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METAPOETIC, LOVE, CHILDHOOD, AND TOPOGRAPHICAL  
AESTHETICS IN THE POETRY OF TAUFIQ RAFAT: AN  
INTERTEXTUAL STUDY

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**ABSTRACT**

Intertextuality, a literary term coined by Julia Kristeva, is the explicit or implicit presence of other texts in the text at hand. Adapting on Maikhail Bakhtin's concept of language as dialogic, Kristeva asserts that the literary texts are not personal or isolated constructions rather they are the contributors in the pre-existent literary traditions which are always in the process of progress. The meaning making of any text, hence, is made through its intertextual links with other texts of the literary tradition instead of autobiographical or textual approach. Four major types of intertextuality are used as framework in this paper. Macro intertextuality is the explicit reference, micro the implicit reference, write back the reaction to the mainstream tradition, and theory of quotation the borrowing of other's quotation sans quotation marks from other texts. Taufiq Rafat's poetry is not the expression of an isolated soul rather it is the combination of all the European, Indian, and American readings he had. However, this paper attempts to explore the aforementioned types of intertextuality in Taufiq Rafat's four selected poems from his anthologies *Arrival of the Monsoon: Collected Poems (1947-78)* and *Half Moon: Poems (1979-83)* with British counter parts. The selected four poems – Bird from Porlock, The Time to Love, At the Service Station, and the Positive Region – belong to four traditions of poetry, i. e., metapoetry, love poetry, childhood poetry, and topographical poetry respectively.

## INTRODUCTION

History is the museum of all the literary works penned down by numberless writers of all ages from every corner of the world. Keeping aside their individual differences, they bear a stamp of some underlying pattern of shared experience. The universal human nature always succeeds in interweaving styles, themes, genres, and literary devices among various texts regardless of country and age.

Having a shared sensibility with Persians, Arabians, Aryans, Buddhists, Americans, and Europeans, the Pakistani writers come up with a long web of literary influences to form a multicultural and universal identity. All the Pakistani poets are seen to be recreating the old artifice of emotion and feeling including the themes of religion, love, culture, politics, postcolonialism, postmodernism, and Diaspora issues since, observes Zulfiqar Ghose, nothing has been changed from Homer (Mansoor, 2012).

The evaluation of literary texts is understood through intertextuality, an age old artistic device like figures of speech (Edmunds, 2001). It throws light on common origin and means of expression of lived experience of humans. Texts from different places always share interrelated ideas because no man is an island in himself to create any text in isolation. The branch of comparative studies brings out, intentional or unintentional, unavoidable intertextual characteristics of different works.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Ancient Greeco-Roman texts show a diversity of intertextuality. Horace's Epistles relate his reinterpretation of idea of poetry being didactic in nature from Homer's *Odyssey* and *Illiad*. Horace's *Satires* is a reply to a challenge posed to his criticism of Lucilius. moreover, his *Satires* show the implicit echo of Lucilius that poetry should be read in present with the same effect it used to be read in the past. (Edmunds, 2001). In Conte's "History and Systems in the Memory of Poets", the themes and story of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* are echoed, and Ovid's *Amores* borrows words from Vergil's *Aeneid* (Casali, 2009). Bible is the intertextual source of parables, stories, episodes, figures of speech, plots, and quotations etc. for numberless literary texts (Orosz, 2009). The most familiar of these are Chaucer's use of metaphors in his account of Parson, Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667), Plath's *Lady Lazarus* (1965), Steinbeck's *East of Eden* (1925), and Backet's *Waiting for Godot* (2005).

