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TERROR IN THE AIR: AN ECOPSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF INDRA SINHA'S *ANIMAL'S PEOPLE* (2007)

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Abstract

The present article investigates the insanity trope in Indra Sinha's *Animal's People*¹. It aims at critically evaluating human cognitive faculty and mental state to the transitory and chronic exposure to airborne chemical attacks in the ecopsychological direction. Ecopsychology theory, championed by Theodore Roszak, is an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary theory which combines two pivotal subjects - ecology and psychology-, establishing a relationship between the natural world and human beings (Rakheebrita Biswas, 2011: 92). Thus, the American's ecocide horror perpetrated in Khaufpur fragmented the Identity of the storyteller of the tape recording to a state of 'animal'. It also plunges the elusive character, Ma Franci, into a virtual reality in which she constructs herself as a messenger of a prophetic vision of an eventual 'apocalypse', the end of the world.

Keywords: Pollution, Divine, Insanity, Apocalypse Trope, Collective Trauma, Ecopsychology, Visual, Hallucination, Ecocide, Bioterrorism, Biological Agents and Toxins, Cognitive Decline

INTRODUCTION:

The use of biological agents as war weapon is not a recent episode, even though it is not easy to identify a precise time of the outbreak of bioterrorism. Over the centuries, the resort to chemical and biological weapons agents were of a paramount importance during wartime, territorial conquests and crush of insurrections. It dates back to the pre-Christian era where some 'Athenians initially, but falsely thought that the Spartans poisoned their water, thus causing the devastating 430 BCE "plague outbreak" in Athens during the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE)' (W. Seth Carus,

2017: P.4-5). In the Medieval and Early Modern eras (1000 AD to 1750 AD), Chemical and Biological warfare have been used in the Tatar attack during the Mongol siege of Caffa, a Genoese city located in modern Crimea in 1346. The Mongol catapulted plague infected corpses into the city to break the resistance (W. Seth Carus, 2017: P.5-6). During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the manifestation of biological agents signalled its eminence in the war between the British and North American Indians with the deliberate release of smallpox at Fort Pit in 1763. However, that period also known as the 'Golden Age of Bacteriology' provides a scientific and technological knowledge of microbial pathogens

¹ Indra Sinha, *Animal's People*. London: Simon & Schuster, 2007. From this page on, Indra Sinha's novel, meaning *Animal's People* will stand for (A.P). Further references to these novels will appear in the body of the work followed by the page number of the quotation.

whereby Louis Pasteur in France and Robert Koch in Germany developed the theory that 'microbial agents (germs) cause infectious diseases' (Malcolm Dando, 2006: 14). The Twentieth century was severely marked by the First world War with the proliferation of the biological warfare by the German troops. German troops had recourse to biological agents to perpetrate bioterrorist acts of sabotage against the allies, targeting Romania in August 1916, Norway and Argentina. The Second World War was also characterized by the use of non-conventional chemical weapons when Japanese troops committed acts of sabotages and firing of artillery shells filled with germs which triggers a cholera, dysentery and plague epidemics during the Soviet-Manchurian battle in 1939. This insane method was also employed against the Chinese in 1942.

In the context of geo-politics and geoeconomics, major advanced technological nations namely the United States of America, China, Japan, Germany, India, France and The United Kingdom have initiated a fierce competition of economic power which generates tension and rivalries. Those politico-economic tensions and rivalries arouse bitter hostilities which imply the use of conventional and unconventional weapons including chemical and biological weapons agents. According to I.W. Fong and Ken Alibek, biological weapon agents can be defined as 'living organism, whatever their nature, or infected material derived from them, which are used for hostile purpose and intended to cause disease or death in man, animals and plants, and depend for their efforts on the ability to multiply in person, animals or plants attacked' (I.W. Fong and Ken Alibek, 2009). Subsequent the cases of bioterrorist and chemical (Anthrax letter) attack in the fall of 2001, in Florida and New York which targeted the American politicians and killed about five peoples, and the onset of coronavirus in the world, some critical care specialists and microbiologists focused their attention on the threats and studies of biological warfare and bioterrorism in order to raise governments awareness on their potential dangers on human cognitive function.

The fictional representation of bioterrorism and chemical agents is well-perceived in Indra Sinha's *Animal's People*, an autobiographical novel. It is a first-person monologue recorded by the main protagonist, a 19 years-old orphan of Khaufpur, who horribly suffered from the physiological and psychological impacts of an American chemical factory explosion in India. The bioterrorist attack on the local ecosystem deteriorates the overall physical ecosystem of the city of Khaufpur, killing a thousand of people. The man-made action also produces acute psychological effects on the Khaufpuri civilians, a tragedy which the elusive character, Ma Franci, conceptualises as an 'apokalis'.

