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## Dissection of Sympathy in Jurgen Frembgen's Travelogue-*The Closed Valley: With Fierce Friends in Pakistani Himalayas*

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### ABSTRACT

Travel writing which once dismissed as inferior and unworthy of scholarly attention has received "sustained scrutiny and investigation" (Thomson, 2016, p. xvi) in recent decades. To analyze travel books, travel writing scholars have often deployed a postcolonial lens to illuminate that the travel accounts are enmeshed in both colonial and neocolonial agendas and their representations of 'others' and their spaces are in reality misrepresentation which are mediated through the cultural baggage of travel writers (Youngs, 2013). Relinquishing this classical methodology as reductive and myopic in its scope, the current article will instead deploy an alternative approach for the analysis of Jurgen Frembgen's travelogue, *The Closed Valley: With Fierce Friends in Pakistani Himalayas* which accounts his arduous voyage to Harban in Indus Valley: one of the remotest regions (that untouched by modernity) to see whether the travel writer is sympathetic towards three 'others': nature, women, and an enraptured fool or not. To this end, it will build on the theories of ecocriticism, feminism and Romanticism to present answers to the above-mentioned question.

**Keywords:** Sympathy, Nature, Women, Wise fool, Ecocriticism, Feminism, Romanticism

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## 1. Introduction

### *1.1. Travel and Travel Writing*

Carl Thompson (2011) in his book, *Travel Writing*, defines travel as "as the negotiation between self and other that is brought about by movement in the space" (p.9). As a multi-cultural practice, travel has been viewed from a variety of perspectives. In the Middle Ages, Christian fathers looked at travel as God's punishment on humans for their abuse of their eyes (Adams, 1983). In contrast to the Christian fathers, humanists rejected the religious

interpretation of the travel and regarded curiosity as its main motive (ibid.). Unlike the humanists, Freud interpreted it as an act of defiance on the part of a son against his father's authority (Fussell, 1980). Looking from a literary viewpoint, Michal de Certeau considered travel as the basis of all stories (Hamera et al., 2009). Moreover, since the dawn of civilization, travel has been deemed as an instrument of widening the traveler's mind, and this popular belief is neatly encapsulated in this well-known proverb, "travel broadens the mind"



(Manser, 2007, p.). There are different reasons for travel and Wright (1966) beautifully summarizes them as-

The sirens, of course, sing of different things to different folk [people], some they tempt with material rewards; gold, furs, ivory, petroleum, land to settle and exploit. Some they allure with the prospect of scientific discovery. Others they call to adventure and escape. Geographers they invite to Map (As cited in Islam, 1996, p.55).

But there was one form of travel which was common in each period. In the Medieval times, traveling to holy places were common and popular (Korte, 2000), while in the Renaissance era when the West began its exploration and colonization, traveling to the New World became paramount (Abrams, 2009). In the eighteenth century, Grand Tour took on importance; this type of the travel was the privilege of rich people's children which was executed for enriching their cultural understanding by attending not only cultural and historical sites Italy but also museums and galleries in other European countries (Goring, 2008). In the Romantic period, the scenic tourism became trendy and its object was the aesthetic perception of natural world (Korte, 2000). In the Victorian era, package tour emerged as new and popular form of travel due to technological advances (Youngs, 2013). In twentieth century, the democratized and globalized form of travel emerged on the strength of motorcar and airplane technologies (Thompson, 2011). Not all travelers converted their experiences into travel books; only some did so in each period. By definition, travel writing refers to "factual, first person prose accounts of travels that have been undertaken by the author-narrator" (Youngs, 2013, p.3). Similar to other literary genres, it