T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* employs many allusions to the characters from classical mythology such as Sybil, Philomel, and dead god to resonate the theme of death. The poem draws contrasts from religious stories as are seen in the resseructing scene beheld by Ezekiel and miracles of Moses. Eliot's beloved is contrastive in her passion to that of Cleopatra and Andrew's coy mistress. Dante's *Inferno* serves as the background to the dwellers of *The Waste Land* (Sultan & Abdel Aziz, 2007). Similarly, not a single line of Ezra Pound's *The Cantose* goes without using allusions and references from ancient Chinese, Latin, Greek, Provencal, and Anglo-Saxon pieces of poetry (Nurmi, 2007). While Joyce's *Ulysses* surpasses all in intertextuality as his unique style modules the language patterns and stylistic techniques while

incorporating the relevant writer's notes, quotes, allusions, or references. The list of Ulysses' intertextual sources Anglo-Saxons, Mandeville, Malory, Elizabethans, Milton, Taylor, Hooker, Burton-Browne, Bunyan, Pepy, Evelyne, Defoe, Swift, Steel, Addison, Sterne, Landor, Pater, and Newman (McKenna & Antonia, 1994).

Sylvia Plath reacts to the siren tradition – the idea of erotic temptation of women (Eros) leading one to disastrous consequence (death) – by discarding the erotic temptation for her siren is old and unattractive but even then she is able to inflict disaster on the travelers through songs (Müller, 2000). By adding Sylvia Plath's thematic and stylistic references and quotations in her poetry collections, Zhai Yongming's poetic creations continue the tradition of 'woman poetry'. Zhai's *Call it Everything* imparts a quotation from Plath's *Fever 103* as an epigraph under the title (Zhang, 2002).

Pakistani writers offer a complicated web of intertextuality in their works. Intertextual references to the rich cultural variety of subcontinent drawing upon a palimpsestic reading of many a conquerors such as Aryans, Ashoka, Alexander the Great, Tamerlane, and Muhammad Bin Qasim unavoidably occur in the poetry of Alamgir Hashmi, Shuja Nawaz, Athar Tahir, and Salman Tariq Kureishi (Raza, 2020). Moniza Alvi in her poem "Alamgir Hashmi's Camel" bears an imaginary journey motif in exploring British suburbs to Alamgir Hashmi's poem "America is a Punjabi Word" (Shamsie, 2019). Daud Kamal's poetry echoes the imagist poets' presence in style and it shares with other Pakistani poets the intertextual cultural synthesis. While Zulfiqar Ghose's poetry share intertextual relations not only with the romantics and the modernists but also with Pakistani diaspora writers (Mansoor, 2012). Uzma Aslam Khan's works are the intertextual rendition of the inclusive idea of religion propounded by many thinkers from Arabia, Subcontinent, Greece, and France. Similarly, Nadeem Aslam's works reincarnate mystic themes from Persian and Buddhist traditions (Kanwal & Aslam, 2018).

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

By taking into account the authority of author, the meaning of text was constructed from its text previously as the work was considered a unified whole. But the theoretical underpinnings of Ferdinand de Saussure, Mikhail Bakhtin, Julia Kristeva, and Roland Barthes pave a new road for interpretation. According to Saussure, language does not work in isolation rather the meaning of a word is interpreted under binary opposition (De Saussure & Sechehaye, 1966). The meaning of the word in a text is the absence of its opposing binary which is outside the text. Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of dialogism states that the meaning of the words of a person is understood in his relation with other people's words and expressions in a specific culture. It means that language is dialogic. It gives meaning only when used in a dialogue between people and not in isolation (Bakhtin, 1981). It goes on to suggest that all the texts are created in a continuous dialogue form between one another (Orosz, 2009). Drawing on these concepts about language, Julia Kristeva, a Bulgarian linguist, coined the term 'intertextuality' in 1966. Intertextuality can be defined as: "A text is the part of unending chain of intertextual cycles that gives a sense of belonging to the history of a

particular genre of the text” (Halliday, 2003). Similarly, De Beaugrand, a French linguist, defines intertextuality as a relationship of a text with many other texts of the same category (Klein & Fix, 1997). And according to Kristeva, intertextuality is “the way in which one signifying practice is transposed into another” (Kristeva, 1986). Literally saying, it is the interpretation of a text with a focus on its marked or implied interaction with other texts in the form of borrowing words and ideas.