Thus, my intention is, first and foremost, to examine the nature of bioterrorist threats on the ecosystem. It also aims at evaluating the traumatic impacts of bioterrorism on the cognitive function of Khaufpuri's inhabitants. Therefore, in order to reach the targeted objective, this paper focuses on these questions: What is the nature of the threat of the gas leakage on the Khaufpur civilians? how do poisons and toxin genes affects the brains of the victims? What is the implication of psychological illness to religious imagery in Indra Sinha's *Animal's People*? Or else, does the reappropriation of 'apocalypse' and 'paradise' tropes a sequel to the psychological morbidity of ecological disaster?

I. Chemical poisons as Bioterrorism

In our present days, following the hijacked terrorist attacks on 9/11, 2001 and the pristine use of anthrax in the United States of America and coronavirus in China, a new threat has arisen on the major nations with the use of chemical agents and bioterrorism or biological warfare. The recent phenomenon captures the attention of the infectious diseases clinicians and generates an extensive literature on bioterrorist campaign. Biological warfare refers to the 'military employment of microbial or both biological agents (including bacteria, viruses, and fungi) or toxins to produce death, temporary incapacitation, or permanent harm in humans or to kill or damage animals or plants for a military objective. Toxins are harmful substances obtained from microbial or other living organisms or their chemical analogues,

whatever their origins or methods of production' (Jeanne Guillemin, 2005: 2)

In Indra Sinha's novel entitled, *Animal People*, the manifestation of bioterrorism is glaringly apparent. The chemical poisonous injected in the air of the city of Khaufpur, an Indian city where millions of poor people live, may be well suited for an act of terrorism to create chaos and bring terror to the hundreds of the local civilians. As to Zafar Bhai, the leader of the Khaufpuri revolution for justice, a clear and exhaustive definition of the term is extremely important.

What is terror? The dictionary says it's extreme fear, violent dread, plus what causes it. On that night our people knew terror beyond what a dictionary can define. Who caused it? Our people continue to feel extreme fear, violent dread, because they don't know what horrors might yet emerge in their bodies. Who refuses to share medical information? Our people want justice in a court of law. Who sneers at justice by refusing to appear in court? Terrorists are those who cause terror, who endanger innocent lives, who don't respect law. The only terrorists in this case are those who run the Kampani" (*A.P.*, 283).

With regard to the potential targets of the airborne attack on the Khaufpuri ecosystem (environment and humans), it becomes apparent that the Amerikan company is a terrorist organisation. It intends to perform a political objective seeking to cause damage on the environment under a complete anonymity. The narrator, by constantly referring to the code name 'Amerikan Kampani', instead of revealing its real name in the narrative, not only wants to keep the anonymity of the factory, but also to unveil the hidden machination behind their operation. This entails the manipulation of dangerous chemical toxins in the factory. Aftaab, one of the employees working in 'the Kampani's factory...told her how dangerous were the chemicals in there. If by chance you got any on your hand, Aftaab said, the skin would blister. (*A.P.*, 83-84).' The toxic side effect of

the chemical poison becomes perceptible on that tragical night when,

he was at home off duty, when the stinging in the eyes began, the burning chillies, unlike most people he knew what to do. He covered the faces of Pyaré and their two young daughters with wet cloths then led them, walking not running, out of the wind. In this way they escaped where most of their neighbours perished. 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. When they returned home all objects of metal, like cooking pots, had a green crust. Aftaab would not allow Pyaré and the children into the house. He cleaned everything, washed every corner before he let them in (*A.P.*, 83-84).

This passage unveils two pivotal points: the one is the manifestation of biological toxins and poison on living and non-living organisms. As it can be clearly observed in the narrative, the perpetration of the gas leakage has been purposely done during the 'night', at a moment when the Khaufpuris were totally vulnerable and defenceless. The other point turns around the first-hand means or strategies to protect oneself as a counterattack against bioterrorism. These precautionary measures consist in protecting one's face with wet clothes, slowing down the paces to avoid being radiating and cleaning up the infected objects before using them. The chemical poison not only causes a thousand of deaths, but also brought about some far-reaching aftereffects on the innocent peoples as Doctor Elli Barber notices, 'Its poisons are in the wells, they're in people's blood, they're in mother's milk. Frank, if you came to my clinic, I could show you. Specimens, I mean. Foetuses, babies that never made it. You wouldn't want to see such things, even in your nightmares.'" Elli Barber's heartfelt appeals to the protection of the ecosystem, herein, sounds a conscious awareness to the suffering of the people of Khaufpur. She is hailing the American governments to eradicate the prejudice caused by the poisons on the means of subsistence of the

Khaufpuris who are denied any sense of humanity. By insisting on the American character, Doctor Elli Barber, as an agent for change, the narrator wants to deconstruct the idea that terrorism has nothing to do with personal animosity, but rather deals with political conspiracy.