underwent transformation throughout previous centuries. In the Medieval Ages, the main focus of travel books was recording and registering holy places like Holy Land without referring to the travel writer's personal impressions. Egeria's (1999) *Travels* belongs to this category (Thompson, 2011). But when the traveler made a journey to non-spiritual spaces like Far-East, narrating the people, their culture, customs, and commercial interests became a primary goal, albeit by mingling fact with fiction (Gholi, et al., 2015). Marco Polo travelogue exemplifies aforementioned trend clearly. Unlike Egeria (1999), he describes "Political and military structures, imports, exports, and medium of exchange, religious customs, the protocols of marriage, and burial, birds, beasts, and countryside, the layout and architecture of cities" (Campbell, 1988, p.91). During the Renaissance, Western travel writing turned its attention to describing New World, and thanks to epistemological shift the travel writers sought to avoid incorporating materials that could weaken their authority and Thomas Hariot's (1992) *A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* can be regarded as the best example this new type of travel book (Gholi, 2016). In the Eighteenth century travel writing in its modern form was emerged and became subjective, that is, the impressions of the travel writers assumed importance thanks to the cult of sensibility and James Boswell's travelogues are the best illustration of this type of travel writing (ibid.). In the Romantic period, the prime concern of travel writer was capturing the sublimity in nature (ibid.). For instance, William Beckford's travelogue *Dreams, Waking thoughts and Incidents* indicates this Romantic sensibility very well (Thompson, 2016). In contrast, in Victorian era, travel writing was the handmaid of

Western colonialism and played crucial in perpetuating Western superiority and solidifying the inferiority of 'others' (Gholi, et al., 2015). *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* by David Livingston (1857) for instance is a classic example of a travel book which is at the service of imperialism since he advocated three Cs: Christianity, commerce, and civilization in Africa to improve the life of allegedly barbarian Africans (Youngs, 2013). In the twentieth century, travel writing was influenced by three movements. Modernism which emphasizes fragmentation and subjectivity is materialized itself in Robert Byron's (1992) *Road to Oxiana* (Gholi, 2016). Given postcolonialism in travel writing, it concentrates on presenting hitherto silenced voice from colonized nations and finds its full incarnation in Ghosh's (1992) *In an Antique Land* in which he civilized image of Orient. In his travel narrative produces "counter-Orientalist travel narratives that challenge ethnocentric views of mythicized East" (Holland, et al., 2000, p.60). As to postmodernism in the realm of travel writing, it shatters generic borders and draws on inter/meta textuality and Raban's (2011) *Coasting* evinces the features of postmodernism (Gholi, 2016).

### 1.2. Travel writer and his Travelogue

With its heterogeneous cultures and ancient civilizations, Orient has always been an enchanting land for Westerners and the inspirer of their romantic imagination and curiosity since the time of Herodotus, and Jurgen Wassim Frembgen (1955), a German orientalist, cultural anthropologist and museum curator, is no exception. One can seek the genesis of his irresistible attraction to Islamic Orient in particular Pakistan, firstly, in his childhood when his aunt cum godmother embraced Islam and married an Afghan; secondly, in Orient's

vitality for offering "the exotic moments of enchantment" and "emotional wealth" (Frembgen, 2014, p.111). Thirdly in his anthropological "curiosity [and] quest for knowledge," (ibid.). Fourthly, in his penchant for the authentic experience of a pristine traditional culture in a tribal society with the promise of perilous adventures and innumerable unexplored cultural and archeological signs. And finally in his dissatisfaction with, working as an academic chained to his desk, with book keeping mentality and constant activity in museum, the sophisticated terminologies and categories used in discussion rounds in universities and altogether with living and working in a society so hungry for attention with its inflation of words and pictures (ibid.).

His romantic and intellectual impulse coupled with his sense of ennui provides him the *raison d'être* to travel to Pakistan, learn Urdu, convert to Islam, immerse himself in Pakistan culture and carry out his ethnographical studies to "better understand [his observees'] mindscape and their contexts" (ibid.). His field work resulted in the publication of books such as *Nocturnal Music in the Land of Sufis, Wrestlers, Pigeon Fanciers, and Kite Flyers: Traditional Sports and Pastimes in Lahore, Journey to God: Sufism and Dervishes in Islam, The Friends of God-Sufi Saints in Islam: Popular Poster Art from Pakistan, At the Shrine of the Red Sufi: Five Days and Nights on Pilgrimage in Pakistan*, and *At the Shrine of the Red Sufi: Five Days and Nights on Pilgrimage in Pakistan*.

Besides his anthropological books, he published a travelogue, *The Closed Valley: Fierce Friends in Pakistani Himalayas* in 2014 in which he fuses his anthropological expertise with literary flair. His travelogue recounts his five times



journey into mountainous Harban, a jealously guarded terra incognita in Indus Valley in the north of Pakistan which in the imagination of British colonizers in the nineteenth century as “death trap” (p.2) and in that of Pakistanis, living in the epicenter of civilization as the locus of barbarians capable of any crime beyond human comprehension (p.5).