Text is produced in relation with other texts and contexts, and cannot be studied in isolation (Raj, 2015) rather it is seen as ideologeme which is, according to Kristeva, placing the text within a textual context of society and history to create a historical consciousness as seen by T. S. Eliot in his concept of tradition (Eliot, 1982). It refers back to the pretexts in formal (generic) and pragmatic (contextual) terms. Kristeva, then, discards the authority of the author regarding his intended meaning in the interpretation of the text for the author only contributes in the pre-existing tradition of the genre. Similarly, reader’s comprehension of the text is also based on the reader’s previous knowledge of other pretexts as Roland Barthes introduces the birth of the reader (Barthes, 2001).

The function of intertextuality can be rewriting, transforming, parodying, or subverting the existing texts. Intertextuality can assume consciously or unconsciously any form such as quotation <sup>1</sup>, allusion <sup>2</sup>, echo <sup>3</sup>, reference <sup>4</sup>, imitation <sup>5</sup>, collage <sup>6</sup>, parody <sup>7</sup>, pastiche <sup>8</sup>, literary convention <sup>9</sup>, parallelism <sup>10</sup>, or a paraphrase <sup>11</sup> (Booker, 1996) developing a creative relationship between the texts. Its scope is not limited to the literary texts only rather, being interdisciplinary in nature, it takes into account the influences, adaptations, and appropriations from non-literary sources also (Zengin, 2016) as we see in the case of text which are cultural products to understand culture and literature (Allen, 2011).

### **TYPES OF INTERTEXTUALITY**

Some major types of intertextuality include ekphrasis, iconotext, theory of quotation, write back, and theory of imitation. Ekphrasis is the type of

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<sup>1</sup> Quotation is a well-known phrase or passage from any literary work to illustrate or support an argument.

<sup>2</sup> Allusion is a direct or indirect reference to a person, event, or thing from other texts to give an intended meaning

<sup>3</sup> Echo is the recurrence of the passages, verses, or other textual features from other texts to compare and contrast

<sup>4</sup> A reference is the interconnectedness, where one author may take an idea, a phrase, a passage, a character or any aspect whatsoever of another author's work and insert it in his own

<sup>5</sup> Imitation is the art of direct copy

<sup>6</sup> Collage is a literary term having layers of ideas or images in a literary piece of work

<sup>7</sup> Parody is an attempt to imitate the style of a particular writer in order to ridicule his works

<sup>8</sup> Pastiche is the imitation of the themes or ideas of other works to create a new work

<sup>9</sup> Literary conventions refer to the features of a literary work to distinguish its genre

<sup>10</sup> Parallelism is the repetition of a chosen grammatical form within a sentence

<sup>11</sup> A paraphrase is a rewording of a paragraph or text, in order to borrow, clarify, or expand on information without plagiarizing.

intertextuality in which a piece of art like picture, painting, or sculptor is given a verbal description (Wagner, 2012) as the verbal representation of *Ozymandias* by Shelley. On the other hand, iconotext is the allusion, reference, or the use of images in the text such as novels with photographs along with verbal text, i. e., *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie. Theory of quotations serves the function of recurring topology, metaphor, or semantic context in the text sans the use of quotation marks (Shakib, 2013). John Milton's use of quotation "Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme" (Milton, 1997) in *Paradise Lost* is the translation of "Cosa non detta in prosa mai, ni in rima" (Ariosto, 2011) by Ludovico Ariosto in *Orlando Furioso*, which is the recurrence of Horace's ideas (Forsyth, 2009). The reaction to colonial texts by postcolonial texts is the write back intertextuality in which the stereotypical identities of colonized natives are reconstructed. Similarly, texts by female writers react against patriarchal text regarding female identity construction. Theory of imitation is the type of intertextuality which presupposes pre-existent textual and concrete references. As Aristotle puts it as the reduction and intensification of all the pretexts the writer knows. The novels built upon world wars, civil wars, and post 9/11 events etc. present the reality the reader already knows (Shakib, 2013).