So, then she starts on about other things this friend's told her such as how Khaufpur once had a high cultural life, and a remarkable history, famous it was for poets, politically progressive, a haven for refugees including a large community of Afghans. I think her friend must have meant Farouq's lot, the Yar-yilaqis, who are really Uzbegs. He complained how all these things are forgotten because nowadays when the world hears the name of Khaufpur it thinks only of poison. "I curse the day the Kampani came here because its disaster erased our past." "Also erased thousands of people," said Elli (*A.P.*, 152).

The poison poses a problem of fragmentation of political, social, economic and cultural aspects. It has the reputation to threaten and damage the cultural and historical heritage of Khaufpuris by working as a coercive agent. The main particularity of the toxic pollutants lays on its everlasting effects on the mind of the infected individuals. The lethal injection of poison leaves a caustic legacy on the memory of the inhabitants, generating a collective and historical trauma. However, what could be the psychological impacts of bioterrorism on the psyche of the Khaufpuri local civilians? Or else, to what extent do chemical poisons inflict mental disorder and insanity in the mind of the exposed individuals?

II. Ma's Nonsensical Prophetic vision of 'Apokalis'

The literary trope of 'insanity' is a rich topic of great concern for the clinicians and scholar community. Medical care specialists and writers have always shown a good deal of interest in the study of 'insanity' trope or 'dementia'. It is developed as a product of the traumatic impact of bioterrorism on human cognitive function. Indeed, since long, it became a truism that there is a strong

connection between the ecology and human consciousness. This connection also pivots around the fundamental idea of the nature aesthetics and human spirituality. According to John Bellamy Foster and Brett Clark, human beings in Marx's conception are "corporeal" beings, constituting a "specific part of nature"—the "self- mediating beings" of nature... The expropriation of nature on behalf of the capitalist class becomes the basis for the further expropriation and exploitation of humanity and nature, in a vicious circle leading ultimately to a rupture in the metabolism of nature and society, including corporeal existence (John Bellamy Foster and Brett Clark, 2020). Thus, the perpetration of ecocide on exposed individuals overwhelms the nature/human system, generating an acute psychiatric illness such as insanity. It also opens up avenues of thinking about a gnoseological approach on disaster.

Indra Sinha's *Animal People* juxtaposes the 'insanity' and 'apocalypse' tropes in the narrative as a sequel of the poison and toxin on the mental health of the characters. An archetype character who experiences acute psychological morbidity of ecological disaster is Ma Franci, an old French nun who is, most of times, referred to as an insane woman. Ma Franci is a nun working in an orphanage where Animal, the main protagonist, grew up. She has always been present in that place since the outbreak of the disaster that nearly disseminated the local people and affected her brain. 'Air pollution impairs verbal tests...cognitive decline or impairment are risk factors of Alzheimer's diseases and other forms of dementia for elderly persons' (Xi Zhang et al, 2018: 9193). The long-term exposure to poisons and toxin agents impedes her cognitive and linguistic performance as it can be crystalized through the following sentences:

On that night all sorts of people lost all kinds of things, lives for sure, families, friends, health, jobs, in some cases their wits. This poor woman, Ma Franci, lost all knowledge of Hindi. She'd gone to sleep knowing it as well as any Khaufpuri, but was woken in the middle of the night by a wind full of poison and prophesying angels. In

that great mela of death, those rowdy, unforgettable festivities, her mind was wiped clean of Hindi, and of Inglis too, which she had also been able to speak à sa manière, she forgot all languages except her childhood speech of France...But there was a further twist to Ma Franci's madness, when she heard people talking in Hindi or Inglis, or come to that in Urdu, Tamil, Oriya, or any other tongue used in Khaufpur, she could no longer recognise that what they were speaking was a language, she thought they were just making stupid grunts and sounds (A.P, 37).

