it's for all who were injured on that night, plus people who are ill as a result of their water being poisoned by the factory. All who come are welcome, for all who come, treatment is free" (131). But the people never go to the clinic. There are some people who argue that: "Better it is the kampani's clinic... Only the kampani knows what deadly things flew from the factory on that night, who else will know the antidotes?" (73) As the company alone knows about the chemicals produced inside the factory, no one else can suggest the antidotes.

In the climax of the novel, Elli pleads to an American lawyer for Khaufpuris and “she describes the horrifying things she sees every day, and tells how the kampani’s refusal to share its knowledge of the poisons is hurting people” (322). On initial days nobody goes to the clinic because nothing would be done in Khaufpur without Zafar’s permission. Agitated Elli asks reason for their resentment to Animal and he answers: “These are my people” (183). Afterwards Elli’s shouting creates an echo in the Nutcracker: “HEY ANIMAL’S PEOPLE! I DON’T FUCKING UNDERSTAND YOU” (183).

Very often, mostly through the character, Ma Franci, Sinha discloses his year of imminent destruction, related to environmental Apocalypticism. In Sanjo’s opinion: “The world is full of wickedness and is going to be wiped out, this will happen in various appalling ways and is called the Apokalis” (Sinha 63). Ma Franci is also a believer of Apokalis. She gives warning about the impending destruction of Khaufpur. She stays there on the thought that: “Khaufpur had felt the first of god, the Apokalis had began, her place was with its suffering people” (37). On another occasion, she says: “It’s begun again, and will not stop. Round the world it

will go. Right now it is in Amrika but it will return to Khaufpur. Terror will return to this city. It began here, here it will end” (64). As a Franci’s rather Sanjo’s dream of the end of the world had once occurred in Animal’s life also.

When the strike is at its peak and violence has broken out, Ma feels that the day has come. In a fearful voice, she says to Animal: “It has come, Animal my dear, this is the night of Qayamat, the end of all things” (328). Sinha, the novelist warns Khaufpuris that there are chances of another disaster if the dry grasses inside the factory caught light and this fire reached to the storage tank and then “it would be that night all over again” (30).

Sinha is not creating a melancholic atmosphere by narrating a tragic aftermath and the miserable life of the victims. Animal’s people in fact encompasses nature, humour, mourning and also satiric elements. Sometimes somewhere in the novel he gives accounts of pleasant vegetation. This can be his longing for a Khaufpur with full of vegetation. There is a place near Bewardi river outside Khaufpur and is beautifully described by the novelist:

Somewhere outside Khaufpur is a greenish river called Bewardi,

there is a place on the edge of the forest, some cattle-herders have made a small but there, to watch over the Animals as they drink, no more is than a thatched roof hoisted on your bamboo poles but it has a smooth floor of clay, there is a small hearth where tea can be made (193).

It is the place where most of the Khaufpuris want to go for a picnic. It implies their urge to enjoy the nature's prosperity which is an extinct beauty for them. Many places outside Khaufpur are blessed with vegetation and dark forests. Towards the end of the novel, Animal enters into a world of illusion, in reality he has entered into a forest. For sometimes he is not sure of his existence. Eventhough he himself ran and reached there, he searches for his presence in the world of earthly life: "Oh, I will discover my true state, die or live" (342). The forest is shady but the features inside are not pleasant: "Shady is the forest but under its trees is no relief. I am searching for other living things, none do I see...not just in me's this agony but in the world" (342-343). The narrator speaks more on nature in the last tapes. He wanders around the forest for now nature is the only one he can depend upon: "my only fellow being are there

silent suffers rooted in dust waiting for rain" (343). As man himself made differences from other natural beings and also set themselves apart, it is so difficult to be merged with nature again. Animal feels utmost loneliness inside the forest:

...Animal alone in his kingdom. Grief comes to me, all my rage and fear empty in dry coughing sobs. I call to my fellow creatures, 'brothers and sisters, the lizard's wrong, I am one of you, come to live with you. Show yourselves'. None come... (346).

The difficulties to be conformed to the forest life are seen in many parts of the final two tapes of the novel. Animal experiences an extreme pain that makes him to believe that he is dead. Still, the hallucination haunts him; he thinks he is in heaven and sees some surrealistic images in front of him. At one moment he meets with his own parents and kindly they say: "poor child, you have had a horrible life, curse the day the kampani left us dead in the road drowned in our blood, we are your parents, we have to take you home" (348). These images make him more confused of his existence.

For Khaufpuris beautiful natural world is a dream and believe where there is

vegetation and peace that is heaven. So Animal cannot distinguish the real and the unreal. He misunderstands the place as paradise where everything is perfect. As he experiences this kind of joy for the first time and thus he lives in a world of illusion until Zafar makes him clear that he is not dead. When comes to reality, the agonizing Khaufpur cries for help to clean the environment and restore vegetation. Only through which the animal world can attain the so called 'comfort' of life in every aspect. Sinha never gives up the hope for good fortune. The character Animal unravels the self-healing power of nature which again provides some extend of relief to the people as well as to the readers:

Mother nature's trying to take back the land. Wild sandalwood trees have arrived, who knows how, must be their seeds were shat by overlying birds. That herb

sent, its ajwain, you catch it drifting in gusts, at such moments the forest is beautiful, you forget its poisoned and haunted (31).

The novel ends without getting justice to the people. But "Zafar is confident" that they "will get them in the end" (365). Animal seems to become the strong believer of Apokalis. He says that they are the people of Apokalis and in future there will be more of them. The dreadful days are not over.

In the end, to conclude, Indra Sinha is not speaking about the past rather he is speaking for the future. He is asking the policy makers to introspect about the development without concern for the environment. All developments without any environmental research will have a bad impact on both environment and peoples' quality of life. Every memory is a lesson for better tomorrows.

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