However, in a broader sense, all the types of intertextuality can be understood under two heads, i. e., macro and micro. The explicit expression of intertextuality in the form of imitation, reference, or adaptation, especially in the titles, that directly show the text's relation to other texts is macro intertextuality as the use of the word 'Colonus' in Forster's *The Road from Colonus* refers back to Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* bringing to mind the related ideas in both of the texts. While the micro intertextuality refers to the intertextual elements hidden in the layers of the texts such as allusions – the character of Mr. Lucas' daughter in Forster's short story *Ethel* is an allusion to Oedipus' daughter Antigone who accompanies her father in his rainy day, adaptation – Dryden's replacing of Epicurean elements of composition, i. e., earth, fire, water, and air by cold, hot, moist, and dry in his poem *A Song for Saint Cecelia's Day*, indication – suggestion to an idea, concept or meaning from other texts, and quotations – direct or indirect quoting of others' ideas (Ahmadian & Yazdani, 2013).

## DISCUSSION

Taufiq Rafat, a big name of Pakistani poetry, follows the tradition of big writers to create artistic pieces of universal significance. The great poetry reflects the presence of the ancestor poets instead of showing the personality of the poet (Eliot, 1982). This function of poetry is served by literary device intertextuality which is the intertextual relation of one text with all the other texts of the same genre. This section attempts to explore four types of intertextuality working in the four selected poems of Rafat from his anthologies *Arrival of the Monsoon: Collected Poems (1947-78)* and *Half Moon: Poems (1979-83)* with reference to metapoetic, love, childhood, and topographical poetic traditions.

### *Bird from Porlock*

Taufiq Rafat's poem "Bird from Porlock" captures a moment of creativity to lay down his philosophy of poetic craft. It is the ekphrasis of the brooding poet lying on a bench under the tree in a garden. While thinking about the topic of his poem, he makes smoke rings. Suddenly, a bird shits in his eyes and the poet gets up abruptly. The peaceful brooding poet changes into an abusive avenger who, in a fit of fury, starts rebuking the bird for the loss the bird has done unintentionally to the poet. As a result of distraction, the poet loses the vision he was trying to capture. The poet regrets the fact that unlike him, Coleridge succeeded in leaving a matchless piece of poetry after having been distracted by visitor from Porlock as he asserts: "I had a wonderful poem going, / and now it is gone." (Rafat, 2008, p. 29)

Neither "Bird from Porlock" is a self-referential poem nor it is new of its kind. Rather its very content bears proof of its belonging to an age old metapoetic tradition. The genre metapoetry deals with poem whose content discusses the poet's philosophy, creative process, metapoetic metaphor, and poetic function. The poet's poetic craft is discussed in the very poems instead of prefaces and essays. Metapoetic tradition starts with Horace's poetic treatise *Ars Poetica* (about 20 BC) and Archibald MacLeish's modern poetic treatise "*Ars Poetica*" (1928) is a reaction to Horace's *Ars Poetica* creating a dialogue between the texts. Other prominent metapoetic texts include Alexander Pope's poem "Essay on Criticism", William Wordsworth's "Daffodils", S. T. Coleridge's "Kubla Khan", and Wallace Steven's "Of Modern Poetry" etc.

The meaning of the poem, according to Kristeva, can be interpreted through its relation with other metapoems. The poem employs macro intertextuality with the explicit reference to S. T. Coleridge, which brings attention to Coleridge's philosophy of poetic craft in the composition of "Kubla Khan". It is generally assumed that Coleridge has written the first part of *Kubla Khan* after a vision he had under the influence of opium. As soon as he wakes up, he starts penning down the view he had in vision. But a visitor from Porlock diverts his attention. After an hour, when Coleridge sets to complete the poem, the vision gets vanished (Mahar, 2007). Rafat finds analogy between Coleridge's creative stage and his own drawing upon psychological realism.