Chronic exposure to environmental toxins such as air pollution induces, in her, negative changes in cognitive functioning and brain damages. The tragic event of the poisonous gas leak causes toxic encephalopathy involving Alzheimer disease- a progressive neurodegenerative disease most often associated with memory deficit and cognitive decline- and eventually dementia or insanity. To Claire Galloway, individuals exposed to urban air pollution show 'increased brain expression of Beta-Amyloid 42, a protein fragment that may contribute to the breakdown of neural communication to the breakdown of neural communication early in the disease process in neurons and glia, the support cells of neurons. Beta-Amyloid 42 in the frontal cortex and hippocampus-both of which are disproportionately affected during the course of Alzheimer diseases' (Claire Galloway, 2017).

Ma Franci's brain, certainly, suffers from loss of memory which entails her 'loss of knowledge of 'Hindi' and 'Inglis' languages on that distressing night. The sudden lapse of memory of the knowledge of the foreign languages, except her native tongue, not only suggests a form of collective trauma, but also a fragmentation of her linguistic background and cultural landscape in which she is living in. The persistence of her mother tongue-French- as the sole communicative competence in her memory after the catastrophic disaster augurs the repression of her self-conscious and therefore comes to reveal her true identity.

Ma Franci's cognitive decline becomes more pronounced as the "wind of poison" and "prophesying angels" distorts her perception of social reality. She experiences visual hallucination which generates changes in how she perceives the world around her. Living in her virtual reality, Ma Franci conceptualises a prophetic mission in which she believes she should warn the people of Khaufpur against an imminent 'end of world' that she refers to as an 'Apokalis'. In the narrative, the repetitive eschatological confabulation she entertains with Animal, an unfortunate victim of the bioterrorist attack, comes to underline the discourse about a fast-approaching holocaust of the world. She warns her beloved adopted 'child' in these terms:

Animal, I am trying to warn people, but they don't listen. Hell is coming, it will open underneath our feet, you can feel the heat already. Le camp des saints et la ville bien-aimée. Un feu descendra du ciel, et les dévorera." The camp of the saints and the well-loved city, a fire will come from the sky and devour them. Then she's confirmed that angels have moved in all around, they're taking over the city, preparing some big showdown. Soon there will be no people left (A.P, 295).

Like a prophet, Ma Franci performs a premonitory function in these lines. She tries to transmit social and ecological conscious to the people of Khaufpur to generate spiritual awakening about the atmosphere of despondency that will soon reign on earth after the arrival of the 'angels.' To Franci's understanding, the 'apokalis' trope will be effectively forecast by a 'blow of trumpets' she repeatedly hears in her mind. She announces the decline of the world as follow: 'when the Apokalis starts, an angel will blow a trumpet, all who love Isa miyañ will be snatched up to heaven right then and there' (A. P, 144). She extremely remains confident that the Apokalis has already started since that tragic night of the poisonous gas leak, this is why she feels the need to stay in that city to endure the suffering with the Khaufpuris.

The rhetoric of 'apokalis' developed in the narrative not only sounds as the perception of

moments of divine inspiration, but also betokens a strong connection that she shares with 'Isa miyañ'. In her 'apokalyptic' vision, she dimly espies the haunting sound of the angels signalling the end of the world. In her mind, Ma Franci could hear,

"... la voix d'une multitude d'anges et des autres êtres vivants, et leur nombre était des myriades de myriades et des milliers de milliers."... She's hearing the voice of a horde of angels and other living beings, numbering millions and millions, they are crying out to god, and all the creatures of the air, on the earth and under it, in the sea, are crying ... "Je regardai, et voici, parut un cheval blanc." What are you doing you foolish old woman, yelling about white horses and crowns of victory? I know what comes next, it's the red horse whose rider has a sword to end men's gorging on one another's flesh, then a black horse, ridden by one who carries scales of justice. It is not just my eyes and guts which are on fire... Parut un cheval d'une couleur pâle. Celui qui le montait se nommait la mort, et l'hadès le suivait, pour exterminer les hommes par l'épée, par la famine, par la peste, et par les bêtes sauvages de la terre." It's a pale horse, on him's death with hell twoup behind, come they've so men may be exterminated by war, famine and plagues, their bodies devoured by the wild beasts of the earth (A.P, 338-339).