Nonetheless the travel writer refutes the negative images weaved around Harbani people and believes that they are product of colonial discourse of English colonizers, and thus he dismisses the impossibility of going there if traveler is careful-

I was confident that with some degree of caution and discretion, I would be able to find access to tribal society of Harban. Furthermore, I mistrusted on principle the common clichés and stereotypes which stigmatized the Kohistani [people of Harban] after all British colonial power has already vilified them as lawless (p.5).

The travel writer ventures into this secluded and sealed region despite the failure of a Pakistani and British anthropologist before him in their attempts to carry out ethnographical fieldwork. The encouragement and inspiration for conducting anthropological study in Harban (although he could not do systematically during his travels) comes from Karl Jettmar, his PhD supervisor. With an introduction letter which he secures from a local Judge in Chilas who was originally from the area in question, he as the first European manages to penetrate into this archaic world where there is no basic amenities of life such as telephone, electricity, and piped-water, and its inhabitants living autonomously because the inhabitants of the region “formed tribal societies without central authorities, official channels or a

state, and bitterly defended their autonomy against neighboring kingdoms and principalities” (p.2). In his traveled territory, the travel writer as an observant-participant witnesses both aesthetic and violent moments. On the one hand, he enjoyed the lavish hospitality his travelees’ homes, their sincere friendship, the rare opportunity of not only joining a boisterous group of lads during their joking, dancing, singing, and unfolding their true nature in their intimate gathering, but also deriving enormous pleasure from hearing the real-life stories of the locals such his host, an adventurous carpenter, and an old enraptured Sufi, to name some. At the other hand, he observed blood feuds between different castes, the spread of radical, misinterpreted version of Islam by Tablighi Jamaat, the deforestation due to excessive logging by timber mafia and local leaders, the oppression of the women in the name of family honor. With respect to ethnographic aspect of his voyage, it affords him the good chance of visiting the ruins of Heavenly Fortress (that was constructed in the past to store grain and was used as a watch tower (that points to frequent tribal battles) as well as recoding and photographing traditional crafts like carpet weaving.

To end this section, in Frembgen’s travelogue, the combination of enlightenment and literary agendas is observable. The former prioritizes gaining firsthand knowledge about customs, practices, and culture of the traveled zone. This trend finds its full expression when the travel writer looks at his travelees and their territory anthropologically to deepen his understanding and capture uniqueness and nuances of their material culture. The latter is observable when he builds on literary strategies to render his travel experience delightful and polyphonic, and he achieves it when he like modernist novelists utilizes

a technique which Bakhtin calls 'polyphony' by embedding the different voices of his travelees. This strategy delimits the authority of travel writer and democratizes the travelogue by permitting the travelees to present their perspectives independently without any hindrance (Thompson, 2011). In fact, it prevents the travelogue from being monologic in which the travel writer's voice subordinates other voices (Abrams, 2009). This feature can be considered as the literary merit of his travelogue.

## **2. Methodology**

One of the commonly applied methodologies for analyzing Western travelogues is Edward Said's (1979) *Orientalism* notably when a traveled terrain is Orient. Terry Eagleton (2002) dismisses this analytical framework which endeavors to decenter 'self' and 'other' as well as detect cliché tropes and pejorative descriptions. He lashes out this method on account of being reductive and intellectually less fertile and rigorous,

The Bad news is that otherness is not the most fertile of intellectual furrows indeed, once you observed that the other is typically portrayed as lazy, dirty, stupid, crafty, womanly, passive, rebellious, sexually rapacious, childlike, enigmatic and a number of other mutually contradictory epithets (as cited in Fowler et al, 2014, p.2).

In this regard, the current study eschews Said's *Orientalism*; instead, it opts an eclectic methodology to dissect the travel writer's outlook towards three 'others': nature, female travelees, and a marginalized wise fool. It in fact attempts to supply answer to the following question: is he indifferent or sensitive to the aforementioned issues. To this end, the article will draw on the theories of ecocriticism, feminism, and Romanticism.