The psychological working of mind in the process of creation informs Rafat's creative activity. His works are the product of short-term memory of the conscious mind. The conscious mind saves for short term whatsoever it senses. After some time, these perceptions move into the subconscious mind. The subconscious information has the characteristic of data retrieval within a specific time limit. But it can never be retrieved back if it passes into the unconscious mind where it is forgotten and becomes the part of unfulfilled desires. Same is the case with Rafat and Coleridge here. When they fail to pen down the temporary visions in time, their visions submerge in the unconscious and are lost forever. Rafat's "Bird from Porlock" also has micro intertextual relation in the form of implicit theme with Richard Wilbur's poem "Marginalia" which works on the same principle. Wilbur advises the poets to

record the mental impressions immediately, which are in a great hurry to cross the margins of the conscious mind. (Wilbur, 2006)

The macro intertextuality is observed in the title of the poem “Bird from Porlock”. The visitor who calls upon Coleridge during his creative fit belongs to Porlock. Following macro intertextuality, Rafat adapts the person with the bird that sits in his eyes during the creative process. Coleridge’s person and Rafat’s bird become symbols of distraction in literature through macro intertextuality.

Moreover, micro intertextuality also shows its presence regarding the creation of metapoetic metaphor in “Bird from Porlock”. The tradition of metapoetry pays a special focus to the metapoetic metaphor for the working of the conscious mind in the creative hour. The literature of Finland, Britain, America, Ireland and ancient Greek and Rome devise many metapoetic metaphors according to cultural sensibilities. The sailing of the ship on the surface of water, rise and fall of sea waves, plowing the field, grafting, weaving tapestries, singing a song, pruning the trees, carving on the tree barks, and walking on the road etc. serve as the metaphor for poetic activity of composition process. Drawing on micro intertextual strains, Rafat invents the metaphor of smoke in “Bird from Porlock” for creative activity appealing to South-Asian sensibility. The dark smoke rings are metaphor for the creative dark which is the origin of everything as the darkness of midnight inspires Ted Hughes’ mind to write a poem (Hughes, 2009).

### *The Time to Love*

Rafat’s poem “The Time to Love” discusses the time to love. The poet presents a contrast between the time to love and the time to create an object of art. The poets need something to inspire their poetry. Generally, the season of spring inspires the writers to create artistic verses. The month of April enjoys a literary tradition since Chaucer to inspire the poets as it is the month of fertility and creativity. The season of autumn and winter are generally treated in literature as uninspiring when everything freezes to the root. Similarly, rainy season in August in Pakistan inspire Pakistani poets to write about them. Hence, there is a time to create and a time when creativity is not possible. But love does not care for these rags of time. “Love is a country” (Rafat, 1985, p. 2) that has its own climate which revolves around the will of the lovers. The lovers’ passion make them reach their waiting salt-lick no matter how difficult the path becomes.

Any text is not an island in itself for its meaning, rather it belongs to its literary tradition (Berry, 2002). Similarly, Rafat’s “The Time to Love” does not stand in isolation for interpretation, rather it belongs to the tradition of love poetry. The purest essence of poetry is the expression of the true feelings and emotions of the poet, which are best presented through the genre of love poetry. It propagates the theorem of art for art’s sake to read for pleasure only and to find surprises in the text. It reserves and defends pleasurable poetic free expressions of beauty and sensuality, which appeal to the aesthetic and artistic sensibility of the reader.

The tradition of love poetry finds its origin in Hebrew Bible in which the joys of conjugal love are celebrated. Ovid uses the metaphor of warfare for the sexual intercourse in *Amores*. Elizabethan sonneteers continue the tradition with artificial love expressions. Walt Whitman in America sings the adores bodily pleasures in “*Song of Myself*”. D. H. Lawrence advocates the purgation of fleshly human instincts as the force of life. Pablo Neruda presents analogy of sensuality with geographical landscape. Nizar Qabbani propagates sexual freedom of woman. Kamala Das gives expression of female identity through her freedom of speech regarding sexual desire.