The mixture of odd languages (Indianised English and French) in the storytelling denotes the seriousness of the doom of humanity. The use of the imagery of 'apokalis' alludes to the extermination of the Khaufpuris, synecdochized as 'humanity', by the 'Amerikan' company. Sinha, in the narrative, invites the readers to consider the 'Amerikan' factory as the symbol of the 'evil power' that rules this world. The 'Apokalyptic' rhetoric, therefore, appears as a divine punishment that will come to wiped out human wickedness and sin from humanity as it appears in the narration: 'Sanjo reckons that the world is full of wickedness and is going to be wiped out, this will happen in various appealing ways and is called the

Apokalis' (A.P, 63). Ma Franci, therefore, proposes her arcanum version of 'apokalis' to admonish the government in general and namely Zahreel Khan, Khaufpur's Minister for Poison Relief against a potential allegation of political bribery and corruption with the Amerikan's company that causes the suffering of the thousands of people of Khaufpur. She is giving fair warning to the boss of the Amerikan's company for a restorative justice for the victims of the gas leakage. In the light of Animal,

Even Zafar, who refuses to believe in god, says we must all be like Hussein who never gave up and refused to be cowed by the evil powers that rule this world. When he says this I know he is thinking of the Kampani and its friends who rule countries and cities, who have guns and soldiers and bombs and all the money in all the banks of the world, and that pitted against them he sees us, the people of the abyss, Ma Franci's people of the Apokalis (A.P, 205-206).

Even if the narrator characterises Ma Franci as a 'mad' or 'insane' woman, however it can be widely suspected that behind those 'apokalyptic' visions, there are some hidden mysteries which can potentially be relevant. The writer Thomas Szasz, in *insanity*, would speak about that state of mind as a 'divine insanity'. It becomes evident that chemical and biological warfare present a potential danger for both the environment and the exposed individuals as it appears in the narrative.

III. Animal's Hallucinogenogenic vision of 'Paradise'

In his fictional novel, *Animal's People*, Indra Sinha exposes the long-term health effects of bioterrorism on the people of Khaufpur, an Indian city. As a matter of fact, the disastrous night of the poisonous gas leakage did not only affect Ma Franci, an insane old French nun, but also bears a psychological stigma on the lives of the whole Khaufpur city dwellers. As the title of the novel *Animal's People* written in bloodred style suggests, Animal, the central boy protagonist is also an unfortunate victim of that fateful night. On 'that night', he grievously suffers from psychosomatic

symptoms of chemical poisonous that damages his spine and obliges him to walk on all four limbs.

The nineteen years born-deformed boy develops a fragmentation of identity, reducing him to a state of 'animal' as a result of the Amerikan's Kampani's operation. He is marked by a crisis of identity which persuades him to deny the human identity or attribute. He formally identifies himself as an 'animal' so that to try to repress the feelings of shame, humiliation, mockeries and wickedness from the part of the others. He even confesses to Ma Franci that he 'no longer want to be human... which you can understand, seeing it used to be when I caught sight of myself—mirrors I avoid but there's such a thing as casting a shadow—I'd feel raw disgust. In my mad times when the voices were shouting inside my head I'd be filled with rage against all things that go or even stand on two legs. The list of my jealousies was endless' (A.P.1-2). All along the narration of the novel, Animal, the boy protagonist, proudly claims out his uniqueness as an exotic species. The unicity of the central character can be proven through the catalogue of animal species as follow:

A big book of animals from the library Nisha borrowed once and she showed it to me, this book had pictures in of all the animals of India, bears and apes, wolves, deer of all kinds, rhino, tiger, lion, buffalo, you name it. There was cobra, king cobra, python, bloodsucker lizard, hoopoo, fish eagle, kite and crow, there was gharial crocodile, mahseer fish, hyena and jackal and dhole, which is a wild dog with round ears, but in all the book, in all of its hundreds of pages and pictures, there was no animal like me. Nisha said, "That's because you are unique. Be proud of it." (A.P, 223).

Tragically, the gas tragedy leaves him with an in-between identity. Taking notice of his dissimilarity from the aforementioned animal species of India, he painfully categorises himself as a rare species, neither animal nor human. That is why the only 'other' he can claim his belonging is with his best companion Jara, a dog.

More interestingly, it can be diagnosed acute psychological distress in the boy protagonist's mind. The long-term exposure to the Methyl Isocyanate (MIC) gas and other toxins in the air affects his brain functioning. As can be seen in some distinct parts of the novel, Animal is badly afflicted by a mental illness that can be assimilated to a Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) caused by a shocking event he experienced in the very stage of his life. He started to develop abnormal sensibilities 'Since [he] was small, [he] could hear people's thoughts even when their lips were shut, plus I'd get en passant comments from all types of things, animals, birds, trees, rocks giving the time of day. What are these voices...' (A.P.8).