Ecocriticism will be applied in this study because one of the issues which the travel writer touches on in his travelogue is the timber mafia's large-scale logging that has been ruining one third of the conifer forests of the region. Besides, this approach will be beneficial in highlighting how nature is affected by human beings' activities (his travelees) and how they (his travelees) are affected by nature (Dobie, 2015). Moreover, it will draw attention to the travel writer's stance towards the man-made environmental disaster and unveils whether he is sympathetic to nature or not. The approach also will point to his response towards his host who is involved in logging business.

With regard to Oriental women, travel scholars inspired by Said's *Orientalism* comb travelogues to prove that the Western travel writers insensitively misrepresented them as inferior 'others'. One can see such an approach in the article of Yahya et al (2013), *The Portrayal of Women in Isabella Bird's Bishop's Journeys in Persia and Kurdistan* (2012), Kahf's book entitled, *Western Representation of the Muslim Women from Termagant to Odalisque* published in 1999, as well as Nabil Matar's (1996) *The Representation of Muslim Women in Renaissance England*, to give just some examples. The present study will relinquish the method in question, and will not focus on the negative portrayal of Oriental women by the Western travel writer. Instead it will look how the travel writer respond to women's conditions in his destination as a human being. Rather it will build on feminism to see whether the travel writer manifest his sympathy towards his female observees by exposing the evils of a patriarchal society in which women are sequestered and suppressed.



Last but not least, Romanticism will prove suitable critical tool in this study. This literary movement is known for its aversion of civilization and its signs and symbols (Whitfield, 2011) and its fascination with rural and simple societies and their residents who are ignored and marginalized by neo-classical poets and writers as unworthy of representation and dealing with (Abrams, 2006). The case in point is Wordsworth's poetry which celebrates the common and the marginalized. Accordingly this article will examine if the travel writer in the spirit of Romanticism will glorify and celebrate the secluded and marginalized like William Wordsworth as the mark of his sympathy. If so, how does he reflect this trait in his travelogue?

### **3. Textual Analysis**

#### *3.1. Sympathy towards Nature*

As a school of criticism, ecocriticism emerged in 1980s and, according to Glotfelty (1996) it is "the study of the relationship between literature and physical environment (cited in Barry, 2009, p.223), Bressler (2011) notes that ecocriticism "is ethically committed to the natural world... [that is the earth] is vitally important rather simply an object for aesthetic discussion"; moreover, he adds that it is "ecologically sensitive in textual analysis" (p.235). In addition, this school is the critique of the anthropocentrism of Western civilization which based on rationalism, empiricism, and Judeo-Christian (Dobie, 2015, p.244) due to its orientation to "the interests of humanism of human beings, who are viewed as opposed to and superior to nature, and free to exploit natural resources ... for their own purposes" (Abrams, 2009, p.88). It also seeks to debunk "binaries such as man/nature or culture/nature" and instead point to "their interconnected and also mutually

constitutive" (ibid.). On the whole, ecocriticism endeavors to heighten humans' attention to the environment and the dangers which threaten it. With respect to the application of Ecocriticism in travel studies, Fowler (2016) remarks that

Travel writing scholars have been influenced by the rise of Ecocriticism, associated most closely with Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin ... Expanding the field's ethical field of vision to ... environmental concerns, critics have identified numerous ways in which contemporary travel narratives have responded positively to conservationists' calls for 'critique[s] of ecocide' or condemnations of environmental destruction (p.58).

One of the important issues which Frembgen in his travelogue dwells on is excessive logging in Indus Valley which is executed by timber mafia including his host Sheer Ghazi, and this has been leading to the despoliation of large area of conifer forests-

Logging has become a lucrative business ... the local press [in Pakistan] repeatedly reports about plundering of national resources by timber mafia. The exploitation has increased at such a pace that Pakistan, along Kenya, holds the sad record of having the least forest cover of any country in the world apart from the earth's desert and ice region... According to the newspaper, over three times the number of cubic feet of wood actually permitted was logged this year in the forest on the opposite side of the Indus. Illegal schemes are the order of the day (Frembgen, 2014, p.34-35).