Kristeva opines that the texts work as dialogues among one another in the unending chain of intertextuality. Among many traditions of love poetry, one is the parting of lovers at morning. Robert Browning’s “*Parting at Morning*” contributes in this tradition by putting focus on the sun, day, and light. The images suggest the theme of social duties which are to be carried down as the morning has brought an end to the meeting of lovers (Browning, 2009). This tradition is reacted against by John Donne in his poem “*The Sun Rising*”, where he refuses to part from his beloved when the day breaks (Shafiq, 2020). This is a dialogue between the texts. Micro intertextuality unfolds itself between Rafat’s “*The Time to Love*” and Donne’s “*The Sun Rising*” in the import of this theme.

The theme of fluttering moods of lovers independent of time in Rafat’s “*The Time to Love*” find micro intertextuality with that of Donne’s “*The Sun Rising*”. Both of the poets develop their theme to love at any time with intertextual comparison of seasons, months, and days. Donne develops his theme by awarding the worldly duties, which break through with the day break, to political servants, school going boys, and animals. The lovers are free from these worldly duties since the sensual desires do not obey the course of sun. Love has its own seasons and climates to follow. The micro intertextual rendition of the same theme is developed in Rafat with lover’s comparison with the poets. The poets have a specific time to create their worldly duties of creating artistic pieces. But the time of lovers to make love is not the servant of the revolutions of earth around the sun. Rather its sun is heart around which it moves. The heart may desire union in August, April, spring, winter, summer, autumn, or rainy season.

Rafat shares the micro intertextual feature of write back intertextuality of rebelling against authority in favour of free expression of sensual impulses with Donne. The poetry of Elizabethan sonneteers is full of pathos and the lovers languishing after the proud beloved in the unrequited love. Such poets show an artificial and restricted view of love. But the take of Donne on love poetry is very realistic. He openly discusses the passions, desires, and fluttering moods of the lovers. He does not follow the traditions of authority and rebels against them following his natural instincts in the form of write back intertextuality. In a similar fashion, Rafat’s love poems rebel against the ghazal tradition of Pakistani love poetry, which shows a similar stance on love following Elizabethan sonneteers. While Rafat’s “*The Time to Love*” relates openly the different moods of lovers depending upon their hearts’ desires, as a



form of write back intertextuality, to come up with micro intertextual features with Donne's "The Sun Rising".

### *At The Service Station*

"At the Service Station" is a reflective poem of Rafat. The poet shares his experience when he is on a service station where his car is being serviced. The poet is in the lawn between the pump and the road. He is smoking a cigar while he observes his setting. Three urchins rub his car clean. And a shoe-shine boy shines his shoes and his facial expressions the poet comprehends as giving a warm approval of poet's shoes. The poet stops smoking cigar and carelessly remembers a line of Philip Larkin: "Nothing, like something, happens anywhere" (Rafat, 2008, p. 54). Suddenly, the poet thinks about his past and present and is filled with fear. He comprehends this feeling as the 'nothing' of Larkin is happening to him.

Since a text is unavoidably an intertext in a continuous chain of other text before and after it, "At the Service Station" belongs to the tradition of childhood poetry. The poetry written about the childhood experiences accompanies a sentimental, celebratory, pleasurable, and nostalgic tone. The carefree childhood is celebrated as the golden period of life. Generally, the mood becomes nostalgic as the harsh realities of adulthood are contrasted with the lost childhood in such poems. A desire of escape from the present and get back the lost childhood is cherished in childhood poetry. The important poems contributing in this tradition include Henry Vaughan's "The Retreat", William Blake's "Songs of Innocence", William Wordsworth's "My Heart Leaps up", Thomas Hood's "I Remember, I Remember", Emily Dickenson's "The Child's Faith is New", Dylan Thomas' "Fern Hill", and Seamus Heaney's "Blackberry-Picking". The write back intertextuality also surfaces in this poetic tradition and many poets come up to challenge these poems with the presentation of harsh childhood experiences. Creating a dialogue with these poems, William Blake's "Songs of Experience", D. H. Lawrence' "Discord in Childhood", and Philip Larkin's "I Remember, I Remember" are significant in this regard.