The pathological condition that the central character is experiencing in his mind can be taken for granted to ascertain his roundabout of madness. The existence of polyphonic voices in Animal's mind reveals his subconscious desires and personalities, driving him to act friendly or doing bad things. This state of mind, therefore, requires the intervention of a Khaufpuri's highest professor, the greatest expert on children born damaged by the poison for an alternative therapy. Ma Franci, urgently, calls for the assistance of the head doctor in these terms: "Mon fils est malade, il entend des voix dans sa tête..." "Il entend des voix. Il parle avec des gens qui n'existent pas." Eyes, if you don't know français, it means, I've already said! He hears voices. He talks to people who aren't there" (A.P. 55-56).

However, she sorely feels disappointed after being virtually ignored by the physician who voices that there is literally no hope for his cure as it be crystallized through these terms: "Madam, I must be plain with you, whatever could have been done for this boy, the time is long past. He will have to get used to his condition. There is absolutely no hope, this boy will never walk or stand up straight again." (A.P, 57) The clinical diagnosis of the doctor of the big hospital reveals that the prolonged exposure to the airborne chemical attack has reduced the slender chance of Animal to walk upright and be saved from his mental illness one day. Sinha, in these lines, seeks to censure the Indian healthcare system of the big hospitals where 'they say, joking aside, you

go in with one illness come out with three' (A.P, 55). The complete despair of the incapability of being cured from his psychosomatic illness drives him to use psychedelic substances intending to attenuate his pain and sufferings. The hallucinogenic drugs produce a paranoid delusion in his mind which leads him to espouse Ma's prophetic ideology of a supernatural world.

Ironically, by re-appropriating Ma's eschatological concept of 'paradise', Animal tries to seek a refuge to escape from his loneliness. After he has thought, he lost his best friends, Zafar, Farouq and Ma Franci in the last catastrophe that hits the city of Khaufpur, he expectedly attempts to find a place to mourn his loss and find a place in the paradise to feel safe. As he has been told by Farouq, the paradise is a place of contentment and great happiness where he could be happy. In the esoteric religion, people, entering in the paradise, could have 'fine couches surrounded by precious silks and carpets' (A.P, 208) and 'fountains and rivers will come gushing forth and there will be fruit orchards'(A.P, 208), although this eternal happiness is exclusively devoted to human beings. To Farouq, if '[he] want[s] to end up in paradise'[he] ll ha[s] to turn (A. P, 208). However, Animal was ecstatically delighted, in his hallucinating condition, to find his fellow creature in the paradise with whom he can be identified. On his first day experience of afterlife, he could notice that,

There are animals of every kind, leopards and deer and horses and elephants, there's a tiger and a rhino, among them are small figures on two legs, except some have horns some have tails they are neither men nor animals, or else they are both, then I know that I have found my kind, plus this place will be my everlasting home, I have found it at last, this is the deep time when there was no difference between anything when separation did not exist when all things were together, one and whole before humans set themselves apart and became clever and made cities and kampanis and factories(A.P, 352).

It takes a great weight off Animal's mind to find a non-poisonous place where he can feel much comforted by his heavenly self. He feels blissful to have found a new found sense of belonging and identity in a place that he could refer to as a homeland. Indra Sinha, in his fictional narrative, proposes the paradise trope as a remedy to alleviate the suffering of the people of Khaufpur.

Conclusion

All in all, this study unearths a clear truth: unconventional warfare poses a real threat for the potential epicentres and rising nations. It comes to deconstruct the traditional convention of waging wars since centuries.

From what has been previously learnt from the history of unconventional warfare, it can easily be concluded that bioterrorism and biological warfare agents are 'silent killers' which cause more damages and death than it was in the past. Subsequent cases of Nagasaki and Hiroshima provide potent illustrative tools of the mass destruction and aftereffects of chemical agents on the ecosystem (environment and human beings).

Therefore, Theodore Roszak's theory of ecopsychology provides a new avenue to the understanding of the impacts of the ecological disaster on human conscious as it appears in Indra Sinha's *Animal People*. Sinha's fictionalisation of the Bhopal gas leakage extensively investigates the transitory and long-term effects of bioterrorism in the cognitive functioning of the Khaufpur civilians. In one point, the ecosystem genocide committed by the American corporation testifies the hypothesis of the devastation of Khaufpuris political, economic, social and cultural heritages.

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