Critical Appreciation of "Dawn at Puri" poem by Jayanta Mahapatra.

The poem, **Drawn at Puri** is written by very famous Indian poet Jayanta Mahapatra. The poem is set in the town named Puri. Puri is very famous town in Orissa, India which is consist as the scared place because of the temple of Lord Jagarnnath. In this poem the poet had talked about the sensitive attitude to the native socio-cultural practices and the falseness of the rites and ritual in India.

The poem “Dawn at Puri” narrated by Jayanta Mahapatra describes the Oriya landscape, the holy city of Puri. In every poem of Mahapatra we find glimpse of his personal experience. Mahapatra is deeply rooted in Indian culture and ethos. And he frequently uses symbols from local history. In order to appreciate the prescribed poem, it is important to understand his sensitive attitude to the native socio-cultural practices. This poem is a narrative of the morning landscape at the great Jagannath Temple at Puri. Here Puri is the living protagonist for him. He inputs his observed realistic and vivid image in the poem. Here Puri is personified (alive). Lord Jagannathan is the main deity in Puri who is the form of Lord Vishnu. At Puri there is a beach called “Gateway to heaven”, “Swargadwara” where the dead are cremated. It is believed by the Hindu that it is it possible to attend salvation by dying at Puri. Ironically, it highlights the empty country pestered with poverty and hunger.

The poem starts with “Endless crows’ noise”, and this very first line creates a typical image of the morning landscape before sun rise which also symbolises the beginning of the hectic day. The poet talks about the widowed women in white clad. He compares these widowed women to that of a captive in a net of oppressive social custom. The poet describes about skull lying on the sandy beach, it shows the hollowness of prevailing rites and rituals. He talked about leprous shells leaning against each other showing the pathetic condition of the isolated and deprived community.

The way Mahapatra delineates the events and the incidents in the poem shows us that he disapproves of what is going on under the cover of tradition and practices. The poem evokes loss of identity, anonymity, death, disease and decadence. Most of the Hindu wishes to be cremated in the land of lord Vishnu. The poet highlights the superstition found in our society.

The poem is about feelings and compassion for the people who suffer. It is a mocking attack on the tradition and traditional practices which is typically ruthless and prejudiced. The poet tolerates no sympathy for the rites, rituals and hollow tradition. Clearly the poet has presented a vivid and realistic picture of discrimination and suffering in his poem “Dawn at Puri”.