"At The Service Station" belongs to the poems written by the generation of writing back. Rafat's macro intertextual (explicit) reference to Philip Larkin, the graveyard poet, merged with the theory of quotation brings to mind the presence of Larkin's philosophy in this poem. The quotation "Nothing, like something, happens anywhere" (Rafat, 2008, p. 54) comes from Larkin's poem "I Remember, I Remember" which is in turn has writing back intertextuality with Thomas Hood's "I Remember, I Remember". Hood cherishes the childhood innocence drawing upon colors and natural images. The poem consists four rhymed stanzas in the reminiscence of childhood poems. The poet, touching the cords of his childhood experiences, presents the image of the sun as beautiful and peaceful turning the cycle of balanced days and nights. The description of charming colors and delicate flowers present an idyllic scene. The tree, planted by his brother, which is still present is also eyed. It is followed by the description of a flying bird, a metaphor for carefree

childhood. Towards the end of the poem, Hood wishes to have been died in the lost childhood to avoid the harsh present. (Hood, 1868)

However, Philip Larkin's intertextual write back to this poem is full of melancholy and depressed state of mind while borrowing the title of Hood's poem as a form of macro intertextuality. In "I Remember, I Remember", Larkin finds himself on a station of his home town Coventry while he with his friend is aboard on a train going to somewhere else. The train stops at the station making the poet remember his childhood. He tries to find any sign that can relate to his childhood but fails. He even fails to distinguish different lanes of the town. He replies his friend that he was born here and shares no emotional bonding with the town. The train starts moving and the poet tries to imagine the childhood memories. He recreates a garden where he does not invent any philosophy about the flowers and fruits. This expression is contrastive to Hood's imaginative childhood in which he invents different theories about the life force of flowers being light etc. as normal children do. He does have grandparents but never talks to them. He goes on to create a wonderful family to which he never visits in his depressive states. A farm house is also there where strong girls and boys go and play under the trees. He remembers a tree under which he never sits trembling with a girl who lays back. And there are offices in which he never reads his poems to the famous cousin of mayor. The friend enquires if he relates the place to hell. To which he replies that it is not the fault of the place but his unspent childhood which is followed by his famous quotation that nothing happens anywhere. Nothing happens in his childhood which is full of boredom. (Larkin, 2012)

At "The Service Station" shares macro intertextuality with this poem. The station of Larkin is replaced with the service station. Larkin's train window is replaced with the lawn where Rafat is sprawling while he views the scene on road and the pump. The childhood of the shoe-shine boy compels Rafat to think about Larkin's childhood who has no good childhood memory unlike other children. His childhood was as dull as his present. Neither anything changes in his life nor anything happens. The shoe-shine boy also shares the same story. He has been pulled by the society into child labour and is declined the golden period of his life. The present misery of the shoe-shine boy is the continuation of Larkin's childhood and the quotation suits the present state of affairs best as nothing has happened anywhere to change the life style. A similar thought brings to Rafat's mind his own past which is no different from his present. And the very thought paralyzes his mind that the very 'nothing' is happening to him also.

### ***A Positive Region***

"A Positive Region" is the picturesque description of natural landscape. In an evening of spring, Rafat happens to pass through a hilly station covered up in the greenery of pine trees. The region is rich with animals, birds, crops, flowers, trees, and plants. The breathtaking view of heaving mountains and the waterfall arrests the poet's attention. A little rain adds to the sweetness of the cool breeze passing over the stream in which stones shine. Road menders, saluting children, and smiling women delight the passing poet. People live in

cottages. The poet leaves the place with a heavy heart to its simple men, cicadas, and eagles.

John Denham is the father of the genre of topographical poetry. It encompasses the description of landscapes with an intended approval of natural imagery especially mountains, waterfalls, and fields. Alexander Pope's "Windsor Forest", John Dyer's "Grongar Hill", Matthew Arnold's "The Scholar Gypsy", W. H. Auden's "In Praise of Limestone", Coleridge's "Kubla Khan", Walter de la Mare's "Tartary", and Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" are some examples that contribute to the tradition of topographical poetry.

