

Beehive Chapter – 8

Poetry – On killing a Tree

Thinking about the Poem (Page 111)

1. No, a simple jab of the knife wouldn't be enough to kill a tree because it will heal itself in the due course of time if it is not destroyed by uprooting it totally. Only chopping or cut cannot kill it as it will slowly rise again and grow to its original size.
2. The tree grows to its full size by absorbing years of sunlight, water and air. The tree has grown to its full size slowly consuming the earth and rising out of it. It fed upon the earth's crust of years, absorbing sunlight, water and air.
The words are consuming, rising, feeding and absorbing.
3. The 'bleeding bark' refers to the bark of trees which gives out a liquid after it is cut or hurt. Hacking and chopping the tree make its bark bleed.
4. The poet says "No" in the beginning of the third stanza to highlight the fact that a tree cannot be killed merely with a jab of knife or by hacking and chopping.
5. 'Anchoring earth' refers to the soil in which the roots of the tree are kept hidden. 'Earth cave' also refers to the same. The soil and the roots of the tree form a very tight grip, like an anchor and it keeps it rooted. As a cave gives shelter, similarly, the earth gives shelter to the roots.
6. The strength of the tree are its roots. They keep it anchored to the earth. They are the provider of nutrients for the tree. When the

tree is pulled out of the earth's soil, these are exposed and tree becomes lifeless.

7. The tree is killed, when its roots are exposed to the outside. The burning heat of the sun and air choke it. It loses all its leaves and gets brown. Twisting, hardening and drying, it dies.