The above fragment substantiates the fact that the travel writer is not indifferent to what he calls "rapacious deforestation" (p.35). The use of adjective

'sad' in 'sad record' alludes to the travel writer's concern over the loss of forest which are essential for the proper function of ecosystem. In this excerpt it is not difficult to perceive that the travel writer is at the side of local press which is the staunch critique of the deforestation. Similar to the local newsmen, the traveler in his own way puts effort into enlightening his local and international audience as well as Pakistani government so that they will take drastic measures to dismantle deforestation and put ends to the lucrative business of the people involved in lumbering. Thus he showcases his activism and commitment to nature by heightening his readers' awareness to injustice perpetrated against the forest which has been treated as a voiceless 'other'. Moreover, he denounces this deforestation for its contribution to "unpredictable natural disasters throughout the country" (p.35). To illustrate the point, he relates flood which he himself was its victim during his stay in Harban,

I myself experienced the threat that deforestation posed to the little village. After it had rained ceaselessly for days, mudflows carried away several stables at the edge of the village the water flooded the floor of my room. At night I slept on my charpoy [type of chair] as if on an Island in the middle of the lake (p.34).

Another point which at the personal level bears witness to travel writer's sympathy towards environment is his sense of guilt over benefiting the lavish hospitality of his host who is in the business of what he calls 'green gold'. He places the blame on himself since his host provided his comfort through illegal way; that is to say, by the devastation and depilation of forest, not from honest industry. As a result, he is against his will is enjoying the benefits of the deforestation, and this explains why he

honestly confesses that "the thought that my host seems to profit nicely from the business with green gold makes me... uncomfortable" (ibid.). One can discern that the travel writer's sense of discomfort stems from the fact that he regards himself accountable for the severe consequences of the deforestation occurring in the region.

The last issue which displays the travel writers' disapprobation of the 'ecocide' in the sense of deforestation is referring to his host's role in plundering the forest for the sake of his personal aggrandizement such as purchasing a luxury car and making a pilgrimage to Mecca. He achieves his end by implementing dramatic irony. In this context, this irony is based on the difference between what Sher Ghazi (the travel writer's host) utters and what the travel writer and his readers believe to be true. This literary moreover device enables the travel writer to tacitly lambast his host's hypocrisy since the money which he earns from destruction of trees, he spent on the purchase of expensive car, the religious purposes like visiting Mecca, the Muslim's God's house and the provision of hospitality for his friends

Nevertheless, I could not refrain from asking one more question. 'To what purpose, Sher Ghazi, are you thinking of dedication the money you earn from timber?' 'With God's help, I hope to undertake a pilgrimage to Mecca and then-Inshallah [God willing] repeat hajj [pilgrimage to Mecca] several times'. In the years therefore, I did in fact see Sher Ghazi made pilgrimage a number of times. He bought an expensive and prestigious Missubishi Pajero...all these served to boost his status in Harban (ibid.).

### 3.2. *Sympathy towards Women*



From the time of its emergence, feminism particularly in its classical form has been the staunch critique of a patriarchal society not only for perpetuating both ‘the myth of women’ and ‘Eternal Feminine’ to borrow Simone de Beauvoire (1989) which set up women as men’s opposite (Venturing, 2013), but also for ascribing positive characteristics to men and places them in the center of the power while disempowers women and denies them good qualities-

[It puts man] at the center of the universe as the only subject, the only true thinking beings, while woman is an object to be admired, feared, used simply looked at, or ignored. From this androcentric view, women have no subjectivity of their own. What counts as universal, therefore, is entirely a male affair (ibid.).

Additionally, this androcentric system defines “gentle, submissive, vaginal, and angelic” women (Tyson, 2006, p.89) as the good women or ‘angel in the house’ to use Patmore’s phrase whereas “violent, aggressive worldly” (ibid.) women as abnormal one. In this system also the good women are valued and adored whereas their opposites are stigmatized and punished, and thus feminism from its inception has sought to shatter this binary thinking to restore women’s violated right.

Gilbert and Gubar (1979) argue that men have utilized the ‘pen’, the metaphor of phallus, power, law, and religion to exclude female writers (Klages, 2013). One can extend the metaphor and claim that the men abused the ‘pen’ to spread ‘the myth of women’ and ‘Eternal Feminine’. Nevertheless there are some thinkers and writers employ it to revolt against man-constructed gender iniquity by shedding light on the women’s trials and tribulations and espousing gender equality. Frembgen as travel writer belongs to this category.