However, the term becomes well-known in romanticism with a renewal of interest in the philosophy of Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant of the aesthetics of sublime and beautiful. Any scene – which inspires a mixed impression of beauty and danger in the reader like Milton's description of hell – that causes terror and delight simultaneously at its sight is the source of sublime. At the same time, delight is created ensued by a sense of safety being at a safe distance from the awe-inspiring natural object. On the other hand, the sight of beauty such as a flowery meadow creates the feelings of love and passion which are the sources of pleasure. Things of beauty are small in size as compared to that of sublime-inspiring. They are delicate, graceful, proportionate, and smooth. The function of sublime is to move the reader while that of beautiful to charm. (Reyes, 2004)

Rafat's "The Positive Region" belongs to the same tradition led by the romantics. The meaning of the poem is subject to its interpretation with relation to other texts following the theoretical underpinnings of Kristeva. The poem shares micro intertextual elements in the form of pictorial quality of natural landscape with Wordsworth's "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey". The pictorial landscape of waterfall on heaving mountains that touch sky, deep woods, eagles, and cicadus create a sense of sublimity in both of the poems. While crop fields, bird-laden branches, serene atmosphere, cool breeze, stream, and green bushes create a sense of beauty.

The micro intertextuality considering the theme of mechanical life of city informs both of the poems. The noise, small rooms, adjacent buildings, and the social duties of the mechanical life of city turn Wordsworth weary and tired. Apart from this city life which is full of cares, no natural scenes of greenery, lakes, mountains, rising and setting sun in the sea, and shining stars in the streams are there to console his weary spirit. He turns to this place after five years to heal his soaring soul. Similarly, Rafat is also delighted at the perception of the region during his journey through it. The beauty of the green lands, mountainous waterfalls, shining streams, bushes, goats, and birds console his weary spirit which is the product of mechanical city life. The healthy, active, simple, and courteous people present a contrast to the selfish people of city. He contemplates over his city life with nostalgia for this lost landscape which seems to him the lost Eden.

The macro intertextuality is also at work in Rafat's "The Positive Region" as a form of transformation or adaptation of the topic of Wordsworth's "Tintern

Abbey”. The name of the place of which ekphrasis is the subject matter of the poem in Wordsworth is adapted in Rafat by the adjective of ‘positive’ in order to generalize the place related to the peaceful atmosphere. The sense of place which soothes man’s senses like a paradise is implied through the use of adjective ‘positive’. The very topic inform the content of the poem, i. e., the description of sublime and beautiful landscape which appeals to the aesthetic sense of the reader by arousing the motions of delight and pleasure.

### CONCLUSION

To conclude the discussion, it is asserted that Taufiq Rafat’s poetry is not self-referential in itself. The meanings of his four selected poems are not inferred from autobiographical, biographical, textual, or contextual approaches. While the meaning construction follow intertextual approach drawing upon different types of intertextuality especially macro intertextuality, micro intertextuality, write back intertextuality, and theory of quotation. All these types of intertextuality discover the relation of these poems with particular literary traditions especially metapoetry, love poetry, childhood poetry, and topographical poetry according to which their relevant meanings are constructed. “Bird from Porlock” explores metapoetic tradition according to which Rafat’s creativity is the result of immediate recording of the conscious expressions through a macro intertextual relation with Coleridge’s “Kubla Khan”. “Time to Love” connects micro intertextually with Donne’s “The Sun Rising” which is a write back to the authority of mainstream love poetry tradition in order to record the real love impulses. “At The Service Station” develops a macro intertextual link with Larkin’s childhood poetry tradition which is a write back to the mainstream childhood poetry tradition in order to relate the real experiences of his childhood, which are none. And “The Positive Region” enjoys micro intertextual link to Wordsworth’s “Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey” in the rendering of description of sublime and beautiful landscapes. All the four poems have been interpreted through intertextual approach with British writers with whom Rafat shares an unconscious historical bonding regarding literary concerns.

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