Moreover, unlike his Western predecessors he does not represent them as lascivious and immoral (Maradani et al, 2012). Rather, he adopts a positive and sympathetic stance towards his female travelers and exhibits it through two ways: firstly, by implicit chastising the religious tyranny of Tablighi Jamaat for suppressing female voice; secondly by casting light on their dilemma caused by men in their region.

Firstly, Tablighi Jamaat which is a “[orthodox Muslim] reform movement in Pakistan involved in missionary work” (Frembgen, 2014, p.119) is the best embodiment of the religious tyranny and patriarchal mentality. For the travel writer, the members of this group are the group hijackers of true Islam who has reduced it to strict rules and commands. Thus accusing them is not tantamount to chastising Islam in an Orientalist travelers’ fashion. Supported by the local men, they seem to be convinced that they are presenting the pure version of Islam in the region and have right to impose their desired version of life. Therefore to expose the group in question’ repressive measures against female travelers, he compares the women’s state before and after their arrival. To do so, he accounts one of his excursions with Sher Ghazi in the fortified village where he suddenly in the middle of village observes a small square with ten or twelve stone benches which arouses his anthropological curiosity and impels him to enquire about them from his host. His host’s answer unveils women’s current and previous social status-

This was the old meeting place for women, he says, where presided over by the oldest of them, problems were discussed like men’s meeting. However, in the 1960s, members of Tablighi Jamaat has forbidden women to meet here, asserting that the women only sat

around chatting in public and this was unseemly (p.49).

The above fragment clearly indicates that women prior to the presence of the Jamaat, enjoyed expressing and discussing their views about their own issue in the village without the interference and disruption of the local men; but the radical group with their misogynistic attitudes towards women interpreted this type of gathering as the waste of time, and thus they barred the local women from doing it. This command paves the way for their further seclusion and is akin to their slavery at their husbands' houses. The travel writer in their approach perceives the infringement of the Harbani women's right. In sympathy with the local women, the travel writer through deploying two rhetorical questions illuminates how the local women may dislike the unjust decision of the radical Islamic group, "I wondered what the women thought about the Tablighis. Did they share their view by now?" (ibid.). At first glance, it may appear that the travel writer is replicating orientalist pitfalls, while he is responding to the problem of Harbani women as a human being. He thinks that it is the inalienable right of his female travelers to socialize, talk over their ideas and problems, and issues like men in the center of village as time prior to the appearance of the Jamaat.

In addition to tyranny of the Jamaat, the travel writer to manifest his kindness towards the Harbani women points to their predicament including their ill-treatment by their husbands which in the view of the travel writer results in their illicit romantic relationship and their death if it is discovered. The writer also implicitly condemns the wrong concept of masculinity in the region which denies the local women's desire for sexual intimacy and reduces them into a sexual slave. Moreover,

he disparages this sexual misbehavior as the root cause of main problems which the local women have to face in their life. This sexual indifference by the local men leads to the female travelers' "rush headlong into extramarital romantic love affairs" (p.107). This romantic affair in the culture of Harban it is interpreted as a "great transgression" (p.104) on the grounds that it threatens Harbani men's sense of honor. In their society, the concept of honor is "defined primarily through [the male travelers'] mother, sister, wife, and daughter" (p.105). If the local men find out this romantic and clandestine relationship, they feel that their honor has been spoiled; as a result, they feel obliged to restore it by taking the lives the secret lovers. By referring to his female travelers' predicament which originates from his male travelers' indifference towards their emotional and sexual needs, the travel writer foregrounds the destructive role of men in the plight of women.

### 3.3. *Sympathy towards Majzoob Baba*

Romanticism as a literary movement in England started in 1798 when William Wordsworth and Coleridge published their *Lyrical Ballads* and ended in 1832 when Sir Walter Scott died (Carter et al, 2001). Morse Peckham (197) defines Romanticism as "revolution in the European mind against thinking in terms of static mechanism and redirection of the mind to thinking in terms of dynamic organicism. Its values are change, imperfection, growth, diversity, the creative imagination, and unconscious" (as cited in Abjadian, 2005, p.207). This movement was a reaction against Neo-Classicism which emphasized order, rationality, objectivity, convention, imitation, and decorum (ibid.). Contrary to previous writers which ignored ordinary people in favor of loyalties and famous people, Romantic writers deemed the lives of these



simple people worthy of attention in their works thanks to French and American revolutions advocated that the ordinary people had same right and worth as kings and leaders (Galens, 2002). However, Wordsworth goes beyond this paradigm by “the glorification of the outcast” (Abrams, 2006, p.10). This explains why Hazlitt states that Wordsworth turns “for the subjects of the serious poem...to the ignominious [and] the outcast” (as cited in Abrams, 2006, p.11). One can observe this tendency in poems like *The Mad Mother* and *Idiot Boy* in which the poet displays his penchant for... lives other side of common (Kerr, 2014). Similar to Wordsworth, to celebrate and glorify the marginalized in his voyage to Chilas located in Indus Valley, the travel writer not only pays a personal visit to an enraptured wise fool who is called Majzoob Baba, but also investigates about his life to shed light on his early life as well as his dilemmas. In an attempt to find about the life of him from a reliable source, he meets Majzoob’s nephew (who is a doctor) in his office. He supplies the curious travel writer with enough information about his early life and why he is called Majzoob-

Soon after his wedding, he went straight across a cemetery when the earth suddenly opened and flames burst forth from one of the graves. This sign of God completely confused the boy. He became *Majzoob* [enraptured] who no longer lived in this world. The young marriage after just few months. *Majzoob* forget his name and often wandered through mountains and deserts (Frembgen, 2014, p.73).

Moreover, when the travel writer meets Majzoob, he finds more about his hard time. Majzoob baba becomes subject to the antipathy in strict religious society notably by Tablighi Jamaat for disregarding

his obligatory prayers. To guarantee his conformity to their expectation, they force him to follow strict Islamic prescriptions, for example, “they dragged him over the street and forced him into mosque among those praying” (p.70). It is not hard to perceive that the travel writer does not approve their harsh treatment of innocent Majzoob baba just for acting differently, “how do the local people traditionalists and Tablighi missionaries judge someone who is so different?” (ibid.).

Another aspect of Wordsworth’s Romanticism which reflects his respect and love towards the uncommon is throwing “certain coloring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect” (Abrams, 2006, p.10). Likewise, the travel writer to evince his sympathy towards Majzoob, makes the life of him memorable and fascinating by relating his romance with fairies in the snow covered mountains of Himalaya which is narrated by his own nephew,

He went far above the high alpine pastures until he came close to the snow-covered peaks where there are ibex and wild goats. There he encountered fairies, pure creatures of supernatural beauty [Majzoob Baba’s brother] believes that Majzoob married one of them! Why else he keep going up there and bringing flowers with an overpowering fragrance (Frembgen, 2014, p.74).

In the above paragraph, Majzoob is no longer an insignificant lunatic which breaches Islamic law, but an impatient love on the top mountains covered with sweet smelling flowers, likely one his way to pay homage to his fairy beloved far from eyes of his foes. In fact, the travel writer by deploying this dreamlike story strives to defamiliarize Majzoob and render him a memorable character.

#### 4. Conclusion

As an anthropologist cum traveler, Jurgen Wassim Frembgen in his journey to the sealed world of Harban in Indus Valley directs his sympathy towards the victimized 'Others': nature, women, and an enraptured wise-fool. To do so, he highlights the problems of the 'Others' and criticizes those responsible in their victimization. With regard to deforestation, he adopts the view point of an eco-critic and heightens his readers' attention towards it through the somber description of deforestation, and its catastrophic consequence like flood. In addition, his sympathy towards nature tacitly impels the travel writer to lambast his host' hypocrisy since he spent money obtained from despoiling pristine forests for his aggrandizement and going on pilgrimage to Mecca. Considering women, the travel writer assumes the garb of a feminist and textually depicts how their right of public speech was trampled by the extremists, and how they are trapped in a patriarchal society from which they cannot flee. Finally, with respect to the enraptured wise fool, unlike Muslim orthodox in the region who abuses him, the travel writer in the spirit of Romantic poet like William Wordsworth respects and acknowledges him by including the story of his romantic love with fairies.

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